



LEGENDARY MOONLIGHT SCULPTOR

2ND COMPILATION

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Legendary Moonlight Sculptor

(달빛 조각사)

by

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Synopsis

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.

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Book 11: The Slightest Hope

Chapter 1: The Land Of The Vampires

Weed, while riding on the back of a vampire bat on its way toward the Kingdom of Vampires Todeum, had great expectations.

“This place Todeum must be overflowing with money and treasures. The mindset of nobilities.....am I going to get a reward in exchange for time I’ve spent bringing up Tori?”

Bloated optimism.

After reaching the city of heaven, Levis, Weed took care of the Death Knight and reclaimed the lost cup of Freya, Herrara Cup. But instead of getting a reward, he instead received another quest from the Church of Freya!

The quest was to defeat a clan consists of vampires in the name of Freya; and retrieves the lost relic of the Church of Freya, the Fargo Crown. With that said, Tori was the head of that vampire clan, a Boss type monster of level 400; and an underling of Lord of the Undead, Barr Khan.

Weed, on the other hand, was not even at level 200 back then. Along with just Ron Alves, he had to free all of priests and paladins whom were under the petrified curse. Thanks to their valiant effort, Tori and his clan were defeated; but that, by no means, was not the end.

Near the beginning of the battle against the Legion of

Immortality, Weed went through many adventures in order to grow stronger; strong enough to summoned and fought against Tori to earn his title as Tori's master. Now, as if to truly recognize Weeds as his master, Tori invited Weed into the Kingdom of Vampires.

The reward will be as sweet as honey!

Vampires love luxurious things: treasures, beautiful works of art, magnificent castles and the likes; so Todeum will be filled with such sights. For them to be invited to such a place, they must have been in Tori's good grace.

While harboring these beautiful fantasies, Weed and his party were taken by surprise as the vampire bats they rode dove into the ground. Entering a hole below earth, they were dropped into the contaminated river and went with the flow.

“Ewpupuu!”

They swam upward from the depth, gasping for air, and made their way toward the shore. With the help of the Geomchi's group, Mapan's wagon full of provisions departed from the river unharmed.

Maylon asked.

“Where are we, anyway?”

“Well, we came here by means of bats,”

Pale shook his head while answering, though he wasn't sure since no one had ever stepped into this region before.

Similarly, Weed came up with nothing.

‘Surely we should be in Toteum.’

Tori promised. For sure the invitation was to the Kingdom of Vampires Toteum! The nobles of the night who lived in the Kingdom of Vampires! Possessors of piled high mountains of ancient arts and jewelry; along with beautiful women that's hard to find on earth.

This Promise Land was only accessible once every 3 months; and housed hundreds of millions of bats and rodents with its rulers, the vampires, while surrounded in eternal darkness.

Damn hell.

After the abrupt end with the vampire bats, the party walked along the shore of the disgusting river, going with the flow of the murky water underneath the earth.

Pale, walking forefront as the scout of the party, asked.

“Will we be able to trace our path back to Morata by going

upstream?”

“Can’t go back to Morata via that way,” Weed answered after he thought it over, “it isn’t even near the vicinity of this land.”

The river of this land was so polluted; the nearby shores along it were contaminated beyond recognition. Instead of the lush green they usually sees, withered plants and grey sands were all they could see. The decayed reeds swayed back and forth as the wind brushed the leaves, an ominous chill seemingly sent by the murky Todeum’s sky. This scenery was nothing comparing to Morata.

“That means we arrived to the Kingdom of Vampires, correct?” Pale asked.

“Well...let’s check to be sure. Summon vampire Tori!”

Weed tried to summon Tori for more information, but no response from Tori.

Hwiyiing!!

The wind grew stronger.

Nobody understood the current situation, as to why Tori couldn’t be summoned. Hesitantly, Pale said.

“Weed-nim, were we played for fools?”

“There’s no way.”

Weed wanted to believe in Tori. The feeling would have been like a shot in the back of the head, though everyone had a similar notion.

“But Weed-nim, this sight is different from what we thought it’d be. Todeum must be a nice place; it wouldn’t be near a contaminated river such as this.”

“.....”

Pale pointed out.

The Todeum they fantasized about. This reality was the complete opposite of the Kingdom of Vampires that was supposed to be filled with elegance and grace, piled high in gold; this was nothing more than a desolate land filled with nothing but a polluted river and a murky sky.

“No way, this was not what he meant!”

Weed still in denial, retorted.

Remembering what Tori said, it suggested that it was some sort of reward; but this can hardly be called a gift. Neither sun nor stars; the passing wind that have the stench of rusted pipes; the

Kingdom of Vampires was completely different than what they imagined. Zephyr finally made a remark.

“Another damned character.”

“.....”

“Getting abused every time, this must be payback.”

“.....”

Romuna words punctured Weed's chest like a canine's bite; though the most damaging blow came from Surka's innocent words.

“Although we made it here, nothing exciting is going to happen?”

In exchange for bringing up Tori, he figured it'd be a pleasant trip; but he hadn't considered the risks, and came without a guide. Weed tried to rally his spirit that had plummeted to the ground.

‘What about my kingdom of gold.’

So far, he hasn't been lucky enough to relax, not even once. He had to overcome plenty of sufferings throughout his journey!

Though looking at the situation calmly, the pleasant trip to

Todeum may not be as it seems. Considering Tori's level, along with the time he have been serving directly under Bar Khan; building a 'good' relationship with a level 400 boss type monster under the duration of a year seems unlikely.

'Seems like it isn't as I thought. This place is extremely dangerous, and we're definitely not ready.'

If the monsters' here were nearing Tori's level, this would not be like any adventures before. The thought broke Weed's expectations and fantasies; from this point on, survivability is the highest priority.

The law of Toteum, the Kingdom of Vampires, is that even if you died just once, you'll be toss back into the world above.

This is considered as a heinous penalty, even prohibited on the Versailles continent. On the continent, you can die many times with no care about the banning; but here in the Kingdom of vampires, you only have once chance.

Due to the fact that your stature isn't like a vampire, a death in Toteum means an immediate spawn outside of the kingdom, total deportation. A difficult to obtain opportunity like this should not be wasted, since you don't know the proper quest line you're supposed to follow on Versailles continent.

Weed's eyes then became cool.

‘Whether it’s Toteum or anywhere else, I will not back down. MONEY! Gunna get me buncha money!’

Consider a big pot in a casino, a piled high shrine that reminds humans of their deepest desire, obsession for money; like a moth going toward a flame at the risk of survival, aiming for it is like foods for desires.

‘This is too much of risk if mobs were to come, a crisis will occur if this happens.’

Bubbling hopes.

However, these hopes will pop if Weed’s fear comes to pass. In Toteum, this crisis maybe averted if he was alone, but now he have a huge number of colleagues with him.

“Where are we and where to?”

“What about our way back?”

Geomchi⁴⁷⁵ and Geomchi⁵⁰³ manly voices seemingly shuddered.

Taken to a place in hopes to witness vampires, but arrived at some random place in which they were unfamiliar with. At this point in time, if they had seen a monster, they’d be too intimidated to fight. With an unknown quest or adventure while situated in an unfamiliar location, the feeling was like being a blind man being pushed into a river!

Not only the fear, but the confusion came along with it was a major crisis.

Though Weed had a simple solution to the problem.

“Lets eat!”

“Woohohoh!”

Hunger for a meal!

All craving for kimchi.

“Give me something delicious!”

“Love some sweets, like chocolate.”

“Whipcreams on them doesn’t hurt.”

“Who here don’t want some meat as well, hm?”

“A drink here don’t sound too bad.....”

Immediately the nervousness that once filled this party faded away; with happy expressions on their faces, they mimic plump-

faced pigs, each and every one of them. And as pigs, food was now the main topic. Though the teachers themselves didn't express their desires, their opinions didn't seem to differ. Geomchi³, Geomchi⁴, Geomchi⁵ seems pleased.

“What kind of food you're going to make?”

“The wait will be boring, but...gotta have patience for delicious foods.”

“Foods Drinks!”

“Wooo!!!”

Seechwi gave out a groan.

“Oh my God, if everyone were like these people, I'd be out of a job.”

All of her theses about psycho-analysis regarding the complexity of the human minds would be abandoned if all humans were as simple as the ones before her!

Falling into the depths of hell just to eat pork was not the way of human natures either!

But there were hopes amongst these hopeless-es that kept Seechwi from going insane. Pale, Zephyr, and Maylon were of the

general population, and were troubled by the situation.

Pale asked Zephyr in a serious demeanor.

“What are today’s meals?”

“Can the items we get in Todeum be use as ingredients?”

“Of course. Possibly.”

Hwaryeong clapped with absolute delight.

“Weed-nim is so good at cooking; we don’t have to worry about a thing.”

“.....”

Again, Seechwi was troubled.

‘They’re also not normal.’

As written on the POD before one enters the game. To go down in history as one of the heroes that bears the danger of exploring unknown territories, high Leadership is required:

Not giving in at the face of any crisis shows the will of the mind.

Unrivaled spirit.

Unsurpassed comradeships.

Having quick wits and being decisive.

It was even more essential to explore the Kingdom of Vampires. However, the conclusion drawn after watching Weed during the time was that it was difficult to match him to a heroic stature. Seechwi basically gave up and said.

“He’s leader probably because of the levels; but those Geomchis and I can probably match his levels!”

Seechwi, after all, was just another human.

After some time had elapsed, Weed brought out the dishes.

Zara Soup! (Turtle Soup)

They had brought enough ingredients before leaving Morata, just needed to cook them.

“The ingredients in this were Zaras, and this very dish represents growth. You know how you’re on all fours at night begging for it to ‘revive’ like a turtle, but when you look down and it was still shriveled like a turtle? This will completely revive the ‘VIGOR’ of a

man...keuheuheu!”

Weed began to sugarcoat the dishes before him. At the end of the appealing demonstration, a boisterous laugh!

Having been through a year as his class being a sculptor, he learned how to hype things up and a show of confidence was a must.

‘Being a cook is the same. The LAW - delicious food will become more delicious if you give them a taste beforehand.’

A vote of confidence from the chef was a must to heighten the experience.

“OHOHH yeah!”

All of the Geomchis rushed to get their Zara soup servings. While they should have kept in mind of the possibility of lacking ingredients for the future, they didn’t leave a single drop of soup leftover.

“Kkeoeok!”

“Awesome!”

They thoroughly enjoyed the soup. They each chow down 3 servings per person; even in a place such as the scary Kingdom of

Vampires did nothing to dampen their appetite. Especially when the words ‘reviving vigor’ were mentioned! Even though Pale and Zephyr didn’t discuss about it, they consumed the turtle soup diligently.

“Bon appetite...will not leave a single drop.”

Maylon was the next to be encouraged; thinking about women’s side, Weeds words were different.

“Similar to the turtle’s longevity, Zara Soup will stop the aging process of skin for 20 days.....”

“Please give me! Do it fast!”

“Plenty of it please, Weed-nim!”

Irene and Romuna interjected. Surka on the other hand was still too young to be bothered with skin care. Of course, no one knew whether the aging process would halt for 20 days if consumed, since it was pretty much impossible to tell otherwise. But taking care of oneself on any day of the year will be rewarded!

Even if you felt like you were duped, no point being unhappy over the situation. Since the girls spent so much time in Royal Road, using skin care products became a second priority; though the girls hesitated.

As if he saw through their doubts, Weed gave his words a final

nudge.

“Eat right after serve. It’s a must! Only then it’ll be effective...”

With that said, the girls devoured the foods greedily.

However, Mapan knew of a terrible fact behind this feast.

During the time shopping for food.

Although it was up to Mapan, as he was of the merchant class, to procure foods and handle the loads of shipments during the trip; it was up to Weed to decide on the ingredients since he was the cook most of the time and knew what to choose to obtain everyone’s shares.

“Are 17 Zaras good enough?”

Weed nodded deeply.

“Yes. Being advanced cooking materials, each one of them costs 3G(G=gold), so we don’t have the luxury of eating them as much as we want.”

“But considering the group we’re going with, are they enough for 500 plus people?”

“Possibly.”

“Even with Weed-nim’s cooking ability, I doubt serving 17 Zaras to this group along with Geomchi’s will be difficult.”

Making Zara Soup was not only difficult, acquiring enough to not leave anybody out was even more difficult.

Weed gave a weak laugh.

“Storing live Zaras will also be tough, maybe this amount is fine.”

“Yeah, will it be alright?”

“We will probably be ok on the first day in the Kingdom of Vampires, and eat them on the second. Depending whether we’ll face any danger along the way, but saving them for too long means the effectiveness of the Zaras will decrease.”

“So it’s best to buy a lot of Zaras.....”

“No.”

“Huh?”

“If we do that, what will we do with the extras we won’t eat?”

“.....”

Weed began preaching as if he were a professional chef.

“The profit margin of high class cuisine is excruciating! Making more than enough is not optimal, and investing too much in ingredients is not recommended. But which is worse, letting the Masters suffer the death penalty without the foods or making them pay 5G per meal?”

“No sir, those choices are too tough.”

The Geomchis group generally was very poor, due to the fact the money they've gathered were used to change weapons or was invested in gears. And rather than hunting mobs for items, they killed one and went onto the next immediately to become stronger without a care for drops. The thrill was in the hunt; the tougher the challenge, the more they enjoyed the game.

So for them to have enough to pay for foods was an ordeal in itself.

“Between death penalty and the Masters, best to have them eat; therefore, we should get an abundance of inexpensive ingredients that we can.”

“But we only have 17 Saras, meaning we're leaving a lot of people out to dry.”

“There maybe a way. Have the Pollock prices been dropping?”

“Hm? Their prices have dropped drastically from the original.”

“Get 2000(amount) worth. I’ll make Zara Soup with the Pollocks.”

“Wouldn’t their tastes be different?”

“Get as much spices, flavoring, and food coloring you can afford.”

Pretentious Zara Soup!

And its main ingredient was Pollack. Mapan’s eyes spun greatly, as his conscience suffered a damaging blow.

“I thought I’m not buying?” (spec im not involve in this)

Weed replied to dispel Mapan’s concern.

“There’s no such thing as an unfill part in a taiyaki.” (spec the moment we started talking about this, we were in cahoots.)

“.....”

*

The feast was finished, and the energy level of the party grew, primary due to the increased strength and vitality of Weed's cuisine; and the effects were heightened thanks to his advance stages in Dexterity. One can cook the foods from the recipes earned, but there wouldn't be a homemade feel to them. Crafting foods with any kind of tools wouldn't be a match to the base of every tool, the hands. Weeds made every part of the feast with his hands, down to the ingredients; and it was completely worth it from his party's perspective.

Irene came.

"I enjoyed Weed-nim's foods. But to make everything with your bare hands, is it a bother?"

"Doing so will make it more delicious."

Irene agreed. Weed even mixed the seasoning by hands. And it seems by doing so, the effects were even more spectacular.

Irene sheepishly said.

"But when was the last time you've washed your hands?"

Of course, the question was a joke, but Weed offered a serious answer.

“A month ago; or it could have been two. Well, I don’t really recall....”

“.....”

Irene, speechless, began shedding tears.

“Kkeoeoeok!”

“Zara Soup was delicious. Just as I had it before.”

“I want to eat this again some other time.”

“Now for the adventure.”

The innocent Geomchi rejoiced, while Mapan and Irene had a quiet conversation on the side.

“Mapan-nim, what other ingredients were made with the Zaras?”

“Well...actually, I traded in a lot of stuff we’ve collected and was still short.”

“We did give you our money.”

Pale interjected. He, along with Irene and Surka, handed Mapan their collected golds.

“In Weed-nim’s opinion regarding the products, he said to buy lots and turn them later for profits.”

“So you mean all of the money was used to get the ingredients? That’s too much for ingredients.”

“Yeah, they were cheap, but...”

“Where’d you get them?”

“In an alley.”

“An alley?”

Mapan paused for a moment, coming out of his hesitation, he said.

“It’s easier to believe they came from China...”

“Ahheuk!”

Irene flooded with tears.

Though the appearance of the dish seems appetizing, but

knowing the actual ingredients may put you off the foods for good. The materials they've obtained were nearing their expiration date! They basically got anything of grade 3 or grade 4 qualities at an extremely cheap price and threw them onto the wagon.

Nevertheless, the Saras amongst all other craps mixed in the dish left a desirable aftertaste, as if to wash the junks away.

“Finally after the meal, the adventure begins.”

Weed got everybody to gather in one place.

Seureureung.

Sounded as Geomchi409 drew his sword.

“Keuheuheu! Finally its time.”

Geomchi15 gave a boisterous laugh.

“Dirty vamps, ima cut you up.”

Geomchis eyes all changed. Wielded their blades nonchalantly, with absolutely no sign of jitters; their mindset have been switched on to respond to any situations.

High Fighting spirits!

No longer were they scared of stronger enemies. If one had come, they'd be honor to rush into the battle head on; such were they ways sword wielding Geomchis.

Zephyr silently nodded.

‘Weed did well putting his faith in these people.’

It was extremely dangerous in the Kingdom of Vampires; since this was a first for anybody, anything could happen will happen.

One major obstacle in this land!

They did not have prior information regarding this land; hence they'll have to solve everything without a helping hand. Forced to walk through this on their own, and there was no other choice; though they've been through this before in the Versailles Continent, where they had to adapt through trials and errors in order to grow. But a death in the Kingdom of Vampires meant an expulsion from this place. Commit no mistake, be highly alert, face all the risks, and need to cope in adversities.

Such were the policies the Geomchi lived by; they've been through many hardships and had hands-on experiences regarding situations like these. Rushes-in-head-first experts.

As if they've sensed the risks, the mood suddenly changed. From one member to the next, their aura amplified one another.

Land of the unknown.

Geomchis showed absolutely no fear!

Pale smiled.

“I’m also ready!”

Surka, too, clenched her fists.

“Lets get to it? I’m ready!”

Definitely a dangerous place; but having comrades to face the risks with will give one the confidence to get through! Similar to the adventure in Levias, they had absolute faith in each other.

Weed came toward Geomchi and said.

“We are probably in the land of vampires; since I do not know of what will happen, I hope master will take the reign and lead the group.”

Geomchi gently shook his head.

“I don’t know much about this place, so I will not understand the mobs’ characteristics. So I believe it’s best for you to lead. You

have various production skills that are absolutely necessary, so you stay back and conduct our movements.”

“But I don’t want to risk you all to suffer the death penalty...”

“No, it’s not for you to take the blame. It’s best to put those who knows even a little more than others to keep the most of us alive.”

Geomchi2 also lent a hand.

“It’s best if you take the command. Better you than any of us.”

Weed’s eyes went toward Geomchi3, Geomchi4, and Geomchi5.

“Are you guys willing as the Master, teachers?”

“Am.”

“Up to you.”

Geomchi5 gave a pat on Weed’s shoulder along with words of encouragement.

“We’re only here because we were invited by you. Don’t be drag down by the heavy burden on your own, ease your mind, child.”

Sincere encouragement in the face of the death penalty.

Weed examined Geomchi6 to Geomchi505 faces. All of the apprentices' stern faces gave a slight smile and nodded. Rather than greed for power, they devoted absolute loyalty toward the masters.

In Surka, Irene, and Romuna's viewpoint, this was a great scene showing the passion of men's heart.

“So cool.”

“I've grown fonder with them.”

“Having Geomchis-nim with us is really nice company.”

Though Seechwi viewed them from a different perspective.

‘Well, to get the five teachers to agree in exchange of delicious foods, then knowing the practitioners will follow the masters; not everyone is as creative as Weed.’

The other Geomchis had something quite different. Weed is one thing, but they were completely fearful of the teachers. During training they were forced to push past the human limitations every time, always near the brink of death everyday. If they had said anything, they feared they might suffer a quick and sudden death.

‘In the past after Geomchi3's death, we were forced to do

morning training everyday for three days straight; I hardly got a wink of sleep in...’

‘When Geomchi⁵ was killed by some worm, he came back and punch the crap out of it until you couldn’t tell who’s blood soaked his fists...and he went around dragging it’s carcass...’

‘Master Geomchi!! Ever since you’ve joined Royal Road, your moods have been getting better.....’

The other Geomchis regarded Weed leading the party was fortunate.

Weed turned to Pale.

“Pale-nim.”

“Yes.”

“Please go with Maylon-nim toward that hill to scout the surroundings. If you happen to encounter any mobs, do not engage and rush back to us.”

“Scanning only? Sure, will go now.”

Pale and Maylon headed toward the hill together. With the archer’s peripheral visions being higher than anyone, they can scan a wide range of space in a short amount of time. Pale and

Maylon returned.

“There are no monsters in this area, though the problem is that they maybe hiding from our sights...”

“What about the terrains?”

“The surrounding areas near the river are blocked by cliffs; so we can only go in one direction. There seems to be a small bridleway that-a-way.”

“Then let’s get on it.”

After Weed’s decision, the party moved along the road anxiously. After passing the woods, Geomchi turned toward Weed and asked.

“Weed, you’ve dealt with a lot of vampires before?”

“Yes, master.”

“What happens if you were bitten?”

“The vampires here aren’t similar to what we’ve heard. Mainly they drain your vitality and mana to replenish theirs, so we should exercise cautions.”

“Do they have any weakness?”

“They have high vitality and stamina, and their magic attacks are very strong. They don’t use weapons and agile like rats and insects; and they can also go on the offensive as bats.”

“That’s quite annoying.”

“Their defenses are also high, and the higher level vampires can use curse magic or stronger types of sorceries; it’d be big trouble if we encounter one and aren’t ready.”

“What are their other characteristics?”

“Unlike simple mobs such as beasts, trolls, and ogres, vampires have way higher intelligence; they can manage well enough and band together to form clans.”

“Keuheum! They can do that? I guess it’s best to keep our distance.”

“Yes.”

They walked for another 10 minutes or so. Then the red sky above them was masked by an innumerable amount of bats.

“Sign of vampires! As a reminder to not relax, vampires can change their forms to bats.”

Weed's words added extra tensions, he gripped his sword even tighter. They rode many vampire bats to make their ways toward Todeum, but the sight before them was way too much.

However, the bats did not attack.

Weed took some time to come up with a decision.

“Before we continue: if you see the bats, do not be the first to engage. Keep your arms up and to see whether or not they'll approach.”

The sky above them changed as the bats continued their ways onward, and scatted.

“Heuheuhew.”

Mapan let out a petite laugh. Though with that smile, sweats were running down his spine. He imagined what would have happened if the bats were to attacked; the sensation of them coming closer and closer, and drained the life out of you. Such vivid imagination!

‘A taste of the adventure, too.’

No one knew what will happen. Each step they took takes them closer and closer to a direct confrontation. He was so excited from the excitement of the adventure; as he was the first of the merchant class to leave the continent and facing the unknown

land!

Merchants, too, do enjoy the game.

“Keuheuheuheu.”

Geomchi9’s muscles tensed up. He was the biggest amongst all others in terms of size. After the intensive training he went through, the fats in his body turned into well-toned muscles. And he was itching for a fight; he hoped to bats to come close so he can test himself.

“Come on!”

Hand clenching his sword, he was ready for the moment! If the situation had changed, he would be ready to dance amongst the bats with his sword. And perhaps the other Geomchis had similar idea; but the bats did not come.

Though it would have been Romuna to be the first attack, as she was ready to cast her spells to attack them if the bats came into range; but they flew away.

Weed’s party continued as they were, passed the mountain ridges, and came before a sizable town. It consisted of hundred of luxurious residences, with large gardens and some with their own water fountains; the houses were more like villas than anything else. The roads were paved neatly and kept cleanly, while surrounding the town was a seemingly impenetrable wall.

Chapter 2: Seirun

Weed and his party cautiously continued forward, until the wall's gates were in sight. Next to the gate were men in white gloves that looked like guards.

Sharp teeth!

Paled face!

Draping black cape and so forth.

“The guards are vampires.”

Weed stopped at a distance.

“Shouldn't we attack?” Mapan asked a question that no one could answer.

Highly intelligent monsters that don't attack were very rare; the mobs that may not attack were herbivores, or those that lived in tree or such doesn't hold aggression as much; unless they were protecting their youngs!

But vampires were subtly different; maybe in some ways, they have emotions such as human beings. Weed took a step forward.

“Maybe I’ll get a dialogue with them. Let me have a word.”

“That could be dangerous...be careful, Weed-nim.”

Irene words were full of concerns. As soon as Weed finished, the always sunny Yurin also felt uneasy. But Weed, as it was his position, took the lead and embarked.

“Don’t worry. I’ll somehow avoid and make it back here alive.”

Faith and will power!

Though having his profession as a sculptor, his defenses were quite lacking; while the extent of the Kingdom of Vampires, Todeum, vampire guards were still unknown. But still, Weed fought against a clan of vampires before, and had to deal with Tori a bunch of times before; so much that he understood their laws and habits that he could use these to his advantage.

Geomchi5 approached from the side.

“I’ll go with. Cant let you brave the danger alone.”

“Yes, sahyeong(elder brother).”

Weed and Geomchi5 walked carefully step by step toward the vampire guards. Geomchi5 was completely trustworthy. Regardless of the differences in levels, he did not show fear to

monsters he have encountered. In this dead of night, they advanced forward, fully prepared; Geomchi suddenly asked.

“But Weed, why don’t we fight them? Whether its vampire bats or a village full of vampires, shouldn’t we just attack and destroy them?”

On Versailles continent, territories belonging to a race of monster were popular hunting grounds. An example would be the Goblins, the one with the Broadest Distribution, where many of them came together to build forts using the materials and land around them, namely woods. Goblin town or Goblin forts!

With that said, because of them, the nearby kingdoms productivity will be decreased. Usually then, the lords of those kingdoms would commission people to hunt down and destroy them. These opportunities not only will increase their reputations, but they get to keep all of the loots. But Weed had a different opinion.

“Maybe, but it’s too early to make a decision.”

“Too early?”

“Yes. We’re not even sure if we’ve arrived to the Kingdom of Vampires, right? However, starting a war with the vampires will do more harm than good.”

“I see. An unexpected brawl is something we don’t want after

coming this far.”

“War is the last option after everything else.”

“Yes, understood.”

Weed and Geomchi5 came up to the vampire guards.

“Halt!”

The vampire guards snarled while revealing their blade like fangs.

“The stench of unfamiliar bloods. Are you humans?”

“Yes.”

Weed said in a humble tone.

“What are humans doing on our land? This is where you can not enter. Return to whence you came from!”

“Leave now and I spare your blood.”

Though they didn't openly acted out their aggression, the vampire guards were still very hostile. At this point, adventurers would usually back away or choose to fight against the guards. The

typical cases, though Weed was different.

“The weather here is a good one! The bats can fly high in the sky freely, hunting down the crawling vermin on the ground.”

“I understand what you’re talking about, human.”

“I agreed.”

The guard showed a slight reaction.

“And truly to your names as the lords of the night, the clothing you wear is really luxurious; full of elegance and cordial. Donning a white shirt, setting contrast to the black pants and the cape. Ah! Is that the Cloak of Darkness?! I’m honored to see such an exquisite item.”

Weed fussed over their outfits.

Seems like the vampire was a race of clothes lovers, whom had shown lots of considerations toward their outer appearance; the vampire guard on the left voice seemed to soften after hearing the compliments.

“Take a photo, it’ll last longer.”

Though the right guard still had his Battle Stance up and seemingly will rush in at any moment. Weed could show the same

amount of interest in the other guard, but they might notice the lies if he had switch from one to another. Seeing how the Intimacy level only rose slightly, there was still a huge risk of them becoming aggressive. Weed then pulled out a carving knife.

The right guard asked.

“What are you going to do?”

“I’m going to give you two gifts.”

“Gifts?”

“Yes, I’m going to craft something, I’d be delighted if you accept.”

Weed then pulled out a piece of Nabemok (some sort of crafting material?)

There were a variety of ways to increase intimacy. Having a silver-tongue to hoist someone’s ego was the simplest way, but it’s effective immediately and works only for a while, and will stop working after a certain point.

However, in order to raise familiarity to a higher point and maintain it, one had to act appropriately according to the person-your-sucking-up-to’s personalities; furthermore, doing quests with that person or saw through some sort of trial with each other increases trust, hence forth higher status of intimacy.

But there was a simpler way.

‘Give them gifts!’

Weed continued trimming down the Nabemok.

‘Vampires like pretty girls.’

He could sculpt Seoyoon. Seemingly in her early 20s, her skin matched those at the age of 10 in terms of smoothness and tenderness, a beauty that defied the laws of aging. However, to sculpt Seoyoon was immensely difficult; to achieve the same level of beauty meant to not make a single mistake while crafting.

If the Heavens were to grant a human with something on the line of absolute beauty, it was not an exaggeration to say Seoyoon was the recipient of that reward; so to truly mimic that level of beauty was not possible. What more, to willingly passing that finished product to vampires was too hard to bear.

‘Though...it was confirmed that vampires prefer little girls.’

Weed recalled the time he freed the town Morata. Something that quenched the blood-thirsty vampire, Tori, for a whole decade was a statue of an unfortunate girl!

The flower-garden-loving innocent type of girls, one that

flounder about on the bed of grass. Weed made his decision and began to sculpt. He moved his hand expertly with the carving knife as he was with his mastery of the sword, and he finished the sculpture in a flash.

“This is a gift.”

“A Lovely gift.....! We’re whom who appreciates fine arts; and this girl here is truly to our liking.”

The guards were thrilled. Loving girls is a main characteristic of vampires! (*for any guy really -.-*)

“Are you of the sculptor class?”

“Yes.”

“We nobles of the night never had the chance to mingle with an engraver before, so you may come in. Many of us would love the opportunity to enjoy your works.”

Ttiring!

Access of vampire village Seirun have been granted

Weed returned and told his colleagues that flattery and gifts will get the vampire guards to grant permission to enter.

“Soo handsome.”

“Valiant.”

“Truly the lords of the night!”

Pale, Zephyr, and Mapan obsequiously used painted words to impress. Then, came the gifts.

“This here is a tail obtained from a water buffalo.”

“This ring is a loot I got from hunting.”

“Jewelry. Hehe.”

They pretty much bribed and suck up to the guards until they got permission to enter.

“You guys are alright. OK, go! Though do not raise any trouble, else we’ll kick you out.”

As for Maylon, Romuna, Surka, and Yurin, they were allowed to pass without getting screened at all.

“The more pretty girls, the better..PASS!”

Their faces hardened a little bit when it came to Irene.

“I feel unpleasant. Do you believe in God? Well, no matter. We were not condemned. Rather than the boisterous lives of the day, we enjoy the serenity of the night, like it is the source of life. But girl, watch yourself when you’re in the village. Do not use your Holy power, else we will not be held accountable for what happens to you and your friends.”

Though the bore their fangs at her, she was still allowed to pass with a warning.

“You cannot come in!”

However, they firmly opposed Seechwi. Orcs are inferior creatures! Seeing how they viewed themselves as nobles, the vampires wouldn’t allow something that doesn’t match their standards to roam their streets.

“Chwiik chwwik! Come on.”

The eyes of the guards remained indifferent toward Seechwi’s begging.

“Our village is not a place where you Orcs can set foot in!”

Now. Geomchis’ turns.

“Well, it’s simple. Do what we saw, make a few gestures here and

there.”

“Yeah, well, yes, but.....”

“Wait and pay attention. You guys, I’ll start first.”

Geomchi5 decided to be the first to advance toward the guards.

“Hi guys, you don’t need to stand here!”

“Huh, what? What did you say?”

The guards forehead furrowed.

“With faces like yours, you’ll keep everyone away for miles...”

“Shits are spewing out of this dirty human’s mouth!”

“WHA? You undead bastards!”

Geomchi5 was a moment away from going to war with the guards.

“Don’t do it!”

“Please no.”

It took Weed and Zephyr a while to settle the situation. Then it was Geomchi3's turn.

“Take notice on what I do.”

Weed was overcome with anxiety, but figured what the heck. Since Geomchi5 method failed, he figured Geomchi3 might have learned something, hence him proceeding forward.

“Human, do not enter.”

The guards blocked him.

“Mhmm, keep up the excellent work.”

Geomchi3 patted the guard's shoulder as he tries to pass.

“Human. You are not allowed to come in.”

“Uh-huh, whatever.”

“A lowly human like you fools do not have the permission to enter. Turn around, unless you want to die!”

“What? Die.....”

The guards gotten more aggressive than before, Weed and Zephyr stepped in again to calm them down. Quietly watching the situation, Mapan said in a serious demeanor.

“I don’t think they can go into town, what can we do?”

Not a single Geomchis was allowed to pass was a major crisis.

“Sahyeongs! Isn’t it better to show them a little bit of flattery to be allowed into the village?”

Weeds words of persuasion did not work. Even the cool-minded Geomchi2 sneered at the thought of sucking up to a bunch of vampires."

“I have a man’s pride! I’m not gunna bow to down to a monster like that or any kind of them.”

Geomchi2 coolly declared. Geomchi3 and Geomchi5 had the same opinion; and all of the practitioners regarded the vampires with the same mindset.

“This is so troublesome...,” Weed hesitantly spoke, “what about learning how to carve from me?”

Weed’s carving skills had advanced to such a level that he could teach others now to sculpt. Seeing how vampires love arts, if Geomchis offered the sculptures similar to their statures as human beings, they might be allowed to enter the village.

“Carving? Do we really have to?”

Geomchi2 replied in an annoyed tone.

“Yes. Beautiful sculptures are good to get girls, and it can be just a side hobby.”

“Really? Only need to know just a bit to attract girls as well as getting in? Might as well?”

Horrid reason for Geomchi2 to began learning, though he was good to go. Weed pulled out a carving knife and commenced trimming a nearby bush in pretense of a lesson.

“There you go. As soon as you finish carving this ‘sculpture,’ I’ll be able to pass you.”

Geomchi2 and the instructors, along with all the practitioners of the school were talented with the swords. While also similarly adequate with smaller weapons, they finished carving the simple “sculpture.”

Ttiring!

Wisdom is too low, cannot learn sculpting

Weed was stupefied. How low can their Wisdom be to make them

unable to learn the skill?

“Sahyeong, mind telling me how much Wisdom you have?”

“Well, let’s see... It’s 8.”

“.....”

Geomchi₃ shined...even worse.

“I’m at 6?”

Geomchi₄ too, was formidable...

“I’m 5.”

Some other practitioners were severely low.

“I must be as impressive as the teachers. I’m at 3.”

As low as 3! Weed couldn’t believe the situation.

“Didn’t you begin with 10 Wisdom when you start out?”

Sculpting didn’t require high stats on Wisdom similarly to something like magic, one only need to be at the basic level in

order to acquire it; but the Geomchis didn't even meet the basic requirement on the stat. Geomchi3 mouth opened as if he realized something.

“Oh, I may know why. Our intelligence got reduced.”

“.....”

“No, Weed, that's not what I meant... Initially, we started out at 10; and the former job before martial artists, we reached as much as 60.”

Weed nodded his head. Stats rising in the earlier days were a common phenomenon. If they had fought and beat the Basic Training Center, they can choose to get the specialized job as Martial Artists, which also meant some level of Wisdom was required to change jobs.

“And why do you think wisdom got decreased?”

“I think it was due to the fact we repeatedly hunted and grinded while using the same skill; we spammed it for a few days and our Wisdom got progressively smaller. Though during hunting, on the other hand, it's not like reduced Wisdom can do anything against monsters.”

“I see.”

Simplistic repetition and Wisdom got decreased. Weed too, was

just like them; but he learned various skills here and there. Having sculpting as base, there was fishing, cooking, repairing, blacksmithing, sewing, and collecting and taking advantages of herbs.

Geomchis, however, limited themselves only with skills that can be utilized in battles; they gradually fought and honed their skills, while completely neglected the decreasing Wisdom along the way.

Simple ignorance!

This situation was not only the revelation of their stats, but also their characteristics as well. Weed carefully advised them.

“If your Wisdom is too low, you won’t be able to learn new skills when a situation arises that requires you to do so. So you better increase your Wisdom before entering the town.”

“Yes, it seems we better do that.”

Anyhow, since they can’t learn sculpture, their chances of entering the town were pretty much spoiled.

“Hunt the nearby surrounding area until you level, and invest all the stat points earned into Wisdom, then you’ll be able to learn the skill.”

Weed had no faith in this plan even though he came up with it. The Geomchis were an arrogant and prideful bunch...whom all

shot up to a stand still all at once.

Through the opened village gates, the streetlights inside were lightening up. As the night descended deeper and deeper into the darkness, the once empty streets of the town became animated as every doors flung open and vampires emerge. It seems as if vampires became active at night. Female voices rung from the market streets.

“Buy an apple!”

“Selling apples as sweet as honey here.”

Female vampires were selling apples on the market square. Immaculately white skin and straight nose, they had a slender build. However, this was something that cannot be viewed in normal senses. Slim waistline along with a sizzling bodies of the vampires was unlike the pure and innocent girls!

“Koeheok!”

“Th...the land of dreams, man.....”

Geomchi₃ and Geomchi₄ body shuddered. From Geomchi₅ to Geomchi₅₀₅ swiftly rushed toward the light, with Geomchi leading the herd.

“Brother guards!”

“.....”

“We’re willing to serve, what would you like? Maybe something like a back massage?”

“You can even take our barley breads that we use sparingly.....”

Chapter 3: Quest

Though the Geomchis had absolutely no ability to flatter, the vampires were heart-struck by their desperations. The guards gave them a simple quest.

“A bunch of healthy humans; it would have been better if they were females, but this is a huge source of fresh blood. We’re tired vampires have exhausted our lifeblood.”

Ttiring!

Quench the Vampires’ thirst.

The guards’ livers have been grumbling since they’ve been working hard protecting the town, and have accumulated a huge amount of fatigue. The rumbling meant needs for extra blood. Fresh, healthy human blood.

Difficulty: E

Quest limit: Only available until the Vampires’ vitality been refilled.

Needless to say, they all accepted without a single rejection. The guards plunged their fangs into Geomchis’ nape of the neck.

Juuuuuuk!

Bitten by a Vampire.

Power was reduced.

Vitality continues to declines.

Burning at the nape!

Geomchis lined up systematically to give blood in order to get into town, and none bore any grudge toward the vampires.

“Iyahh, its only blood...”

“I’d do it a hundred times over for the ladies without an ounce of regret.”

Pale and Zephyr were enlightened.

‘I will be better toward Maylon.’

‘I don’t want to be like that at all; men being so transparently needy of women.’

The extreme playboy Zephyr had a major epiphany. For he who was able to get girls as easily as he was with fishing, he realized

that the road he was on would eventually leads to futility.

‘And I travel with some pretty nice girls.’

Zephyr glimpsed around at his party members. Irene was simply kind by nature, she never as so much as used curse words toward anyone. Though occasionally quite feisty, the easygoing Romyuna knew how to have fun.

The young and childlike Surka was cute, while the alluring Hwaryeong was the complete opposite. Her dances were the first instances of her charms; then sometimes when she was in the mood, she’d sit on a rock and starts to sing, one of the crucial factors that made the adventures more enjoyable.

She was amazingly well-rounded! But Zephyr digressed, since Hwaryeong eyes no other but Weed.

‘But he doesn’t even realize it.’

Though Hwaryeong did not openly express it, anyone else could have easily guessed. Anything Weed cooked was simply delicious to her. Even if he had served something as simple as a bowl of soup along with a piece of bread, she wouldn’t voice a complaint.

Each and every time, she’d never miss a chance to say thank you nor leave her meal unfinished. Even now she’d actively stealing glances from his side; this act was downright without a doubt from a woman in love!

Though Weed's mind was mainly preoccupied by money and his worrisome face reflected that fact, the atmosphere set by the two could catch the attention of any onlookers.

Maylon was Pale's girlfriend, and Yurin was Weed's younger sister. Yurin was very appealing. Zephyr sneaked a peak at her trying to catch her smiling; but he shook his head.

'No no. Absolutely not her!'

Never try to get close to her unless you wanted to drastically decrease your likelihood of living!

'The antagonistic families of Romeo and Juliet weren't so bad.'

Perhaps even the Geomchis feared the trouble they'll face for liking her.

In the meantime, the Geomchis "donations" to the vampires were almost over, as there was a huge number of stumbling Geomchis. As their vitality and power were being exhausted, the guards were overflowing with vigor. Even their naturally pale faces blushed, and their canines were lined with crimsons.

To their nature, the vampires became more robust after they drank blood; still, the guards were less than enthusiastic when the Orc Seechwi stepped up.

“Do not want to taste orc’s blood.”

“.....”

“You’re not coming into town.”

Those words wounded Seechwi’s feelings. Then Geomchi2 stepped in.

“May I offer my blood on behalf of Seechwi?”

The guard perched with interest.

“More human blood? Good, I’ll take my fill.”

Second time Geomchi2 offered his blood to the vampires. Seechwi voiced.

“Chwiik! Geomchi2 nim.”

Seechwi’s eyes were lined with tears. After Geomchi2 finished, Seechwi became his pillar of support since he was completely overwhelmed with fatigue. An obese Orc assisting a sturdy human!

After that, every party members gained permission to enter Seirun.

The first to discover Seirun village.

Rewards:

+180 Reputation

For discovering a village in an unexplored region, the quest rewards from this village will be 2x for a week.

The benefits of being the first discoverers!

Weed's face was widened with a satisfied smile.

“2x.....”

Doubled the rewards from questing. Furthermore, there were substantially more benefits undisclosed. Besides being the first discoverers here, they were bound to be the first discoverers in the Kingdom of Vampires, Toteum; that meant the loots and EXP from hunting there will also yield 2x. Pale and Irene, too, were delighted.

“Gained reputation.”

“It's a good thing.”

Weed quickened his steps entering the village.

“Let’s go.”

But everybody else was hesitant; after all, they’re the first to enter a village full of vampires! This was a completely new land, not of the Versailles continent. They were impressed and excited into frozen stiffs at the entrance of the village. Especially Maylon, from the second she settled her sights toward the vampire village. Beautifully built homes in the forms of villas, and cape wearing vampires roaming the streets were intoxicating.

‘Well, exotics are parts of the adventures too.’

She did not know where to begin. Then Mapan bellowed.

“Yeah. C’mon!”

Yurin too, considered this was a great prospect. Painters such as herself traveled in order to visit cities and view landscapes with the intention to paint to increase their skill’s mastery. Therefore, the newly discovered Seirun village provided her an opportunity to paint dozens of pictures.

Weed and Mapan entered the town together and made their way toward the stores. They needed to dispose of some of the imported goods they bought from Morata, not to mention checking on new equipments and obtaining maps of the town. Mapan got the pricings from various owners regarding loots and let out a scream of joy.

“They’re selling rubies and sapphires and jewelries at very expensive prices. Furs and rugs too!”

“YES!”

Weed was more delighted than usual. (*evil hint*)

“You’re so lucky, Mapan-nim.”

“Hope you reap a huge profit as well.”

Pale and Surka handed out the congratulations. Though he hadn’t done anything yet, Mapan felt as if he’ll reap a huge return; yet he viewed Weed in suspense.

‘It’s all thanks to Weed-nim that brought me here.’

Back on the continent, Mapan did well selling stuff also, but he did not have a large profit margin nor were his items guaranteed to sell. But here, an unexplored region along with a town full of vampires!

Being the first to sell goods in this village meant he’d be able to receive the special treatment of reaping an extra 20-30 percent in addition to the selling price. Not many merchant can have a chance like that. But Weed’s face showed no hint of envy at all as he handed Mapan the opportunity; in fact, the smile he built

simply mimic that of a baby who was in bliss.

Pale nodded his head.

‘I knew it! Weed-nim is a good man.’

The shameful Surka wanted to go somewhere to hide.

“I guess I misunderstood Weed-nim. I should broaden my interpretation wider like the seas that embraces everything, rather than judging something over just one instant.”

So Weed was still smiling and glowing without creasing a single wrinkle, told Mapan.

“Mapan-nim, please let’s go sell your stuff.”

“You think so?”

“Yes. You should grab hold of this opportunity as the values here are more than the original.”

Mapan came up to a trading post and began to negotiate. The owner of it was of course a vampire.

“I brought some pretty jewelry here with me; ohh Mr. merchant, and I just want to sell them,” Mapan pulled out ten rolls of furs,

five stacks of rugs, along with three gems, “what are your offers?”

“250,000G. Nah, no. Stuff like these goes for 270,000G.”

“Ahh I’m sorry. That price is lower than expected.”

“Damn! Don’t go! On second thought, I’m able to pay as much as 303,000G for them.”

1st stage bargaining succeeded.

If you decide to sell goods, all merchant skills will rise with +2.3% each.

Mapan swallowed his saliva. The costs of purchasing these goods totaled only to 110,000G! The offer he just got was nothing more than a jackpot, made more than twice the gold he paid for. But Mapan greed decided for him.

“Though that may sound like a decent price; but to me, I prefer to go elsewhere.....”

The vampire built a long face. Mapan, who was also in the trade of deceiving, hinted a leaving gesture. The conflicted vampire suggested.

“This is a gesture out of the kindness of my heart. 368,000G. I’m sure you’d show the same kind of gestures when you’re out to

purchase goods. I do not care for how much you purchased them for where you were, but I can not go any higher.”

2nd stage bargaining succeeded.

If you decide to sell goods, all merchant skills will rise with +6.2% each.

Mapan mouth widened and remained open for a while, he himself couldn't believe the jackpot he just hit.

“You don't want to sell at this price?”

“Ohh, sorry. I'll sell.”

Mapan handed over the goods he brought.

Ttiring!

Obtained massive profits via trading, +630 Reputation.

Accounting skill have risen to Intermediate - lvl. 6.

Chances increases when negotiating on prices to tip to your favors. Will be able to take advantage of 7 gullible players.

A moment where a merchant triumphs!

70% of his goods remained after the sale; for Mapan feared the prices might drop if he had sold them in bulk. Therefore, he planned to sell a few more things, and save the rest to be disposed of at the Kingdom of Vampire Toteum. Some vampires chattered from a distance.

“That human Mapan just earned a great fortune; it’s a topic amongst those humans.”

“Which one is this Mapan? I hope he’ll pass by right in from of me. What I’ll do if he did? I’d just drag him to some alley and sink my teeth into his nape...”

Jackpot in trading!

Mapan accumulated a huge amount of profits, and Weed handed out his congratulations.

“Very nice.”

“It’s all thanks to Weed-nim.”

“Nah. I’m pleased to see you do well.”

Weed was very happy; the joy came from his position as the Lord of Morata. Not too long ago Mapan registered himself as a resident of Morata, and facilitated his trading practices in the North as a

citizen of Morata. As a result, he was subjected to Morata's tax rate, something that's even more fearsome than a bloodcurdling dragon! (*Weed's way of thinking -.-*) Merchants had to pay 3% of their revenue by means of taxation; and as Mapan reaped roughly 360,000G, he'd had to pay Morata more than 10,000G via tax.

Main reason for taxes!

‘Taxes can also be good for something after all.’

The reason why Weed was more pleased than usual.

They made their way toward the weapon shop afterward, of course, they also planned to sink their snake-like fangs at the weapon shop too! They boldly declared their intentions in the face of the thick-fanged male vampire owner.

“Hey buddy. Can we see your weapon inventory? Unfortunate, we can't use true vampire's weapons; so can we see a few we can use? Things like elegant equipments: rings and such, or precious armors we'd love to see.”

The vampires did not use weapons such as swords etc., so there were little of those metallic gears. But there were gloves that absorb bloods, belts that summons dark beings, and capes that induces delirium and forced apparitions(see ghosts); these weapons were truly to the nature of vampires. Among these Hwaryeong found a dress.

“Wait. Take a look at that dress.”

Golden flows on a crimson dress, an eye catcher. A view from the side, one could tell from the abdomen area up to the chests, there was little to none. A difficult dress to get into if one weren't in shape. However, Hwaryeong experienced harsher dresses while she was doing concerts.

“What do you think about it?”

She asked Weed for feedbacks. Seeing how he had achieved the intermediate stages on sewing, she wanted a second opinion. But of course, that's not the main reason why.

“It's amazing.”

“Also pretty?”

“Yes. The fabrics used to make the dress weren't used sparingly. From the materials, he could have made two dresses; I would have done so to make more money! Too bad I haven't leveled to a stage to handle those kinds of materials yet.”

Weed was in deep thoughts staring at the dress, why don't people use their minds when it comes to these things! Usually regarding these clothes, they'd be hard to sell. The more revealing the clothes the more lackluster it is when it comes to defense; but he couldn't have fathomed the dancer's needs for appearance and charms.

“Would that dress go well with me?”

“Well...the price is also important.”

“Would I be prettier wearing it?”

Weed thought for a while then nodded.

“I think you’ll be beautiful.”

“Thank you. Hey Mapan-nim, please buy that dress in my stead.”

The merchant Mapan used his skills to bargain for a price on the dress, still it came out to be at 148,000G; but Hwaryeong didn’t considered it as expensive.

“Cheap.”

At this point, one would considered this was a slip of the tongue; but it wasn’t so to her.

The expensive dress itself wasn’t the problem; in fact, for her levels and her profession as a dancer, there was a major factor she knowingly overlooked when she paid 140,000G for the dress.

‘Weed didn’t even address nor did he check the stats on the dress

and I snatched it only because he said I'd be beautiful in it.'

It wasn't logical, decided to pay for the dress before asking about it!

Fortunately, the crimson dress enhanced her dancer skills by giving her a boost in agility and grace. Hwaryeong, in the dress, was able to show off more of her charms; the coverage was lower than before, but she in no means looked vulgar in it. Her exposed well-toned exercised figure did not take away any of her cultured charms. Comparing to the colorful dress, Hwaryeong was lovelier; the face full of confidence and the eyes full of magnetism would catch anyone's sight; truly a Fairy of the Stage. (*what her fans calls her?*)

"Beautiful, eonni(elder sister, term of endearment toward one of not blood relations)!

Surka commented first. For her age, she looks up to beautiful women. The commotion went on for awhile, and they all left after they finished checking out the weapons.

Next, they visited general stores that sell basic necessities for journeys, though the ones they saw were seemingly useless. Weed had no intention to buy anything however; as the lord of Morata, he invested all of his money into its development for further exploitation.

'Use money to make even more money.'

Weed was far from mindlessly spending his money on impulse; nonetheless he was here in search for something. While in thought, the approaching vampiric owner revealed his fangs, and Weed immediately spun around!

“Kueaaa!”

The owner had his mouth opened as he loomed toward Weed, who’s reaction was as fast as the wind and turned around, forcing the vampire to close his mouth. The owner was smacking his lips as if he wanted something enticing.

“Humhum, it’s a shame that you noticed, been a while since I’ve tasted human blood. So what is it that you want?”

As the reason why he visited the shop when he wanted to buy nothing, Weed entered to obtain information.

“I’m a sculptor that’s looking for something to inscribe.”

“Sculptor? Have you tried Todeum yet? This is just a small village in comparison. There was a rumor that Toduem had something that can be viewed as inspirational to sculptors, though it wasn’t confirmed.”

“What is the relationship between this town and Totuem?”

“Here’s just a small town, a serene place where vampires escaped the hustle and bustle of a city. Toduem is a few days due east if you

wanted to go, though I do not recommend it; there are more rumors about it becoming more dangerous.”

According to the vampire owner, Seirun was kind of a town where beginners began.

‘I don’t think Todeum is a good place for the weak.’

After that, they started to collect and authenticate the information acquired from vampires.

“Seirun? You’re asking where the town got its name? It’s the name of one of our three moons: Pallun, Gorun, and Seirun. The vampire queen of the nobles of the night belonging to Todeum also carried the same name. She’s also very beautiful; if she asked, I would gladly pull and dedicate my human heart if I was one.”

“A tip to you human tourists, avoid the alley at night. It’s a place where many humans were drained of their bloods, so never accept their advances.”

“You really want to know about Todeum? It was originally where the dead were put to rest, a cemetery if you will. But for some reason, they rose from their slumber and began to seek out blood. And now, it has become a city for nobilities of the night. Join with the living beings? Why would the Nobles do something that relinquishes their prominence!?”

“The land of vampires is different from human’s. The dead are

sent above to the ground for one. What about their belongings? We vampires just put it with them as we have no need for human's belongings. Though, antiques and jewelries occasionally could occasionally be 'misplaced.'"

"Tsk! Damn younglings vampires these days. I had them agreed not to search of the golden vampire bat....."

"I didn't do that when I was a kid. Sometimes they don't even make it back by the break of dawn the next day; I hope nothing had happened to them."

"The pride of our town? We have a lot of pretty sexy vampire gir...keuheum! Go somewhere else and leave me be."

The adult vampires on the street!

There was a huge difference in the generation gap, the younglings were literally garbage. Weed saw and talked to a few of them.

"You're human? Do you want to ride something that makes your blood pumps? Ok, that's great! Have you seen the scenery from the alleyway? That's where everything seems the most majestic. If you want to go, I can guide you there and....."

"Female vampires, they talk so much it's incredible. The Jakkuman clan seems to have disappeared, whether it's true or not doesn't really matter to me though."

“The rumor in Seirun is that the vampire queen of the same name is the most beautiful, but I haven’t seen her. Wonder where she is.”

The Geomchis have long separated from the group as the only they occupied their mind were the female vampires selling apples, now eating apples they purchased. Occasionally, they’d throw their fists in the air or pointed thumbs out while screaming loudly.

“Vampire Kingdom Hurrah!!”

“Long live all the vampires!”

“Keuheuk! Good thing we came here. Thanks. Weed.”

Geomchis were making a scene!

Geomchi2, Geomchi3, Geomchi4 were truly enjoying themselves, while Geomchi and Geomchi5 were stuffing themselves with apples. Seirun was considered as a haven to these old bachelors. They would flex their muscles or smile whenever they were dealing with the female vampires.

“Bon appetite. Thankyou for your patronage.”

“Not a problem. Do you have more like these.....”

“Thank you.”

The female vampires hung on both of his arms as a reward.

“Euheoheoheoheo.”

Like a male student getting touched!

“Worth every penny!”

Geomchi3 notice his master.

“Master! Use the money we saved up!”

“Roger, disciple! Keep up eating! Buy some more!”

Geomchi’s money drastically reduced; knowing that all were going toward the local beauties, he still didn’t mind. He could hunt again to raise more money, there was no hesitation because living an impoverished lifestyle for a day or two didn’t really matter to him.

And for some reason, their behaviors elevated the female vampires liking towards them, as one of them tugged on Geomchi3’s arm.

“Please help us.”

“Yes? What can I do for you.....would you like me to buy more apples?”

“There were those who were trying to capture then kill us, please slay them.”

The worrisome words from the tearful female vampires; the sight burned its place in Geomchi3’s heart.

“No, those lousy fools! Where the hell are they? Take me to them punks immediately.....”

“We’ll guide you. Come with us.”

While Weed and his party were gathering information and find out which quests were good to obtain, Geomchi3 rushed in hastily.

“Weed!”

“Yes?”

“I think we found a quest.”

“Tell me when and how?”

“We were buying apples from girls and they told me.”

They were vampires!

Though classified more so as monsters than humans; in Geomchis' eyes, they were simply women.

“What about the compensations and difficulty level?”

“I don't know. It's something regarding the Jakkuman somewhere, I thought you might have an idea.”

“Take me there.”

Weed, along with his party, rushed toward the female vampires, and caught sight of the Geomchis surrounding them.

“Weed hurry. This lady said she'd guide us; we're to rescue her friend as soon as possible.”

Geomchi2 said with urgency, and poised ready to do. However, Weed was sharp, he turned to that female vampire.

“Tell us where you want us to follow?”

“I'll show you directly.”

The vampire shot a reply bluntly. Weed did not believe her or the

vampire race, figured they've used this lie plenty! Full of greed and envy, the jealousy filled vampires loved to produce crisis based on their lies; the most incredible creature on land were the vampires. Weed stated.

“If it's true that your friend's in danger, would you swear to the Blood Oath to authenticate?”

Blood Oath.

The blood being the source of the vampire's life, and they could not lie once they swore to it. Weed found out about this fact when he dealt with the vampire clan Jinhyeol.

‘If she's lying, she'll ignore and pretend not to know of it.’

Contrary to what he expected, the female vampire nodded.

“Yes! I, the vampire Minorue, under my sacred blood, I swear I am not luring the humans to a trap.”

“Let's go.”

Weed and his party followed the vampire Minorue as she led them toward the plain behind the village. Navigating through the plain they encountered a spacious field with many divided paths; then after passing the vast grassland, a village came into view.

Surprisingly, the village was inhabited by human beings!

Fences rose surrounding the village acted as a barrier, while knights and priests remained on the lookout.

Minorue sorrowfully said.

“This gathering of human fanatics has been plaguing us.”

“And they have something to do with Roselin’s disappearances?”

“Yes. They foolishly believed in their god. They continued to kidnap young members of our clan every night and burn them at the stake. Take a closer look over there.”

Minorue pointed her finger toward a place near the main entrance of the village where pillars of stakes were erected. The vampires were suspended by ropes tied to a cross; while beneath them, woods, oils, and such materials were accumulated.

“My friend Roselin is supposed to be burn tonight, please expel all of the fanatics gathered there and save my friend.”

Ttiring!

Vampire rescue.

The threats from a religious cult, priests and paladins are amongst them! We could not drink their blood because they were armed with pious; they blessed their lands so that we could not approach them.

We were playing when they attacked us, and claimed it was in the name of justice and duty when they captured Roselin. However, they're going to pay dearly for going after our queen.

Difficulty: B

Rewards:

Potions of vampires.

Roselin cursed doll.

Quest limit:

3 months between the date Roselin was captured till the date she'd burned at the stake, quest will fail at the moment of her death.

A very unusual quest!

A quest commissioned by a vampire. Weed was relatively hesitant at the thought of fighting against humans, but the Geomchis had already decided.

“There’s a woman named Roselin tied up?!”

“Ima help a babe like that!”

“Sure. No other choice for us men!”

“Don’t worry, we’ll help.”

A sight at Roselin’s face, the vampire queen, Geomchis helplessly accepted the quest; while Weed also reluctantly accepts.

“Roselin will be rescued.”

-You have accepted the quest.

-15 Faith.

-200 Reputation.

-3 Luck.

+15 Attractiveness.

Tendencies slightly lean toward wickedness.

Chapter 4: Roselyn Rescue Mission

Accepting the commissioned quest was simple enough, regardless of the multiple stats change; not surprising considering the request came from a vampire.

“Wah! Reputation dropped.”

After Weed had accepted the quest, Surka bellowed; while the remaining other people shown vexed expressions. Gaining fame was a tough road; one could be grinding mobs or repeating the same quests for weeks or so to raise 200 Reputations.

There were also the declines of Faith and Luck, but the amounts were laughable comparing to Reputation. And since the Reputation had a direct correlation to the quests one may takes, while acquiring 2nd job, and 3rd job also required a certain amount of rep, the loss was quite huge.

Geomchi seriously inquired.

“Weed.”

“Yes?”

“If this continues to be the case, what would happen if our REP hits zero?”

Though Geomchis' reputations were not terribly high, the resulted loss still wasn't that big of a problem. In fact, Weed concluded that there would be some kind of penalty when accepting the quest.

'A level B quest offered without doing familiarity works such as quests beforehand, so the loss in fame in the land of vampires isn't a significant problem.'

Originally Weed was going to tell them the damages were not a big deal, but he decided to say something casually to prevent them from accepting fraudulent offers.

"Well, Weapon shops aren't going to sell us good weapons."

"Why?"

"They'll say the no-REP and anonymous doesn't deserve good weapons."

"....."

Geomchi's greed for good weapons would not lose to anyone; so in actuality, the fact that he might not be able to purchase good weapons to further his arsenal caused him considerable sadness. Geomchi₃ then asked.

"But that doesn't mean our only option was to buy them from weapon shops. Can't we just order blacksmiths to make them

directly?”

“Problem is blacksmiths will be even more difficult since they got more pride; since they make their weapons on their own, they want to put them in the hands of celebrities. And if our fame falls while those prices rise, it’ll be even harder.”

Geomchi3 forced a smile.

“We’ll probably be able to endure it.”

They can still buy weapons through Weed or Mapan.

To have blacksmiths to create custom-made weapons uniquely matches their personal preferences would be great, but not a primary concern. Also, blacksmiths can be bought at a premium price if they had truly desire to create their personal gears.

Weed, again, tried to make it a big deal.

“Will also be tricky if you want to enter a restaurant.”

“Wh...why’s that?”

“A reputable restaurant isn’t going to let just anyone in.”

“Euheuheuk.”

Geomchi3 agonized over it.

The need to suppress his appetite was a long and insufferably painful road. In fact, the foods in Royal Road were something to alleviate the throbbing called forth by his strict diet.

“Com’on, fame was that important?”

“Noone said it’d bring this kind of trouble?”

The others practitioners also churned.

Their spirits, broken!

Weed then turned to his simplest method.

“Hyungs!”

“.....?”

“Battle! It’s time to rescue the vampire beauties. And then...in consolidation...”

“In consolidation...”

Kkolkaa!

All of them essentially drooled. Throughout faces of the practitioners, all of which formed an easy to read poker face.

‘This is not the time to care about something like that!’

‘I will be the first man to get.....’

‘Gotta hurry! Damsel in distress!’

Weed did not continue. Just a hint here and there will get results!

“Whoaaaaa!!!”

The students bellowed as they charged across the field toward the village, followed by the teachers. As to not be outdone, the teachers also vented their voices.

“MOVE! I will get Roselyn!”

“Your rank’s below me! Follow and pay attention!”

“Brother, why would ranking authority matters here!? There’s a woman in trouble!!”

Both teacher and student practitioners rallied while rushing!

“Get out my way! IT’S SUPER URGENT!”

Geomchi too, ran like the wind.

Female vampires were monsters that closely resembled humankind, and tend to quite pretty.

Unlike the High Elves and Wood Elves whom were innocently charming, the female vampires had the enticing and sensual body figures.

The captured Vampire Queen Roselynn that was awaiting rescue had the figure that could not lose.

Surka sighed deeply.

“They’re hopeless.”

Romuna too, furrowed her brows.

“Men are all the same.”

Still, the macho and tough looking Geomchis jumped at the chance to rescue the vampire queen was a disappointing sight beyond belief.

Meanwhile, the strides of Geomchi2 and Geomchi16 remain unchanged.

Maylon was quite curious as to why.

“Geomchi16-nim, why aren’t you going with them to the rescue?”

Her impression of Geomchi16 within the Geomchi’s group was similar to the ridges in one’s hand, just one line of many. The ridges in the hand that belonged to one of the nephew weeping loudly, while he amongst many others holding out that hand on the first day of the New Year.

Geomchi16 replied with a bright smile.

“I’m sending whispers with my girlfriend.”

“Girlfriend?”

Everyone’s eyes were widening in amazement.

Geomchi16 has a girlfriend!

The possibility was too hard to believe.

This was the first time amongst the Geomchi group that there was the mention of a girlfriend, so it sounded unbelievable.

“I cant believe what he’s saying.”

“Could he have some sort of dementia?”

“To be talking to an imaginary person, could he have been...”

“Don’t talk like I was abducted!”

A bunch of speculations came about, and as Maylon worded her own theory, his outburst caused her to choke on her words. She then painfully asked.

“Can you tell me what happened when you met her?”

“I knew her since the battle with the dragon. Her name is Libian. Isn’t it a beautiful name? HAHAAHAA!!”

A good event happened to Geomchi16 that noone else knew.

He devoted the last bar of his life fighting to add a friend. A dream then was made into reality by her. She sent him a whisper after they parted. He was quite clumsy, but Libian was comforted to find Geomchi6 to be honest and trustworthy, and extremely entertaining.

He was then looked up by the Geomchis, the act was something worth imitating!

Hence, they all rushed forward like crazy to save the female vampire.

Maylon eyes blinked with admiration.

“Of course I understand! The trait of being dependable, of course this will make you popular. Oh, and by the way, Geomchi2 nim, why aren’t you rushing in to battle?”

“I’m here to keep her accompanied.”

Geomchi2 drew his sword and stood beside Seechwi to keep watch.

Tall fat female Orc and human!

Geomchi2 muscular body and at a stuttering two meters tall, was still slightly smaller in comparison to Seechwi. So to say he was going to watch over her may sounded a bit unusual, but he still remained static to take care of Seechwi.

“Geomchi2 nim! Chwiik, chwiyiit!”

Seechwii didn’t know what kindness meant while in this second body.

The parties she was in before were filled with bitterness!

Having good people didn't mean the status quo were evenly distributed; in fact, the loot and experienced she acquired were at the size of a bedbug comparing to the bed itself. Unable to be let in battles, she was only allowed the job of a porter, carrying luggage around.

She felt a sense of loneliness and desolation, and even shame.

However, such a person is presented before her.

'This is not the first time a guy said such a thing to me, but...'

In reality, the beautiful psychiatrist had been out on blind dates and such, while many well-dressed men lined up before her.

Even though going against what the male preferences were in Royal Road by choosing a job as an ugly Orc, she didn't have to worry about her outer appearances nor worried about men pretending to be interested without their own agenda.

Geomchi2 was the older brother amongst the teachers so he was naturally sensitive to the people around him.

Weed stepped up.

"Then, we'll also go into battle."

“Weed nim, I’ll cast a blessing. Please let the divine power fill thy body to protect it from harm. Origin of Eternity!”

The prayer came from Irene.

As she chants her prayer, the area was filled with white light.

Irene acquired a new blessing skill!

It temporarily increases magic and physical defense, also improves the body ability to heal.

“Please let his power peak against all forms of wickedness. Bless!”

She continued with the blessings on Weed, and then turned to bless the rest of the party. Even though the best of her current ability can’t match that of the Pope candidate Ron Alves, Irene’s divine powers were still quite effective.

Now they were primed for battle.

Weed then turned to Yurin.

“Sis.”

“Huh?”

“Stay here and be well hidden. Mapan nim will be here with you.”

“Ok.”

“If monsters come then let Hyungs take care of it; if not, run.”

“Don’t worry, I’ll run fast.”

“When you get hungry, eat the beef jerky inside the wagon.”

“Eat till I’m full.”

“But if I don’t come back...”

“I’ll offer the best rice for the afterlife.”

“Man...”

“Just kidding. Didn’t have to believe it.”

Weed then, continued on for a while.

From things such as it’s usually female vampires that are seductress, but if a male vampires sent you a pass, don’t go for it; to when you’re tired, take a rest. Having low stamina mean you’ll be exhausted quickly. So don’t overdo things, to avoid chronic

fatigue and a cold, it'll take...

Mapan's face was stricken.

"Weed-nim's sensibility is going downhill with each spoken word."

Pale too, agreed.

"To be quietly listening to this, Yurin-nim is amazing."

Zephyr seemed to identify the reason as to why.

"I can relate to the relationship between a younger sister and the older brother. When she goes out wearing a mini skirt, as a brother I can't seem to word out the problem at hand."

After that duration of nagging, Weed turned his sights toward the battlefield.

"The situation there is more urgent so lets be brief."

"Yes, brother."

"Plenty of time later."

"Tell me more later since there are a lot of unfinished subjects."

“Of course!”

The people around them were horrified.

Weed moved toward the widely flung gates of the fanatics' village.

“The vampires misled you fools.”

“Repent. Repent!”

“Here is where we sent them to hell to repent for their sins! And we were given the task by God!”

“First squad, Paladins, GO!”

The fanatics.

The Shadow Paladins and Shadow Priests were poised to attack.

The expectation of a boring siege as the village lying in wait to be attacked was off by a mile, as these human NPCs were rather aggressive.

“The path you tread is not abiding to the will of God!”

The rumbling speed of the Geomchis lowered significantly. Their heavy footsteps were constantly being constraint as they headed toward the headwind blowing against them.

The Shadow Priests continued casting their magic.

“You whom were deluded by evil, you reprobate beings! The stench emitting from you now will make you sick!”

Geomchis bodies began to turn green. An unpleasant smell entered their nostrils as they breathe in the plague.

Usually this would have been a troubling development! Most would have lost the will to fight, holding their breath and run away at the opportunity.

But an unfortunate blessing, the Geomchis aren't normal humans.

Geomchi₃ grinned.

“Just this much!? This is barely comparable to not having my feet wash for 10 days!”

Geomchi₄ too, flashed a sinister smile as he recall one moment of his past.

“I was on an excursion in the rainforest for 2 years, and then

returned to Korea. Everybody ran away from the bathroom when I started using it. Hehe!”

“There’s never a stench that can raise a hair on my skin!”

He went on a hellish training to discipline himself against any sort of odor.

Geomchi aimlessly let out a chuckle.

It was a lifetime ago. In his childhood, at the time when he was learning the arts of the sword; his house was poor, and there was nothing to eat. Sometimes in the middle of his training, he’d find food and eat at the bathroom on his way back.

This was one of his comfort zone!

At the time, it was called a dwitgan (a hole in the ground where u sits to poop. Google.) The ‘facility’ didn’t have water. It was an old and outdated hut, where you’d have to scoop out the wastes, unlike modern conventional toilet!

The foods in the dwitgan were delicious.

“Squatting there eating instant noodles was the best.”

Each and every one Geomchis’ past was so tragic!

Though their bodies were riddled with the plague that was weakening their joints, they continued to advance.

“Warrior’s Assault!”

“Endless Sword!”

Geomchis’ bodies glowed with a faint light.

Their running speed and attacking speed increased.

Warrior’s Assault.

A buff that increases the recipient’s running speed by a whooping 25%!

The powerful rushing attack was extremely effective against the knights.

Even though it consumes a considerable amount of stamina, the trade off was worth it.

As the buff was continuous, anything that was in the way did not stand a chance.

Cutting, stabbing, and hitting anything!

The swords were forced to flow constantly as a stream of water.

The buff is inefficient to those that aren't familiar with the way of the swords. If one disrupts their flow at the sight of monsters, potentially the sword can go out of control.

One must be three or four steps ahead of the monsters and change their attacking patterns accordingly.

And raising the skill's proficiency can be done through efforts, but to truly utilize the ability to its full potential depends on the individual's fighting ability.

“Screw them!”

“There's nothing that can stop us!”

The Geomchis brandished their swords and advanced like madmen.

Swords were slicing the wind!

They charged toward the priests that conjured the headwinds.

And more paladins got in between.

“Strike!”

“Feel God’s wrath, unbelievers!”

The fanatics and Geomchis clashed.

“Hammer of God!”

“Ground Reversal!”

Magically enhanced shields and swords collided.

“Haters. Hate the will of God!”

That was not a skill, just two herds smack talking.

“Oh power of the Holy Spirit, please give me power to relieve the suffering. Therapeutics Touch!”

The Paladins kept receiving the Priests’ blessing every time their health points drops.

Priests, clergy and the likes didn’t have very strong magic attacks, but their protective blessings and heals were unmatched.

Geomchis continued their vehement attacks, but the HPs they caused on the Paladins were immediately replenished. Not only that, the expensive armors the Paladins were wearing boosted

their defenses unimaginably.

Then the Priests in the background continued to buff the Paladins attacking powers.

Furthermore, the Paladins were wearing great armors!

Weed eyes pried them at his location.

“Armor set! Paladin’s even!”

Paladin is one of the most popular professions.

They can wield a variety of weapons such as swords and maces. They can also use magic, and have a high defense for survival, so it’s love by many.

“If it’s the Paladin armor set, I can sell for a helluva high price.”

Most people don’t like checking auctions to get a part at a time. Most would just go for the full set even if it’s more expensive.

“This is awesome to come to the Land of Vampires.”

Then against, they must win the battle.

The priests in the rear were making it tough with their constant

buffs and heal.

“Why don’t these fools die!”

“Priests are healing them.”

“Cowards...”

Geomchis clamored.

Though not having the high vitality the Geomchis has, the knights were constant getting heals from the priests till prim and proper shape. Even the ones that seemingly almost ready to collapsed, the priests took care of them till they’ve made a full recovery.

The Paladins continued the fierce fight, forming an impenetrable wall.

They firmly stood their ground in the midst of the battle, while defending with their shields, and slowly pushed Geomchis back.

“Magic Arrow!”

“Ice Bolt!”

At the same time as their defensive lines up, the priests also used

some tough attacking spells.

As the damages they were continuously receiving, the accumulation was becoming more and more significant.

Geomchis were too far ahead for him to intervene, but Pale was getting more and more restless.

“If things are continue to go the way they are, are we’re going to fail the quest?”

Weed shook his head.

“We good.”

The quest was acquired from the village of vampires!

Similar to the quest he received a while back fighting against Tori’s clan, also a rank B quest.

In order to complete the request at the time, he was struggling to increase and utilize all of his skills while under the assistance of Ron Alves.

However, the situation has changed. The Geomchis are higher levels comparing to Weed at that time, and masters in their arts.

Nevertheless, Weed's optimism still looked a bit wry.

"Quest is successful, but there'll be sacrifices."

"Yeh?"

"We're done if we died just once in this place."

"Ah, that's a hell of a restriction!"

Pale and Zephyr's were startled.

If you fail a quest, or die, you're forever banished from the world of vampires.

In case of the death, revival is not an option.

Having high ATK is an outstanding feature of Geomchis. But that also means their defenses aren't prominent enough so they're quite vulnerable. In addition, they can't even use simple self healing spells like the Paladins.

As things going the way they are, the cumulative damages will naturally results in deaths, and the amount is relevant to the total of their strength.

Pale realized.

“We’re screwed if this continues!”

Irene lacked the power to cycle her heals to a large group of people; therefore, the fact they were facing was that anyone maybe expendable. In particular, the DEF-lacking Geomchis had the highest possibility of dying at any moment.

Frankly speaking, if the battle continues to go down the current path, the number of their allies will be greatly reduced.

Weed’s ways of doing things are meticulously going through preparations.

Cultivating his allies, test the strength of his enemies, while making the most of his environment.

But now was not the case.

They were allowed to be in this land for the total of only three months.

Current situation: Vampire witch trial.

There wasn’t much time left to rescue Roselyn from the burning stake. While the Paladins and Priests continued to defend with their impenetrable barrier.

‘Have to bet everything on this one.’

Weed’s heart was about to break from the slowing growing pain.

‘Paladin armor set. Have to give up holding back the damages now.’

Organization within a natural clash can minimize casualties. While commanding over hundreds of officers is a tremendous task; at the same while, organized battles can mean abandoning the victory, and the loss is even more damaging.

In this messy melee skirmish ‘formation,’ controlling the fight isn’t that complex. In addition, the intention of the Geomchis who are in no mood to listen to anyone is well known.

Weed yelled.

“Roselyn, hang in there for a bit! Zephyr nim is coming to save you!”

Kureureureung!

Terrible roars roamed from the battlefield.

Weed’s Lion Roar stirred an enormous ripple effect.

Up until now, the uncooperative individuals of Geomchis continued to move forward for Roselyn's, exhausted their rage.

“What? That fish soup of a playboy's gunna save our Roselyn?”

“Hellsnoo! Not happening!”

“I'd rather let our Hyongs get her.”

“All the handsome guys can go lie in a ditch!”

The movements of Geomchis changed.

Rather than single mindedly forcing their ways to Roselyn, they pushed toward the Paladins and earnestly fought in close quarters.

“Rotating Lunge!”

“Crisscross Cut!”

“Seven Strokes!”

Geomchis took advantage of their skills and attacked aggressively.

Dealing direct blows with their swords.

They were using long ranged attacks with their swords, while dealing little damage at the cost of lots of mana. Now they were utilizing their direct melee attacks.

Straightforward and more effective skills.

Some rolled their body on the ground to avoid incoming magic arrows, and then leapt into the air immediately afterward.

Swung their blades at enemies whilst rotating in midair.

Results from agility, quickness, judgment, and experiences!

The scene here was unconceivable by any movies.

From running, ducking, even throwing their swords for a hit..... attacking with no distractive thoughts such as flashy moves and defending.

The paladins frantically avoided Geomchis' desperation whilst casting their spells.

"I absolutely won't allow him to pass!"

"I don't care how unfair the world is to me, just not for the sake of Zephyr!"

An honorable one on one fight during a confrontation.

In a war, to hell with that!

Geomchis repeated the same tactic of attacking then recedes while ganging up 3-4 people to one paladin.

They continued to do so as they isolated some paladins, and hunted them down. The priests persistently casted heals and plagues, but Geomchis were able to pushed the paladins to their breaking point.

Geomchis had plenty of experiences attacking large group of enemies, so the priests weren't given any break as they tried to intervene.

On the Paladins' side, they weren't given a second of a breather as they faced the onslaught of the raging-wild-boars that were the Geomchis.

In the battle, just a miniscule of a second of the moment!

For one caged Paladin who let up just for a bit, he was struck five, six times in that bit.

Weed's entertained tears faded as he approached the priests at a different route from a far distance. He intended to attack the

Judges and Priests that were located behind the units of Paladins.

Dadadadadadak!

From the middle of nowhere, footsteps approached him for no reason.

Therefore, Weed, without a care, sped up on the plain. But then, Zephyr also did the same in a flurry.

Initially, the intention was pure. Weed only sped up to get the similar rate of speed to that of the dash. Then suddenly, the two continued increasing their speed as if it was a competition.

Men's Pride.

For such a trivial reason, even if their stamina's depletes, they absolutely refuse to be lag behind.

If they were at the same condition, Weed was a bit faster. But at the moment, he was wearing a heavy armor. So Zephyr was able to match his speed with Weed's.

Weed was the first to open his mouth. Even though he was short of breath, he let his word flown out calmly.

"The plain's pretty."

“Not a big deal.”

Zephyr too, maintained a healthy like glow.

“How you gonna slow down? It’ll be a bit hard for ya...”

“Is hyong nim saying it’s tough for little old me? I have a very light body.”

“Hu hu, the wind’s quite calming. So far, I’ve only used 1% of my strength.”

“Only 0.2% of my real strength’s used at the moment.”

The childish competitive mindset of men weren’t going to end.

Weed lifted his hands.

There was still a considerable amount of distance until the priests. However, he had a secret weapon hidden away.

High Elf Yeurika’s Bow.

The dream of all archers.

Weed loaded an arrow on the bow. Then shot it toward the priest.

Syusyuk!

The bow was imbedded with powers of the water spirit. The arrow zoomed past as it left behind a stream of droplets in its trajectory.

Soon the arrow reached its intended target.

Puwawak!

It swept up the priests like a wave.

A luxurious bow that can use the power of water spirits!

Weed's archery was not very outstanding. Most of his battles he relied on his sword. The arrows he shot before simply drifted toward monsters from a distance. Also, since the skill wasn't in set with his mastery, it had very little power as it was reduced.

But the Yeurika's Bow reached the priests at a surprising distance and dealt the standard damages.

'This bow's pretty good.'

Weed continued to fire arrows using Yeurika's Bow toward the priests. His mana was rapidly depleting, but he didn't care.

“Cowardly bastards!”

“We are the devotee of God.”

“You shall receive the wrath of God!”

Cries of fanatics!

Weed and Zephyr were in close proximity to priests with their sprints.

Weed’s gaze became stone cold.

‘Ima win this battle and bring the armor sets back.’

Many people also took on the roles priests. Unfortunately, the prices for robe sets were much lower in comparison.

Because they usually weren’t situated at the forefront of the battle, their sets didn’t require much defense.

‘Armor sets!’ (yep...that’d be my warcry too, Weed.)

Desperation for items!

“Moonlight Sculptor Blade!”

Aimed at the Priests!

Weed forced his way amongst the priests as he brandished his sword.

Due to the fact that his level was considerably higher than the current quest, the priests lost their lives within two or three strikes.

‘Bracelets, rings, earrings, magic staves! MINE!’

Weed looted the priests as he swept through them.

Zephyr too, attacked with a wide radius as he swung his fishing pole, while Surka flaunted her fists in close proximity. At the same time, Maylon and Pale situated themselves atop a hill.

“Triple Shot!”

“Fatal Blow!”

And to support the two as they fired their arrows, Romuna called forth her memorized spell.

“Fire Tornado!”

A huge whirlwind of fire took place.

More so than attacking directly, the spell had vast range and struck many enemies; essentially, disabled the priests from conjurations.

Hwareureureu!

“Kkueahahak!”

The Priests screamed.

Irregardless of the flames around him, Weed continued to target the priests.

Without the past protections and heals from the priests, the paladins dropped quickly one by one.

Geomchi² and Geomchi³ joined Weed amidst the flames.

“I’ll help.”

“We gotta divide up their troops.”

As they read the flow of battles, the Paladins united into one thick assembly.

While seemingly past their limits, they were not broken.

To our faith, we're to offer our suffering.

May God bend it against the unbelievers in folds.

The Paladins.

Organized themselves and offered their prayers. And contrary to their characteristics, they even tossed their shields aside.

We will forever remain faithful, even to follow the in death.

To God, we give our lives.

As they continued to hymn, the Paladins fiercely swung their swords. While ignoring defense, they fought to annihilate.

The Geomchis retaliated for their dear lives.

“Damn!”

“Where are they getting the strength...”

The Paladins will to live were twice that of the Geomchis.

Geomchis were surrounded by the paladins to a point where there was little space between each Geomchis. Then the paladins let on an unrelenting onslaught as they neglected their defense; but as the damages they dealt were comparatively little, each fell one after another.

The fierce battle raged on for more than 40 minutes!

As the Shadow Priest were taken care of before them; the Shadow Paladins too, lost their lives.

The Geomchis slumped as they sat.

“Coughkeok”

“I was hella nervous for a long time.”

Their stamina was exhausted after the long battle.

Even if they were against tough mobs, they can easily take a break in between battles. But this war against the paladins was a necessity for the quest’s sake, and called for no pause as they had to win the battle.

Geomchi13 grinned.

“Thank God. The kids didn’t get hurt.”

Geomchi19 too agreed.

“Aint we dignified? It’d suck if we couldn’t protect them.”

They withstood the attacks from the Shadow priests and paladins to ensure Seechwi and Yurin’s safety in the back.

Men’s Pride.

Even they they’re seemingly near death; they’re willing to fight at close range to ensure the safety of the women in the rear.

A close examination after the victorious battle, the number of practitioners declined by 34. They’ve lost their lives during the ferocious battle. Primarily the lesser experienced who were killed during the confusion of battle.

“Keoheoheom!”

Geomchi coughed uncomfortably. In addition, Geomchi2 and Geomchi3 didn’t lift their heads, similarly with the other instructors.

“How are we going to instruct those kids.....such a big disappointment.”

“.....”

“Tonight, make them do every set.”

“Yes.”

“Write the name of the deceased separately.”

“Sir!”

The penalty for losing their lives in game were experiences lost and a day of was a tiny punishment.

Hell Training!

They will be subjected to at least a month in front of hell’s gates.

“WOW.”

“Heoeoeo, better not relax too much to avoid death.”

“In the future, the instructors also have a responsibility to their practitioners.”

The instructors’ shoulders dropped.

But this was another sort of training posed on them.

Instead of teaching the selection they had to practitioners; comparatively, Royal Road offered an unlimited ways to learn an art.

Royal Road was more superior in terms of training the five senses and one can truly take advantages of the swords.

Without even the need of using skills, no one who truly uses the sword was harmless if they had anticipated the behavior of the monsters.

Nevertheless, the practitioners face a higher risk, so it was better for the instructors to monitor their group of disciples.

After that, Geomchis, the instructors, and every other practitioner approached Roselyn who was still on the cross.

Kkulkkeog!

Geomchi swallowed his saliva.

The hanged being on the cross had an amazingly alluring appearance.

“Le, let me get you down.”

“Thank you.”

Geomchi untied the ropes on Roselyn. She held on to him afterward to show thanks.

“I was able to released thanks to Yongsan-nim” (brave warrior + nim)

“Keoheok!”

Ttiring!

Vampire Rescue Complete

Roselyn was rescued from the clutches Taron's Cult unharmed.

She was born destined to be a great queen. Appropriately to the amount of blood she drinks, she'll become more beautiful.

Quest reward: Inquire Minorca.

As Roselyn gives thanks to everyone, she held them close and bowed to kiss their hand.

"Oh great human hero, I humbly gives you my sincere thanks for saving me."

Geomchis were flattered.

"OHH!"

"Great!"

"Nice work coming to the Land of Vampires!"

After completing the quest, the sense of achievement filled the air!

From the teacher down to the practitioners, Roselyn gave thanks by means of a hug in sequential order.

The quest's finished, Pale subtly checked the notice for quest completion.

“Maylon nim, if it's not too much to ask, what we received for completing this quest...”

“Alayot!”

From Minorca, each was to receive 10 cursed dolls as a reward.

Items such as these can be offered to the Temple for a great boost in reputation.

They also received a considerable amount of experiences, the lower level Geomchis were able to gained 2~3 levels.

“The compensation wasn't bad at all.”

Weed was satisfied.

After receiving the thank you from the beautiful vampire, Geomchis were more than happy.

“I wish this quest can be repeated.....”

“Saving her was a righteous thing to do; this was just one sample of chivalry.”

From then on they started accepting Vampire quests!

Quests ranged from grade B and C, and got as much as four at once.

Although they received a considerable damage from the first battle; through Weed's conducting, the damages now reduced dramatically.

Beyond the red wall of the town, where the wild yaks roamed, were their favorite preys.

And the reason was that they can eat yak's meat after the siege!

19 Geomchis were killed. (ROFL)

They became more cautious when hunting Beasts of Chaos. Since the beasts were able to use dark arts and their physical were topnotch. Therefore, a frontal assault seemed to do more harm than good.

Weed and the top 100 practitioners decided to head into battle.

“How we gunna fight? Do we go all out on those guys? I think if

we do that, we can take out about half of their HP.”

Said Geomchi12 while clenching his fists.

In comparison, it was apparent that the beasts were far stronger than them; but in any case, he didn't want to allow himself to show any sign of weakness.

“Please stand your ground as long as you could when fighting against them.”

“Aren't we fighting to win?”

“Of course! They'll be attacking us with all their might so it's good to show that you're able to defy them. It'll be pretty difficult. Don't fight them to the death, escape them to survive.”

“Oh? Sounds interesting. Lets do that then.”

Weed along with the top-tier Geomchis went on the assault against the beasts. And they were heartily beaten with all sort of magic and physical attacks.

And before their lives were at stake, they fled like the wind.

“Bandage!”

He used the bandage skill on them for a long time.

Weed brought along plenty of first aid materials on the wagon for situations such as this.

In the meantime, the second wave led by Geomchi2 of 100 men went on the assault.

“Yo evil beasts!”

“Come and get it!”

They were struck by curses from the dark arts and sustained physical strikes, calling forth for retreat.

Like a bunch of tanks!

Resilient and slowly worked their way toward victory!

Over time, the Beasts of Chaos power and HP continued to dwindle. And since their INT were low, these monsters began to go out of control.

Rush, rush!

Without a single break, the fight escalated and caused for more retreats.

This was the method of fighting Weed thought up while fighting along side the Pope candidate, Ron Alves, many times before.

100 people during each assault alternately winding down the beasts power; and when they were completely burnt, it spelt their deaths.

As a result, only 13 Goemchis died for the win!

They couldn't escape the strikes from the beasts fast enough.

Pale muttered.

“This quest's also tough.”

Zephyr too, agreed.

“Hella tired to celebrate the victory.”

Some quests through hard work rewarded new talents.

Those that claimed hard labor won't result to anything suddenly realized Weed's conviction.

Thanks to that, Pale and Irene were able to obtain some new skills; though the skills requirements were so random that they let

out shrieks of terror.

“I have to shoot once for every 1000 steps; if I can’t, I won’t be allowed to shoot for 10000 steps.”

“It’s this hard to raise the expertise on Sacred Blessing? I have to train it everyday for 10 hours each time.....”

The number of deaths gradually decreased as they took on the quests, but they spent much more time than before. Nevertheless, nobody complained.

Soon after they entered the land of the vampires, Pale’s party realized that they weren’t prepared for such a task, now primarily focused on safety.

From the practitioners’ perspective, if they were to die, the gate of hell would swing open for them.

The instructors, who assumed the responsibilities as well as the penalty for his disciples, worried for their safety also. Even if the progress of the quest came to a crawling speed, they’d still prioritized safety above all else!

Geomchi at this time was distracted by delicious foods and Hwaryeong.

Weed was the only one by himself.

He wanted to make use of the 2x EXP period given.

He would try to get commissioned quests battling other monsters so that it wouldn't interfere with his colleagues' current quests.

'We already have 66 deaths. The number will increase without a doubt, and even more so as they get higher difficulty quests. It's best to survive as long as possible. There are still things to do after we finished here.'

The feeling of complete isolation seeped through in this land of vampires; while it'll continue to increase corresponding to the number of people dying.

Weed's way to ensure the number didn't drastically increase was to remove a bunch of stronger monsters while he hunted.

So in some hunt, he swept more than the requested number; such as defeating the wizards and clerics of the Killer Blade Army in addition to the request.

In this way, Weed was busier than the bunch.

Since the quests were preceded with caution, they cut the time for lunch breaks as short as possible. While Weed and Mapan were going through the supplies for food preparation, the rest assumed other duties.

Geomchis were used to making their own foods; while Yurin and Irene as well as other girls tried to be helpful; from washing rice to doing the dishes or setting up the fire.

Weed's tasks decreased to simply picking out ingredients and seasoning the foods as the girls' jobs increased.

When Weed cooked by himself for the group, it could take up to as much as five hours each time. And thanks to this, his Cooking skill increased tremendously.

Hwaryeong after she tasted soaked kimchi said with a smile.

“Kimchi's so very delicious.”

Irene then murmured sadly.

“It's still came from China.”

“.....?”

She still could not shake off that past the expiration-date-material feeling.

Nevertheless, Hwaryeong and the rest enjoyed it. The feeling of sitting on the ground eating freshly made food enthralled her. Yurin and Surka who were at the same age too, wanted to cook the food.

Of course the manly Zephyr and Pale didn't want to just idle. They got the necessary firewood and also prepared the materials.

Even to such extent as removing the poisonous part of monsters they've hunted: Pale with his bow arrows obtained birds, while Zephyr went down the river to fish.

They supplemented the food ingredients diligently.

“Hurry! We need fish here.”

“Yea yea, in just a bit.”

Zephyr never once rushed while fishing. With the lure in the river, he would simply watch the flow of the river with a peace of mind.

But ever since he joined up with Weed, he was expected to procure foods. He was now fishing with as much as 10 fishing rods at once, so there was no time for him to slip into his idle mode.

The strange thing with the pressure was that even though the fishes he caught weren't rare, the expertise rating on his skill rose rapidly.

‘Maybe the reason my Advanced expertise rating stalled was because I've been too lax.’

He was sure that fishing skill rose by means of catching rare fishes.

There was even a record of the fishes one has caught. But now, simply by catching a lot of fishes, his expertise proficiency rose noticeably.

‘Maybe the profession weren’t for the sake of a relaxing hobby. This is a fight for continued existence, could it be fishing was a mean to survive? It makes sense.....’

Zephyr moved quickly and deliberately as he tried to increase his proficiency by means of fishing. As a Fisherman, his attacking power was a little higher than the norms, and his health point was on the high side; so the possibility of his survivability is very high.

No matter how things were, even when he was near collapsing, he’d refuse to be toppled.

Persistency was the Fisherman’s greatest advantage!

Squishy like a zombie, but still survived.

Though, since he was obsessed about his outer appearance, he wouldn’t allow himself to be in their position.

So from day to day it was a series of struggles.

From questing then to procuring food he had finally found out how difficult it was.

He remembered the time when he hunted in Basra Dungeon with no rest and thought that it would be his last. But now, on these lines, he was severely mistaken.

By participating in obtaining ingredients, his workload further increased. As if he was maturing step by step, his workload increased as he grew.

Like a suffering horse leaving his barn for the pleasure of an adventure only to find out his suffering hadn't change.

As if he deliberately brought the pain onto himself.

While eating, Zephyr muttered something strange.

“But this is the first time I'm deserving of the food.”

Mapan raised his head from the food.

“Hmm?”

“For some reason I'm feeling like the meal's decreasing in term of quality.”

“.....”

They were now eating poultry, noodles, meat, and whatever else mixed in the midst of it without spices.

Earlier on, the foods were covered with fruit scented seasonings. But now, the food they were eating unadulterated by the plentiful of spices; and the flavor of the day before lingered.

The body gotten used to the slight change of flavoring!

Nevertheless, the food expenses remained the same.

Mapan called for Weed urgently.

“You there, Weed nim!”

But Weed suddenly got up and hurriedly left.

“I just remember I gotta do something, I’m out!”

“.....”

Everywhere in the world, there’s corruption, even in cuisine!

Meals in the early days of a restaurant tend to be on the good side. But slowly, the qualities of the foods drop to slightly average or go completely unbearable.

The similar process was aimed at Weed's foods and the complaints accumulated to too much, he made the appropriate gesture.

Rather than cooking the foods he normally made while receiving praises, the meals now weren't as delicious.

And now everyone caught wind of the deal!

Weed spoke without an ounce of alarm.

“Then don't eat when you're hungry!”

He threw a threat at them!

And sounds of discontentment traveled the group.

In the meantime, the party continued.

Day by day, experience and skill proficiency increased terrifyingly. Those who were below lvl 100 gained levels tremendously. Of course they were the Geomchis, thanks to the 2x experience boost for the initial weeks.

But still, their achievements couldn't match to that of Weed's.

He was able to locate enemy's position, in an efficient manner, and dominated them in battles.

He underwent tremendous pressure and challenges, so he had little time to himself.

Weed's rate on the hunt increased substantially as he learned of their patterns; he'd then informed the other parties regarding the matter.

Another reason why he didn't join other parties such as Fail's and the others was due to the fact that he was too strong.

If Weed was to lead any party, it'd be a boring hunt.

Still, even the lower levels practitioners were gaining experience dizzyingly fast via his information.

Every time they'd succeeded the quests, they changed their evaluation of him.

"It was set up the way he said."

"He's not a completely evil being."

“My head’s.....”

Weed was recognized as a force to reckon with.

Around a week had passed, and roughly all the quests in Seirun village were completed.

They’ve obtained Olderin Boots that gives +45 Agility, and the Circlet of Blaine increases maximum MP as well as mana recovery.

Though the greatest gain came from the Beasts of Chaos’ quest, where they received a number of refinement stones for weapons and armors upon completion.

And while Weed gained two levels from it, the others ranged from 5-10 levels increased.

Now the 2x period from quests ended.

The total of Geomchis dropped by 92. Romuna and Surka, whom nearly died twice, managed to survive.

By now, they’ve acquired a more coherent information regarding Todeum.

“Ordinarily, no one should go near Todeum. The vampires who went there never came back. Why? We do not know. If there is one, then.....”

“You’re going to Todeum to find out why? This maybe the penalty we’re facing for the sins we’ve committed.”

“Maybe you humans could save the aristocrats. Why be in league with you humans? It’s something we don’t even dream to care for.”

Chapter 5: Lee Hyun's First Class

Lee Hyun got onto the bus.

‘Whew, it’s finally day to go to college, huh.’

For other people, their chests might be bursting with glee when they go to a university. The college life is one full with a variety of good times: extracurricular activities, MT (membership training), and being part of the clubs. It’s also a collection of various knowledge and education, a great place to gain experiences.

However, in Lee Hyun’s view, it was crap.

Endlessness. Darkness. Despair!

He should have been fully devoted to Royal Road in order to make money instead of going to school.

As the sighing Lee Hyun continued, a conversation the female college students drifted into his ears.

“What courses are you attending for your major on Monday?”

“I enrolled in advance process of Regenerative Medicine, since I wanted to learn more about joint treatments.”

“Really? That’s great. I’m also going to it. Words going around that Professor Hanh Minsoo are really good at teaching it. What about you, Soyun.”

“Major’s Molecular Biology.”

“Whew! That’s tough. Bet the tests’ are killers.”

Three female college students are having a lively conversation.

There were many female college students coming to the University via buses so it wasn’t a strange thing.

‘They’re proolly medical students.’

‘Pretty cute girls...’

‘Good at studying also.’

Some passengers on the bus eyed the female college students with envy.

However, Lee Hyun thought the opposite.

‘I pity them.’

That’s six years of college!

The Medical field tuition is significantly more expensive than that of other majors. Even if one came from a decent household.

But in most cases, the Ministry of Education and the bank joined hands and prepare a system.

Student loans.

To receive student loans for nearly six years for the University; once you get out, it'd be debt piled on debts!

‘Tsk.’

Unknowingly, Lee Hyun’s tongue got cold.

Though unlike what really was happening, the female college student took it another way when she saw it.

“Ah Soyun, there’s a man over there looking at you drooling!”

“He seems to be the best looking guy on the bus.”

“Go and say something.”

The two girls forcibly urged the girl named Soyun on.

Soyun then came over to Lee Hyun as she was told.

“Sorry. I don’t plan to have a boyfriend since I want to focus on my studies.”

She said carefully and soothingly, as to try not to offend him.

Lee Hyun sighed deeply and replied instead of a simple bow of the head.

“I apologize that my behavior was misleading. So here’s my two cents on girls. You female college students drink coffee which is extremely expensive rather than just simply.....”

Deed rooted prejudice against woman!

He deliberately and annoyingly explained just that bit and then slumped his head.

Sleeping on the bus helps plenty when you lack sleep while recovering your vitality! (as in quit drinking coffee and sleep more.)

Soyun watched the scene and didn’t know what to do.

‘She alright? Was it too shocking?’

Until they've arrived at the Korea University, Lee Hyun kept his head stationary like that.

“Deureureong, kuwuool.” (snoring)

The girls' bitterness grew as he pretended to sleep.

‘This makes it look as if we're the bad people.’

‘Still, he was too severe to Soyun.’

‘I want to ask for his contact info...’

The misunderstand increased when Lee Hyun arrived at the school and at his classroom.

The university's lecture hall was large and magnificent, and was stocked with various state-of-the-art equipments.

Lee Hyun victimized himself.

‘This is where my tuition goes?!’

Since the tuition money was already officially paid to the university, the cut was even deeper!

Since the money was gone, the resentment filled up quickly

resolved.

‘Hayan also, is taking classes.’

Lee Hayan has a different major, so she didn’t have class on Monday. The only time where they were in the class was Liberal Arts on Friday.

‘Anyway, let’s enter the classroom.’

He did not know anybody in the class.

The senior student threw several welcoming parties and had invited him several times. The motive was that to have the students get acquainted with one another, form friendships from the curriculums, but Lee Hyun didn’t go.

The fee was 20000 Won. (20bucks)

Nothing in this world exists for free.

He even skipped the Admission Ceremony a week before. Usually, for most, at the beginning of the new semester shouldn’t be a time for them to be late.

In other word, the moment he first stepped into the class was his first time ever.

“Who is he? Don’t seem to recognize him.”

“Is he a returning senior?”

“I think he’s on the waiting list. What his student ID?”

The students who were taking the class noticed him and whispered amongst themselves.

Lee Hyun steadfastly ignored them and took a seat, and then opened up his laptop.

An old, outdated laptop.

It was a relatively inexpensive item from the marketplace on the internet. It was heavy and crude, but the performance wasn’t that far behind others.

However, Lee Hyun’s face lit up with embarrassment.

‘I don’t have any books.’

The lecture was on the Existence of Virtual Reality.

He didn’t know what kind of textbook to get so it had completely slipped his mind.

Lee Hyun was sitting there in embarrassment when a book slipped in the middle from the girl sitting beside him.

“You can share with me.”

“Thank you.”

“No problem. likewise to Seonbae-nim too.” (Senior classmen.)

“.....”

Lee Hyun took a bit to explain.

“So you can be at ease. Im not a Seonbae.”

The girl then, persisted.

“Seonbae-nim, please do not joke like that.”

Freshman girls seemed to treat many males like poison, at the same while only be interested in their Seonbae. So she took what he said as a joke.

“I really am not a Seonbae.....”

Suddenly the misunderstand became unpleasant.

Since he didn't show up at the Admission Ceremony, he didn't make acquaintances with anybody; and surely, the people in this class wouldn't want to hear this conversation.

'I have no choice.'

Lee Hyun gave up on it.

Letting the misunderstanding fizzle out on its own was the best method.

Shortly afterward, he dove into the lecture the professor was teaching. Since the subject the teacher was teaching caught Lee Hyun's interests.

"Many organizations, one in particular is the military, began research into the numerous advantages virtual reality poses. On their part, if they were to deploy a team of Special Forces on a dangerous mission, the survival rate wouldn't be very high; so to have them train on the same terrain in a virtual reality will increase their experiences. This will maximize their survivability, and.....however, this notion then wasn't fully completed."

Lee Hyun more or less nodded in agreement.

'It was lacking in many ways. The earlier development placed emphasis on education and training. But to truly place a real being into another reality, it took a long time.'

The Professor spoke.

“Initially, the development of virtual reality then was insufficient; however, there were many feedbacks on the subject regarding the looming possibility of increasing people’s happiness via this method. Ultimately, many companies dove into researching virtual reality. Their goal was a simple one.”

‘Obviously it’s the money.’

Lee Hyun’s pet theory (simple logic) did not change.

Money is the thing that can make one either cry or laugh!

“Companies essentially gave birth of new societies within virtual reality and sold it to the consumers as a mean of reinvigoration. As technology develops, the field became more competitive. And from this, Unicorn surfaced from the ground to what it is today with its greatest game, Royal Road; which, in my opinion, is the most beloved by humanity.”

The professor then went on to lecture about the history of VR, in which he simplified.

Lee Hyun then felt a surge of boredom. Ever since he decided to play Royal Road, he researched countless of articles before even actually playing the game. Thus, he already knew the basic contents of the professor’s lecture.

“Euhaam!”

Lee Hyun unknowingly let out a big yawn as he ninja-stretched. He was already tired when he rode the bus, but now sitting in chair listening to the lecture, the waves of sleepiness splashed over him.

And he was reprimanded with eyes from every direction pouring in.

‘Until now, he barely came to class on time.....and now he doesn’t look like he’s in the mood to study.’

‘Is he a student, or was he fired? Oh, then how was he able to come to our department?’

‘Looks like he’s a returnee.....that must mean he got an F to be retaking this class. I don’t want to be like him, gotta work hard and learn. Jjeutjjeutjjeut!’ (pencil hitting paper)

Most of the students who are attending this class are freshmen, whom if not openly criticizing him, made unpleasant faces.

Lee Hyun regained his posture and pretended to be studying hard. But the book placed in between the two earlier by the girl who was next him, seemed a bit further away from him.

It was a subtle three centimeters from the previous spot!

Most likely, she too, reviled him.

The professor laughed.

“There are many other times to talk about VR’s origin and development in the future to ensue dullness. So should we talk about what your favorite things are regarding Royal Road?”

“Yes!”

“Professor, please do that.”

Royal Road’s popularity among the students was high. There are only a few of people in the VR Department that doesn’t play the game.

“VR is fun, while it can also be use as a tool to study. So then, what is your action against someone who uses skills and of the art classes?”

The professor asked a rather random question. However, some astute students realized his hidden agenda.

The artistic classes in Royal Road are currently under reevaluation.

The troubadour, which is the Bard class, songs convey romance

and adventuring together. Even when you did the same quest that many had done; when you have a bard participated during the event singing songs of praises, the rumor of your achievements will get spread farther, and you'll obtain more fame in the process.

If you participate in the Bards' special quest of creating songs, you'll receive an extra bonus in reputation.

Due to these reasons, the Bards were accepted into many parties as people continued to do more difficult quests.

The highly skilled Painter.

Beraneo's 'Paintings of the Continent' were sought for desperately by many nobles.

When nobles have had it with an adventurer choice of action, they console with the painter's network. At that point, that adventurer's face will be plastered in every city; when that happens, that person usually won't be able to receive any special requests.

Only in some cases, where one's intimacy with the commissioner is extremely high, that the quest could be given. Or when one's current level's acceptable or not, it's up to the client.

The painters have a saying whether you can get quests or not, hence their values were reassessed.

Essentially, the picture determines whether you're an adventurer or not.

“Art in a nutshell, was like having an orc readily waiting in the front yard wanting to pounce you because of your uselessness. But now the Artist classes in Royal Road are being reevaluated. Although this is a very tough path, walking down this road to become a true artisan is very much respected.”

The students were convinced after the professor's proclamation.

“To be an artist who travels the Versailles continent, such a wonderful thing.”

“Becoming the great soul that spreads art to an unknown land filled with chaos sounds awesome!”

Some students seemed to be dwelling in their fantasies.

Frankly speaking, even if they didn't choose classes such as Warriors or Paladins, there was no guarantee they'll be safe from monsters. Not only the Artists' attacking power was weak, the risk of traveling Versailles Continent was like that of a flame on a match, easily snuffed out.

So the occupation wasn't as impressive as he let on.

“Recently, I too had been thinking of choosing Artist as an occupation.”

“Spreading art to people while earning their respect sounds incredibly attractive.”

The students were murmuring.

Lee Hyun wanted to curse.

“You guys are living in an illusion.”

If they go to the art city Rodium, they’ll be made painfully aware of the harsh reality!

The people who resides there and painstakingly work on their arts; so they when do not receive good reviews, they suffers from aches and pain, and hunger!

Lee Hyun too, also experienced it when the statues he worked on didn’t sell well and had to lower the price to a couple of Coppers. And when his statues were regarded as useless ornaments, he held himself back as much as possible to not pick a fight with them.

Having been through such trials he could not argue on behalf of it.

Of course in Lee Hyun’s case, he got through to a couple of people by means of flattering; essentially suckered many people to buy his sculptures even if it was just a penny gained.

The vicious sculptor's going as far as getting every change from your pocket!

A while after the students' buzzing did the professor's words continued.

“The Artists struggle to create works; through the works' Artistic Values that their reputation rises, as well as the rise in skill proficiency. Masterpiece, Classic, and Magnum are rankings upon successful completion of the art; so can anybody tell me what are the basis for establishing the Artistic Values and the ranking of the art?”

A student raised his hand.

“I'm Kim Hyun-jun, Gyosu-nim(Professor-nim. Isn't it directly related to the skill's level and proficiency?”

It was an obvious answer using one's common sense.

I.e. for fencing and archery, the damage output of any attacking techniques depended on the skill's level.

Lee Hyun shook his head.

‘It's not fully based on skill level.’

Even when he was at the beginner level of sculpture, he sculpted a Masterpiece. And even though later on he reached the intermediate level, the other sculptures he sculpted had lower Artistic Value in comparison.

To say that skill level plays the direct role of determining the art, then when your skills are so far ahead beyond that to make Magnum pieces, the art will no longer be called an art. It could be from skill levels, use of the tools, or the amount of work put into the material; but to say it's absolutely depended on skill levels was wrong.

“No. If there any other students that would like to make an input please do so.”

“I’m Park Sumin. Would the value change according how detailed the work was?”

This was it was a girl in sharp glasses who replied.

She was two seats away in Lee Hyun’s row.

‘That’s not even an answer.’

If what she said was the case, then Bingryong could never be a Classic piece.

Fine details.

It's beneficial, but clearly has limitations.

Art can never be based around the technical aspect. Even with just a small portion, when tried to precisely imitate something as it is, it'll never be called a work of art.

Lee Hyun knows that the Royal road system was crappy.

'I can't stop them from randomly making wild assumptions. And since the ball will keep rolling and it's useless for me to stop it, might as well not give a crap.'

Many students answered the question, but the professors buried all their opinion.

Finally, after the professor realized there was no one else to comment on the matter, he spoke.

"So let's change the question. Leave Royal Road and its special circumstances behind; in reality, how do you assess a piece of art?"

Even before the students could come up with an answer, the professor continued.

"In reality, many people dream of stardom. But amongst the many, only a few can truly rise and live well through art. But even they don't understand the meaning of art."

Many dreamed of making a life through art. But unfortunately, without popular consensus from the public, not many people can achieve their goal.

“World-class artisans and their works are reputable, that meant many people know their names, and received lots of praises. They created works of art that are often overpriced. But a look at their works, even experts in the field sometimes said they don’t feel an ounce of inspiration. But for many who really truly love art can no long walk those roads due to personal reasons or placed their family before themselves.”

“.....”

“To make a piece of art isn’t difficult. A child first painting of his mother is art; or even paintings on a wall during prehistoric time, as a well wish from the hunter’s family to return home safely, is consider as one. The art’s value is only in the mind of the beholder. What art is, in addition to the beauty it depicts, are what people’s heart postulates what the drawing or the statue represents; and there are boundless of possibilities.”

The students quietly listened to the professor’s rant. They were in the middle of discussing the Royal Road’s system; and now random stories were flowing out that they could not keep up.

“Now lets go back to talk about Royal Road? Artists create their works and are subjected to the evaluation of Masterpiece, Classic, or Magnum with its own Artistic Value. But by this method that it

poses a very difficult question regarding the piece upon its completion. In this example, the question is the mistake you made along the way when creating the piece. Or that is to say, you did not make a single mistake when working on the piece, and have made an identical representation; the system will still devalue the art.”

Lee Hyun nodded his head.

He sculpted numerous of statues in Royal Road; even when he hadn't made a single mistake on a piece, that work still did not come out to be a Masterpiece. While some relatively well made pieces received more Artistic Value than the former, or some didn't receive any at all.

“In our world, from ancient times, there were many virtuosos. So imagine being evaluated based on their standards? So by which means does the Royal Road system assess your skills by taking in the inputs of our eras past artists, is there a specific method or notation, or something else?”

The students regarded the matter in an unbiased manner. Taking in all the expressions from all the works existed and set it on a standard. However, the professor denied their assumption.

“If you are not to create anything new but constantly acknowledging and compared to the past's expressions, essentially you're standing still. Similarly, others are forced to do the same and cannot overcome it. To be able to witness and create works comparable to past virtuosos, but cannot overcome them to achieve true greatness; is frustrating.”

Silent swept the students.

Listening to the professor, it was too complicated.

Artists' works should be evaluated in a fair manner. The fact is the problem is difficult to resolve.

“Many experts praised works? The works will be judged subjectively, depending on the differences between the masses or within a niche of people. Many works of art faces rejection due to the point of view from the mainstream.”

“.....”

“Though, to speak of, the Royal Road system is under complete security. To evaluate a piece of art, it's classified information.”

“Don't you know, professor?”

In respond to the student's question, the professor showed a slightly embarrassed smile.

“In fact, I do not know how the system process and give Artistic Values. Maybe in a percentage, the level of the skills effect the value, but perhaps there are more than hundreds of variables to calculate the score. Or possibly, thousands?”

“If it’s that many...it’ll be difficult to obtain a good score.”

Shortly afterward, the many students who secretly fantasized about becoming an artist gloomed. If there was clear information regarding the criteria of how the value was given, it’d be easier to get a good score; but an unknown criterion with hundreds of variables would be difficult to solve.

The professor shook his head.

“I told you before, art isn’t difficult. A look, a feel, and if you can enjoy it, that’s enough. Rather than matching the hundreds of criteria, just go with what you think is better and create; because Royal Road is just a space in virtual reality.”

“.....”

“Royal isn’t a simple game. Would it be that great if the skills were only at that level? Royal Road here is another world with a complete history from the beginning of its inception. In real life, is it possible to transform what you value in your mind to reality? Virtual reality realistically depicts reality, and it means something more. Not only can you, in essence, achieve your dream, but you can also enjoy it as the space hands out challenges to be flattened.”

The professor had a job in Royal Road.

His class was Landscaper.

His job was to maintain and cultivate beautiful flowers and trees.

The reason behind this particular class was when he obtained a quest at the beginning.

It was thank to a child sitting while watching a flower withering. Then the professor offered the child with a piece of advice on how to bring up the flower.

Then a quest occurred!

The professor gave the flower fertilizers and watered it as it revived. He took it as a sign to be a Landscaper, to cultivate flowers and trees and make them thrive.

Sometimes he got jobs to look after extravagant gardens, but sadly, there weren't many of those. Of course, he was poorer than others, and he was proud but it wasn't anything to boast about.

However, one time, the flowers attracted butterflies with its aroma under a starlit night.

It was a beautiful sight as the flowers bloomed.

It bloomed and faded away; in just one moment, it gave a great impression.

Royal Road was filled with exotic sights, that was its purpose.

The professor said forcibly.

“A space where people can achieve their dreams. Future lessons will be on real life and virtual reality in combination.”

After the lecture, the students left the classroom one after another.

“Oh I’m hungry.”

“Let’s go quickly to get food. I don’t wanna be late and wait in line. What’ll you do afterward?”

“The library?”

“I have club activities.”

Other students were coming into class as it changes course. Lee Hyun then know it was the right time to leave.

Even though they were in the same department, nobody talked to Lee Hyun. He was essentially labeled as a returnee. In clothes that way past its prime, while bearing a face they didn’t recognize, he was easily ignored.

‘I got to eat lunch.’

Lee Hyun slowly moved alone.

Carrying his homemade lunch to the campus lawn!

Instead of being like the other who came and went to the cafeteria to get their lunch.

A picnic like relaxing tone. Some were eating in a relaxed mood, while others lying on the lawn to sleep.

College student romantic and atmosphere situation!

Many smiles on the faces of the students who were in the shades.

Lee Hyun, too, took out a lunch box to eat.

Ugokugok. (eating)

Radish kimchi and white rice!

A simple but tasty meal.

‘The kimchi hadn’t been soaked well.’

Nowadays, eating kimchi sold by the market was popular.

‘But at least the ingredients genuine.’

Lee Hyun was ok with the price because it'd be much more expensive if he was to soak the kimchi by himself.

Meanwhile, a brisk wind blew.

The students chatter and laughter from all around. Spring is coming.

‘Sleepy.’

After the meal, he let out a stretch and yawns followed.

Two hours till next lecture!

He could go to the library but there was no particular book he needed.

‘There's no internet at times like these.’

He's now on an adventure in the vampire's kingdom, so sooner or later he'll have to check on the prices of the items.

‘Maybe it's telling me to take a nap?’

Lying on the grass as Lee Hyun closed his eyes.

Though the wind was a bit chilly, it was a beautiful sunny day and the weather was great for a nap.

He closed his eyes, and in a short while, he drifted off.

Then, after finishing off their meals in the cafeteria, the students from the Virtual Reality department came out and passed by him.

“Hey, is that not the Seonbae?”

“Yea, looks like him. Seems like he ate here.”

“That must be right. But look at that.”

“Eating and sleeping.....”

“Ugh, so embarrassing!”

The students increased their paces to pass Lee Hyun quickly.

He was a sample of laziness and idleness.

Lee Hyun, more than before, was shunned by the students.

His afternoon course was about the Technological aspect of Virtual Reality. And he saw some familiar faces.

Choi Sang-Jun, Min Sura, and Lee Yu-Chong who were taking similar classes.

“Hey.”

When Lee Hyun approached them, their faces stricken.

“Ah, Hello!”

“.....”

“Did you want to sit here?”

“Is it alright?”

“We’ll go to the back seat.”

“You don’t have to. I’ll go back there.”

“No no. We’ll do it.”

They deliberately rose from the front seat and moved to the back.

Similar with the two that showed up afterward. They were students of the martial art department, so it was even more shocking. At first, they spoke in low form (less honorific) until he looked up; then it became unbearable for them too look at him straight in the eyes.

There were many, but Lee Hyun sat alone.

Lecture time was approaching and students continued to pour in, but no one sat next to Lee Hyun. Most of the reason why was due to the two he faced earlier, everyone else simply avoided him in fear of the unknown.

Ddiriririri.

Four minutes until the lecture officially began, Lee Hyun heard the phone rang.

He purchased an old and used phone to keep in touch with his sister while in college.

The three dimensional images that was so common when one calls did not show up, nor was this able to get online due to it being a discontinued antique phone.

Through the phone, a cheerful voice of Shin Hye-Min came over.

- Hello, Lee Hyun nim.

*

During the KMC media Planning Committee.

Everyone who was involved in broadcasting Royal Road was to find new item. Trends were quickly becoming out-of-fashion; no matter how fresh the material was, after a week or so, the committee would discard said material.

“How is it going with the other day’s precipitated proboscidean analysis?”

“Will be done before noon tomorrow.”

“Too late! You’re working on that overtime and get it finish before today end at all costs. Don’t even think about leaving your office until it’s done!”

“Keoheok!”

Director Kang Han-Seop was pushing the employees.

Broadcasting was the only thing, but it was busy every day.

KMC was growing as a media broadcaster, so one pretty much was expected to be working all day without sleep.

“Nowadays, there is an increase of beginners playing, so what do you think about programs directed at them?”

“That’s not bad. Is the age group high?”

“Yes. The majority of them are seniors.”

“Then the broadcasting contents are easily resolved. I think it’ll be fine to place emphasis on the path of the adventure. Broadcasting time...lets make it at 10 in the evening.”

“Overlap it with the Terrestrial Drama.”

“To make it comfortable for the family to gather in order to watch.”

The number of elders playing Royal Road was moderate, but shouldn’t be overlooked; since the number increases proportionally as each month passed. They were beings slow to adapting to new changes, but the generation has the purchasing power that was very formidable if they ever get involved.

“We got to seize them from the beginning. If our broadcast captures their attention during their novice time, this generation of gamers will become loyal followers.”

“Yes!”

“Attach in advertisements you investigated that are enticing to the seniors.”

“If you want the viewership and have the committee coming up with advertisements, then I don’t think that’s a good idea at all.”

The rapidly growing KMC Media.

Due to and the increasing of the popularity of Royal Road, the advertising fee that gets attach to the program is also on the rise.

But due to the increasing birthrate of new channels broadcasting games, the competition was fierce. Even the channels which only specialize in Royal Road were scared of the increasing trend.

“But Director-nim, what would entail in this month’s special program?”

One member asked silently.

He really didn’t want to say have a rerun, but there was only a few days left until the date.

Unlike regular broadcasts, the special program ran once per month and featured a special story on the Versailles continent. The date, which loomed about in five days.

“How is the relationship between the two warring guilds, Legend of the Hammer Guild and the Silver Wings?”

“We already did two takes on them.”

“What about the adventurer who traveled north?”

“It was late last month, I don’t think he succeeded.”

“Well, is there anything fresh?”

Director Kang and other members stricken.

Fresh events in Royal Road were dwindling, while KMC Media steadily continued its timely and accurate reports.

Newly discovered locations.

Quests.

Warring forces!

They were deep events of storytelling that builds the Versailles continent’s history.

Nevertheless, the special programs did quite well for the station.

Director Kang and the others bound their heads in their hands and groaned, until a new suggestion entered the conversation.

“How about we intersect it with some of our broadcasts?”

“After all, would it be better to broadcast the people flocking to the north?”

“Ok, the north. It’s still going through consecutive broadcasts, but there’s probably something there the regular program didn’t retell.”

“That’s true.”

That suggestion was easily accepted, and time drifted on hopelessly. But suddenly, Director Khang’s eyes followed the stream to an empty seat.

“Why is it I don’t see Sin Hye-Min ssi?”

“Didn’t you know? She’s on an adventure in Royal Road, so she couldn’t make it to this meeting.”

“Is that so?”

“She’s lucky.”

Director Kang and the other members weren't really concern about Sin Hye-Min situation as they were so busy with the matters at hand.

However, Sin Hye-Min showed up at long last.

“Hello.”

She arrived two hours before the actual broadcast, hence she would attend the meeting.

Director Kang inquired.

“Sin Hye-Min ssi, what are you so busy with?”

“I'm sorry. I don't have much time because of the quest. I just want to check up on you since I have a bit of time.”

“What is the quest?”

Director Kang didn't expect much from the answer that followed after he asked.

“I'm on a quest together with Weed nim.”

“Weed? Is that right. Which Weed?”

“You know which.”

“How can you be sure who I know?”

“You can’t not know. How can you not know Weed nim?”

“I only know of two that goes by that name. Are you talking about the Jeonshin Weed?” (it had many meaning, but the one that’s resemble this story means: predecessor, antecedent, ancestor, original. Basically this prefix was for the ‘Weed’ of the previous game, which he sold the acc for 3 mill. I rather like the word antecedent.)

“Yes.”

Director Kang jumped out of his seat.

“You’re on a quest with that Weed?”

Weed.

A common name for a very common grass.

Many users in Royal Road know of that name.

And as a broadcaster, he was the benefactee of such a handle.

The brutal orc Karichwi.

The battle against the Immortal Legion received a sensational audience.

There was a sense of urgency when he led the Dark Elves and Orcs to fight against Rich Shire!

To Kang, stereotypical siege was just a struggle, while he was on the edge of his seat during this event.

Since then, his name broadened as a broadcaster, and finally had dinner with a peace of mind on such matters.

Then from out of nowhere.

During the Northern Expedition battle against the dragon, he suddenly showed up and fought fantastically.

With a method nobody thought of.

Clearly proven he was the Jeonshin Weed.

“So you’re on this quest with Weed...”

“To be precise, we haven’t gotten there. But we’ve been through

many adventures along the way.”

“What is the quest?”

“It’s to reach the Vampire Kingdom, Todeum.”

Director Kang and the other eyes filled with suspicion.

“Where is the Vampire Kingdom? Has it always been on the Versailles continent? Is it a newly discovered location in the north?”

“No. Actually, it’s the place where a vampire named Tori grew...”

The director and others listened as Sin Hye-Min’s retold the story.

The gates of the Vampire Kingdom only open once. If you die, everything ends.

The expedition left for the unknown world.

Their adventure!

As if he seemed to hear the number of audiences climbing.

Director Kang shouted.

“This is the special program. No, cancel that! On the other hand, they still have a month left. What if we schedule this as a regular program? Call him! Call Weed and persuade him to broadcast this!”

*

Lee Hyun was sitting in the classroom while on the phone cautiously.

“What you call me about?”

- Yes, actually, I want to talk to you regarding a broadcast.

“A show? What’s this about? Are you saying KMC Media wants to broadcast my adventure as a program?”

As soon as the sentence left his mouth, the still growing crowd in the lecture hall became still momentarily.

“.....”

The students stopped what they were doing and paid close attention to Lee Hyun.

The students of the department of Virtual Reality.

After graduation will be doing various jobs depending on their fields.

Even for those who current doesn't have Royal Road.

They want to learn about VR because they were motivated by Royal Road.

And the one place where the majority of them obtain news regarding Royal Road was KMC Media!

‘What we did was not good, huh?’

‘No way, couldn't be.’

They were dubious, but still listened to Lee Hyun's call.

- Yea, that's correct. I want to broadcast our adventure in the Vampire Kingdom, Todeum. But I need permission to do so.

“Hye-Min ssi need my permission?”

- Yes, because you're the one that leads the party as Weed nim. I saved the videos of everybody on the adventure, but it'd be morally wrong if I was to broadcast the clips without your permission. If you get the ok from the others, each can get a salary, and you'll also get the consultation fee.

The students were in frenzies.

‘Hye-Min ssi? Couldn’t be Sin Hye-Min?’

‘Why would that returnee receive a call from Shin Hye-Min?’

‘With that famous host?’

These people knew all too well about the name that came from Lee Hyun’s mouth; the famous commentator of the Versailles continent, Shin Hye-Min.

The surprise filled students became unspeakable.

“Well, I get the jist of it. Fill me in more in the future.”

- Yes. I hope to have an answer as soon as possible, since the station’s members are in an uproar. Ah, actually, I forgot since they went so crazy about Weed nim’s adventure in the Vampire Kingdom Todeum, but there a catch regarding the broadcasting schedule. They wanted to make an episode once every two days regarding this adventure. Take your time and we’ll talk later with more details.

“Definitely.”

Lee Hyun hung up the phone.

Then came a flood of students who pretended to be close.

There was a competition to see who could get the two empty seats beside Lee Hyun!

Triririri.

Lee Hyun phone rang again.

The student' body stiffened.

'Is Shin Hye-Min calling again.'

'No way...'

'I want just a chance...'

They were quietly waiting with frustration.

But they still kept their mouth closed.

Lee Hyun lifted the phone to answer, but it was another voice that came out.

- Bored so I phoned you. What are you doing now?

Like a crystal clear voice tuned to musical instruments.

It was Jeong Hyo Lynn.

“Ah, Jeong Hyo Lynn ssi. I’m waiting for the lecture to begin.”

- Please excuse me, did I interrupt?

“Nah, don’t worry, the professor hadn’t come yet.”

- So you have a few minutes to talk.

“Well, yea. Oh, I heard you have a new song out?”

- How’d you know?

“It was an article on the internet. Something about Jeong Hyo Lynn’s imminent release of the song.”

- Yes, it’s just a single.

The students ridiculed.

They were suspicious of the first call, but to get this second call from Jeong Hyo Lynn, who was a singer.

‘I knew something was up.’

‘Damn prank.’

‘Psh, what do you do to receive a call from Lynn?’

‘I saw through your bluff.’

The students continued to deride him. As implied, from that point onward, Lee Hyun’s present was thoroughly ignored.

Chapter 6: The Law Of Local Procurement

People were coming to Morata day by day. Visitors flocked to the north because of the scent of adventure and new quests.

“Wizard, level 310. Skill set atmospheric magic, looking for a party.”

“Come this way, Wizard nim”

“I’m here!”

“Identifier, level 296. I focus on traps but can also identify things for you.”

“Identifier nim, I’ll let you take care of the items. Join our party!”

“Since we got the offensive lacking Identifier nim, what quest do you want to get?”

The town square was abuzz with people looking for parties.

In every part of the north, new quests and stories were being born.

So every Adventurer wanted to make the best of it!

When they hunted monsters in some dungeon, the chance of them acquiring good items was rare. But here, some given quests can lead them to be the first discoverers of some unknown dungeon, where they will get double experience and the good items drop rate will also increase.

Many of the adventurers gathered in Morata to find faithful compatriots to face the risks. And because of this, Morata became the most prosperous town.

“Polearm! Nothing is more comparable than polearm in combat. A weapon that excels in attack and defense, this might be the last chance for you. Check its stats!”

“Kadallina Dagger. The only weapon in his name. You can find out its value before purchasing.....”

Players were squatting in the town’s square as they waited for potential prospects to sell their stuff obtained through hunting. Precious items were sold to the players directly as they can get a better value than that from in-game shops.

“Black Iron! Selling items made specifically through Black Irons. These were created by the Blacksmith Geam. These were made at the Intermediate levels and will blow anyone away. However, items are non-refundable after purchase! No guarantee future repairs for dents and damages.”

“Masterwork Shield production. Align yourself with a custom made shield from Paberu, whom recognized as a master craftsman upon reaching Intermediate level in Blacksmith.”

“Items that provides magic. I have from one day, three days, and a full week.”

From Blacksmiths to Seamstresses, Enchanters and Tamers gathered. The north was filled with erratic swarms of monsters and traps. Life crisis happened at every turn here, so naturally called for a great deal of demands on specialized equipments. The market for equipments and commerce developed rapidly, which called for various blue-collar jobs. Now, Morata’s name was widespread amongst users as a place to obtain and exchange things, and the adventurers have been endless.

“The land’s fertile and wide. Now we just need wheat seeds.”

“There must be somewhere in the mine.”

The farmers, miners, and grazers also came to Morata for the opportunity. The vacant land was cleared; and from the clearings, mines were founded. For those who found them, they only have to pay an estimated tax to own the land; so miners came and searched the land as adventurers in order to strike rich quick with a gold mine.

Morata was the north’s central city!

To be honest, it was flattering to call it that. The number of people deviate from the standard value for a population because it was low, it was also lacking in buildings. Nevertheless, the village was growing everyday as more and more people came to pass. Another part of Morata that was busy besides the adventurous warriors leaving were the producers; which were always can be seen working on something.

And the night life after the sun went down!

The once busy streets in broad daylight were completely abandoned. The main reason was because people were crowding at the Light Tower near the rocky mountain area.

“How on earth can this wonderful sculpture captures the human’s sensitivity so subtly?”

“It makes me want to get to know the Engraver more.”

On the other hand, for the warriors and mages, they hurried to the battle zone as soon as they saw the light.

“Let’s go!”

“To the hunt.”

They wanted to make use of the duration of the buffs from the

sculpture as much as possible to hunt monsters.

Similar to the Eiffel Tower in France or the Statue of Liberty in New York, each symbolizes individually great city; Morata became famous and flourished through the Light Tower. The information was widespread regarding the subject; now many towns and cities knew of the Light Tower of Morata. Through its workforce, committed care for health, the city's name further widespread. Many of the northern cities know of Morata's achievements, but its Light Tower made it worthy of its recognition. That is the thing people recalls once they had a reminiscent regarding the north.

Another reason why the number of tourists never seemed to dwindle was that of its citywide development, thus the role of the Light Tower was even greater as the city's landmark.

For those who traveled to Morata from Roseheim Kingdom, these were the words they exhale in exhaustion!

“Is this Morata?”

“The Sculptor Weed nim is the prince of this city?”

“I heard they give you porridge when you come!”

The village Elder ruled over Morata province in place of Weed's.

“I want the town's residents no longer have to go hungry.”

So he had the city go through a large scale development. The city cultivated the land with crops to relieve the food shortages. Since plants grew so well in the north, the once starving resident thrived and its population increased.

The investments to obliterate the vicious cycle!

Morata have clear another space of wilderness. Reclaimed land can be planted with wheat, vegetables, and plants. First harvest will be four months after which.

Clearing Area: 140,000 Py (1 Py = 3.3058 m², so about 370 soccer fields)

Economic Growth: 7

Tax Revenue: 800 Gold per month

Grain Yield: 830% increase

In terms of investment, the income yield was inefficient. However, since Morata's population was increasing, this sort of investment was well required. For the clearing of the fields, the village elder spent as much as 30,000 Gold in this project.

“The town's buildings are too underdeveloped. Have to the increase the pride of the village residents by cleaning up.”

2000 Gold were given for street cleaning, and 260,000 Gold were invested to housing and commercial constructions. Numerous maintenances, and even a marble gate was built at the entrance of the village. For the pride of the people!

Morale of Morata's residents is 89.

Sanitation and Health Status modified to Very Good.

Whenever adventurers visited the village elder's home; in this case, Bantem, Kunta and Horeugan brought back things from monsters such as the horde of Barbarians they've hunted in Yodeum's Evil Lair. In other cities, these materials could get them up to 200 Gold and around 30 Reputation points when handling them over. But in the Elder's case, this too was also unusual.

"Oh, you did a great job. We, the people of Morata, will never forget your help."

As the village Elder fussed over something seemingly was not big a deal, Bantem replied bluntly.

"As warriors, we're simply doing as dictated."

"No, no. You've helped relieve fear for us from these monsters of our troubled past."

For Morata's village Elder, as well as all its inhabitants, their fear regarding monsters was a bit unusual, as it was due to the fact they were harassed by a vampire clan in the past. That was why the elder was very fond of the warriors.

“You guys were given the task of taking care of things for our cherished and beloved residents, and I would like to exercise the power on behalf of our Lord. Although this may seem insufficient, I hope to take care of your expenses.”

Ttiring!

Reward for commissioned is 360 Gold.

Reputation increase by 46.

“So much money...”

“Please come back with more monsters. We'll pay more.”

The village elder paid heartily!

In the Lord's stead, he gave a lot. The 130,000 Gold Weed left behind dissipated quickly; so from then on, they heavily relied on the income tax as the revenue source.

The people of Morata revered the warriors that took care of the monsters, and the warriors, in turn, were rewarded with a large

amount of fame. Thus, the village elder had to spend a lot of money, this caused the income tax to rise.

Then, on the part of the adventurers; while questing, they had to fork out their money to take care of their equipments, as well as money for food, and even paying for a room at the hostels.

As for the monsters' byproducts and whatever else, they can be processed and remade into leather as well as other products; which caused the prices for the items to increase dizzyingly.

On the other hand, technology, agricultural, and industrial side of Morata were underdeveloped, everything except for the textile industry!

They grew and went on to creating excellent leathers and cloths, which merchants and adventurers bought readily even at expensive prices. This was the main revenue source for Morata.

Still, the village elder did not forgive the increase in tax.

“As thanks for being under the constant observance of goddess Freya, I'd like to make this donation to our brethren.”

“Ooohh, may blessing come unto thee.”

A significant amount of 5000 Gold was offered.

In addition, other cultural projects went underway. Even though guilds related to combat weren't established, the artist guilds spared no effort to start up. Conferences, art shows, etc., money flowed through these like water. Day by day throughout Morata, variety of window displays, sculptures, and paintings grew into the thousands.

“Keukeukeukeu.” (laughter)

“The owner left.”

“Let's fly. We are now free.”

Wa-1-yi, Wa-2-yi, Wa-3-yi, Wa-5-yi, Wa-6-yi, Wa-7-yi!

They were happy. Their exploiting and oppressing owner was in the world of vampires; although temporary, it was freedom. It wasn't a paradise.

Cheoeok! (a choke.)

The first to spoke through the sound of the wings was Wa-1-yi.

“We have to indulge, but how!”

“Yeah.”

“I’m distressed.”

The wyverns enthusiastically replied.

“Golgol. It was insufferable because I got the wrong owner. Look at what happened to my golden shell. Golgol!”

Geuminyi knocked on his head.

“Cold and hungry...now, sweet freedom after the suffering. We have the right to enjoy this freedom. Cause here and now, NO OWNER!”

He was elated, as for the simple reason that weed had left. But nevertheless, he was still under Weed’s command. Before leaving for the world of vampires, Weed called for the Wyverns and Geumniyi and preached eloquently.

“Looking down from this vast sky, checking on walking monsters. Wa-3-yi!”

“Speak, Master!”

“To you, what does Wyvern means?”

“The lord of the sky, the strong and fast Wyvern, is this right?”

“That’s right.”

At this time, Wa-3-yi was stuffing himself with chicken wings vigorously. Of course, the rare praise from Weed also made him feel good. But the praises and encouragements also had another meaning.

“So why on earth are my Wyverns weaker than those weak monsters walking on the ground!? So the Wyverns, lords of the sky, flinched against them and spread your wings. The wings are just convenience excuse so you can avoid those inferior walking monsters!!”

Weed fiercely criticized the Wyverns for their weakness.

“Sorry, master.”

The Wyverns were ashamed and didn’t know what to do. But in actuality, they were weak because of Weed’s lacking in proficiency when created them; but they, all the same, were convinced because of their low intelligence.

“Be strong! The Kingdom will no longer exist if you continue to let others forfeit their lives to those weak monsters. As true lords of the sky, you guys will not lose any of your colleagues at all costs!”

“Kuoooooooo!”

“You were concerned about us regarding this.”

Their beaks(snout?) trembled with emotions. Weed at the time of his departures, left a goal for these Wyverns to accomplish with his speech.

“Gotta get stronger.”

They moved around freely on the hunting ground while growing stronger. Even though their owner wasn't there, they still followed his guidelines. And for a while now, they knew why they were adhering to Weed's commands faithfully.

Leadership and Charisma!

The stats affinities were higher than most toward the Wyverns as they were directly created by Weed. Everybody was growing slowly while following Weed's commands.

“I'd like to get some fresh air today.”

But Wa-1-yi chill time went beyond of that his hunting time. He stood on a high cliff with his wings folded, feeling strong, while uselessly stood in his place with a rabbit prey in hand. The other Wyverns behind him were also just as bad.

“Keukeukeu.” (laughter)

“This thing is good.”

“Eat more, c’mon and eat more!”

Their hunting time was increasingly shorter. The Wyverns were indulging themselves; passing their peaceful days outside in the meadow sleeping and loafing about!

“We came and pretty much did everything.”

“Gotta have a break.”

“When the owner’s not here we gotta rest. Certainly when he comes back, we’ll be in a world of hurt then.”

“Come and play.”

They still hunted sometimes, but it became very little. No matter how high the Leadership and Charisma stats were, if one were absent, it’d become less influencing. And this was one of the results from Weed reduce in control.

“Keukeukeu.”

“Happiness. Such a cozy feeling to have.”

The Wyverns were indulging themselves on the ground. While

being lazy, they were stuffing themselves with delicious things. As a result, they were rapidly fattening. Number of necks grew(weird...but I guessing the fat in the neck came in layers), while their abdomens were no longer able to flexed out, and remained convex. As for other parts, such as their wings, they were severely impaired. Although not a big deal, as they were originally crafted slender, the growing stoutness significantly reduced their flying speed.

Maybe a little more of this recurring actions they'll no longer be able to fly!

“The ground is also good.”

“Yea. We had to flap hard just to stay floating in the sky.”

The Wyverns banded together on land.

Feet's turn!

Now, sometimes, when hunting, they had to resort to running on the ground.

Step by step!

*

When Weed connected, Maylon was already telling the party

regarding the broadcast.

“KMC Media is insanely interested in our adventure.”

Pale was quite surprised. He had a lot of interest regarding broadcasted materials, but he had never imagined one of their adventures would go on air.

Maylon said with a smile.

“We are pretty much the only people ever to have an adventure in the land of Vampires. So, is it alright if we can air this?”

Since Hwaryeong saw no reason as to why not, she nodded willingly.

“I vote for.”

Pale was a bit reluctant, but seeing this as something to promote Maylon's work, he too joined in.

“I too vote yes.”

Romuna, Irene, and Sureaka too, calmly withheld their excitement.

“I’m not saying no. An adventure in the world of Vampire isn’t

something to hide.”

“Though it’s kind of embarrassing to be in a broadcast...it is ok, you know?”

“We’re gunna be aired, yeah!”

There was no need to ask the Geomchis.

As soon as the word broadcasting came out, their attitude since changed.

Those who were sitting idly on the ground shot up and faced the wind, then remain in said position.

Having one’s hair swept by the wind is a wondrous sight!

However, since their hair was either crew cut or shaven, the hair remained motionless.

All the instructors called together a meeting.

“Did y’all saw Weed’s last video?”

“Yes, Geomchi2 sa-hyeong.”

“I hate to say this, but it was cool, huh?”

“The rating was very high.”

“We cannot lose.”

“Definitely. The heroes of this broadcast are us.”

Geomchi3 then said confidently.

“Sa-hyeongs, will you carry out my plan?”

“Can we trust in this?”

“Definitely, we need to make our own song”

“Song?”

“Didn’t you see Weed singing his song?”

Orc Karichwi singing was the worst!

Nevertheless, the song accompanied by the exciting event that it became popular.

“But on our part, we’ll give them a better song.”

“Pretty good idea. I think we’ll be alright if we sing the chorus together. But who’s gunna compose it?”

“We can leave it to Weed to do it. He is experienced in it, and good at it.”

“Leaving it up to Weed seems right.”

The instructors were considering everybody’s inputs.

The practitioners also came up with few ideas.

“It’ll have to show man’s spirit.”

“It has to be loud to seemingly overwhelm enemies.”

“Oh. Gotta show our nice bodies too..then...”

“Yeah! Shirts will be off.”

The general population. The norms that enjoy playing Royal Road could never come up with such idiosyncratic idea.

Taking one’s top off and to fight against monsters? It’s like asking for an immediate death or show that you’re crazy.

No matter how little one’s clothing is, it’s still significant since it

is the main source of defense.

Even if it's just a piece among thousands, when wearing the right armor at the right level, the damage sustained can decrease by half.

Though the only time that the idea is right is when one can tell the damage will be huge, or a desperate need to save the armor from breaking, then it could be considered as a good idea to take it off.

But the absurd opinion from Geomchi38 was aggressively taken to mind by Geomchi3.

“Good idea, Geomchi38.”

“Thanks for minding my idea, Geomchi3 sa-hyeong.”

“But! Ain't it riskier by taking it off?”

“Mhm! I also thought about that. So when we meet a really strong dude, we'll slip away. But for normal mobs, we'll just overwhelm them with our stamina!”

“Sounds cool, solid plan.”

“Geomchi38, I didn't know you were so smart.”

“I don’t wanna boost, but when I was a child, my teacher had praised me.”

Geomchi³⁸ recalled his past with a satisfied look.

Geomchi³ seemingly envious, asked.

“What were you told?”

“She said ‘I have a good head but hate studying.’”

“Oh, such a good compliment.”

School teachers often lie!

They said that every time there was a parent-teacher conference.

Doing so then kids could be sent to school, and paid the tuition.

“I usually procrastinate till the last minute or so, then I start using my head.”

“I see. So attempting things nearing due time is good for you.”

“My retention capacity’s only a 30 minutes worth when it comes to studying.”

“But really now. You guys have something special going on here.”

The usually non-talkative Geomchi intervened.

“Keuheum.” (Ehem)

“Instructors, you guys have something to fill me in on?”

Geomchi² and the other instructors, as well as the practitioners, made haste to comply to their Master’s inquiry.

A moment after their tale was finished, Geomchi words seemingly burdened.

“I think, we need something that symbolizes our teachings.”

“MHM! Though we have a lot of styles, so one line may not encompass for all of us. Could you come up with something, Master?”

“If that’s so. Then to keep it in mind.....”

Geomchi thought to himself for a moment, then boast with a smile.

“Our sword is invincible.”

“.....”

The message was very simple and clear!

But it spoke to many of the Geomchis.

The willingness to face any enemy.

For the sword, even if it's nearing its brink of fracture, it should never break. When a sword under duress, it's because its owner couldn't properly taken care of it.

They have learned swordsmanship for seemingly a lifetime.

And they trusted in it.

For Geomchi, he learned the value of life through it.

For the others, though they were only under his tutelage for just the swordsmanship, they still learned the world through his sword.

They faced the turbulence weather undeterred with their swords.

While continued to sharpen their swords and hone their skills as

they move forward, it signified their bold aspiration and commitment!

Geomchi2 repeated those words.

“Our sword is invincible!”

“Our sword is invincible!”

“Our sword is invincible!”

Geomchis shouted their aspiration.

Weed’s party, a bit further away, also gathered to stage a conference.

Pale's brows furrowed a difficult expression.

“That plan has indignation written all over it.”

Hwaryeong and Zephyr agreed with criticism.

“I think that’s a horrible plan.”

“Can you imagine the Geomchis taking their tops off while shouting ‘our sword is invincible’ at the top of their lungs?”

Suffice to say, the imagined sight was terrible.

And the embarrassment follow was even worse!

At this moment, they were scared of the Geomchis action more than those of the mobs.

The embarrassment at this level would always retain at the back of their mind.

Irene pleaded expressively.

“Weed nim. Can you please do something about this?”

Weed shook his head.

“How can I tell my Sa-hyeongs to dial it down? That’s like subjecting them to an even larger indignation and killing the momentum.”

“Hyuu!”

Everyone groaned, fully knowing they couldn’t do anything have the Geomchis tone things down.

Seechwi at this time finally gave in.

‘I don’t think I’ll ever understand them no matter how many psychiatric evaluation they’re subjected to.’

Until now she had been observing the Geomchis’ mindset, but it was considerably difficult. She struggled on this far more so than that of her doctoral dissertation.

They’re exciting like true men, and then somehow sometimes turned into childish clowns.

It was as if the only thing they knew of were swords and battles, while clueless on how to appeal themselves to the opposite sex.

Their hidden complexity was a current that was impossible to determine its flow.

Nonetheless, one thing was for sure, anyone that could understand the Geomchis bizarre nature was just as twisted as they are.

Weed said.

“But this hype is a necessity.”

Surka lamented.

“But do we really need this...”

Romuna replied shortly.

“Somehow this hype seems to be so troublesome.”

Mapan intervened.

“I think...the best way to decrease this embarrassment is to get the maximum distance from the Geomchis as possible.”

Weed agreed with his opinion after a moment of thought.

“I’m in favor, what about you guys?”

Maylon, Irene, Pale, and Seechwi answered simultaneously almost immediately.

“As far away as possible!”

“Don’t even turn your heads, just pretend you didn’t know!”

“We can reach the top of a hill then speed up when coming down the slope.”

“Chwiik. We got to go.”

Their instantaneous agreement showed how desperate they were.

Coming together!

There were a lot of embarrassing moments in everybody's lives. But when a situation such as hanging out with the Geomchis came forth, it was best to turn tail and run rather than playing along.

And so, a secret countermeasure was put in place.

Seukseuk.(brushing)

Yurin was still sitting on the ground painting in her sketchbook.

She had been drawing without taking a single break to increase her skill proficiency.

Zephyr had slipped away from his colleagues meeting regarding the Geomchis and pondered at the sight before him.

‘I wonder how she lived to trust her brother so much.’

A little while back, Weed's words to Yurin were kept to a minimal, yet somehow, the message from one to another was well understood.

Her parents died when she was young, so it was tough having a steady home.

‘I don’t know how anyone lived without money. Even the dolls I had were foreign made.’

Zephyr had never first hand experienced any kind of poverty.

When he was a kid, instead of toys to play with, he was handed jewelry and many things that shouldn’t be given to a kid.

Only times where he’d went without money was when he didn’t receive his allowance for not cleaning his room, or had his platinum credit card taken away for a slip in his grades.

His one crushing trauma was when he didn’t have the money to go to night clubs with his friends the week after.

‘She is such a nice and pretty girl to live such a heart wrenching life.’

Zephyr couldn’t endure watching from the side.

He didn’t know anything regarding Yurin and was not appropriate to console her.

He thought she should at the very least smile a lot more while enjoying Royal Road, but now only to encounter an embarrassing

moment brought on by the Geomchis.

Zephyr said to her kindly.

“It’s alright. It’ll be fine.”

“Hm?”

Yurin seemingly confused, as she didn’t understand what she was told.

She was enjoying painting. Envisioned what color goes where to produce a beautiful painting.

She was happy when finished her drawing!

This was a good thing, so she brooded over what she was told from next to her.

Due to the unusual reaction, Zephyr said cautiously.

“Umm, have you not heard? Due to the Geomchis embarrassing actions, we called together a meeting to plan what we should do.”

Yurin’s eyes twinkled.

“Why? Aren’t they cool?”

“.....”

Zephyr jaw dropped.

“I drew a picture of it to keep for a long time. On another note, I can sell this to girls for money. Hehehe.”

“.....”

Zephyr felt a cold sweat running down his spine.

He was momentarily captured by Yurin’s cuteness.

But she was still Weed’s younger sister. This was absolutely not something that could be easily overlooked.

*

Weed and the party continued to move eastward toward Todeum.

According to the information gather from Seirun, the trip could take as much as ten days!

“Really tough.”

Zephyr heaved a heavy sigh.

Under normal conditions, there would be some sort of transportation via horses or carriages for such a journey. But here and now, it was the world of vampires.

There was no such convenience.

Although there was Mapan's wagon, but it could only seat a limited amount of people; only Irene, Hwaryeong, Romuna, and Yurin were those that rode it as they had low stamina.

“Heokheok.” (wheezing)

“Damn, really.”

They were slowly traversing the road; and whenever anyone felt out of stamina, Irene would cast magic spells that restores physical properties.

After a full day of walking until the evening, the party would rest to eat. Of course, the foods were made by Weed.

“I'll make food that'll increase stamina and decrease fatigue for ten days or so.”

Weed put herbs into the chicken.

Well stuffed chicken!

Of course, the mix of herbs contained very little ginseng or dry bellflower, as to not let their scent ruined the chicken flavor.

“It’s only still broiling and I’m already hooked.”

Everyone traveled the same span of time and distance. All were physically tired, the toll on their mind called for a rest as well. Nevertheless, Weed still had to prepare the large quantity of food.

As a matter of fact, Hwaryeong and Yurin tugged on Weed’s sleeves to offer their assistance, only to be declined by him.

“Usually I don’t mind, but this time the food needs to be much better than other times, so it’s better if I do make it myself.”

When people with low cooking skill cooks, they tends to be very wasteful of the cooking materials.

“Ok, but if it gets too tough, call me.”

“Brother, I can lend you a hand anytime.”

Hwaryeong and Yurin were forced to retreat.

After eating a hearty meal of herbal chicken stew, Weed resumed

to his usual actions at night.

Sagaksagak. (carving sound)

Weed was carving a sculpture while walking. Using the plain method of actually carving rather than relying on his actual skills to sculpt the wood.

“Every little thing when comes together will always bear fruit to something greater.”

When he created a Magnum piece, his skill proficiency rose considerably. But until now, despite having carved maybe a dozen pieces per day, many of which were Classic rather than Magnum pieces.

When relaxing after a battle, if he wasn't carving, he would sow or did smithing. Or fishes while he sculpted

Comparing to the long cooking hours and preparations, carving was as simple as pulling a piece of wood out and begin.

As his goal was far away, he knew it would take a long while before achieving it.

And he tirelessly devoted to travel that long path knowing that it was the fastest way to make his dream comes true.

Attaining his dream through sculptures, as well as other acquired production skills; they were his driving force.

An endless road of physical labor.

More than the being strong or the aptitude to learn, was the will of complete devotion.

Though relying on just that is simply exasperating.

So there is another reason for one wanting to become stronger.

On Versailles continent, there were numerous dungeons and hunting grounds, as well as a wide variety of quests. To face and fight stronger monsters and overcoming the risks was the main reason for him to get stronger.

So purposefully continuing, the constant work was not at all tedious.

They have traveled for three days.

From onto the wagon, Hwaryeong asked apologetically.

“Weed nim. Isn’t walking getting harder?”

“No. I’m just worry over the broadcasting material!”

“.....”

Weed had a suddenly realization about the broadcasting thing.

The eating and the blindly walking constantly should not be the only materials being broadcast.

If things continued the way they are, it'll turn away many viewers.

With the thought of the money obtain corresponding to the broadcasting materials in mind; he sped up his speed toward Todeum to a much quicker pace.

Hwaryeong this time around, questioned Geomchi9.

“Is it bad?”

“No.”

Geomchi9 replied valiantly!

“If it's too tough you can take my place.”

“I'm only using a fraction of my power.”

“.....”

Seeing as Weed and all the Geomchis were used to the hard work and physical training, she didn't give it a second thought.

In Zephyr, Maylon, Pale, and Sureuka's cases, they took turn to rest on the wagon.

Of course Mapan, the merchant, remained on the ride continuously.

Lunch time that day!

The traveling group and the wagon finally crossed the mountain.

The wildflowers and the blooming trees engulfed every degree of their sights.

Whenever a breeze blown past, the flowers all danced to its sweep. The temporary sight of the tens of thousands of petals flying in the wind was spectacular.

“Woow!”

A once in a lifetime sight.

Numerous petals dancing in the sky to the will of the wind, as

well as the fragrant that came and went left the party wanting.

In the northern part of the continent, it was a struggle everyday against the harsh nature for everyone; but the sight bore before them in the land of Vampires was breathtaking.

A beautiful scenery out of this world!

Yurin asked.

“Brother, can we rest here a little?”

Irene and Romnyuna couldn't help but agreed to it.

“Yes Weed nim! Let's take a break here. It's not good to let this opportunity pass.”

“Just an hour here. It's been too tiring.”

They did not voice themselves, but Hwaryeong, Maylon, and Surka also thought the place was good. Such a beautiful place to kick back and relax to wash away all the fatigue accumulated.

In fact, the physical fatigue can somewhat be controlled via the use of magic and foods, but not the mental fatigue amassed.

The constant movement, while tedious, was a pain. In this

natural flowerbed stretched before them, they all wanted to relax.

But some did not get their hopes up.

‘There’s no way Weed nim will stay at this place for such a meaningless reason.’

‘Just give up and go.’

Susceptible to his ways!

In normal cases, Relaxing was not Weed’s way of doing things.

But for some reason, Weed readily agreed.

“Yep, this place is good, but I think one hour is too short. Let’s stay here for seven hours or so.”

“Kyaa, really?”

Surka cheered. The other girls were also happy.

The unbelievable scenery of blossoming flowers within the mountain created a good atmosphere.

However, Mapan and Zephyr eyes were filled with suspicion.

‘It’s not normal for Weed nim to do this.’

‘No way, could it be there are monsters in the area?’

They scanned the flower garden.

A scene hard to find elsewhere on heaven and earth alike; filled with blossoming flower and blooming plants, while the dragonflies and butterflies lazily flutter, a magnificent picture filled with serenity.

There was no dungeon, nor were there any monsters that could be spotted.

In the case of monsters, archers would have sighted them outright with their buffed up visions.

‘Then what is the reason.’

Mapan and Zephyr were locked in agony rather than relaxing.

Hwaryeong, Irene, and Romuna thought to themselves.

‘Weed nim must have also wanted to rest while viewing the beautiful flowers and trees. Perhaps he might also want to take a stroll with me...’

‘Seems like Weed nim is still a brother who can’t refuse his dear sister’s request. Aside from his usual actions, he’s secretly a real family man with sensitivity.’

‘Such a really beautiful place. Of course, an artist of his caliber could not pass up a place like this. Is Weed min trying to conjure up his inspiration in this place? He’s going to sculpt a great statue!’

Romyuna’s opinion was fairly straightforward and plausible, so she told the whole party of it.

Naturally, the reaction was explosive.

“Wut, really?”

“He’s going to sculpt? Then we get to watch the work from beginning to end?”

Hwaryeong eyes sparkled.

Maylon did not hide her expectation.

“Yes! Or else he wouldn’t have bother calling for a seven hours break.”

“Wah, I get what you’re saying. That’s definitely it!”

Weed, on a daily basis, created a lot of sculptures.

Delicate and calming representation of objects.

The road to increase skill proficiency was paved with labor.

Nevertheless, many things happened to increase his desire.

However, Weed's aim and the created works differed in terms of purpose. Few known of the fact, but nonetheless, his reputation spread on the Versailles continent as the transgressor of great sculptures!

Sculptures like the Light Tower and Bingryong that rose to the ranks of Classic or Magnum were few examples of his visions.

Even the calm Pale fluttered with anticipations.

Geomchi too, looked forward to it.

‘Creating works through carving. In this way, can I read how polished his heart is through the work's textures?’

Everybody was watching Weed's movements.

None carelessly opened their mouth, nor approached Weed. They

tried to be as unobtrusive as possible.

Before their eyes, he was gone.

Weed was presently moving.

As expected by Romuna, he drew out Zahab's carving knife.

Through the same means as always.

He infused his life and soul into Zahab's carving knife just like the numerous times he sculpted.

“Moonlight.....”

Weed shouted at the tree before him.

“...Sculpting Blade!”

Rather than moonlight sculpting, he used Moonlight Sculpting Blade!

Weed's carving knife surged the plant with a whoosh whenever he strikes.

Irien's small mouth stretched wide.

“Haahh?”

Zephyr also shook his head.

“The hell?”

At the first glance, it was as if Weed was working from bottom upward, but the branches and the tree was cleanly severed off.

Hwaryeong muttered in a quiet voice.

“I need to watch longer. Since there are various ways to sculpting, I’m sure this is just one of the methods.”

There was even a method to sculpt light.

So they figured there was some sort of way where Weed needed that tree in a different manner.

They patiently waited with expectation.

“Wheww.”

Weed then went on to collecting the pieces.

Formed a collection of branches!

“I wonder how much money this is going to save me!”

Weed was very happy.

To increase his sculpting he needed good materials.

Excellent materials such as the Wood Elves' lumber were sold at expensive prices.

Strict procurement laws!

In Weed's case, he couldn't help but to buy the materials, but the prices his sculptures sold at brought him to a loss.

The speed of his skill-rise decreased; and as he grows, the future mats will be even more expensive.

But then, they had accidentally discovered this lively flowering bed with growing trees.

The outer surface of the wood was good, while the leaves were lustrous.

Strong life force and vibrant trees!

Thus the true purpose of the rest: a chance to save a few pennies by cutting down the trees.

“So great, this should earn me a bit!”

After having collected the branches, Weed went on to working on the trunk.

Mapan rushed over.

“Weed nim, I’ll be happy to help you!”

Mapan swept up the twigs to place them onto the wagon.

The difficulty when he was a beginner taught him how to gain and spend money!

He had to survive on collecting firewood from the mountain ranges.

Mapan was now collecting timbers with the intention to sell them.

The atrocities he committed!

Cutting down the myriads of trees, the party realized the circumstances of his actions.

“It was for money after all.”

“Somehow, Weed nim’s action would always result to this.....”

They once again faced an overwhelming disappointment.

However, one did not lose hope.

Zephyr said to himself.

“Weed’s younger sister must love flowers.”

Pale also nodded his head.

“The need for money can’t be genetic.”

The youthful Yurin should be somewhere adorning herself with flowers in this plain.

As expected of a girl.

When they sought out Yurin.

The scene unfolded before them was shocking.

It was correct that Yurin was sitting in the field of flowers. The problem was she was squatting on the ground digging into the flowers reaching for the petals, yanking them out and placing them into her basket-shape formed hand.

“The, why.....”

Questioned by Zephyr who approached her, Yurin replied concisely.

“It’s natural dye.”

“Dye?”

“Gathering the petals together can make dyes. And to use them to paint a picture, cost nothing.”

“.....”

Same mentality!

Yurin was no different from Weed.

“Please help me.”

Zephyr could not refuse Yurin’s request, squatted down, and then started collecting the petals diligently.

“You have to divide them by colors.”

“Yeh...”

Then he went on to struck a tree, and colleted the dropped petals.

The practitioners, at this very moment, were getting bored of flower watching scene.

“This carefree idling around is a bit tiresome.”

“There’s nothing to do here besides this.”

Weed just couldn’t bear with their wry comments any longer!

He sent a message to quell their complaints.

“If you help me collecting these woods, then I’ll treat you all with a round of meat.”

“Meat!”

The practitioners rushed in a flurry brandishing their swords toward the trees. Followed by their swinging, all that left were wreckages and stumps of what used to be vibrant trees.

Even when the durability of their swords dropped tremendously due to the demand, they continued their devastating prayer!

“Sword or meat, MEAT!”

“COME TO ME GRILLED MEAT!”

Mapan obtained the wood in exchange for the meat rations.

Pale was devastated.

“I can’t believe this!”

The sight was beyond shocking.

Everywhere Weed and the practitioners step foot on, the trees appeared to be just a stump moments later.

The instructors and Gemchi weren’t just idling around.

“There are a lot of trees this way.”

“The pieces aren’t thick enough for carving!”

Shouted them as they led the practitioners collecting wood; using this voice deliberately, they cried out for Weed to hear. In the practitioners’ cases, they weren’t press by concisely cutting the

wood; rather, meat was their ultimatum.

And in comparison, the hypocritical instructors' wreckage was worse!

Then, Hwaryeong's face stricken as she walked toward Weed.

'Guess it's too much for Hwaryeong nim to take.'

'Seems like she's going to give him what for.'

The party hoped.

The people that can seemingly restrain Weed were Geomchi and Hwaryeong.

For Geomchi was his master in the ways of the sword, while Hwaryeong hardened look and strong presence can essentially dampen the atmosphere.

If she was like this, Weed would change his attitude.

However, Hwaryeong did not stop Weed.

As he went on cutting the tree in front of him, she danced silently behind him.

The speech the dance spoke was quite straightforward.

She was doing it in order to lessen Weed's fatigue, at the same while she had on a provocative gown to confess her heart to catch his attention; like a butterfly sappunsappun(fluttering about) to draw in her mate.

Her heels trampled the flowers with every dance steps she made.

Complete destruction of nature.

The place they stayed at slowly turning into ruins.

*

Director Kang and the planning committee hearts were thrilled.

‘I can see what the Jeonshin Weed is like.’

‘It was very good for the station that we got this.’

Simply having Weed's name, it was a guarantee that the viewership wouldn't be low.

Domestically, as well as on the international level, he was known as the God of War!

Cryptic Invader.

Hunter without a shadow.

The Dark Knight.

Weed earned a variety of nicknames, but the one that stuck without being either excessive or long, was the ‘God of War.’

An individual that exists to fight against every monster, and comes out the victorious singular.

A legend born from the Magic of the Continent.

From just buying his account, CTS Media essential obtained a strong following that came with Weed’s reputation.

“I hope it just as sensational as the Legion of Immortals quest.”

Director Kang was filled with a swirl of positive anticipation.

“No drinking yo. They’re away in the Kingdom of Vampires. Above all, Weed is leading the expedition. This is going to be more work than the Legions of Immortal.”

“Gotta stay up, right?”

“Yes!”

The station officials were convinced.

This adventure was the jackpot of a broadcast to draw in more audiences!

What they need now, was the work to put behind it.

“Sound team, special effect team! Starting today, you’re on a 24 hours standby. You’re gunna edit things as they’re shown the screen.”

“Yes. Everyone is waiting.”

“The writers have to make the caption oomph with the descriptions.”

“I don’t think there’s such need. If you copy paste anything to Weed’s adventure it’d still be just as intense.”

“True that. But it’s an order from the commissioner. We’ve had this experience before, got to proceed with the editing as quickly as possible. Our first priority is to begin the broadcast as soon as possible.”

Only veteran broadcasters were gathered for this urgent task.

Usually the special program features prestigious guilds expeditions or large scale boss monster hunts; though now, Weed was the only person that they're preparing the program for.

The faith they had in Weed was proven long before.

The Planning Division unexpectedly exclaimed, due the fact that the adventure they were about to work on popped up on the screen.

“Boss! Videos are coming in.”

“Who got it? Put it on the main screen.”

“Yes. Doing it now.”

The station turned their gaze onto the main screen.

According to the talk earlier, they should have been proceeding with editing.

But curiosities regarding Weed's adventure far outweigh the work.

Weed and the party stepped onto the steep mountain.

Far above the cliffs, clouds drifted by.

They cleared it, and traveled along the flowing creek, and reached a place filled with trees and flowers.

Kkulkkeog. (Gulp.)

Director Kang swallowed his saliva.

On the main screen, the unexpected sight before them was simply breathtaking!

Weed and his party stopped in their tracks when entered the plain of flowers. And after a few verbal exchanges, they scattered in groups.

“That must mean they want to take a break.”

“Yea, I think so.”

But they began to harvest petals and timbers.

As the hundreds of people moved forward with their harvest, they ground became bare wherever they tread.

From one area to another, each was becoming a thorough mess. Everywhere they trampled, it was as if the once sweet fragrant from the flowers got drown out.

Havoc!

Devastation!

It became unbearable.

“.....”

Director Kang, as well as everybody else, became speechless.

Instead of appreciating the beautiful place they've encountered accidentally, Weed and co. left nothing standing.

In what seemingly as 2 seconds, every form of flowering plants disappeared.

In that location, they calmly had their meals with meat as if nothing happened.

“Do we export this to broadcast?”

“There's no way we can do that, sir.”

“Then, today must be just messing around; the real adventure will probably start tomorrow.”

“Sure. It is Weed.”

Director Kang still did not lose hope.

Jeonshin Weed.

It was an honor to watch all of his struggles.

In Magic of the Continent, he was the sole existence that can drop any challengers to their knees, and forces every enemy to abandon hope. It was great to form an exclusive contract with Weed and to broadcast this adventure.

In fact, the entire broadcasting station had already cleaned up the internal issue regarding the special program because the expectation on this was very high.

However, Weed and his party have been traveling for about nine days, and everywhere they went, atrocities were committed.

Each and every time, Director Khang's innards were slowly burnt to black.

Chapter 7: Letter Of A Vampire

Vampire Kingdom Todeum.

Weed and his party arrived to their destination.

The first glimpse was the projecting spires shooting toward the sky; of which belonging to dozen of old rustic castles surrounded by mountains.

Broken gravestones and burial mounds.

Essential indicated a cemetery within the mountain ranges.

“Ahh, this is Todeum.”

“So many castles.”

“Lots of graves.”

The energy flown out from Todeum was eerie.

There was the cold, but from some unknown place, the chills were creeping in!

Due to the thick fog that encompassed the area, the far away

horizon could not be seen.

Became the first to discover Vampire Kingdom Todeum.

Rewards:

+820 Reputation.

If reported to an aristocratic member or to a royal family of Versailles continent, additional compensation will be rewarded.

For discovering a kingdom in an unexplored region, the quest rewards from this region will be 2x for a week.

Todeum!

Tori's promised location.

Weed slowly stepped forward. He pretended to be undaunted, but still could not settle down.

'I cannot relax. If I do, my devastatingly huge misfortune will consume me.'

Arrival at the kingdom should have been comforting; but, if anything, it has brought in more vigilance.

‘It’s always the calm before the storm. Have to be on alert for any requests before accepting them.’

He was thinking about the compensation to the difficulty ratio of quests prior to spending energy after reception. When everything was checked out accordingly, then expectations can be high.

He didn’t want quests that were similar to having a watermelon flung at you from behind that came out of nowhere!

Then, it couldn’t be avoided.

And the run is over.

Those quests are just the temptation at first sight and leads to nothing else but death.

They first quest they accepted in Seirun was already a rank B quest, from what seemingly a town for starters; so it was understandable to speculate that the Vampire Kingdom Todeum quests would be much more difficult in comparison.

‘There are indications of quests. But nothing alarming.’

Each elegant and classically built castle was connected to each other, forming a huge citadel. But the feeling weren’t the least human.

There were no traces of living beings or to a smaller extent, bats, observed within this giant fortress.

The colossal Todeum appeared menacing.

Near the gate, Weed discovered fragmented pieces of wood written in cursive by someone.

« To keep...our nice blood. »

“.....”

Weed thought it was absurd, but he continued reading.

« Drink blood three times a day. Regular Vampires must never skip sleeping in the morning.

To us, Todeum was a comfortable home.

As a hobby, late at night, I wake up and start with a little stretching, then turn into a bat and fly around Todeum.

The banquet room in Blood Palace is a good example of our luxurious vampire race.

The humans that lived around us have already been condemned to slavery.

The humans worked for us such as cattle, and had sacrificed their blood to us.

Isn't it wonderful? Thanks to the sacrificial of humans, we were kept away from death.

As Todeum increasingly became gloomier by the day, so did the Power of Darkness, which added to our strength.

But with the increase of the mighty Power of Darkness, our enemies too, rose from their slumber.

The Pegasus that flies in the sky.

The Innocent loving Unicorn.

They simultaneously attacked our darling Todeum.

They weren't affected by our legendary Power of Darkness at all.

As we were peace loving, and though we were scared, we had to fight.

Oh, as to why Vampires hate Unicorns? There is a deep historical reason. »

At that, Weed took a quick glance at the wooden boards below.

The long narration as to why the Vampires and Unicorns had deep hatred for one another spanned over a total of seven pieces (of wood.) It was something trivial such as the Unicorns snatched away virgin Vampire maidens, or stole jewelry or gold, etc.

« Anyway, it was difficult for us Vampires to fend off the Pegasus and Unicorns' attack. Unlike the humans, we did not have the number to do so. Thus, Todeum's day and night were occupied and the citadel fell.

But this event wasn't all the misery that fell upon our Bloody family.

With the strength of the Power of Darkness too was on the decline, the humans who have lived here in ancient time would return.

For that specific reason, they had a tower built within the citadel of Todeum.

Hero's Tower.

We want You to destroy that place and to reclaim the pride of Vampires.

If this is not possible, then at very least suppress the Unicorns and Pegasus to the bare minimum.

Note: Our Vampire families doesn't have any foreign currency, but if You succeed the request, we'll allow you to enter our treasury. »

Ttiring!

The request from an unknown Vampire.

Todeum's only remnant is a vampire's record.

Under the annoyance of the Pegasus and Unicorns, the Vampires had hidden themselves and would not come out. The virtue of the Vampires is still a mystery, but it seems alright to comply with their request. Within the Vampire clan's treasury, the soul of Koldeurim was trapped in a bead; and at the moment of the bead's destruction, his soul will be liberated. If You want to see the true nature of the Vampire Kingdom Todeum, then engrave your name onto the board.

Difficulty: A

Rewards:

Can obtain a level 400 or more Unique grade weapon.

The weapon can be directly selected from the weapon's warehouse.

Koldeurim's Liberation.

Quest limit: Death will result in immediate transportation to the Versailles continent. Quest will fail.

Grade A difficulty quest finally revealed itself!

Additional Information: Koldeurim's Liberation.

Koldeurim, a Knight of the Kallamore Kingdom 30 years ago.

The hero that was the salvation of the Kingdom, who have led and won countless victories against the Kingdom of Haven. One day, a loyal soldier discovered his body while getting drinks for his horse. Through a plot devised by the Kingdom of Haven, he was presumed dead on 2013.

But in reality.

The Kingdom of Haven instigated his kidnapping with the help with the Vampires, but it was unsuccessful. So then, the Vampire counsel decided to lay a honey trap. They use the beauty of the Vampire Queen and seduced him to lower his guard.

Alone, Koldeurim soul was lost and sealed in a bead.

If Koldeurim soul is liberated, he will be revived on the Versailles

continent; and the unfinished war between the Kingdom of Haven and Kallamore Kingdom will resume.

If Koldeurim's soul is liberated, You will receive 23, 000 points in Public Relation with the Kallamore Kingdom.

A full-scale war between the Kallamore Kingdom and the Kingdom of Haven will occur.

“Ueaaaaaaahhhhh.”

“I can't believe this! Such a difficult commission.”

“Pegasus! Levels around 420. And the Unicorns are a bit higher.”

“Plus, they can take to the sky. We can't accept this request.”

This was the first time the members of the party encountered an A difficulty quest, and all were in panic mode.

However, Geomchi and the instructors had a different mindset.

“Geomchi2.”

“Yes, Master.”

“What are these Pegasus and Unicorn bastards?”

“Their powers are legendary.”

“Stronger than me?”

“Is that even possible? Master is invincible.”

Flattery was the best way to handle this.

Especially when the risk of getting a hole blown into his body was located next to him.

Geomchi quickly shouted.

“Even infants know that Master is a Celestial Being!”

In normal cases, Geomchi and the instructors’ willingness to fight might seem a bit creepy.

But they had been relaxing while viewing the scenery for more than ten days already, so everybody was itching for a battle.

The practitioners were also in favor of the request.

“Why’s the pending, isn’t it good to kill strong guys?”

“That’s right! This is a chance to see the Pegasus to their deaths, isn’t it so rare?”

“I think we should check up on the Royal Road’s board, to check how we’ll fare against them.”

“Well, Weed will think of something!”

They had no countermeasure.

They figured the situation will somehow take care of itself, so they weren’t at the bit least worried.

‘That’s right. Weed showed this side before.’

‘If it’s Weed nim, we can trust his judgment.’

The party turned their attention to Weed. Until now, they have put their faith onto Weed to make the best decision.

In fact, the request didn’t make sense in the first place.

The Pegasus and Unicorns can use magic affiliated with nature, while they move fast and could also take to the sky.

Therefore, aside from their levels, it was already hard enough to have such monsters as the opponents.

‘Forget about it.’

‘It’d be easier to commit suicide.’

Fighting back against the desperate pleading eyes of his party members, Weed placed his gaze on the rewards.

“The Vampire’s treasury and Koldeurim’s Liberation.”

The treasury must contain some unknown item, as a grade A quest’s compensation shouldn’t be this simple. Yeurika’s Bow, Baharan’s Bracelet, becoming the Earl of Morata was such quests’ rewards.

Koldeurim’s Liberation reward stated was huge.

“23, 000 points of Public Relation is tremendous.”

The points can be exchange for items, and can even be use to borrow soldiers. And can even be helpful when buying goods; in Weed’s case, although not necessary, it can even be use to increase Reputation or even obtain a title.

“A jackpot to encounter this grade A quest with such good rewards.”

Facing this terrific compensation, his usual mindset was lost.

Weed said at once.

“Ima accept this quest.”

Then he took out his carving knife and engraved his name onto the board.

You have accepted the quest.

“Eos.” (ack!)

“Weed nim!”

Everyone gasped in surprise. No matter how unreasonable the quest was, Weed readily accepted it.

Weed didn't hesitate once bit and continued to engrave the other's names onto the board.

Pale, Maylon, Surka, Irene, Romuna ...

Pale have accepted the quest.

Maylon have accepted the quest.

Each time Weed engraved a name onto the board, a new window message followed. As the leader of the party, each time he wrote a name on the board, the written person will automatically accept the quest.

“Keuheuheuheu.”

“It’s a fight.”

The still without-a-countermeasure Geomchis were joyous.

Pale couldn’t help but ask.

“Weed nim. You must have some sort of plan to deal with these Pegasus and Unicorns, right?”

“Nope. I’ll gradually think of one...”

“Then shouldn’t we wait before accepting?”

“We’ve come this far, why not see how you fare against Todeum’s caliber?”

If they didn’t accept this quest, they would have to retrace their steps back to Seirun.

From there to here and back takes at least 20 days!

As the monthly fee for Royal Road was expensive, this was something Weed could not afford.

“We will respect Weed nim’s judgment. But why did you write our names on there?”

“I didn’t want to die alone.....”

“.....”

Weed calculated in his head.

‘Pegasus and Unicorns’ leather. Superbly fine tailoring item. If I sew using these items, the skill proficiency will rise dramatically, and I’m sure I can sell the produce at a high price.’

Leather wasn’t the end of it.

The Unicorn’s horn magical property can be use as the main ingredient to create excellent grade staves.

The magic staves are one of the most expensive weapons!

Not only blacksmithing and sewing skill would improve, the fabricated products were excellent sellers, an opportunity no one should ever miss.

Koldeurim's Liberation and the Vampire's treasure were important, but to compare which was easier to bring back between the gifts and monsters' mats, monsters' mats win out easily.

Then, another message window popped up.

Ttiring!

Built by ancient people, the Hero's Tower.

Following the war, the tribes of Heraim built Hero's Towers after they were scattered throughout the Versailles continent.

Located on the frontiers or remote regions, 12 towers were made.

Why the people of Heraim did such a thing was unknown.

The Hero's Tower consisted of five floors.

Another name for this is the Immediate Training Center.

Upon reaching the third floor and more, one will be able to obtain Heraim's power or skill.

Difficulty: Unknown

Rewards:

At each stage, the people of Heraim have prepared special rewards.

Quest limit:

Had to accept given quests by Todeum's vampires beforehand.

Those that can climb the Hero's Tower are limited to those that passed the Basic Training Center and Beginner Training Center.

For Weed, another reason why he must unconditionally complete the current given quest appeared.

A second quest.

Many have desperate sought out the Intermediate Training Center, only to discover that it was in fact the Hero's Tower in the Versailles continent.

The Intermediate Training Center presented in the form of a quest.

‘At the very least, I need to reach the third floor.’

Unknown difficulty!

The Basic Training Center and the Beginner Training Center was considerably difficult. For the BaTC, it required a tremendous amount of patience; whereas the BeTC forces one to face an oncoming group without a single rest while going through a dark passage.

For the ones that have no combat sense, they would never be able to break through the passage.

Weed had passed the Beginner Training Center back in the day; at the time, only 400 contestants passed the challenge in Versailles continent.

‘That number prolly increased a lot more now.’

The Geomchis also passed the BeTC through the use of martial arts.

Now, the locations of the BeTC were no longer a secret.

So those that have passed the BaTC will most likely try and challenge the BeTC. There were those who’ve encountered failure; but through efforts, most succeeded.

At this point, there were about 3,000 people who have passed the BeTC.

But for those who have passed the Intermediate Training Center, the number did not exceed 150.

By passing each of the two training centers, one can obtain stronger skills or new abilities.

Weed made up his mind.

“Ima sneak into Todeum. I’ll map out the Unicorns and Pegasus’ locations and their number, I’ll also look for their weakness.”

“No no no!”

“That’s suicide!”

The party was trying to discourage everyone. But Weed was stubborn.

“We need information if we are to enter Todeum. In any case, we’re gunna have to launch an attack anyway.”

“If that’s why, I’ll go with you.”

“Hyeong nim, I’ll regret it if I let you do this alone.”

Pale and Zephyr tried to offer their assistance for the infiltration.

Weed shook his head.

“Your power is important that Pale nim remains to watch out for our members.”

“Hm?”

“The Archer’s skills are essential to detect any Unicorn and Pegasus roaming around.”

Pale could not deny it.

It was the characteristic of the Archers. The party’s safely rely heavily on their power.

Though with weak defense, low vitality to take on opponents attack, and can be charmed; but in this case with flying monsters, the Archer was the most essential.

Hwaryeong smiled slightly.

“Then I’ll go with you too.”

“Hwaryeong nim can’t go either. It’d be dangerous at any moment and I won’t be able to accommodate you all the while.”

“If Weed and I are together, we can work around the fact that a

singular are more susceptible to a surprise attack, don't you want that?"

"If more people are coming, there'll be a higher probability for us to be founded out. So I'm gonna do this alone."

"Will you be alright?"

"This isn't the first time I've gone on a reconnaissance on a horde of monsters."

Hwaryeong did not hide her deep affection or discomfort.

"How long until you come back?"

"If it's a short while, maybe a day, longest will take a couple of days."

"Hm? Why is it that long?"

"Because Todeum is a large castle. To check up on everything, I need that much time."

"Wouldn't it be fine if we look on from just the entrance?"

"I'd start with that anyway. In addition to identify the location of the monsters, we need to have a deeper look into Todeum."

Weed's aim was a thorough inspection.

It was a must to identify Todeum's geography, to the location and the number of the enemies. In addition, he must find the most secure path to the Unicorn and Pegasus at each location.

If they didn't accept the quest, it didn't matter. But since the quest was accepted, they must succeed for the compensation rather than going in blindly.

Yurin readily held out her sketchbook.

"Brother, do you want to use my sketchbook?"

"Huh?"

"Whether the positions of monsters or locations of traps, it'd be easier for you to draw them out."

"Ah!"

The words made sense!

Adventurers and artists alike, they all had the skill to create maps by default. Adventurers could make map by pinning down the exact coordinates of monsters and traps or list information regarding dungeons, but it all pale in comparison to the Painter's

accurate illustrations.

“I didn’t learn how to draw.”

“I’ll bestow it. You’ll learn it fast.”

Weed took a bit of time to learn how to draw from Yurin.

The skill acquisition process was just to simply draw an apple. Since Weed’s Wisdom and Dexterity was unusually high, he could learn it easily and drop it later.

Meanwhile, Hwaryeong and Irene did not hide their expectation.

“Since he could sculpt so excellently, he’ll learn how to draw in minutes.”

“He could really do all sort of works(art), huh?”

Contrary to their speculations, Weed’s illustration was hard to look at.

The apple looked like a rat had munched on it!

Rather than a round apple, it looked like an elongated melon!

He redrew the simple apple several times because he kept

committing mistakes.

Because art requires time.

In order to draw a picture, the minimum requirement was a sketchbook and a pencil. In addition, crayons or paint or such were necessities to paint the picture.

So for Weed, the lack of such said materials meant he never drew once before. Therefore, to say he had no sense on how to paint was not an exaggeration.

From his beginning, the 'talent' to sculpt was built through vigilance endeavor rather than talent itself.

He continued to sculpt to increase the skill's proficiency.

And through every piece his work became better and better and his selling price increase!

Without a single loss in concentration, he continued to work on the picture and became susceptible to the defects and modified them.

Then it became easier for Weed to draw a fitting picture, but there was a big mistake.

He still did not learn how to paint nor did he want to, and there

was a reason why.

Ttiring!

The completed picture is an abomination. However, thanks to the excellent Dexterity and Artist Value, the conditions for skill acquisition was met.

Illustration skill have been acquired.

Painting skill have been acquired.

Two kinds of essential skills of the Painter were transferred.

In fact, as a sculptor, Painting could be a quite handy skill. Beside being able to create colors from materials obtained, the completed sculpture could be coated with layers of paint from the then attained paint colors.

Weed also knew that he could get these skills from a Sculptor Guild, but he didn't want to get them until now.

The reason was simple.

‘There's no way I can buy the materials!’

The spirit of the skinflint that won't even pay for the skill.

Though speaking frankly, whether painting was good or not was hard to say; on one hand, it may increase the Artistic Value of the finished sculpture, and conversely, it could decline.

Reasons being the fabrication materials or the coloring was mismatched, or the painting skill was too low in terms of the level.

Therefore, it was best to not touch the sculpture after its completion.

Weed said after returning the sketchbook and pencil into Yurin's arms.

“By any chance that I'll die, I'll tell you guys how far I got and how many there were through Yurin. If our levels aren't adequate enough, you'll have to grind here. Then, I'm off.”

Weed stood tall and looked onward, then entered through Todeum's gate.

With the final footstep disappearing from sight, it wasn't the only thing that was heavy or lonely. Hwaryeong sighed.

“Whew! I hope he's successful.”

Her heart was filled with anxieties and insecurities.

It was perilous to venture alone to scout out the Unicorns and Pegasus.

However, this dangerous task was taken up by him because he deemed it necessary.

“This disciple was brought up well.”

Geomchi laughed proudly.

Geomchi² hurriedly pulled out his blade.

Weed’s aim was a thorough reconnaissance, so no one knew how long it’ll take. Rather than idling in his absence, Geomchi² practiced to improve his skills in the meantime.

Zephyr held out his fishing rod in the nearby river, while Pale and Maylon left to catch for rabbits and birds.

Incase they’ll be going for Todeum, food was a necessity.

Heading toward Todeum, Weed fearlessly walked at a quick pace; the moment he stepped past the gate, his attitude made an 180° turn.

Salgeumsalgeum! (sneakysneaky!)

Every footstep he took, he tried not to leave any prints.

It was the best choice seeing as his fellow companion was already out of sight.

‘I don’t wanna get caught.’

If he saw lone Pegasus or Unicorn, he would fight. But it’d be a different matter if the enemies appeared together.

Weed placed his hands and legs against the wall and pushed his body toward it.

He didn’t care how lame he looked.

“Survival comes first. Confucius said for three people, the others (2) are teachers in disguise for the third (paraphrasing). There’s a reason why rats and cockroach are good at not dying.” (the full Confucius saying is “If I am walking with two other men, each of them will serve as my teacher. I will pick out the good points of the one and imitate them, and the bad points of the other and correct them in myself.”

So instead of applying this quote to imitate human beings, Weed decided to learn from rats and cockroaches.

It’s better than reflecting and regretting when you died!

Ttiring!

The skill Four-legged Traveling is available in your current position.

Would you like to use the skill?

He then dropped to the ground to get into the best position that he could to start using the skill.

“I’ll use it.” (remember how he had to imitate animals, and Hwaryeong and Mapan saw him acting like an animal they were like ‘we don’t know that person.’)

Weed activated the skill quietly.

At that moment!

Weed’s moving speed was very fast.

Syasyasyasyak! (him moving.)

Like a cockroach crawling, he swiftly roamed around the ground.

Weed felt the excitement.

This elevating pleasure.

There was no one who could match Weed's crawling speed!

'This is the best.'

Though trivial, he felt proud.

Todeum was a very large citadel. It was basically dozens of Rojaim Kingdom's Saraborg castle conjoined together.

Basic reconnaissance completed!

Weed with his body lie close to the ground while concealed in water, found his targets.

Located near the tallest spire, the silver Unicorns and red Pegasus were in flight.

The situation was similar to the Jinhyeol(Tori's) vampire clan infiltrated and encamped Morata village, but the differences started from there.

The vampires were walking slowly on the ground. Most of whom were in their human forms, to easily avoid the attention of the scouts. Though it seems with just one drop of blood, the vampires will swarm to the area.

However, the silver Unicorns and the red Pegasus' speed were far

superior.

Their tails and manes waved as they raced around Todeum.

And occasionally, some spread their wings while on the ground and began to soar in the sky.

Weed hid as much as possible using the alleys.

Close to where he hid his body, more than ten Pegasus dashed by in a flurry.

Dudududu!(galloping)

Weed's body shook.

The body of the Pegasus was nearly three meters long, and as large as a troll.

‘It's tough. It's really not an easy quest.’

Though it was suspected of a grade A difficulty quest.

Not only were the Pegasus and Unicorns divinities, they also possessed the quality of aerial animals. While mainly active in groups along with their quick speed, they've proven to be difficult.

Even with the currently used skill, he wouldn't be able to escape them if they were to give chase.

Sometimes, while Weed was hidden in the alleyway, the Unicorns and Pegasus snuffed into his direction not allowing him a single breather.

‘First, I'll need to find more about Todeum, and the scale of these bastards.’

Weed snuck into Todeum's smallest white castle undetected.

The ornate palace was decorated with numerous works from the vampires. Candlesticks made with silver, armor embedded with gold, wall paintings and sculptures were also presented.

Have witness the work of the Maestro Elware “Nestled Lion.”

Art stat have increase by 1.

Have appreciated excellent works through Your eyes, the Illustration skill increase by 28%.

With just viewing an excellent illustration through his eyes, the skill proficiency increased. It was the same case as the sculptures; but in the case of appreciating works of art, the skill proficiency leapt through sight was a huge help.

Since his Illustration skill was at beginner level 1, the increase was a lot; nearly 1 or 2 percent increment each time!

It was a rare sight to see arts that were beyond those of the masters. For Weed, he gained as much as 650 Art points and his skill proficiency gained even more.

Weed simply walked around the castle viewing all the works.

Though the level of the sculptures were low and weren't as helpful, his beginner level Illustration skill gained aplenty.

Beginner Illustration reached level 2. Able to use charcoals and other tools to draw the illustrations.

Beginner Illustration reached level 2. Art can be express in more details.

His drawing skill rapidly increased.

However, Weed had no desire or satisfaction from the growths, since he knew too well the limitation of these.

“In elementary school and even middle school, no matter how hard I try my drawings never got any better!”

In his childhood, he once dreamt of becoming a mangaka. (yes, that's right, I used it. Cartoonist is the term)

He tried to doodle and paint as best as he could, only resulted to nothing but crap.

To express the object via drawing was very difficult to him.

There were too many differences between that and creating sculptures via feeling and carving.

That was the case for Weed.

Such as many Maestros of history.

Genius sculptors also need the foundation in other areas as well.

Math, physics, human anatomy, architecture, and invention were the foundation for such geniuses!

Whether it was sculpting or painting, these required activities in many other fields.

Whether it was the painters or sculptors, the difference between them was not large.

The reason was simple.

Aptitude!

Weed since then decided to abandon drawing.

In the beginning, the skill level can grow quickly. With his high Art and Dexterity stats, these advantages can help him to create drawings. And at most, he could reach level 6, 7 of beginner level illustration.

But, there was no way he could get past that.

With his inherent horrid hand writing, the fact that he'd have to start at the novice level of drawing was hard to overlook. Sure the skill could help to some extent, but from there he'd have to create something on his own!

He saw that it was better to invest his time in other areas rather than drawing.

After completed his tour of the castle appreciating the arts.

He was still wandering around the hall slowly to avoid the Pegasus and Unicorns!

And in the midst of the lobby, there seemed to be a red casket.

“A vampire’s coffin?”

Ttogttog! (knock on wood.)

Weed knocked on the coffin.

“Is anybody in there?”

“.....”

There was no returned reply.

Weed shook the casket from side to side.

“It’s empty?”

Then from within the casket, a roar.

“Keuahahang!”

A vampire screamed wildly. But the lid remains unopened.

That sounded very uncomfortable as well!

People who are asleep does not like being woken up.

Weed left the casket alone and went to check on the rest of the castle. As a result, within the castle, there were approximately 30 Unicorns presented.

‘30 of them will be pretty hard. No, realistically, it’s nearly impossible.’

Weed shook his head.

Even with the Geomchis, it still wasn’t enough to fight level 400+ monsters.

Their damage output weren’t bad, but the continuous damage that will be inflicted was the major problem.

The problem was that they don’t wear armor!

If they were impaled by the Unicorn’s horn, it would spell a sure death.

Weed through the use of Piece Destruction could hold has much as two of them, but as for the rest, he wouldn’t be able to.

Thereby, they were overwhelmed by the damage output comparatively.

‘So far, 92 people have been killed, making this difficult situation even more so.’

Weed ate the bread he prepared in advance as he remained in the castle for the whole day, to avoid being impaled to death in the

midst of Unicorns outside.

“With Todeum’s under these circumstances, we can’t fight them effectively. We’ll have to catch the Unicorn or Pegasus outside.”

Weed left the castle and returned to the street once again.

Before him were the Vampire residents and the Pegasus and Unicorns flying above.

At first glance there were more than several hundreds of groups!

Including those on the ground in Todeum and all the other places, the number seemed to be over 2000.

In the smallest castle, he had seen at least 30 Unicorns presented, the cumulative number could result to something tremendous. That said, there were at least 40 castles in Todeum.

“I rather go catch a dragon.”

Finally, Weed began to whine.

Until then, he remained quite quiet.

Whether it was completing quests or raising his sculptures, listening to people narrating stories, Weed tried to remain as

humble as possible.

But, he could not see an escape route now.

Even with Weed, Geomchis, and his other companions, there was no way to resolve the quest.

With the dragon, it would probably be similarly difficult, but there is a slim hope. Whether it is death or for the win, there's only one to fight!

Although its breath may be terrifying; with the use of the single point attack, and possibly a significant amount of sacrifices, they could come out with a win.

But in the case of the Unicorns and Pegasus, they were presented in flocks.

No matter how good the items they were using, it'd come to naught. They were heavily outnumbered.

“I could give life to sculpture. This could even the odds.”

However, Weed until now had no desire to do so.

Every time he grants life to the sculpture, it costs him 2 level and 10 Art stats will decline. He calculated that it'd take him at least 50 sculptures be granted life to create an even fight; and the loss

would be too enormous.

“They’ll have to be Classic or Magnum pieces to be on par with the Unicorns. Plus, I don’t think I can make them in this short while, along with the fact that they’ll only be disposable here.”

This is the world of Vampires.

Even if the sculptures are to survive the battle, they can’t be transport back to the Versailles continent.

“Fucking quest!”

Weed broke out in rage.

A grade A difficulty quest, no matter how hard, shouldn’t have been this tough.

Even for Oberon who led the Northern Expedition; for them, half a day in Todeum would face a complete and utter slaughter.

The rewards weren’t even sufficient.

This quest should have been labeled as the premium of A-grade difficulty!

Although not reaching the level of S-grade difficulty quests

where it can change the balance of the continent, this was still on par in terms of difficulty.

An ordinary person might have just give into the frustration and git-up-n-leave.

But Weed was different.

“I’ve gotta somehow break even. There’s gotta be a path to do so.”

Weed continued to search through out Tudeum.

A day went by, then another, he did not give up the search. For the slightest hope, he searched high and low and even areas no one would bother.

And finally, he discovered a place.

In the middle of the city there was a creek flowing, a place where the monsters in Todeum huddled together for a drink of water. Usually 10 or 12 monsters each time, the numbers were smaller than the rest. (comparing to the 30+ for each castles, and 2000 for the central.)

However, they didn’t come on a timely basis, while at times there were hundreds of groups waiting to use the creek.

“Here is still impossible!”

Weed with his growing frustrations!

But seeing how Todeum was an aggregation of many castles, he did not give up on the expectation of finding a suitable location for the fight.

Afterward, he discovered a dark castle before him.

This was the sole black castle amongst the abundant beautiful red, yellow, and even green castles!

Now, after going through several castles, he piled up on knowledge.

Usually near the main entrance of the castle, there's a plaque present.

Count Christopher's Castle.

Viscount Burachya's Castle.

In this way, others could see who the owner of the castle was; but this black castle had no such thing.

Weed carefully infiltrated the black castle.

He found a path to the basement, traveling down the passageway and found himself a warehouse filled with coffins.

‘I don’t feel any presence here.’

Weed left and went for higher grounds in the castle.

The largest room in the castle where the owner stayed!

Even here, there were Unicorns and Pegasus moving around in the corridors.

Patience and wait!

Every time each one of them coming down the corridor, he could hear their loud footsteps rang.

Weed waited for a long time for their passing to get his way into the lord’s room.

In the center of the spacious room there was a large black casket.

‘Must be the master of the castle.’

Weed didn’t expect much when he came toward and touched the casket. Then from within, he heard a raspy voice.

“I love pretty and cute girls. If you are not a girl, GTFO of here.”

The gloomy voice spoke severely with girls as the subject.

Even though hearing the vampire’s voice shouting loudly was unexpected, Weed somehow felt as if he had encountered this voice before.

Weed asked.

“Who are you?”

“Me? You asked the young and beautiful me a very pointless question. But since I’ve just lain to rest I’ve been too unsatisfied, so I’ll specifically tell you. I’m the new Count of Todeum, and also lord of a mighty clan.”

No matter how it sounded, he seemed to recall a similar voice.

Weed said with a lump in his throat to the coffin.

“I’m Weed.”

“.....”

“Who are you?”

After a long pause, the vampire from the coffin said.

“I absolutely am not Tori.”

Chapter 8: The Slightest Hope

Weed questioned once again.

“Aren’t you Tori? Earlier you did say you like girls?”

The vampire from the coffin was desperately trying to convince Weed otherwise.

“All vampires like girls, that’s the stereotype of my country, hmph! You also have no evidence that I’m Tori.” (vampire usofunny, digging ur own grave.)

“But I do think that you’re Tori. I’m Weed. Don’t you know me?”

“I don’t. Really.”

Weed knew that vampires often lie, so he didn’t believe these words one bit. He’d rather believe in the words of the merchant trying to 1up him rather than them(vampires.)

“But I’m sure this voice belongs to Tori. So you’ve been asleep in Todeum since you came here?”

“.....”

Weed senses surpassed those of the diviners.

But from the casket, no further answers escaped. He simply remained silence, not bothering with a reply.

Weed said insinuatingly.

“Humm. And here Prina wanted to see you.”

“Really? Prina with the body that I missed?”

“Yep! She wanted to give you flowers she brought up. Something like red roses.”

“Keuheuheu. I knew you were really in love with me, Prina. Not a single girl can reject this handsome body of mine.”

Weed asked.

“Then, it’s really Tori who’s in there, huh?”

“Hut!”

“You decide: get beaten when you come out, further beaten when you come out, even more so beaten when you come out, or I’ll beat you until you come out, or I’ll let you come out. You know I’m an engraver, right? If you come late, I’ll engrave the casket ‘Tori the Fool’.”

The pride of the prideful vampire has been stripped through intimidation!

Weed used his profession as a Sculptor to intimidate without hesitation.

At first glance, the Sculptor class was one where one can barely live on and had to fight to survive on a daily basis, but the upside was that he could dabble into many areas.

In fact, this helped in the inseparable relationship between Weed and Tori.

Whenever he beats Tori, Familiarity dropped.

If so, then the normal case was that Tori would never follow Weed.

However, after having severely beaten, the taming process would automatically begin. Domesticated animal like horses, or such monsters with slightly higher intelligence could be tame.

Complete surrender to the owner, faithfully following any commands given.

Of course there are conditions. Charisma and Leadership needs to be high, and having a class such as the Tamer will be helpful.

In Weed's case, the profession was hardly suitable, but his Leadership and Charisma was on the very high side. But to be at the tolerable level of a guild master, Weed's Leadership and Charisma weren't enough.

On top of those, while Weed hunted, part of his hunting EXP also went into Tori's growth.

In other words, Weed's contribution to Tori was very high, which forced him to comply.

Although the master and pet relationship was over, Weed and Tori was still inseparable.

“Kkeueung!”(squeak sound)

The lid of the coffin gently opened. And the vampire in it was making a sickly sound.

The change in lighting showed the pale appearance of Tori.

*

Weed took Tori and returned to where the party was staying.

The party, in the meantime, had unearthed a few good hunting grounds in the surrounding areas.

Swamp in the east filled with Crocodiles!

Scorpions in the sands located southeast!

In the Northwest plains had Barbarian tribes!

Although there were a lot of other hunting grounds, the levels of those exceeded 300, so it was too early for the party to hunt there.

“Weed nim, please make crocodile leather bags.”

“I want to eat seasoned and grilled scorpions, can you do it?”

Hwaryeong and Surka begged as if they were baby birds awaiting the mother’s return.

Zephyr too didn’t play around. He had loads of fishes stacked in wait.

Of course, even without Weed around, they all still wanted to eat. But because everybody cooking skills were too low, nobody wanted to cook and take the blame for everyone’s intestinal problems.

Zephyr, as a Fisherman, could cook the fishes by default; but he had never cooked before.

Because of this, Weed began boiling to make hot chowder.

“Along the river, there are many hunting grounds. Calling it the monster’s paradise is not an exaggeration.”

There were also plenty of monsters in Todeum.

There wasn’t any place that doesn’t have monsters!

Weed had been under duress of the Unicorns and Pegasus when he was running away.

But Weed’s eyes lit up like those of the monsters.

“Can we win the fight at our levels?”

“I can’t tell yet. I found an intermediate hunting ground filled with Water Elementals.”

The hunting ground he spoke of was filled with level 320!

While being hopeful that the quantity of mobs there were sufficient, with the party superior damage output along with teamwork, that hunting ground seemed like a blessing.

Weed’s level was at 339 as well, so the experience points he could obtain weren’t bad.

“But isn’t this that vampire Tori?”

The eyes of the party left Weed and went toward Tori.

“Yes. By chance, we meet again.”

“.....”

The glances from the party changed into that of pity.

In every case and form, Tori looked as if he had been socked in both eyes. That sight and the drastic screams of the moment resonated vividly in everyone’s ears.

He had suffered so much. All he wanted was liberation...

And here of all places, to have meet Weed once again, the door of suffering swung wide open.

‘We are also tired like you. You’ll get use to it.’

‘Poor guy.’

‘He must rather die.’

‘You’re also attracted to misfortune.’

They sympathized with the mighty lord of a vampire clan.

Weed now, having escaped the Unicorn and Pegasus, lowered his guard.

“Tori, tell me. What happened to Todeum.”

“That...”

Tori let out all he knew about the situation.

The Vampires were in a state of mass hysteria under the invasion of the Unicorn and Pegasus. However, some reorganized and organized a counterattack. A brave lord and his familiars fought against the invaders; in one or two bouts, the clan turned into ashes.

Because of the nature of the prideful and independent Vampires, no one lineage wanted to cooperate with another.

Most of the time they would never comply to the will of another race!

And since they didn’t want to risk the sacrifice, they’d rather went into their coffins to hide. They planned to sleep for several hundreds of years until their invaders disappear entirely.

Weed asked.

“That’s the plan?”

“Yes, is that not a plan? Simple non-violence and patience tactic...”

“.....”

Tori’s plan was also to sleep. Having just arrived into Todeum, he had not drifted into his slumber. And just as he was about to, Weed found him.

“But we Vampires did not give up fighting. If you are here, we can fight together.”

“How can we do that?”

“Wake up the sleeping Vampires! If you kill the enemies in each castle, then the Vampires would voluntarily leave their coffins on their own.”

Ttiring!

Obtain more concrete information on the quest.

Cooperation with the Todeum's Vampires.

Save the Vampires and join forces to prepare for a counterattack against the Unicorn and Pegasus.

Until Todeum's night and day returns, on the full moon of every month, the bats will lend You assistance with their wings to give You flight.

A major battle will be known when the drums are sounded.

The request of an unknown vampire.

To be victorious in a frontal assault against the Unicorns and Pegasus, under normal circumstances, was something that could not be done.

However, thanks to the relentless investigation into Todeum without giving up, he has obtained a second piece of information on how to deal against the Unicorn and Pegasus.

It was still far from certain victory, but it had shed some light of hope in the current situation.

Weed began to conduct the battle plan.

“First, Master and every Sahyeongs have to go grind to raise your levels, the duration is 10 days in reality.”

At the end of Weed's sentence, Geomchi willingly agreed.

"Got it."

"Tori will be very helpful if you take him along with you. Irene nim too."

"Me?"

"If Irene nim goes too, then Master and Sahyeongs could utilize the hunting ground more."

Irene nodded her head.

"I see. I'll take care of all the treatments. I will make sure no one will die. But Weed nim's not coming too?"

"I have things to prepare for the battle ahead. Oh, Master, what is your level?"

"236."

"What about Sahyeongs?"

"229. 227. 224. Geomchi5 is a bit higher at 235."

Weed also had all the other practitioners reported their levels.

Among the practitioners, there were those that practiced their skills during the travel on the valleys and mountains, and those who enjoyed fighting against monsters and doing quests. While the minimum was approximately 230 and the maximum at 290; the level differences was too significant.

“For the people with low levels, you’ll need to hit at least level 270. And to those who have more, rather than raising your level, it’s best to raise your skill proficiency, please. This hunt itself is against really high level enemies; but for those with low skills proficiency, it’ll be tougher later on to raise them.”

In the case of Geomchi and the instructors, their attacking related skills were very high. Until recently, they’ve overly invested in Strength and Agility that they didn’t care about defense.

The damage output for them could be on par with those in the 300s, or even higher.

Having weak defense can seem like having a disadvantage; but looking objectively, it’s not an exaggeration to say they have the highest efficiency when it comes to hunting, if they don’t die.

“Alright.”

“No problem.”

Geomchi and the instructors said without a question while grinning.

If you compare swinging the sword alone, this was heaven. It was more interesting to fight against monsters in comparison.

But why would anyone risk the likelihood of death in a fight against monsters of similar level? Mobs in those hunting grounds could potentially deal powerful attacks, anybody would find that unwelcoming.

At the same while, the uneasiness due to the lack of defense was something that could not be easily overlooked.

But for those who enjoy hardships, these details weren't at all alarming.

Everything weren't for some simple level or wish for the end; it was to prepare for the quest!

“Two weeks to hit 270.”

It was Pale and Zephyr who offered their condolences to the other party.

Usually, it was unlikely for humans; to having to raise their levels at that rate was something to snort at.

They didn't have complete faith in this at all. In the first place, this plan was beyond unreasonable!

But...they were Weed and the Geomchis.

"They can do it."

"I think they can, those muscle heads."

They watched with a bit of envy and jealousy in their eyes.

For the Geomchis, the preposterous plan might be a successful one; because for them, all they know was fighting.

It was something that the party could depend on nobody else but them.

Normally, the plan was still a bit excessive even for the Geomchis; but throughout Todeum, they would be the first to discover the new dungeons. With the 2x given, it was something doable.

Weed now face his party.

"Pale nim and the rest, please go and collect dozens of food ingredients."

“Yes!”

Pale replied without a problem.

This bit right here was also true. Since the Geomchis had to grind, they'd have to collect food for everybody.

It was something that could not be helped. During their time in the world of Vampires, all that was left of the wagon of foods was just the wagon itself; so in order to keep living, they have been collecting food.

“This maybe troublesome, but please collect food ingredients that are at least Intermediate grade. If possible, Advanced grade materials might be better.”

“Collect Intermediate or Advanced materials?”

Pale questioned.

It was because until now, Weed didn't care for the level of the ingredients.

If one was to hunt 10 deer and noted down the ingredients, there'll be several different grades. And collecting Advanced grade food materials was something easier said than done.

“I want to utilize my cooking skills to maximize the effectiveness of high quality foods. Since this could potentially elevate our lack of power just a bit more, this is a very important mission.”

Weed's words were pretty clear.

To have found Tori was a glitter of hope, but he was still worried.

“We know the number of Vampires we can rescue is limited, plus comparatively to the Unicorns and Pegasus, our power is much weaker.”

Surka asked innocently.

“So what can we do?”

Weed replied with a clear cut answer.

“For us being here, most definitely, the more we fight, the more people we will lose.”

As the battle continues, the number of colleagues will be reduced.

To them, whether it's the Unicorns or the Pegasus, the differences in level and size isn't something they can handle. For all the Geomchis, Romuna or Irene, if they are attacked, then the possibility of them dying isn't that far off.

Losing their focus even for a split second and are attacked a second time, it would be an instant death!

The Unicorns and Pegasus are very strong.

The sorts Pale and the party have never hunted before.

Weed added a slight tension with his last few words.

“There’ll be many deaths. Even if we ended up lucky and the quest is successful, the majority of us here will die. I want to ensure, even if it’s a slight number, that more people will survive throughout the quest by means of preparations.”

“.....”

The words didn’t bring up their determination in the least. Even if party somehow succeeds, knowing that they could potentially die anytime only left the lingering feeling of despair in the depths.

“So every one of you need to take responsibility and cook your own meal, today’s meal is...”

Weed paused slightly.

It’s always best to draw it out rather than spoon feed them.

Excitement and anticipation!

Gauging their hunger appropriately was the main ingredient to bring out the foods' taste.

“Flower Bibimbap!”

“Woooeahh!”

Weed began to cook.

Making an edible meal from flower petals and mushrooms and herbs mixed together with rice. Finally, mixing in honey and red pepper paste to create a gourmet among delicacies!

There weren't that many different dishes prepared, nevertheless, he made enough dishes to have an adequate sangdari. (it's kinda like everybody's individual salad. A sangdari is the many separate dishes prepared individually, while the bibimbap is a mixing by oneself from all these dishes. Not 100% sure. An educated guess.)

Have created Flower Bibimbap.

Simple made cooking.

Have minor effects, but a bowl does not dissipate hunger.

With every bowl, Weed also decorated the meal using the flower petals.

From one to another, each had its own custom design, such as a sword or a shield.

Through this means, it further increases the value of food skills!

The aesthetic image of the food was just as important as the taste.

Weed had fully comprehended how to maximize cheap cuisine.

Of course, there was a story behind the Flower Bibimbap.

A while back, he didn't even have money for bread. Whatever edible things he procured around him had turned into food. And then, he went as far as mixing flower petals into the rice to make a meal. And through experimentations using his imagination, this dish was born.

And now, with the sea of petals in the area, he could bring this dish to the light in several folds.

“Kkeoeok!”

“Delicious.”

Geomchi and the instructors, as well as all the practitioners downed seven bowls each before going on the grind.

Pale and the party also left to complete their assignment. Weed too, had his own preparation to do.

*

KMC Media planning committee.

Director Kang and the production staffs were watching the video received.

It was through Shin Hye-Min's character, Maylon, point of view.

“This is Todeum. They've finally arrived.”

Director Kang scored a proud laugh.

Throughout the course of the party's journey and witness their brutality, he felt sick to his stomach.

By all appearances, they weren't suitable contents to be broadcasted!

The director murmured a prayer.

“From now on, they better receive a good quest.”

“Definitely, boss!”

The station was too, a company.

So his workers were quick to flatter the boss through any means.

On the screen, a grade A difficulty quest popped up at the entrance of Todeum.

“Ah!”

“So difficult!”

From here to there, groaning came about!

“But this is Jeonshin Weed.”

“He defeated the Legion of Immortality, so he could do this too.”

Director Kang eyes were fixed onto the screen, but he was filled with anxiety.

Then, it seemed as if Weed was going to infiltrate Todeum alone.

The director jumped.

“Switch to Weed’s POV!”

“Yes sir! Doing it right now.”

The technical staffs immediately changed the screen to Weed’s point of view.

Beforehand, Maylon went through all the necessary arrangements to have her and Weed’s capsules to relay videos in real time.

“Is that is?”

“Yes, it is. It’s Weed.”

“Amm! I think Weed will be fine infiltrating Todeum.”

If Weed was to die, the disappointment would be huge.

Director Kang and his staffs went silent and watched the screen. The sense silence now was like that of the serenity after death.

At different points in time, the door would move without a sound. One by one, people came and look for seat vacancies. When all seats were taken: some stood leaning on the wall, others shared

seats, and some squatted on the floor.

People flocked when they heard talks of Weed doing another unknown quest. All of them became hardcore fans after they've seen the war waged against the Legion of Immortality.

Whether it was the receptionists, the facilitators, artists, or even security personnel; all abandoned their work and snuck in.

They whispered in low voices.

“I heard they finally arrived to Todeum?”

“Weed's going into Todeum alone!”

The excitement and thrill!

All of them were assimilated by Weed.

The created city of Vampires consisted of castles.

He was to stealthily spy on the monsters that seized the city alone.

And after that!

Weed was crawling like a cockroach.

“What the?”

“I think he was to scout...but...”

“I think he want to scout by crawling.”

“.....”

Speechless!

All their mouths were opened, but they could not able to force any word out in this situation.

Nevertheless, there were those that did not abandon hope.

‘It’s not like a cool hero will explicitly appear whenever you asks for one. The heroes achieved miraculous results because they went through such tedious work as this.’

‘It’s like the swan standing elegantly in the lake. It only appears so on the surface, but their feet must constantly work in order to remain still. Weed nim is probably like that.’

They looked at it positively. The expectation they placed on Weed did not go away.

Weed entered each and every castle in Todeum and persistently looked for clues. There were more than plenty of times where he encountered the Unicorns and Pegasus, where he had to hid or crawled away to escape the scene.

But as time passed, one day, two days, and more, he repeated this same process.

Since Royal Road and reality had a time difference, they would have never see the ending of this if they didn't fast forward four times as fast.

And now, all were in despair.

Defeat was the only option seeing how the Unicorns and Pegasus dominated Todeum!

Director Kang and his staffs were forced to stay up the whole night.

“Director, what about a rerun?”

A member spoke up and forced the director to ponder about the proposal seriously.

“Really? How can I do that when we haven't land any advertisement yet?”

To cancel said feature program, then have a rerun wasn't an uncommon thing. But doing so would have a great repercussion on the director in charge.

“You know, sir, actually...”

“Hm?”

“What if we give them an exclusive sight of the world of Vampires, and say that there was a mistake regarding the aforementioned news?”

“.....”

The circumstance was beyond redeemable!

“No. I will never do that!”

Director Kang was facing an unexpected suffering. But that was just it.

“The director's words were that no matter what, Weed's the top priority when it comes to broadcasting! It's pretty clear that the last thing we will do is going against his words. So does anyone know what to do since we're not canceling?”

Director Kang also recalled the words he said.

“Kkeueung! Then was there an alternative program?”

“No sir.”

“Really? Why is that we don’t have another program planned? Isn’t B team or C team supposed to do so in these situations?”

“Because of this program, they didn’t convene it. The sound teams, video teams, and the writers all focused on this. This adventure called for everybody to make this the best ever.”

“Then there is no alternative?”

“What if we do reruns sir?”

If they did that, KMC Media viewership would drop dramatically. This was simply not an option.

“If I do that, the embarrassment we’ll face will be too much. What should I do.”

Time kept moving.

Director Kang suddenly turned his attention to the screen.

‘Why’s he swaying like that...’

Weed retuned to his colleagues and began making preparation for the quest.

“Huh? He didn’t give up?”

“I know right. I would give up.”

“Wait a minute. There’s also the vampire lord Tori who joined up.”

“What?”

The station’s officials became busy once again.

Director Kang also found a lingering hope among the darkness.

“What are the odds now?”

“Still very slim!”

“What about those muscular colleagues with them?”

“Their levels are too low, so I doubt the can do much. And also, there are too many monsters. The quest itself was already difficult, piled on the level differences made this unimaginably complicated.”

“Keuheum!”

Director Khang’s forehead lay flat as if he was defeated.

Now it was the time to somehow come up with a decision. Whether it was to cancel and fold their hands, or continued with the risk was the decision to make.

“Weed did not give up so we shouldn’t either. Ima risk it and continue broadcasting.”

Director Kang and the staffs were in haste.

They bet on the possibility and resumed their work.

*

Weed had embarked on preparation alone.

Juseomjuseom. (sound of placing stuff)

Backpack filled with various materials.

Weed pulled out all the mats and set them down.

Items of various occupations, and piled together depending on the type of goods. Fangs of wolves, or bone fragments, or virtually

useless loots were the majority.

However, Weed wasn't the type to pass on these loots.

“Lets recheck to see if these are useful now.”

If someone picks up threads and a needle, then they'll use them to sew.

If he obtained a torn shirt or a piece of leather, then after the meticulous repair made, he'll sell them. Sell them at a higher price than when he obtained them.

That's what he does regarding Charcoal!

Usually, he makes Charcoals to sell them. And use them on a torch in the dark or use them to seal Light Magic. So there was no reason why anyone would write off Charcoal. And as for the chef, this was also an important tool.

“Charcoal-grilled meat is delicious beyond comparison.”

It was a handy tool to save for cooking. If it was sold to the store, the price was a copper a piece, while things like bone fragments didn't even come with price. But if you mix the bones into soup and cook using the Charcoals, it'd be beneficial to your health.

Weed was rummaging through his backpack and through his

loots to find the items.

He was looking for the tree trunks and monster's tendons.

"I hid the items deep inside the backpack a little too wel...got it."

Elastic Strong Tree Trunk:

Durability 39/40.

Attack 3~7.

Part of a rubber tree.

Lightweight and excellent elasticity.

Is not suitable to use as a writing stick but can be use as a whip to some degree.

Not only can this be sold to stores for a price as firewood, this can materialize into other purposes for those with the skills to do so.

Material: Rank 4.

Option: -30 Faith, when use as a weapon.

Damage wasn't on par with beginner weapons!

It wasn't useful as a weapon, so it was classified as a type of loot.

Cattle's Tendon:

Durability 50/50.

Docile cattle's tendon.

Tough and elastic, suitable for making bows.

Material: Rank 3.

Weed, through fundamental knowledge, tried to create a bow.

Ttiring!

Creation of Beginner's Bow logged.

Blacksmith skill proficiency have increased slightly.

"Identify!"

Beginner's Bow: Durability 70/70.

Damage 9~13.

Range 4.

Bow made from basic ingredients.

Short and tight, can be use throughout many hunts.

Comparing the level to the materials, this was made with great flexibility so the chance of it breaking is low.

Restriction:

Level 3.

Available for all professions.

Option:

Upgrade impossible.

Normally, bows would be graded as specialized weapons in blacksmithing. It required advanced Dexterity and Intermediate level Blacksmith to begin making them; while also, there were no instructions that can be view on how to create them.

With all of Weed's wastage materials, he could create more than 100 bows.

Rotten Wood Bow have been made.

Unknown Used Bow have been made.

Poor Goblin's Bow have been made.

The levels of the finished bows were slowly improving. Reason being he was gaining experiences with each finished product. Though, it was still far from satisfactory.

Weed simply continued making bows while filling his stomach with bread.

Hunting Bow have been made.

Specialized Deer Hunting Bow have been made.

Tree Shortbow have been made.

Beginner Archer's Bow have been made.

At this point, the bow's level has improved. If he could somehow manage to bring them to a store, he could sell them for fairly low prices!

The quality of materials was decreasing, but good products were still coming out.

“From now on, it's the real thing.”

Up until now, Weed has not a single ounce of regret when he was making the bows.

The bows production was at a very high speed. But from then on, he was going to create them with more devotion.

So, he made another 200 bows.

Beautiful Wooden Bow have been made.

Hawk Hunter's Bow have been made.

Penetrating Bow have been made.

You have gained a level.

Ttiring!

Able to use animal's bones or horns to craft Khakgung(horn bows). Varied in size: accuracy, shooting speed, and damage can improve.

Through making a large quantity of bows, he obtained a new stage of bow making.

Generally, wooden bows were widely used throughout the beginner stage. But with the superior tension of animal bones and

horns, these had a clear advantage.

“I could make bows out of animal’s bones?”

For most, having suffered through making several bows only to discover there was a better grade of bow out there, their relative willpower would drop.

But Weed was different.

“Let’s start over now!”

Repeated labor!

Working with tree trunks was abandoned. Since the transition was easy because he had collected many bones.

Through the materials collected from hunting monsters, and through cooking where he had to separate the meat from the bones. However, it was dependant on the mastery of the skill; whether the amount was large or not, based on this.

In Weed’s case, with his Intermediate cooking skill, the bones collected after separating from the meat was huge!

“Bones! I don’t think normal bones would do tho.”

Depending on the size of the bone, the size of the bow could be large, and with the given bone's resiliency, it was to excel. Although better ones were made from monsters or animals' horns; but since they were classified as medicinal item, the prices rocketed in stores.

Because of that, every horns he had he sold to the stores without reserve.

"Instead of those, I'll use ogre sized monster's bones to make them."

Weed fished out large bones and began making bows.

Handling large monster's bones required tremendous force.

Struggled against materials!

"The mobility of short bows isn't that great. While it does have fairly fast reloads, the power of it is weak."

He trimmed the unforgiving large monster's bone to create the limb(don't know the terminology, so I yeah.) Any vulnerable part on the limb, he reinforced it with iron; then he carefully fastened the bowstring.

With that, the bow was finished to some extent; he then meticulously adjusted the balance of the bow. And through engraving, he carved a wind sylph onto the limb.

It was indeed the best that he could do.

Ttiring!

Creation of The Chasing Wind Bow logged.

Blacksmith skill proficiency rose by 0.2%.

“Identify!”

The Chasing Wind Bow:

Durability 85/85.

Damage 49~62.

Range 7.

Bow was created using the thigh bone of an ogre.

The bow has an unimaginable strength.

But because this was crafted from strong materials, not a lot of people can handle this.

Accuracy drops sharply.

Restriction:

Level 200.

Strength 530.

Archer only.

Option:

Minus 35% chance of hitting.

Minus 80 Agility.

Plus 45% chance of penetrating target.

Can destroy light armors or shields.

With Power exceeding 700, arrows can fly 3 times as fast.

Arrows can ride the wind and fly a bit further.?

The damage output wasn't all based on the processing!

This was not comparable to Weed's High Elf Yeurika's Bow; but considering that it was made from common materials, its was amazing.

However, Accuracy and Agility had been sacrificed.

Compare to moderate armors, this was much heavier; the large bow was born.

“Good. We need to bows with powers to this extent!”

Weed was felt a surge of prideful feelings, and he embarked on the production of another bow.

He continued through the same process trying to make similar bows.

The goal was 413 bows.

One for each of the still living Geomchis.

“I don’t have much time, hafta hurry.”

Earlier he was making bows through trial and error, but now he moved more diligently.

He made about 17 bows, when Pale and the party returned. They were standing with bunch of ingredients.

“Weed nim, we got plenty of meat and fruits this time around.”

“Thanks for the hard work.”

Seechwi and Zephyr were in charge of the wagon of food materials.

At this time, Maylon came to Weed to see what he was doing.

“What are you making? Siege weapons?”

She asked as she watches Weed refining the large monster bone.

“Nope. I’m making a line of bows for Master and the Sahyeongs.”

“Bows? At this size?”

Maylon face shown she was shocked.

It was something hard to believe. The bows Weed created were around the staggering 140 centimeters in height.

“Yeah. Pretty awesome, huh?”

“Yeah but, it’d be substantially difficult to handle with such large bows. Do you mind if I check one?”

“Sure. By any chance you encounter something worth noting to create them, please tell me.”

“Yes, I will do that. Let me see.”

Maylon was very surprised when she checked on it. Its weight was very heavy. It was heavier than the armor she was wearing, which seems to counterintuitive.

Leaving the burden of the wagon, Pale, Seechwi, and Zephyr walked up.

“What are you doing?”

“Ah Pale nim. I’m looking up on the bows Weed nim made.”

“Oh my...bows, huh?”

Awe filled Pale's eyes.

He saw there was only a 30 centimeters difference between Maylon and the object she was holding, that he didn't even notice the moaning and groaning she was making with the bow in her hands.

“The hell with these weapons...isn't it heavy?”

“It is. A lot.”

Weed was like a craftsman, silently listening to the criticism, while dutifully continued making bows from the monster's bones. Around him were the various bows he created, piled up like

mountains. When the bones ran out, he returned to making wooden bows, sizable ones.

‘To have made this many in this duration...’

‘Making bows for several days without a single break.’

Pale and Maylon didn’t know what to say, because they could not afford to use such bows.

It required such overwhelmingly Strength, and its weight heavily restricted movements.

“Uhh...”

Pale was about to point out the problems he saw with the bows.

Then from far away, Geomchi5 and 10 practitioners appeared.

“Weed, we return for food. We also gained some minerals and leathers from the hunt. Master wanted to give these to you.”

“Yes.”

Weed gave them the bread he baked in advance in bulk. But instead of returning immediately after receiving them, Geomchi5 snooped around.

Pale and Zephyr seeing so and nodded their heads.

‘I see.’

‘So it was too tough even for you.’

To hit level 270 like Weed said was something beyond difficult. And because Geomchi5 had high self-esteem, he didn’t want to confess he couldn’t do it and decided to loiter about; or so they thought.

‘That’s no good. I have to help him out a bit.’

Zephyr saw an opportunity and walked over.

“Geomchi5 hyeong nim.”

“Hm?”

“Isn’t hunting tough? I know raising levels never get any easier. When I was like you, it was realllllyyy hard.”

Geomchi5 yawned and replied.

“There are a lot of strong monsters. So far, there were cases of monsters appearing that I couldn’t handle. They came out when

we were picking up loots from other monsters, I also hear those issuing commands.”

According to Zephyr’s past experiences, those would be a Boss monster or Named monsters; that meant the area they were grinding in was a very dangerous hunting ground.

“That’s very risky.”

“Hm? Nah. Everybody kicked their asses.”

“Eh?”

“Don’t the unique ones give more experience points? They dropped a lot of items; so whenever they appear, we come together and beat them where they stand. It’s a pleasure to see all 10 guys haven’t died yet.”

“Shh, it wasn’t easy, I presume?”

“Even if I don’t use weapons, they still die all the same.”

“.....”

“The knives rarely taste the thrill of combat. If some accident occurs then I’d have to repair them; so most of the time I’d just grab some random thing and kill the monsters.”

If a Boss monster came along, they would drop the things on hand and rushed toward it. They didn't need the overly complex skills since brandishing their swords was like anyone else using their pen to write.

“Oh Weed, I forgot to ask this. My level is nearing 270, but a few of us are beyond that level. Is it alright?”

“Yes, Saheyong.”

“Oh thank God.”

And Geomchi5 was watching Weed making bows.

“Weed, what is this?”

“They're bows. I was going to give them to Sahyeongs.”

The Geomchis picked the Martial Arts profession, so they could buy and use arms of other professions without restriction.

“Really? Can I try some?”

Geomchi5 quietly picked up a bow.

The bow Maylon barely manage to hold was casually picked up!

“No way!”

“How high is your Strength...”

Maylon was an Archer through and through, so she did not raise the Strength stats over the requirement. Nevertheless, there was no way to make sense of Geomchi5's incredible Strength.

“Strength? It's a little more than 1000.”

Maylon wore an amazed face.

“How on earth can your Strength be at 1000?”

Even with the given stats back in BaTC obtained, having more than 1000 points in Strength stat was a preposterous thing.

Geomchi5 answered as if it was simple.

“Whenever my level rises, I put my stats into Strength. If you're a man then strength is the way to go! Oh, and I put a little into Agility. If the Agility is low, then I can't strive to hit monsters properly without receiving reciprocated damages; and that would increase the chance of me receiving a critical blow.”

It was something out of Maylon's prediction.

“So you’re saying until now most the stats were put into Strength?”

“Yes. Where else am I gonna put them?”

“.....”

Whether it was ignorance or courageous, the Geomchis growth revolved around Strength; aside from the little points put into Agility.

The side effect of this is always the lack of mana that spells the inability to use skills, and with the low defense means a single attack from the monsters can increase the chance of death!

Death meant the loss of a level and drop in various skills’ proficiency, so would the stats placed in Strength.

“Geomchi9’s stronger than me by 2 stats!”

No one knew when it turned into a competition!

But it became a contest to see who can get the higher Strength stats amongst themselves.

With encountering monsters, they increased Agility accordingly to give them a lee way to dodge. Attack and defense were coordinated according to their will.

Even with the lack of dexterity, they moved precisely without much worry; so it was a battle revolving the increment of Strength!

Battle of masters!

This was a method that anyone who knew better would never attempt.

‘Monsters!’

‘The laborious monster and actual monsters.’

The persistency of Weed was something they couldn’t dare to venture.

The Geomchis were similar in their eyes. Their strong desire to be strong and their struggles to do so forced everyone to admire them.

Maylon and Pale's eyes met.

“Maybe...”

“Could we actually be able to resolve this quest?”

Weed had come up with a plan, but everybody was dubious. They swallowed in their doubts and participated, knowing it was unlikely to succeed.

Since it couldn't be helped that it'd be a let down after working their ways to Todeum, so they followed the plan without a complaint.

And now, a little hope was seen.

It was hard for Zephyr to endure the curiosity: how on earth were they able to level up so quickly.

Zephyr sent a whisper to Irene.

-Irene nim. I want to be informed of something. In what ways are the Geomchi nims hunting and where?

A moment in time passed before Irene replied.

-Now, we are hunting on the plains.

-Are there a lot of monsters there?

-Monsters? At first when we arrived, it was a paradise of monsters. There were many villages, many buildings, and many wandering monsters.

Irene was a quiet character. So now she seemed to be embarrassed with each accumulated word, but she still had more to say.

-Near the beginning when we arrived at the plains, there were thousands of various monsters! So I thought we should give up and return to hunt the Crocodiles. But before I said anything, Geomchi3 recklessly rushed toward the monsters in the plain and struck them.

-So you're still on the plain you told me about a while ago?

-Yes. Instead of withdrawing Geomchi3 nim proposed a mission.

-What kind of mission?

-He's out to lure monsters. He was to go to where monsters are and kite them back here. And then...

-Gulp! And after that?

Zephyr couldn't see and only imagined the situation.

To openly provoke the monsters in his eyes was not a smart behavior.

-There were hundreds of monsters chasing him!

-Ugh! Why so many?

-But I really admire the Geomchi nims. We managed to come out victorious, barely. And then from there, we kept moving toward the populated plains, fighting. Also, yesterday we found a monster's lair and like a punitive force, we...

Irene complaints continued indefinitely.

“Yatz! Yatz!”

“These guys are mine.”

“Here we go! Here we go! Slaughter them all!”

Shouts traveled on the rampant battlefield.

Irene at this moment was treating the injured Geomchis who were waiting in line, the number of patients was nearing 35 people.

They were in need of Irine's divine magic without letting her take a break.

“By the power of the Spirit, please relieve this one from suffering, Hand of Treatment! Geomchi395 nim, please be careful.”

“Yep, thank you.”

“I’m Geomchi44.”

“Gyaa!”

Irene involuntarily screamed.

Geomchi44 whole body was bleeding.

He was almost at death’s door!

It was surprising that he didn’t drop dead right about now.

Even more so that he let out a laugh.

“Why so shy. I thought that if we were hurt we’re supposed to come here for treatment, right...well, if you’re busy, I’ll come again.”

“This is not the time to be saying that! Come quickly so I can help you.”

“Something like this isn’t much. I still have 200HP remaining. It’s not a problem, you know.”

Whenever and wherever, the weak side of a man can never be shown.

Even before death, Geomchi⁴⁴ maintained his image.

“Increase stamina of this worn body. Recovery! By the power of the Spirit, please relieve this one from suffering, Hand of Treatment!”

Irene casted urgently.

First, it was to increase stamina, then onto recovering vitality. This was the way to effectively maximize the output of divine magic.

But before she could fully treat him, her mana was depleted.

“Please wait. I’ll continue healing after my mana’s replenished.”

“No need, just lightly wrap this because it seems like they’re fighting again.”

“Excuse me?”

“This last bit of healing, you can wrap me up with bandages and I’ll be good.”

“.....”

Geomchi44's body was still bleeding when he returned to the battlefield.

Even after that, there was still a line of the wounded!

And in the same way, some of them who weren't in critical condition got wrapped up while those who were got healed.

Chapter 9: Program Weed

The promised 10 days had passed, and all the Geomchis' level exceeded that of 270. They didn't acquire any skill, as the main focus of the grind was through quests, and the lowest level the group achieved was 274.

The average level was around 279, in which Geomchi and Geomchi2 were at.

Their strength was too weak in comparison to the Unicorns and Pegasus!

This was the goal they had in mind, due to all the work they've put into hunting without a single moment of rest, it seemed to pay off. But in the process, the number of Geomchis declined by 60.

At moments in time, one or two died in the midst of battle until only 353 remained.

Geomchis faces were filled with shame.

“Sorry. Because of us, we may have doomed the quest.”

Geomchi2, like a man, cleanly apologized.

“It's fine. Will it be fine, Weed nim?”

“It’ll be ok.”

Irene quickly went over to Hwaryeong. She took her place, and one could see from her drooping shoulders, that she was grieving. It’s not a lie to say between her and Geomchis’ self-esteem, she’d win out!

Nevertheless, with this drop of number from the get go, the fear of not being able to succeed the quest took a big toll on all.

“Sahyeong.”

“Yeah, Weed. I’ll accept whatever admonishment brought out.”

“No. That’s too much trouble. It was something really difficult and you’ve done the best you could.”

“Frankly, this is too damaging. Will this really be a dire consequence?”

“You don’t have to worry about the quest.”

“Is it really alright?”

“It’s been determined that our power was weaker since the beginning. But we’ll have the opportunity to join forces. “

“Thanks for easing our minds. In this quest, if there’s anything you ask, I’ll oblige.”

Geomchi2 made a firm promise.

If it’d within his power, if he said he could, then he definitely would.

Weed thought.

‘I guess for the time being, they’ll need to eat heartily.’

Geomchis are experts in battle. If there was a way to have leverage over them, it would provide a great advantage.

Even with others, if they have seen the monsters for a while, they would gain enough confidence and courage as time passed; and this time they would follow Weed’s command. After having battle this long of a while, one will always show their true color; but this was a positive one.

‘Rather, having just 60 deaths is excellent in itself.’

Weed had predicted the result to some extent. Since they were forced to undergo such a hunt while having just Irene as the sole Priest, it was a longshot.

‘Thank God we still have a lot.’

He had considered that from 100 to 170 people might die from that. If it was above the maximum number, then the severity of this, even with the newly gained levels, will definitely hinder the goal.

Without a single piece of information, to tour the unknown hunting grounds and raise their levels to that extent was a very difficult thing to do. But the toll of just 60 people to complete the given objective was an amazing thing to achieve.

-Yo. How do you assess your sahyeongs’ work?

Geomchi had learned how to skillfully use the chat whispers.

If by any chance a girlfriend who sent him a message, it’d be terrible when he doesn’t know how to reply.

Though, the only use he had through mean of sending whispers was solely to whisper Weed for food.

-Really admirable. I knew they could do it, but didn’t know it’d be this well.

-Ahem. It also exceeded my expectations.

Geomchi was pleased and did not hide it.

The instructors were roaming the battlefield leading the practitioners. The purpose of it being the quest at hand, but the loyalty between of the brotherhood strengthened as time passed.

‘Geomchi² is the type that cares for the well-being of his boys. A deep and caring brother who knows how to treat his bros. Geomchi³’s a bit further away. He knows how to fight and can read the flow of the battle and make good judgments.’

Geomchi imminently evaluated the instructors and practitioners.

‘Geomchi⁴ has a strong competitive spirit; he’s fast and tough to catch. Even though it is a good thing, this could turn into impatience and spoil things.

Geomchi⁵’s swordsmanship relied on his Strength, so he lacks the roundedness of a player. Geomchi¹⁸? This practitioner is a surprise, he has the ability unlike other kids. He spent 17 years in the drilling halls. Even if his fencing skill’s a bit lacking, you can trust him to do some good work.’

In Royal Road, Geomchi led a crowd of hundreds into battles; whenever and wherever they explore, he tended to watch over the students to gauge their caliber and personality.

The only person who had not been fully comprehended by Geomchi was Weed.

‘Even if it’s fame through luck, maintaining it is still difficult.’

Geomchi was also informed of Weed’s past and his reputation.

Even in Continent of Magic, Weed entered difficult dungeons that nobody dared to venture, alone no less, and defeated them. He didn’t care about the attention of others as he thoroughly and silently hunted dungeons and doing quests.

At that time, his charisma was at its absolute!

Impregnable castles, penetrated.

Strength demonstrated by guilds, didn’t even came close to make him bat an eyelid.

Weed, solitarily, grew stronger constantly.

He broke through impossible and highly praised dungeons, cleaned them up as he finishes his quest; obtaining items no one had ever seen.

All previous records were revised.

There was no dungeon that could prevent Weed.

For anyone else, as if they deliberately wanted to die, they’ll

charge in recklessly to fight. But for them, with each growth, the fear of death and loss of reputation increases; providing a constant challenge.

In Continent of Magic, his Reputation was also absolute.

All of the people then who knew of Weed said one thing in unison.

“Continent of Magic, the peerless Jeonshin Weed!”

One instant of this was when Weed was riding a horse through the plains. There was a crowd of thousands of people there, as the united guilds were going to war trying to dominate a kingdom; but with emergence of Weed riding his mount through them, all resigned to themselves.

As they were trying not to be obtrusive in Weed’s eyes, they became submissive in order to not obstruct him on his way.

These types of event were only one of the many anecdotes manifested.

The lone Jeonshin Weed.

He shook the heart of everyone as their fighting spirits plummeted.

But, it wasn't in just CoM that he quickly grew stronger; Royal Road too.

‘The art of the sword. He thoroughly learned the basics of the art in just one year in the Dojang. So in Royal Road, he could reasonably harness it within here. Since in here, there are skills and stats so that anyone could utilize their body without the ultimate understanding of the art. Proactive and adaptability, he quickly identify the weakness of the opponent and uses it to decrease the difficulty of combat. With what I saw in the Dojang, it does not surprise me that he gotten strong so quickly with such fangs. Nowadays, you cannot find that kind of strength easily; the will to survive anywhere, not just the will to be strong.’

If Geomchi had fully utilized his power in Royal Road's battle, it'd be too easy; so he didn't necessarily did that.

He just stood nose to nose with the monsters and taking them down!

Where one could only see its tail, the sword itself was imperceptible by the human's eyes.

There are also murderously strong monsters that wield heavy weapons.

In order to hunt these monsters, one would need considerable experiences and ability. Something that Weed had perfectly adapted to since the beginning.

The predispositions that outsiders could not see were the fighting spirit and the competitive nature.

He had no fear with monsters. The roundabout way he saw them was that they were consisted of experience points and items.

Weed, like the real weeds, grew stronger as a mean to survive in any situation.

He was already considered as a celebrity, as his broadcasts drew the crowd in frenzy.

Usually, through the conventional broadcasts, they doesn't fervent people's chest to any degree.

Hope, courage, struggles, and tenacity.

People were excited by Weed's every move.

Geomchi really wanted to see Weed's true nature.

*

In KMC Media, there were three broadcasting teams on hold.

“The acoustic calibration?”

“Nearly finished!”

“Make the accompanied music personify to the personality of each cast. Who is the MC host?”

“Shouldn’t it be Shin Hye-min?”

“Don’t even dream of it! She is one of the main adventurers on this.”

“Bae Seon-hui’s schedule is empty.”

“Then arrange it!”

The broadcasting team undergone urgent preparations accordingly.

They laid the groundwork with complete preparation; their aim was to create a film with its own story that surpasses that of a simple video.

The epic story of a whopping six hours!

They cut as much as possible to reduce the videos to that of six hours for the broadcast.

But this was only from the currently received footages; with the

continuing quest in progress, it will become much longer.

The officials showed their dissatisfaction.

“We cannot cut anymore.”

It was to inform the audience the basic information regarding Todeum.

View of the landscapes, some of the quests obtained at the beginning that weren't deemed essential to the audience were cut.

Director Kang decided.

“If this is we can do, I'll try to negotiate with the manager of operations.”

He went up to the manager of operations.

Having been enlightened of the situation thus far, the manager proposed a simple solution.

“Since it is so much, we can just organize it as a regular program. You can broadcast the content once per week on Saturday.”

“Is that really alright?”

“We can make transition of the existing footages of Weed’s adventure into a regularly scheduled program, doesn’t that sound good?”

“Your words sound fitting, but...”

Todeum’s traveling and the amount of quests were too much to imagine and difficult to fit into the special program. So he did actually gave serious thoughts regarding making it into a regular program; but because the level of the quest was too high and its result was still pending.

The manager said.

“Director Khang, have you determined the quest’s achievability?”

“Hm?”

“An adventure that you don’t know which way it’ll flow will be more interesting. It leaves you with excitement and tension. In Royal Road’s hunting and exploration, doesn’t it always leave you with the feeling of wanting more?”

Director Kang nodded.

Forming party with strangers to hunt and explore always leave you with that feeling!

That kind of feeling escalates with each and every party member obtained on the hunting grounds.

Through the demonstration of power and ability, while sometimes offering a helping hand to those weaker than them, the bond formed becomes that of friendship.

“It is an adventure. But since we’ve already formatted the adventure to that of a film, to change it is something we should not do.”

It was not like they can’t broadcast recent events. But to turn the already finished film script to that of an adventure program did not make sense.

Whether the quest was a successful one or that of a failure, the fact that it was a great challenge to overcome was a great pleasure to see.

Director Kang reflected.

‘Because of what happened to the Crimson Wing Guild that I’ve become so timid.’

Due to the Scorpion King’s curse that many have suffered.

As a result, the guild was disbanded and the concerned parties

suffered a downfall.

Taken examples from that huge failure, he became worrisome and didn't dare to be brave.

‘Leaving the adventure in its simplicity is worth it. If our goal is to make the adventure more pleasing, then our station should leave the adventure to take its course.’

He was to follow the manager's words.

In which he thought the words didn't even bother to have a sense of encouragement within them.

Director Kang ordered the staff.

“Broadcasting team! Dispose whatever scenarios we've created so far! And also, please contact Mr. Bae Seon-hui!”

“Yes, understood. What should I say?”

“Tell him we do not need a host.”

“Yes?”

“We've decided to turn this into an adventure program that shows periodically.”

Scrapped the created story, and shown the adventure as is. Without showing so much as any prior information, simply expose the viewers to the video was the chosen decision.

“Everything is private! Everything we see and hear will be shown to the audience and let them come to a decision! The footages and sound needs to be at the highest level, and do not disclose any of the contents regarding the adventure!”

The prepared broadcasting program was to hide everything, even the fact that it was Weed’s adventure was masked.

“By the way, what is the name of the program?”

“Huh?”

“Since this is a newly organized program, we should determine a new name for it.”

“Well. How about ‘An Adventure in Todeum’?”

“I think that’s a bit too descriptive.”

“Well then, ‘Bloody Adventure.’”

“That makes sense since the blood can symbolizes the vampires, but it seemed a bit too cruel... and since this is Weed’s adventure, it

seems to leave him out on the sideline.”

“Ah, also that point, huh?”

It was not an exaggeration to say that the title can dictate the ups and downs of the program.

Director Kang and his subordinates debated on the several hundreds of titles suggested.

After careful consideration, Director Khang’s mind flashed.

“Weed.”

“Hm?”

“Let’s go with the title ‘Weed.’ Even if we call it Weed, most people will simply ponder at the title and just guess, so it’s ok.”

“Then isn’t that sorta like exposing the fact that it’s Jeonshin Weed?”

“Ah, that’s the jackpot.”

“We’re simply suggesting it rather than naturally showing it in the broadcasting contents.”

Director Kang and the committee members exchanged insidious smiles.

The new periodic program title of KMC Media that suggests the main protagonist was Jeonshin Weed!

It was needless to say the shock would be overwhelming if it was true.

Thus, the program 'Weed' was first broadcast on a Saturday.

It started from the moment they were dumped on the Land of Vampires till the scene of the Vampire queen's rescue.

The average rating of first episode was 0.6%.

In comparison to the average 12.8% of other game broadcasting companies, it was far too low at the start of the broadcast.

Chapter 10: First M.T. (Membership Training)

The psychiatrist, Dr. Cha Eunhee, was consulting her patients.

“Doctor, I don’t know if I want to get married. My boyfriend is all good but he’s too poor.”

“He doesn’t work?”

“He’s an office worker. But because there is a mortgage on the house that there’s no money left over. And in fact...not long ago I met a man on a blind date, he’s much older and I don’t like him much, but he is a professional. This seem swell to me.”

At this moment, she was having a session with a woman at a marriageable age.

“So you broke up with your boyfriend, and chose the professional?”

“I don’t know. I can’t really decide. This makes me hateful of how much of a vulgar person I am. Because of this, I can’t sleep well at night, and it even gives me headaches.”

The common symptom of depression.

Cha Eunhee did not blame the woman.

‘In reality, that will eventually hit home to everyone.’

Cha Eunhee was a doctor who treats disease of the mind, to ease the suffering.

And she was determined to help.

“Miss.”

“Yes?”

Cha Eunhee glanced at the charts.

“You’re 30 years old now.”

“Yes.”

“The average lifespan of a person can hit up to 90 years old, which means a third of your life have passed.”

“So I’ve used that much...”

“Wouldn’t you hit 40 in 10 years? And 50 in 20 years...”

“.....”

“Life is like a crab, it scurries along, and when you take a second glimpse, you’ll realize it had long moved. You’ll only get one chance to choose a man to love you during your lifetime, or you could get the house and a nice car that you wanted; it all depends on what you will ultimately decide to ease your mind.”

Cha Eunhee spoke softly as she finishes with the session with the patient.

In the case of mild depression, she just needed to have conversations several times and the symptoms will be relieved within a few days.

“Whew, with this, did it roughly finish with the morning appointments?”

The nurses from the side who were listening in were very impressed.

“Amazing, Doctor!”

It is easy to talk about life. However, it is difficult to change the psychological state of the patients with just a few ordinary words.

Cha Eunhee pouted her mouth.

“It’s not something to be admired. Actually prior to this, I had a talk with a patient about the same subject.”

“What about that patient?”

“A novelist.”

“Yes? They have troubles?”

“Of course, the writer is also a human. He was an old bachelor and anguished over it when he almost got killed, but if you’re going to eat ramen at home then at least peel off the utensil’s coating instead of choking on it and writhing on the floor!”

“.....”

She’d know, since her equipments were hard to get and she was incompatible with the human sets of armors and equipments. Since Orcs wouldn’t be able to produce good products as a Blacksmiths due to their low Dexterity, so there weren’t that many out there. But since the Orc’s population was growing at a terrifying rate, overtime, the problem could be solved.

‘I ought to connect to Royal Road at lunch.’

Lately, Cha Eunhee has been fidgeting every time she thought about Royal Road.

Healthy and dependable guy. Geomchi2!

Through her appearance as the Orc Seechwi, he was the most familiar person that stayed by her.

They didn't have many conversations as of yet, but from his cautious words and attitude, she could feel the care and attention. Occasionally, his embarrassing actions also attracted her.

At times, to her, his sincere efforts to protect her impressed her.

“Huum.”

A soft smile rose from Cha Eunhee's lips.

Often times when she chat with Geomchi2, through the low proficiency cooking skill, the burnt fish tasted good when it shouldn't.

Still, Cha Eunhee was cautious as she could not accept to be happy alone.

“Seoyoon needs to speak again soon.”

Progresses have been made with Seoyoon's treatment.

She has been in Royal Road to be detached from reality to break

the ice!

She did not talk for long and pretty soon returned to being speechless.

“It’s fine. She may have long forgotten how to speak but it’ll return like before.”

There was no need to specifically rush things by force.

Cha Eunhee didn’t urge Seoyoon to talk.

If they try to draw her out through coercion, she would most likely hide herself even further. For more than a decade they’ve patiently waited for her to naturally feel like herself. Cha Eunhee witnessed it when Seoyoon took the opportunity to do so.

“By the way, are her lessons going well?”

Cha Eunhee was a little worried.

Seoyoon was also attending school.

If you only let them live in the hospital ever since they’re young, then they’ll fail to fit into society when they leave in the future. So she had a tutor throughout middle school, and attended a formal high school from there.

Of course it was a place mainly dedicated to educate special children.

And last year, she was admitted into the University.

Circumstances didn't allow her to go every day, and sometimes she just wanders around the school. This was the first time she went to class this year.

"I hope she's ok. I don't want her to be caught in an accident. And since I don't know what will be going on at the school, how will she know what they're talking about?"

Cha Eunhee was thinking of plenty of false scenarios. Most of which were highly unlikely.

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Lee Hyun had already paid the expensive tuition, so he did not want to miss attending the classes.

But only a few know of this.

While others had extracurricular activities, social activities, school wide broadcast activities, he only showed up for the classes.

"The average needs to be a C. So I don't have to retake the class."

If the academic grades you receive have a warning or a failure as an undergrad, then that will restrict you from graduating. And because of so, since he didn't want to repay the expensive tuition to re-attend, he was somehow faithful to going to school.

Fortunately, it was a promising fact that the steady attendance can guarantee a C grade most of the time in college.

Lee Hyun usually sat in the front and steadily took notes of the professor's lectures.

"Have you heard the words going around about Professor Jeong Dongmin?"

"Yeah, he does a really good job with his lectures."

"You should add him next semester."

The students' conversations during the break were basically knocking on his ear.

Half of the students were incline to talk about the class, while the other half broke up into groups and chatted about Royal Road.

"So let's go hunting at Medium today?"

"I have to fix my equipments."

“...defensive against Lighting property Sebon set.”

“How’d cha got money for it?”

“Been saving since a month back. Today ima try to buy the full Sebon set. I’m so excited.”

“Whew. When can I wear the set...I’m really jealous.”

Lee Hyun’s mouth permeated into a creepy smile.

‘These group of students as well.’

The price to purchase the Sebon set was 420,000 Won cash.

It was a flawless set for those at mid-range lvl200.

‘Now that I think about it, they’ve just gotten out of high school so a large amount of them are still at the lower levels.’

Comparing to a dark gamer like himself, these students seemed as if they were truly innocent.

Lee Hyun smiled gratifyingly.

But then he heard the low whispers of the students.

“That returning Oppa is laughing at us again!”

“That’s a really sinister smile.”

“He’s full of it.”

Lee Hyun’s reputation within the department was already set in stone.

At the end of the class he would clear up and head off home. He didn’t participate in the department activities, nor did he get along with anybody; thus they labeled him as a charlatan.

‘What choice can I have.’

During break, Lee Hyun also engrossed himself in the textbooks. But the reactions from those around him were far different than imagined.

“Look at him pretending to study...”

“If he was truly studious then he wouldn’t have yawned during class nor slept during break.”

Lee Hyun figured he shouldn’t rebuke the accusations. Since they have already set a prejudice against him, it was to do more harm than good.

And though, some of their misconceptions were a bit appropriate.

Lee Hyun's target was just a 2.0!

'Don't want a warning as an undergrad. Nor any F is tolerable.'

The extent of his studies was only to avoid expulsion or failing.

Even with the perfect attendance record, he did not want a bad evaluation from the professor on his weekly reports.

'My days are always like this.'

Lee Hyun resigned as he continued going to school. He had already given up making friends.

But today was a bit special. The students were excited about something.

"Where is it going to be this year?"

"I don't know. It never said."

"Last year we had a really good time!"

Lee Hyun could not understand their conversations.

‘Are you planning a weekend trip?’

But Lee Hyun thought it was unrelated to him, he didn’t give it a second thought.

At the end of lecture on that day, the professor suddenly said.

“Lecture is over, but we got a little time. Shall we talk about MT just a bit?”

The University initial MT!

For many, they’ve heard it from friends or their superiors, and only Lee Hyun was completely unaware.

‘This is completely irrelevant to me!’

Of course Lee Hyun wasn’t going to go. If you have time to do that, then you should take the time to beat up monsters and make more sculptures!

But it seemed as if the professor had read Lee Hyun’s mind and continued on with his story with such additions.

“Don’t you think that having a real life adventure is important to

get a better understanding of Virtual Reality? You have to fully commit to the MT and do not play hooky to eat. You will be evaluated by your peers along with the teacher that will have a major effect on your grades. Of course for the students that will be absent, I will not give you your academic credits.”

The students cheered.

MT will have a major effect on the grade!

For Lee Hyun also, the atmosphere spelt that it was unavoidable to not attend.

“Professor, what is the goal of this trip?”

“Is there some concept about the MT we should know about?”

The MT events of the VR department were quite unique. It wasn't the drink or the culture sharing, it was truly a novel experience.

Each MT event had its own particular concept, and it changes every year.

Of course, the professor never said anything regarding it.

“It'll be known once you form your groups. So you'll meet in the afternoon in the auditorium. Oh, the person you all know very

well, Seoyoon, have also come to school. Although unlikely, she might be attending the MT. But you shouldn't raise your expectations, okay, guys?"

At that moment, the boys' eyes changed.

After having finishes his other classes, Lee Hyun slowly turned to the auditorium.

'This is really weird.'

The library did not have a single person. Normally, the students were idling on the lawn or stayed at the language lab. It was also hard to find people at school cafeteria or the food kiosks.

'I guess they must have finishes with their lessons early.'

Lee Hyun moved leisurely.

He was basically ordered to attend the MT, so he was going through the motions since he didn't have the heart to go.

'My credits will be screwed if I don't participate.'

Lee Hyun finally arrived at the auditorium in his slow pace.

He was a bit late. But there was already a sea of men clamoring

about.

“Don’t push!”

“Where, where is she?”

“Beyond them!”

Many people were eager to see something.

“I came from the Engineering department. We’re miserable. Please just let us have a look.”

“Please refrain the Engineering department students!”

“Yes. If I see her then my will to live definitely increase, y’know.”

“Keuheuk! This is by all means wrongful since we have girlfriends...but still...”

All the guys located in the back voices echoed with sincerity.

Lee Hyun barely got to the entrance of the hall by swimming through that sea of people. At the door, there were the VR department seniors who stayed guard and identify the people they were letting in.

“I’m sorry, but students of other departments are not allowed to enter.”

These seniors also restrained Lee Hyun.

“I’m also a VR department student.”

“Huh?”

“Freshman.”

Lee Hyun replied coolly. The two guarding seniors looked at each other and smirked.

“Who is the freshman?”

“Who knows?”

They figured Lee Hyun was also a senior student.

It happened very often in the school.

It was the perplexing power of that female seonbae that led to these things.

“Excuse me, but do you think you can show your student ID card?”

“Sure, here you go.”

Lee Hyun took out the ID card.

“This is right. Then you can go.”

“Okay.”

After having shown his ID card, Lee Hyun safely made it past and entered the auditorium.

There were plenty of VR department freshmen already presented.

Most of the guys and girls' eyes were particularly leading toward one side.

“Really pretty.”

“She's a goddess. Goddess.”

“What could be more beautiful than her?”

“If I could hear her voice, and even if she'd call my name just once, it'd be heavenly.”

“I’d enlist for the army twice for that.”

Like the men who were stunned and resulted to muttering, the women were also the same.

There were those who likes pretty woman too. But there were many of those who eyed with envy, knowing that they will eternally doomed themselves to jealousy when the opponent transcended to that level.

Lee Hyun also directed his gaze to match theirs.

‘What the hell are they looking at?’

And then Lee Hyun quickly discovered the reason.

Seoyoon!

Her skin was sooth and clear like that of a child, and her eyes were fine like those of a deer. The human eyes could not be that pretty.

Her well groomed eyebrows harmonized with her forehead. Her nose was also wonderful.

If one was to stare at her face for just a while, they wouldn’t be escape from the gripping radiance.

Even her hands, feet, and body exuded beauty.

The clothes she was wearing were also exquisite, as if they were born for her sake's.

Her whole body was covered with brilliance.

Lee Hyun was badly surprised.

“Keoheok!”

That Seoyoon really do exist in the real world!

‘I assumed she maxed out the appeal settings ingame.’

Compared to the real world, her beauty in Royal Road was rather lacking.

‘Come to think of it, she usually has on those clunky armors in Royal Road.’

Lee Hyun silently looked at Seoyoon.

But as if she felt his attention, she suddenly fluffed to the side and looked back at Lee Hyun.

“Ugh!”

Lee Hyun quickly averted eye contact by hiding behind a girl.

Virtually instinctive reaction for survival!

In Royal Road, he sinned a lot toward Seoyoon.

He secretly made several sculptures of her!

And because of the time he took to avoid her in game, it had become so habitual that he even did so in real life.

Seoyoon also looked briefly where Lee Hyun hid himself before resuming her earlier line of sight.

Lee Hyun mixed himself amongst the girls, and slowly turned his direction away from Seoyoon.

The girls whispered behind him.

“Did you see that? He’s avoiding eye contacts.”

“Wow, so creepy!”

“So stupid.”

He was again, misunderstood.

The deeply seeded misunderstood distrust took roots and budded.

There was no way to undo this.

The MT was led by faculties and senior members.

“This year, the MT event will take place on an island. We’re going to stay near the shoreline and mimic the Neolithic Age...”

The seniors were describing the purpose of the trip, but the freshmen’s only interest was aimed at Seoyoon. They watched her clear eyes and waited on her lips to move for the description.

Of course, there were those at Seoyoon's vicinity.

Yet among the freshmen, chatters about her were carefully spoken.

“That Seoyoon seonbae. I thought the rumors were exaggerated since there’s no way a beauty like that is possible.”

“I think she’s more beautiful than celebrities.”

“But why doesn’t she have any friend?”

“Didn’t you know? Seoyoon seonbaenim was mentally shocked when she was a child, and she lost her words.” (seonbae’s senior, seonbaenim’s more honorific, ill use senior from now on.)

“Really? No wonder she seemed so expressionless.”

“She also doesn’t come to school often, this is like the first time she came this year.”

“She’s really a noble and a pure person.”

Lee Hyun wanted to scream.

‘You all been lied to!’

How can Seoyoon be ladylike and a pure person!

Lee Hyun knew more about Seoyoon's nature than anybody else.

IF you had seen the slaughtering of monsters that Lee Hyun watched for 4 days and 3 nights, you would not be able deem her ladylike.

She did not care for the users’ level and cut them down like flies, such the way of the Berserker! (misunderstanding since volume 1, where she had the murderous ign.)

When she wields her blade, even Lee Hyun was terrified.

‘Such a strong woman in such a small frame.’

Plus, there was another deception people were led to believe.

She could speak.

Lee Hyun also knew a second reason why he thought they were duped.

Right before she was slain by the dragon, she clearly spoke the word, friend.

‘She feared for the loss of her items and registered me on her friend’s list with that word.’

That was not the end of her devious way.

Lee Hyun immediately tried to return her items when she reconnected. But there was no response.

‘Pork, leather, and clothes. She ignored me because she had no need for them. She must have obtained a good quest or busy hunting that she saw no need to reply or come back.’

Seoyoon's cruel nature!

Lee Hyun pitied those who were deluded by her.

The senior continued talking.

“Therefore, today’s top priority is the formation of groups. Note that this is very different from the usual MT. This year concept is the wild.”

“The wild?”

Some of the freshman asked.

Because they didn’t know what that singular word truly means.

“Yep. It literally is the wild. No fixed accommodations, nothing outside of the prepared things are allowed.”

“So what are the necessities?”

“You will decide that on your own.”

“Hm?”

“Each group will prepare your own necessities. However, the budget limit is 50,000 Won per person! The goods and tools need to

be bought according to the budget in order for you to participate in the MT.”

The freshmen were appalled after the senior finished.

“OMG! Only 50,000 Won!”

“What can I do with 50,000 won?”

Not caring for the freshmen’s dismay, the senior spoke.

“Of course, I do think the 50,000 Won budget limit is a bit lacking considering you are to spend 3 days and 2 nights there. However, if you plan well among your group members and form a tighter bond through the ordeal, don’t you think that’ll good? Also, the professor will be grading you based on how well you adapt to the wild; so please work hard everybody.”

A good meal at a decent restaurant was around 10,000 Won. So the restricted budget of 50,000 Won per person was quite tight.

Lee Hyun thought differently.

‘The MT trip is pretty luxurious. What kind of wilderness trip that allows 50,000 Won to sleep for two days?’

It seemed to him that the given expenses can cover for an entire week.

Even with the cold weather nowadays at night, if one could get their hands on plenty of newspapers then that'd be able to cover for the night portion.

The most Lee Hyun need was about 5~6 sheets of newspaper! He wouldn't even mind going without them if he had to.

If he had to, he could even use a rock to dig the earth for a place to sleep, yank up the trees to eat the roots; because it's survival for two days!

“Each group has to have 8 people. In this MT, the senior does not need to be in a separate group. Please get together to determine your group correctly. But in any case, the group needs to include at least 3 males and females respectively. Please specify the groups now.”

The freshmen were buzzing trying to find their friends.

“Seona, come this way.”

“Jaejina, come here!”

Each person looked for the senior whom they were familiar with to get together!

Since they needed to be a close knitted group through the trials,

they've searched for those whom they've already made contacts with.

Lee Hyun was just standing around.

'I don't know anybody anyway, so I'll just wait until they're finish and join a group with vacancies.'

Since the only thing he wanted was the credits, it didn't matter which group he'd join.

"Donghyeon, this way!"

"Senior Sangho, come join us."

Lee Hyun thought to himself as people were forming groups.

More and more singular people were reduced until there was only a third left.

Among them were three acquaintances Park Sunjo, Lee Yuu-Chong, and Min Sura who remained undecided. The freshmen uptakes on their senior were too fast and made it far difficult for them to form a group.

There were only 20 people remaining.

Park Sunjo saw Lee Hyun.

“Lee Hyun Hyeongnim, come this way! There are two spots open here!”

In this situation, Lee Hyun figured it'd be better for them to assumed(he was a senior) otherwise.

Lee Hyun scratched his head in embarrassment.

“You don't need to bother. I don't think I could attend the MT.”

“Come on! Let's go together Hyeongnim!”

“I see. Well, if you want.”

Lee Hyun replied with a bit of courtesy and joined Bak Sunjo's group.

He had already met these guys in a brief instant so it was best for him to join them. Not long after, the group increased with the addition of two girls.

“Hello. I'm Hong Seonye.”

“I've heard so much about you (just a greeting). I'm Ju Eunhee.”

“Lee Hyun. Pleased to meet you.”

The two women were a bit reluctant toward Lee Hyun, due to the horrid reputation he had within the Department.

Even so, they did not plainly hate him.

‘Anyway, at least in this way I can go to the MT.’

Lee Hyun felt at ease.

The fact was that he had a little expectation with his first ever college MT!

Then, someone came and stood behind Lee Hyun.

The attention of the auditorium turned to her. It was Seoyoon who approached Lee Hyun.

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The Seoyoon who have never participated in an MT.

‘Everybody else will not like me.’

She was afraid of meeting people. She was afraid of getting hurt so she bounded herself in a frozen state.

Then, she found Lee Hyun.

‘It’s him.’

If it weren’t for the fact that he looked exactly like how he did in Royal Road, then she would never be able to recognize him.

While she had the chance to meet him and accompanied him, he cooked and created a sculpture.

‘The heartwarming sculpture of a pair of lovers, that man.’

Seoyoon unwittingly reached her hand toward Lee Hyun.

Lee Hyun reacted and turned around, only to find Seoyoon.

His eyes dilated; the instinctive attribute when one perceives a crisis.

“No way...MT..you want to come with...?”

Seoyoon's head nodded in silence.

She thought it’d be fine if she could tag along with Lee Hyun on the MT trip. Surely in his case, he would not abandon her, because they were friends.

To Seoyoon, the moment they registered themselves as friends, she had already regarded Lee Hyun as a real friend.

Book 12: Prisoner of War

Chapter 1: The day Of The Showdown

Finally, it was the day to conquer Todeum.

Mapan was anxiously waiting for the timing.

“No matter what, the quest needs to be successful.”

Since the Merchant would not participate in combat, he was very desperate.

He brought a wagon full of goods from Versailles continent on this quest!

If they fail to conquer Todeum, then the investment would come to naught.

Until now, while hunting, he bought loots to refill his pocket, but that was pale in comparison to the good he traded and planned to sell.

“I can’t believe that last town didn’t take tax.”

On Versailles continent, at every town, he had to pay a toll and taxes on the trades.

Even at Morata, he had to pay income tax and various taxes

placed with each of his earning.

Furthermore, larger metropolitan area had addition taxes.

Among them was the village of the Orcs, where the growth of the society was based around taxes.

But the Vampire was a race exempt from taxation.

Mapan trembled with excitement.

“No matter how much of a profit I’ll make, there’s no tax on them.”

Even in Economic class, the most interesting subject to him was the laws of taxation.

For instance, here’s an interview for a company based around knowledge.

Nowadays, many people have several skills.

“A Master in English.”

It is rare to find people without 1~2 foreign languages.

“An excellent computer literate.”

Knowledge in computers at the modest should be around those of a middle schooler.

Have to have corporate internship, volunteering activities, winning awards in competitions, or strength are crucial for the interviewee.

“What do you think is the most crucial?”

When asked by the interviewer on what is the most crucial aspect of an employee that stands above all of this!

“Tax evasion. Need to be an expert on tax evasion!”

“HA?!”

“Up until now, I’ve successfully never having to pay my tax once.”

This was indeed the best talent for any company!

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Hwaryeong pulled out the red dress to wear.

Along with the exposure of her body, there were luxurious jewels

dangling from the gown.

She turned about with her body and nodded.

“With this, it’s not bad.”

Saying ‘it’s not bad’ wasn’t enough. It was a powerful magic to seduce men!

No men could have enough will power to pry their eyes from that.

“Laa. Lalalaa.”

Hwaryeong hummed and danced along to her own tunes.

She was dancing her seductive dance under the moonlight.

The mysterious and alluring spectacle of expressing herself was a good view to behold, for there was a simple reason behind her dancing.

“I’ve enjoyed being with Weed nim in a large-scale battle before. This time as well!”

It was for Weed that she danced in the moonlight.

A slight habit of hers before any large battle.

It was something that can easily wipe out the bad atmosphere.

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In the middle of the night, the three moons rose over Todeum, Weed went on one of the small hills.

“Finally, it’s time for the showdown.”

He had on the light absorbing Talroke’s black armor, the Noble Grace black helmet, Vampire’s cape and black boots.

Dark Knight.

The complete knight outfit.

Weed raised one of his legs and placed it on a rock, gripped his fist as he set his elbow on his thigh, and gazed down the hill.

Overlooking the Kingdom of Vampires, Todeum.

The appearance of dozens of old castles connected to one another was a very quaint spectacle.

As dawn approaches, the three moons: Pallun, Gorun, and Seirun

were descending below the horizon.

In fact, since the sun did not appear, Todeum's night and day had no distinction from one another.

At certain times where the three moons reached their peaks, it then plainly resembled that of day.

Since then, the morning began.

The light of Seirun shone on the hill Weed placed himself.

Hwiyiing!

And the wind blew exquisitely.

This was the moment Weed waited for!

In this great scene with such fine atmosphere, while the wind softly flow its path.

‘I gotta quickly take advantage of this moment.’

Weed, in his most elegant way, splendidly took off his helmet.

“Huu.”

Weed formed a light smile.

His hair caressed by the wind, while the cape flapped to its will.

With the guaranteed of a tough battle ahead; he mimicked the elegance of a champion: alone in solitude, and enjoyment!

‘Gotta relish this!’

He held this form for a long time while still gazing down the hill. Then suddenly, he drew his sword with his right hand.

The Cold Lott Sword.

Within it contained the spirit of ice, a sword of ice.

With this in hand, his damage output could be very high incorporated along with Weed’s level; the blade shone sharply from the daily grind.

‘This isn’t all.’

On Weed’s left hand was the Ancient Shield.

A shield forged by the best blacksmiths of the Dwarves.

A shield made from mithril and bones of unknown monsters.

The original beautiful patterns carved were unrecognizable due to the effect of time.

The lackluster shield was impossible to repair.

Nevertheless, it was a high class Unique item.

In order to fully utilize the shield, he needed to increase his stats and level to take advantage of it; but thanks to his Intermediate Blacksmith skill that he was able to use it.

Also, he also had on one the treasure of Nippleheim Empire, Baharan's Bracelet. (when I sounded this out, it sounded like Val Hallen, the Viking God of Rock in Dexter's laboratory. But keeping baharan for consistency for my fail last vol.)

But because it was a valuable item and he wanted to pamper it, along with the fact that his arm gotten cold, he removed it.

The added glamour of the finely crafted jewels on the bracelet didn't fit his overall image.

"This is for the best."

Weed with one sword in a hand while a shield in the other, stood as the wind reintroduced itself to him.

He deliberately didn't wear the white gloves because it didn't match this particular image.

He wanted to keep up the charismatic image and went barehanded!

Weed opened his mouth.

The created armor

The timeless armor

In the sun and the moon

Through the wind and the rain

Let's make an imperishable armor

Through the beatings

Rumbling bang bang bang

Appearing for just a moment

Only to be sold expensively

Up to where can this go?

Three gold?

No, no, no...

Now much will it cost...

Must be at least seven gold

In this trade, it only comes to a deficit of I go along with the first customer

He slipped away from the three moons as morning emerges.

Weed descended from the hill to where his party members gathered.

Their eyes were bloodshot red; it seemed as if they lack the necessary amount of rest.

Weed asked curiously.

“Did something happen?”

“N...no. It’s not a big deal.”

Hwaryeong shook her head, but she really did have a nightmare at dawn.

Pale, Maylon, and Irene all connected earlier than the promised time due to the building tension.

Since before dawn, some gathered their thoughts, while the others were warming up to get into forms.

Then in the midst of their growing optimism, Weed sang!

‘Worse tone deaf ever!’

‘What kind of lyrics are those?’

Weed’s singing was like a splinter stabbing at their minds.

But that wasn’t even the end of it.

He sang four songs in total!

They vaguely remembered the lyrics of the first two.

Shortly after that, they were in stupor, and could not recall anything afterward.

I'm going to make the cape in the wind

Flapping like a flag flapping

I can sleep at night with this covering me

Should never wash it after usage

Because when you try to use to avoid enemies

Sniff sniff

They will smell

The strange odor of the cape

“But...that really did happen to me.”

“.....”

At the end of that, the party firmly kept their mouth shut.

Since, it was almost time to barge into Todeum, they didn't see the point of increase the already existing pressure with such triviality.

Then the Geomchis connected one after another.

Most of them connected simultaneously because it was reaching the appointed time.

“You’ve come, Master, Sahyeongs.”

“Yes.”

Geomchi took a relaxed stroll and greeted the members.

Pale and Mapan eyes widened.

‘It’s just Geomchi nim, the others will be filled with tension.’

‘Maybe he’s a little uncommon, but the others will beg to differ just a bit.’

As usual, Geomchi₂ retained his trustworthy countenance; Geomchi₃ and Geomchi₄ were seemed somewhat excited.

“This will be on TV?”

“That’ll make it a bit harder to fight.”

“We’ll just show them our usual things.”

“Also, find good angles too.”

The broadcast of ‘Weed’!

The show’s ratings started low, but having it as a regular program on KMC Media was a very encouraging fact.

The Geomchis were enjoying the situation.

However, Zephyr looked around Weed with a relatively flustered face.

“By the way, Weed nim, I don’t see Yurin nim.”

Everybody else came, only Yurin was the sole absentee. So the question was thrown.

Weed knowingly nodded unconcern.

“Yurin won’t come.”

“Hm?”

“She’s spending a nice time at home today.”

“.....”

The party's anxiety jumped.

‘So you hid your sister from this!’

‘If it's the usual Weed nim then he wouldn't have done this.’

In fact, their thoughts weren't misunderstandings.

Weed expected that this battle will actually be very hard.

‘Assembled here are those who survived.’

Weed thought.

When they first arrived to the Land of the Vampires, the Geomchis alone was at 505 people.

Together with their companions such as Weed and Pale, totaled to 516 personnel.

But throughout each of the numerous battles, their group declined by almost a third.

The Geomchis without considering their companions, dropped to 353.

And the other colleague's safety could not be guaranteed.

Since Seechwi and Mapan lacked the attacking power in the first place, they would face all kinds of risks.

With the imminent battle in mind, the silence crept on since nobody was talking.

“Please trust me. I’ll see to it many of us will come out alive.”

Facing Weed’s grim determination, Maylon and Seechwi hearts trembled a little.

‘It’s happening.’

‘Finally I can see the God of War true aspect.’

On Continent of Magic, every quests and dungeons fell to the legendary Weed!

Now, Weed was to defeat the Todeum before him.

*

Weed made an unusually hearty breakfast.

“I will eat well.” (it’s a common saying.)

“Yes. Enjoy your food. This maybe our last meal in this place.”

“.....”

Until now, he had been making considerably tasty food with low grade materials; but this meal was made from Advanced materials that took many difficulties to obtained.

Intermediate level 6 cooking skill!

In this Land of Vampires, having to take care of the Geomchis, the bustling of cooking finally gave him Intermediate level 6.

The secret of having higher skill level was simply work on it like doing chores.

While traversing the road, he looked for herbs amongst the wild grass.

As he kept on doing that, his Herbal skill also suddenly climb its way to Intermediate level 9.

With having the skill at this level, he could even find and

unearthed sweet potatoes hidden deep with the crust.

And also, his Handicraft skill reached Advanced level 4 in this place.

Weed poured all of this into his cooking!

With the combinations of various Advanced materials collected, nothing made could be better than that of porridge.

Body have eaten very good food.

Stamina increases by 40%.

HP increases by 25%.

Mana increases by 13%.

Strength rises by 36 points.

Agility rises by 22 points.

Poison resistance increases by 36%.

Stamina will not decline.

The materials contained in each bowl were at whopping 53 Gold!

Needless to say, this was the most expensive food Weed had ever cooked.

In the cities, the collective ingredients would cost around 200 Gold to start making the meal.

But here, the materials were collected through hunting.

The effects given were a clear indicator of the precious resources that went into the food.

The aromatic meal melted as it entered one's mouth and spread its taste thoroughly.

At this point Weed took out a bottle.

“Here's a bottle to drink.”

A drink made from mountain fruits and herbs!

Although it had not been a while for it to be fermented well since it was made here in Todeum.

Nevertheless, the Geomchis each took a shot.

Pale, Zephyr and other party members did not drink since they were filled with tension.

This was the first time they've encountered a grade A difficulty quest.

Whether it was the Pegasus or the Unicorn, individually they were still too powerful of a monster.

They were imagining themselves going head to head against such monsters.

But they didn't realize that the added tension along with these thoughts would stiffen them further mid battle.

They could not drink the drink, because they were already tension filled.

In combat, just as stats and skills, having morale was just as important.

With so many people gathered together to fight, they could not ignore the psychological factors of the group.

‘Everybody seems to be nervous.’

Maylon shot a question towards Weed to try to boost their morale.

“Weed nim, I’ve been curious about something. Do you mind if I ask?”

“No.”

“It’s about back then in CoM, the Ibanpolten Island’s labyrinth.”

Weed somewhat vaguely remembered.

‘It was the sealing place of an Archdemon.’

It was a very famous place in Continent of Magic.

It was the nastiest of labyrinths that remained undefeated until Weed!

It was an incomprehensible maze that wouldn’t allow Weed another attempt at it after he had finished exploring it.

“So, how did you break into it?”

Maylon was expecting a great answer.

She figured if they listened to Weed’s adventure for a bit, it’d calm the mood of the party.

Weed had a simple answer.

“Did you know that that labyrinth had many sewer rats in the basement?”

“Yes. It was infested with large ra...no way?”

“I entered it through those sewers.”

“.....”

The answer was too simple!

That was too much of a simple solution to come to.

Maylon had to throw in another question.

“Do you remember the Inferno Skeleton King?”

Skeleton King!

A monster with a body of bones and smoldering flames encompassed him.

“That was another monster that Weed nim killed. Great physical attacks, as well as magic defense so great that it was expected to be at the level of dragons, it was considered as the worse of monsters; how would you handle him?”

“I would immerse him in water to kill him.”

“.....”

Maylon drooped tremendously after her useless attempts.

However, if she had known of the situations behind them, she wouldn't think it could be so negligible.

He had to make detailed mapping of everywhere, all to predict where the Archdemon was sealed.

Just to locate the nearest entrance to that location, and it was a sewer entrance no less!

The Skeleton King too, after a dozen deaths or so to figured out his weakness, and was finally able to drag him to the lake.

The reasons for Weed's successes were through thorough investigation and preparation.

Although it was easy to give an immediate answer while leaving out plenty of the intermediate steps; in actuality, he suffered a lot throughout the process.

‘Regardless, it was much easier than trying to earn a living in real life.’

To Weed, any quests given weren't that hard.

They were much easier comparing to him being a high school dropout trying to take care of his sickly grandmother and younger sister.

With no education degree, his payroll wasn't much.

The workload, the risks, and being dirty; his pay would get cut immediately from any one of these simple reasons!

He even had to compete with foreign workers.

Quests are just simple comparing to that of the job market!

Maybe if it was a grade Special S difficulty quest! (dunno if SS is a real grade or not in this game, no1 achieved it yet.)

Comparing to real life, doing quests was a relatively simple shift.

Breakfast was over.

Weed stood up from his spot.

“Are you all ready?”

“Yeah.”

The party nodded slowly. Regardless of their confidence level, they cannot not go.

“Now let’s move. Everyone are to take care of yourselves.”

At last, Weed led the tension filled party through the gates.

Within the expanses of the collective castles in Todeum, the Unicorns and Pegasus were in flight.

They would romp from roof to roof, and sometimes they would whiz by on the plaza.

“I’m prepared for this.”

Geomchi2 solidly said.

He saw the abundance of monsters, but his aim was to pounce them all anyway.

This was the reason why the party, more than before, culminated themselves to the utmost.

To go against what could be called the ultimate power.

Having just seeing what he visualized as objects of terror before him; at last, it was the moment to fight.

But Weed shook his head.

“This isn’t it. There’s a better hunting ground.”

“Where at?”

“You’ll know when we get there.”

Weed crouched closely to the earth, and crept on all fours.

Therefore, his party did the same thing. More than 300 people, moving in unison, crawled on the ground.

Ppalppalppalppal!

All were crawling at formidable speed.

It used twice the amount of Stamina comparing to running, but everyone tried their best to keep up.

“Heokheok! Well Weed nim.”

Mapan was struggling onward, because he was the Merchant, really weak when it comes to combat abilities.

It was a steep price to pay for his high amount of Wisdom.

In the first place, other than Knowledge, Wisdom, and Charisma, most of his stats were waived.

But since he gained a bit of Stamina from the meal, he was barely able to keep up zigzagging around.

Mapan asked while relaxed.

“I don’t know why we have to zigzag from alley to alley.”

Weed absolutely did not take the main street.

As soon as they past the gate, he passed through an alleyway where there were plenty of empty boxes stacked on one another.

He only used the extremely narrow alleyways among those were there.

Weed spoke in a low voice.

“If you look carefully at the behavior of animals, there are a lot to learn.”

“Huh?”

“They know many laws of survival to live a long life, so they have a lot more advantages over you.”

“So now, what kind of animal are we going to copy for survival?”

“Cockroach.”

“.....”

Not a lion or a tiger, Weed was going to learn from a cockroach!

Thus they were moving like the insect with the highest rate of survivability.

Syaysyasyaysyasyak.

The two arms and legs moved very quickly.

His head moved violently from side to side, as if it was a moving antenna.

His rolling eyes moved constantly to determine if there was an oncoming monster.

Fortunately, thanks to effort put into this, they did not encounter any monster and were able to arrive to their destination.

The first destination was the vampire Tori's black castle!

The party entered the castle and made it safely to the basement.

With the tension dwindled down a bit, Pale asked as he took a relaxed breath.

“Whew, what is this castle?”

Weed replied simply.

“This is where I found Tori, and this is also his home. Our first battle is here. Sahyeongs, please take out your bows.”

Geomchi, the instructors, and all the practitioners took out the overly large bows they received from Weed.

“You’re talking about this?”

Geomchi had the biggest bow.

Then from Geomchi₂, Geomchi₃, the size, in increments, got smaller and smaller.

Even the bows had rankings!

Only after then that Pale and Maylon understood why.

The bows seemed to be too big and sluggish, making them difficult to use; but that would not matter since they were going to

fight within a castle.

It'd be an inconvenience to use during combat, but along with a shield, they will be able to survive.

Weed looked at his dirt covered body, then removed his Talroke's Armor, Lott Sword, Ancient Shield and cleaned them at lightning speed.

“Ah so. Please take out your shields.”

The Geomchis each removed the shields that could cover their entire body that they have equipped.

It was hard to say whether the shields' form and usage were good or not.

It can deflect oncoming arrows from their enemies when equipped, also increased their defense by at least 50%.

Problem was they were two-handed weapons; along with the inability to equip swords, their Agility reduced dramatically.

“Sword go, shine armor, shine shield!”

Exercised the Blacksmith skill!

Geomchis and other colleagues' weapons were grinded and armors wiped; albeit temporarily, stats increased through these means.

"It's over. Then Irene nim, please bless the group."

"Yes. To fight against the wicked and evil, please let his strength reach its peak, Bless!"

Weed and the Geomchis' bodies were covered in slight divine radiance.

The Unicorns and Pegasus broke their ways into the cellar through the door.

Due to the fact they were creatures made from divine magic, they could sense whenever divine magic was used within a certain range.

Chapter 2: Todeum Expedition

10 Unicorns and 12 Pegasus broke through the door and intruded.

“Hihihing!”

“PeureungPeureung!”

Before long, with voltage like speed, they dashed.

Dadak dadak ddadadadadak!

Within one or two steps, they gained tremendous acceleration with each tread one after another.

These horse-like monsters can be regarded as long-term sprinters!

In comparison to the size of the common horse, these divine creatures were nearly twice as big; with steams coming out of their snouts, they angrily rushed toward the group.

It was not an exaggeration to say that the castle’s basement was about as large as decent plaza, with empty boxes and pillars posed as obstacles; however, they were smashed to bits before the terrifying assault.

Kuruereung kwashang!

Kwareureureung!

The whole castle shook from trembling of the ground.

Weed had already anticipated the Unicorns and Pegasus to come due to their acute sense to divine magic, but he didn't expect a rush of this caliber.

Nevertheless, he immediately responded.

“Sahyeongs are to divide into 5 units: 1st unit in order of names up to Geomchi100, 2nd unit up to Geomchi200, 3rd unit Geomchi300, so on so forth. Master and the four instructors are to command each unit. One of the 5 units please at once, go and block the enemies' rush!”

Weed's words echoed terribly; with 70 of the current group's members under Geomchi5's command, they went on the assault with their shields.

“Let us move to fight!”

The Unicorns and Pegasus at a terrifying speed, shortened the distance in an instant.

Through the means of shields, Geomchis tried to stonewall their

assaults.

These divine creatures were much more daunting and larger than the usual horses!

They broke through the barrier and were still rushing in at an alarming rate, but more jumped in in order to prevent them.

Whether they were brave or just simpletons, time and time again, the Geomchis took place for preventive measures.

Even if they could not stop the sprint and suffered a great deal of damage in return, there was no hesitation coming from any of them.

Weed too, ran out with his Ancient Shield in hand.

Although he could have waited safely in the rear, he wanted to check the damage output of these creatures directly.

With his Defense and Endurance, Weed was the best to take a hit and if he couldn't stop them, nobody else could.

Weed ran in and issued a second order.

“Romyuna nim, use spell! I don't need any strong magic, please just make the ground muddy.”

“Understood.”

Romyuna’s specialty was offensive Fire magic. But she acquired a secondary skill set with her few extra points.

The set was completed with the addition of a pretty much useless skill called Water Clay.

“Water, moisten the earth wet and drag the on the enemy’s feet. Water Clay!”

Romuna casted her magic and the ground changed into that of a moist swamp.

These divine creatures’ magic defenses were enormous.

Even if they were attacked, they were impervious to it.

But this was not a direct attack on them; this cast was to influence the environment around them.

Peureureung!

Peuhing!

The Pegasus and Unicorns were digging their hooves into the earth.

And because of that, it had slowed them down quite a bit.

If they had been weaker monsters, they would be stumbling around and falling onto themselves; but this only made them madder.

Pretty soon again, they tried to achieve their earlier speed.

The Pegasus sought to spread their wings.

The Unicorn and Pegasus planned to get airborne deliberately to escape having to set their hooves into the ground.

Their bodies became twice, three times as large with the huge white wings!

Pureukpureuk!

Their aim was Weed and Geomchi's unit.

Weed on the verge of being rammed, closed his eyes.

You have used Cold Eyes.

You can see nothing, but suffering and pain disappears.

Kwakkwakwang!

The roaring sound of collisions!

The strong impact spread throughout Weed body as his HP dropped by half.

Have suffered a highly lethal assault.

Due to the nature of the Sculptor, his HP wasn't great; so even if he had high defense, the toll taken on him was expensive.

In this case, half of his life force had been reduced.

Comparing to the damage taken by Weed, the practitioners didn't fare any better.

As many as 12 practitioners, after having crashed into, turned to gray and disappeared.

They cannot underestimate the Unicorns and Pegasus' charge!

Of the 12, during the clash of the moment with their shields in front of them, some practitioners were slammed and lost their lives.

Others survived for a brief moment, before once again being hit

by something as the monsters turned around to deal another strike.

Beside the 12, thanked to the fact that they weren't directly hit by the Unicorns and Pegasus' rush, they were able to be alive.

The attack was as disastrous as being hit by a car.

For the practitioners who stonewalled, all their shields were damaged without exception.

The steel shields made by Weed at Intermediate level 3 Blacksmith exceeded their limits and broke from direct impact.

It didn't end there for Weed with the decreased vitality after having received the strike.

The large impact have put You under Confusion.

For 8 seconds, movements are impossible.

36% decrease in Attacking Power, 23% decrease in Defense.

Cannot use any skill.

He was confused.

For Weed, throughout his history in battles, that rarely happened.

He went in to deliberately take a hit.

The ones that he saw didn't expose their vitals nor allowed any attacks to come behind them.

Then the thrust came from the Unicorn, contained a great deal of force, stopped him and put him in disarray.

It put him under a very dangerous situation, but the Unicorns and Pegasus weren't exempted from the clash.

The reciprocation of the impacts in the conflict also blew these creatures away from the location of the crash.

Even with their force being much stronger than expected, Weed grew more vigilant as he watched them.

Jjijjik.

A fine crack spread on the Ancient Shield.

The Ancient Shield Durability have declined by 1.

An impossible to repair Unique item!

The Ancient Shield was expected to fetch at the very least 1,000,000 Won!

He wanted to pamper himself with the debut of the treasured shield.

Now the Durability of the Ancient Shield had dropped by 1.

“You dare...my money...”

Weed’s fighting spirit raged.

“Ready to fire arrows!”

Cheochoechoek!

The Geomchis and Pale, along with Maylon drew the bowstrings as hard as they could at beckon.

Needless to say, their targets were the Unicorns and Pegasus!

Thanks to the selflessness of the 5th unit, the monsters were standing in place, stopped moving.

The remaining distance between them was 20 meters.

They were close enough to be a breath away.

“Fire!”

The fired arrows flew straight toward their targets.

Due to the abnormal size of the bow, the large arrows shot by the Geomchis gave off vapors as they flew.

These arrows that could be even be mistaken as something shot off of a siege weapon; struck the body of the Unicorns and Pegasus.

“Puheeeheng!”

These divine creatures screamed and staggered as they suffered the blows.

The Geomchis took the Martial Artists profession.

With any weapons, they follow the same skill proficiency.

Now they were dealing damages with their bows, which was equally as strong as their sword.

These creatures’ levels were explicitly more than 400; while close to more than 280 Geomchis were attacking with arrows; it can’t be said that it wasn’t damaging.

However, not a single monster had been slain yet.

The Pegasus who seemed to suffer the greatest, were still in decent shape with $\frac{3}{4}$ of their health remaining.

After series of strikes, Weed exclaimed.

“All get swords. We’re attacking!”

The Geomchis all abandoned their bows and rushed these Divinities with their swords armed.

“DIEEE!”

“I’ll avenge you brothers!”

They brandished their swords and fought close range.

The greatest weakness of the Unicorns and Pegasus!

Along with their tremendous size and high affinity to elemental magic, they could also fly.

Although unmatched; with the ground hindering them, at this distance, they had far less combat capability.

“Do not allow them space!”

“Block them. Keep the being close!”

The Unicorns were going wild and on a rampage.

They kicked with their fore and hind limbs, chewed with their mouth, even thrust with their foreheads.

The Geomchis were rolling on the ground to avoid the attacks, turning side to side and moving round and round.

Figuring that frontal assaults were meaningless, they refocused themselves to attack the thighs and buttocks from the sides.

“Keoeoeok!”

“Really strong. These guys!”

Screams erupted here and there.

None of these divine creatures had lost their life.

No matter how much they dealt, the creature was too strong even with a group of Geomchis attacking; and there were more of them.

With 22 of these more than level 400 divine creatures, they could not afford to go all on one.

Then, Hwaryeong stepped up.

“Enchanting Dance!”

Her specialty Bubibubi dance!

The rampaging Unicorns started dancing to and fro among her.

The sight was dangerous from another person’s perspective, but surprisingly, she was safe.

“Pretty woman. Kihihing!”

Around her, the once unruly Unicorns became as docile as lambs.

Women are toxic to Unicorn!

Caught up in Hwaryeong’s formidable charm, they quietly closed their eyes.

“Happy. Kihihihihing!”

She was able to quiescence the enemies’ ability with her fascinating dance.

They smiled delightfully, and stood still.

Having settling the three Unicorns asleep, she headed toward the nearby Pegasus.

‘Maybe this wont work on Pegasus.’

Perhaps she’d be kicked once and killed instantly.

Being a dancer with her weak defense, dancing among monsters was an amazing risk.

But it was the same for Pegasus.

“Kiheheheng!”

A very satisfying smile rose and even their butts swung to and fro!

Whether it’s men, wolves, or horses, all males have the same tendencies.

After having set two more Pegasus asleep, she ran out of Stamina and sat in place.

Afterward, the battle didn’t get any easier.

With the declined in number of active creatures, it came in handy

because the groups were able to get thickened for the assault.

“Cut his legs! Do not let him move!”

Geomchi3 screamed.

Although dozens of attacks landed on the body, the results were inconclusive because of the thick leather like armor.

But each time they attacked the ankles and thighs, the Unicorns and Pegasus were writhing with pain.

“Here’s the weakness!”

“Concentrate on the legs!”

Geomchis were fighting well, but this tactic place them in vulnerable situations: such as being unable to avoid the kicks and were hit to the point where they were near death.

So whenever that happened, Irene took the risk and approached to give help to those in need of treatments.

Meanwhile, Weed withdrew and assessed the situation.

‘The odds.’

With the significant damages earlier on, he saw they might not be able to win.

If it had not been good at all, he would call an order to immediately escape.

However, with that singular drop of the Ancient Shield Durability, he wanted to grab the bastard who did it!

Still, he couldn't tell if the hunt could be successful or not, but the creatures were getting pretty damaged.

It was thanks to the fact that the Geomchis were clinging onto them like leeches that their vitality and stamina were incrementally weakened bit by bit.

‘Can win.’

Weed was confident.

“Don't let up on the assault. Don't let them cast magic or call on the elements! We can win if we stop them from doing so!”

Weed's cries stopped everything and gave Geomchis hope.

“I knew it!”

“Keuheuheuheu.”

“Looks like these bastards are our meals.”

Geomchis did not doubt Weed’s words.

They experienced it throughout many adventures, and they were ready to place his insistence before their own judgment.

Though they thoroughly trust Weed’s words, they still believed.

‘Weed’s reliable at everything except money transactions!’

Complete trust!

Furthermore, Geomchis felt something as they continued the battle.

‘Their movements are increasingly sluggish.’

‘We can do this.’

Geomchis, without a single thought misplaced, heavily focused on the monster they were responsible for.

Only in this situation where they were fully preoccupied in battle that their talents shine.

Herein, it was more difficult for Weed. It was a full-pledge battle that needed all sorts of power.

“Tori! Death Knight Van Hawk!”

“Present.”

The Vampire Lord Tori mantle waved as he approached from the rear.

Although they have already liquidated their relationship, they entered a temporary truce until Todeum return to normal.

Death Knight Can Hawk also appeared in his armor in a puff of smoke.

With Weed in the helmet taken from him, a bunch of mixed feelings stirred up.

“First get the guy on the right.”

“Got it.”

The Death Knight and Tori answered briefly and moved toward the enemy.

“The guy at the right. Hold the rightmost guy.”

“Aye.”

“Okay.”

Pale and Maylon answered lightly one after another and focus their shots at the Unicorn on the right. Weed also used his Yeurika's Bow and focus on the target.

They shot arrows consistently as they ate away at the Unicorn's HP constantly.

With the help of Tori and Van Hawk, the first of the Unicorns fell.

“Hihing!”

The bovine-like body of the Unicorn slumped to the ground with a loud sound. In its place: horn, leathers, jewelries, and knee protector dropped.

Weed's eyes scanned like a wildfire.

‘Celtic Protector, 220 Gold; Jewels, averaging with 103% to sell would be 400 Gold; 7 pieces of leathers, 325 Gold; horn! 8 of these with 2000 Gold in others mats and I can make Unicorn horn bow. The minimum price to sell it could be 5000 Gold, and if it ends up

being a Unique item, it's 78,000 Gold. The horn stands alone at 945 Gold!

Weed's eyes were consumed by greed.

The Unicorn's levels were too high; but generally, they weren't monsters static in dungeons.

No one had ever hunted these divine creatures in Todeum before!

Their drop rate was still fresh.

In this case, he was able to obtain more items.

Furthermore, it had long been acknowledged that Unicorns often dropped good and many items.

With such conditions, it was highly probable for them to expect more.

"If we hunt the Unicorns, each one can buy us 3,118,500 barley bread!"

Only when it was about money calculation that his mind work so fast!

"Heoeok, so much barley bread."

“Let’s get them all!”

“Wooooooooo!”

“From now on, we can say goodbye to hunger!”

The Geomchis’ motivation burned.

Weed too, unequipped his bow and rushed onto the battlefield with his sword.

With just that, it was sufficient enough as a command.

To the Geomchis, the importance of the first hunt is incomparable!

Because from thereon, as battle experts, within that clash was how they learn how to deal with the monster afterwards.

In the first place, they allowed Weed to decide whether they should continue the hunt or abandon it to escape.

‘Let’s hunt till death.’

Weed made the decision and jumped toward the divine beast without hesitation.

“Moonlight Sculpture Blade!”

This was done onto a Pegasus.

The Pegasus vitality and stamina had already been significantly reduced due to the fight against the Geomchis!

Together with the Geomchis, they became an encircling task force.

Weed moved dazzlingly.

“Single point attack!”

He focused only on the rampageous Pegasus’ leg.

Every strikes were focused on a single point was the best still to use!

Due to the struggling of the Pegasus, sometimes Weed’s attacks missed.

But with all the Geomchis presented attacking on all limbs, the damage taken by the Pegasus grew increasingly.

Whenever his legs became exposed with his wild movements, the

punishment was immediately dealt by the Geomchis.

So the divine creature was forced to rely on his great defense as his hidden legs remain covered.

But his blood dripped onto the floor constantly as he took the hits, dwindled his more and more of his vitality.

Weed, Tori, and Van Hawk designated themselves a different target to fight.

“Pale nim! Maylon nim! Concentrate on only one!”

They had a slight overall advantage in this war-like situation, so it was best to concentrate on one and kill it as soon as possible.

Unless some unforeseen event happened, this way was the certain path to their victory.

Kuwooung!

Kwaang!

Here and there, the divine beasts collapsed.

With Tori, Van Hawk, Zephyr and the party concentrated on attacking, this creature also fell; and the number increased as they

fell to the hands of the Geomchis.

“Iyat. We did it!”

“Master, we got him!”

The monster that Geomchi’s group was dealing with also died.

Under Weed’s intensity, another Pegasus fell pretty soon; afterward, these divine creatures clung to each other.

With Geomchi₂ and Geomchi₃’s hunting competition, more and more creatures collapsed.

“Puhihing!”

The monsters that were put to sleep by Hwaryeong woken up only to realize they were getting pummeled!

Later, nine additional Unicorns busted through.

Although their intrusion was a momentary crisis, Weed and the Geomchis have thoroughly refined themselves during the struggles of the earlier battle, hunted these down.

After which, it looked as if they have hunted all the monsters.

Ttiring!

Fought against the Shinsu in the 1st castle of Todeum.

Remaining castles: 46.

Reputation rise by 30.

Receives an additional 60% combat experiences.

They obtained additional compensation in correlation to the hunt.

Presently, Weed and his party, along with the Geomchis, their Reputations had been dragged through the mud.

- Mean and Petty Archer – Pale.

- The Vile Merchant Who Can Eat Children For Money – Mapan.

- Fists are Louder than Words – Sureuka.

During the course of doing all the Vampire quests, they were given bad titles and also the declination of their Reputation.

However, by winning battles, they could make up their Reputation little by little.

The achievements through the battles could be great.

Through physically beating all these divine creatures, not only vast quantities of items were acquired; but also, the Vampires who were asleep in Tori's castle arisen.

“Greeting my Lord.”

The Vampire Queen and the followers joined!

A troop of 100 Vampires obtained.

These guys' levels were around the mid late 200s, but nonetheless, more power was added.

The practitioners, however, faced a loss of 28 deaths.

The largest amount of 12 deaths was during the initial clash.

Mid of the battle, some were killed in combat; the second intrusion of the Unicorns took out seven more.

“We got this vampire castle.”

Those who were still alive toured the castle's halls.

The place was decorated with old arts and crafts!

It was filled with many precious treasures such as gold or silver candlestick holders, and swords embedded with sapphires or opals.

Weed and Mapan seemed to have made a secret oath with a quick eye contact, and went separate ways.

And as they moved forward, each and every time the valuables they passed disappeared moments later!

Swiishh!

For a simple reason to earn additional income, they left nothing remained.

Even with the items where they couldn't see the monetary values using 'Feeling.'

Due to their Rarity, Artistic Value, Historical Value, their prices varied.

Although the armors and the swords had practical uses; but in actual practice, their values dropped in accordance to their low Durability.

Weed addressing these points and asked.

“What do you think the price for all these is?”

Mapan agonized and replied at the end.

“Most of these artworks are Common. Altogether, the maximum we can get for these are 12,000 Gold.”

Weed nodded.

The suggested price was somewhere around what he initially figured.

Since these artworks weren't the really good items, it was difficult to sell a huge sum of them.

“I'll try to sell all of these. After which, we'll evenly split the profit.”

“Yes!”

In the case of valuable works of art, they were valued as collectibles; but to these guys, that meant little in comparison to the monetary gain.

And then, they stumbled onto a picture they had never seen before in the middle of their 'hunt.'

From the picture on the wall, a strange energy wafted out within it.

A pale vampire was staring at the nape of a girl longingly could be seen.

You have witnessed ‘The Longing Face Masterpiece.’

Perhaps the painter was intimidated by a vampire to paint such a picture.

This was not an amazing work by such an exceptional painter.

In addition, few mistakes were committed from fear in parts of the work that declined its overall rating.

Fighting Spirit will increase by 10%.

In the dark, stats will rise by 7.

In the dark, Recovery Rate will increase by 15%.

By looking at the picture, some abilities could be increased.

“Well then, let’s go to the next castle.”

Weed visited another castle.

This castle seemed to be slightly larger than that of Tori’s!

In this castle, there were 32 more.

Again, Weed with the Geomchis stood at the forefront as the vanguards.

The newly acquired Vampire forces will have their chance not much later to enter the battle.

Reason being that they were too weak and could be easily dealt by these divine creatures.

Growth of the Vampires!

The group was being thoughtful: to keep the Vampires from death and have them grow stronger.

The experiences the Vampires acquired from these divinities were enormous.

Through just one single battle, Weed also gained more than 20%; while the Geomchis nearly obtain another level as the battle finished.

After which, the number of liberated Vampires in this castle was 110.

Thanks to the experiences accumulated from the first battle, only 16 of the Geomchis lost their lives.

At this point, Weed said.

“We still have too many people dying during the battle. If we keep this going with an upward of 10 people die at every battle, then before long, all of us are gonna get wiped out by these creatures way before we can liberate Todeum. From now on, we’re gonna keep the damage taken to a minimum.”

They have already learned how to deal with the Unicorn and Pegasus.

Weed, to over the shortcomings of the group, pulled out the materials he had been saving.

The Rotting Dragon.

The materials were obtained from the dragon hunt.

From which Weed made weapons and armors out of them.

Bone Sword:

Durability 130/130.

Damage 64~79.

Sword made of from bones of a dragon!

To use such corrosive material into the blade is not a good idea.

Though, it's sufficient enough to function as a sword.

To repair this item requires a highly skilled blacksmith.

Restriction:

Cannot be used by Paladins.

Level 300.

Agility 520.

Option:

This was created with extreme delicacy, so it's easier to use.

Requirement reduced by 20%.

+200 Reputation.

+30 Agility.

Poison damage will inflict an additional 60 HP points per second.

From fear and metastasis, atrophy with monsters rises.

Foul odor.

Bone Chest Armor:

Durability 130/130.

Defense 85.

The armor has a fatal flaw!

Since the armor is made out of old bones, if it was to receive a singular large enough impact, it will break.

Restriction:

Cannot be used by Paladins.

Level 320.

Strength 650.

Option:

This was created with extreme delicacy, so it's easier to use.

Requirement reduced by 20%.

Reduce physical damage.

+35% Magic Defense.

Immune to all Confusion magic.

Foul odor.

Blacksmith skill proficiency increased by 2.3%.

Blacksmith skill proficiency increased by 3.1%.

The rotting bones of the dragon gave an unbelievable amount of

proficiency.

The completed sword and armor weren't at the highest levels, but they were more brilliant than expected.

“While there aren't that many effects given, but I think each should be able to fetch at least 20,000 Gold.”

If he had better blacksmithing techniques, he would have been able to reach the extreme capabilities the materials could give out.

However, these were the maximum output for them since Weed was rather lacking in blacksmithing techniques.

To make a sword required at least 3 kilograms of the dragon's bones!

To make either shield or armor required as much as 5~15Kg of the bones.

He obtained a total of 230Kg of dragon bones from the hunt!

He made a total of 10 swords, and the rest went into shields and armors.

Each person a bone armor set!

Ttiring!

Have obtained Blacksmith Intermediate level 4.

Created items' Attack and Defense increase by a certain value.

Improve ability to handle weapons and may inflict additional damages.

Have acquired the title 'Blacksmith with Extensive Experiences.'

+350 Reputation.

Weed's skill level had risen by one.

Furthermore, the Intermediate level 5 wasn't that much further away.

Weed's made weapons and armors were offered to Geomchi and the instructors.

"Master, please take."

"Is it really?"

"Yes. I was saving these materials but it made me just as happy to make these weapons for Master."

“Weed.”

Short word and grim demeanor!

To interject in this requires delicate timing.

The hesitant feeling will decrease as the effect if the gifts slowly loosen their grips.

Weed did not miss the moment.

“In this stead, if you don’t mind, can some of the smithing and sewing materials you get from the Unicorns and Pegasus go to me...”

“No problem. Take all you’ll need from us.”

Geomchi and the instructors value little regarding the materials.

So after little deliberation, Weed was able to take them.

Some of the practitioners also divided up the weapons and armors; instead in an immediate trade, they offered their promises instead.

From then on, the battles against the creatures were much easier.

The swords, shields, and armors played a major role in this.

Thanks to the help of the given defenses, the number of deaths greatly reduced; as the battles raged on, only about 5~6 people died in each.

They were still going after the smaller castles; and among them, the number of tag-along Vampires increased significantly.

Chapter 3: Silmido Of Hell

Lee Hyun had done nothing in preparation for the MT.

‘I don’t want to do anything that’ll be deemed unnecessary.’

The samurai’s doctrine of complacency was the best course of action and the easiest.

However, the group got together to discuss and prepare.

The progression of the meeting was in charge by Park Sunjo. Seoyoon too, specifically came to school to attend the preparation meeting.

“Well then, everybody share the things that you can do. Is there anybody who knows how to cook?”

“.....”

At the end of Park Sunjo’s question, all were silent.

“...well, if it is food, we can roughly get around to it. Then next, does anybody know how to put up a tent?”

“.....”

“Is there anyone who likes the outdoor more than staying inside the house? It’d be really good if you have mountainous experiences.”

“.....”

Seoyoon was already silent to begin with, but everybody else had their head bowed and was quiet.

Other than studying at school, the all had no other experiences.

It seemed that in the frequent trips they took, they did not bother for any of these things.

Lee Hyun’s eyes plunged into the darkness.

‘You incompetent fools!’

Park Sunjo’s forehead was shining from the sweats formed.

For all of them, this was the first time they’ve done anything like this, and thus, didn’t know what to do.

10 minutes passed, and then onto 20, the meeting was going nowhere fast.

Inevitably, Lee Hyun was forced to comment.

“What do you say we start arranging with the necessary supplies first, due to the fact we have a limited budget. Since we don’t have much time left, just suggesting things and we all deem whether it’s really essential or not.”

“That’s right. Let’s start with things we see fit.”

Having Min Sura favoring the idea, each began inputting what they thought was necessary afterward.

“Tent!”

“If we’re going to cook food to eat, then we need cookware and burner.”

“We need meat and water...we really can’t go without water.”

“Since we need to sleep at night, we need a set of blankets.”

“Wash towels are also essential.”

“Cell phone charger.”

“Cosmetics too...and bowls, cups, spoons, chopsticks.”

“I almost forgot! The pinnacle of all travels is photos. I’ll bring a camera.”

It seemed throwing in ideas rekindled their livelihood. And then, Choi Sang-jung face frowned.

“But these stuffs, we need to prepare them within the 50,000 Won per person limit...and also, we’re all going have to carry them. How the hell are we going to carry them all?”

Once again, the planning seemed to hit a wall.

“The money is a problem.”

“To be limited to 50,000 Won per person is really like having nothing at all.”

“How do other groups prepare with this?”

“I figured we should just buy a box of ramen and eat them everyday.”

Credits were associated with the MT!

All were well aware that this was a viable and important option, for the general trend of most groups was to buy ramen to eat.

Every meal consists of only ramen!

Lee Yuu-Chong forehead wrinkled as he spoke as if it couldn't be helped.

“Anyway, I think ramen is a good option. Including Sulanju and rice, I think that good enough.”

Then Park Sunjo also gave his consent.

“So is ramen ok?”

3 days and 2 nights!

That meant having 6 or more meals consisted of only ramen!

Although the activities that they have to do during the MT hadn't came out yet, they all generally expected that it wasn't going to be easy.

Still, having to force down and endure meals of only ramen was the decision to uphold.

“What other alternative do we have...”

“You sure it should be ramen?”

Choi Sang-jung and Min Sura moments later also confirmed.

Lee Hyun eventually decided to come forward. People then entrusted him to be the person-in-charge because it was far more convenience for them.

Friday morning.

Since they were in the vicinity of the marketplace, Lee Yuu-Chong, Park Sunjo, and Choi Sang-jung gathered.

Because of Lee Hyun.

He strongly opposed to ramen.

“Even for me, I cannot handle having ramen at every meal.”

Ramen as food wasn't bad.

Rather, to Lee Hyun, it was the most valuable food.

Back in his old life of economic hardship, where he was burdened with the inability to buy rice and had to buy the inexpensive ramen.

It was the biggest help that filled his enduring hunger when in dire needs.

Even now, sometimes along with his grandma and younger sister, they would boil the ramen and eat it with kimchi in reminiscence.

‘But I cannot eat six straight meals of just ramen.’

He had eaten way too much ramen in his childhood that he learned all the secrets within all of them. So now, he just want to eat ramen as a sometimes food.

Also, six meals of ramen meant that they won’t have a balanced nutrition.

“Rather, whether it’s eating or sleeping, let me prepare the necessary tools to live.”

He had told them he would take care of the essentials in accordance to the given budget, but they remained dubious and came to clarify.

Lee Hyun came exactly on time; he looked to his colleagues and nodded.

“You’re all here.”

“Yep.”

“Then let’s go.”

Lee Hyun then took them into the agricultural wholesales market.

Only having just entered the market, even the seemingly intelligent Lee Yuu-Chong didn’t know.

“The supermarket’s much more comfortable. So why are we here?”

He privately murmured insinuatingly. It was not long after the appearance of the supermarkets that the era of the marketplaces was fading.

Lee Hyun didn’t want to explain the complexity. He had to buy a lot of stuff here so he didn’t want to be relaxed.

“You’ll know when you see it. And this place isn’t like the usual marketplace.”

From the entrance to the wholesale market, there were different types of butcher shops, rice stores, grocers, bowl stores. There were all kinds of stores.

The moment he saw the pricing list, Lee Yuu-Chong mouth did not close.

“No way! 100 grams of pork is 1,400 Won!”

In the supermarket it's usually 2,200 Won for that much, so nearly half of that value! Rice, vegetables, or fruit prices were also unparalleled.

“Are all these stuff imported?”

When Lee Yuu-Chong asked, Lee Hyun shook his head.

“There's not much to profit off of pork to do it. Fish is imported though, it's like that anywhere.”

“Why so cheap!”

“They're just small shops. These outdoor shops aren't big, and also have been doing for more than 10 years and brought them here directly from their fields.”

Lee Yuu-Chong called his mother and had her checked at a few sections only to find out how severe the price differences could be.

The shop owners saw Lee Hyun and began to horselaugh.

“Young man, you're coming twice today?”

His sister already came at dawn due to their periodic changes to

get the items to prepare the meals, so they thought he had come back once again for the same purpose.

“Yes, hello. I’m going with these guys on an MT trip so I need several different items.”

“Well, come one then. I’ll sell them cheap, of course. So are they also bachelor college students?”

“.....”

Lee Hyun was selecting the meat from then on.

‘Since were on a budget, I’ll start with the most expensive.’

He chose 2 kilograms of each of the pork belly, neck, and ribs.

The meat bought in corresponding to the 8 people eating for three days and two nights, so it seemed right. Since he didn’t know whether it was lacking or not, so he got pork chops just in case.

“It’s not much but here are some ham hocks on the house.”

“Thank you.”

The next place Lee Hyun went to was the grocer!

By the way, when cooking, if you don't have fresh vegetables to accompany the meat, you won't be able to wake up your taste buds.

At this place here, Choi Sang-jung and Park Sunjo were disheveled.

Poram Vegetable 21.

Dapeojwo Vegetable 19.

From there, the grocers' name didn't change their pattern.

There was almost no vegetable on display; while the ones that were, were still inside the box with the box top cut off, boxes stacked on each other.

Lee Hyun picked the lettuce, onion, and cabbage boxes.

“How much are they?”

“3,000 Won for a box of lettuce, onion 3,000 Won, cabbage is 5,000 Won.”

“Please give me parsleys, leeks, garlic, peppers, and potatoes too.”

“How much do you need?”

“A lot. Enough for 8 people for 3 days and 2 nights worth.”

“For you students 90,000. I’ll give you a lot!”

The grocers pulled out boxes one after another to give him. There were eight extra sweet potatoes lying on top of them.

“These are only 7,000 Won for all.”

Lee Hyun hesitated for a moment before receiving.

“If you sell it at that, doesn’t it mean it’ll go south pretty soon...”

“It’s because nowadays we’ve got too much sweet potatoes so they’re cheap. Just take them.”

Once all the boxes were placed, Lee Hyun turned and asked.

“Do you also want to eat fruits?”

“Huh? Yes. I can eat then if we have them to eat.”

Lee Yuu-Chong in embarrassment replied with a slur.

In the tight budget of 50,000 Won per person; even when they had come up with a guideline, they never expected to be able to buy everything they could.

Of course, they never planned to have fruits. But as it happened, they went along with Lee Hyun to the store.

“Auntie.”

“You’re back, bachelor.”

“Yes. How much for the strawberries?”

“2 boxes for 4,000 Won. I’ll round the items in the front to 3,000.”

“Please give me two of the good ones. Cheap please.”

“Cha! Here’s just for healthy guys like you. Just 3,000 Won.”

Choi Sang-jung and Park Sunjo loudly exclaimed.

“Keek!”

“What kind of prices is this low?”

It seemed as if they came to a strange country. While they were

pushing carts in the market to purchase items, they had no clue about the existence of this place.

Anyway, to the disarray of the other party members, with everything up to the strawberries, they were far from reaching the budget limit.

Lee Yuu-Chong asked excitedly.

“Aren’t just the tent, cookwares, and oven left and we’re going to make it!”

Lee Hyun shook his head just once.

“The MT preparation was to be entrusted to me. So I will take care of getting ready.”

“We’re ordered to not borrow any tools.”

“I’ll take care of everything. On a side note, who here can’t eat pork chops so I’ll buy some other food?”

“If that’s all we have then it’s fine, but...”

Lee Hyun took them on a trip around the marketplace, and bought a bit of shrimps, tofu, and shell fish.

Also, he did not forget to buy red pepper, bean paste, salt, and seasonings.

“You eat chicken, right?”

When Lee Hyun asked, the now tired Lee Yuu-Chong simply nodded. Park Sunjo and Choi Sang-jung had long since turned into quiet porters.

“I’ll bring a chicken from home and treat it as a wholesale price.”

“From home?”

“Because we raise them in the yard.”

“Ah. You’re raising them as pets.”

“Nah. As for human consumption.”

“.....”

“I raised them since they were chicks and when they bear eggs I raised those too.”

“But it must have been hard to raise the chickens so we can’t just eat them.”

“It’s ok, we have 7 chickens at home. First is Boiled Egg. Second is Sunny Side Up.”

“No way, those are their names?”

“Correct. The third one is called Mother Hen. Because she raises the chicks. Or I should call her the Protagonist since she’s also one that bears new arrivals. From the forth one upward are classified as food. Soup, Fried, and Sauce. The seventh one is the youngest, Half Sauce Half Fried. The naming process is altered by family branches, but the full name doesn’t get pass on from generation to generation.” (that is, 2nd gen - ‘half fried’, 3rd gen - ‘fourth fried,’ never just fried.)

“.....”

Do not expect warmth from Lee Hyun. Even chickens he raised are just food!

*

Port of Incheon waterfront terminal.

Students were chatting away about the upcoming ‘pleasant’ MT.

“Uwhew, it’s finally today.”

“I only wish today had not come.”

“How much are we’re gunna suffer.”

The sophomores and the more seniority students were already in haggard appearances.

The generations who had already done an MT weren’t at all relief.

They weren’t so confident about the special concept of the MT trip.

“But it’s the coast this time around. It’s on a small and pretty island too, so it’s better off.”

“Come to think of it, the last time it was hard because we had to climb a lot of mountains. This time, that’s not going to happen.”

“Oh btw, what kind of food did your group prepared?”

“Instant ramen. We also have around 1 kilo of pork to eat.”

“Sounds a lot like us.”

“With a budget this low, I bet all the other groups are like this also.”

The new students were carefully taking to the seniors in order to enjoy their time.

The purpose of the MT trip was to build up motivation and it was an opportunity to make a good relationship with the seniors!

Lee Hyun and his group members also huddled up.

“What the hell is that?”

His group members had no intention to show the materials and tools Lee Hyun had prepared.

Contained in the black vinyl bags consisted of unknown things!

It didn't feel like the normal tools such as tent, oven, or cookware.

There was even one with holes perforated into it, while the sounds of struggled flapping and knocking came from within.

Kkokkodek! (cockadoo)

“Shup it!”

After Lee Hyun's piercing shout, the sound from out of nowhere stopped.

“.....”

“No way...”

To the group member’s surprise, the cold eyes of Lee Hyun let off slightly.

“There’s less taste from frozen meat.”

Lee Hyun did not bring an ice box.

It was heavy and expensive to use only just once so he didn’t see the point.

Instead, the frozen pork was thrown into a Styrofoam box.

He then threw in a few extra ice bags, and completely sealed it with wrapping tapes.

With that, it should be able to retain that degree for about 23 days.

However, there was no point to do it to the chicken.

Between raw and frozen meat, there was a subtle difference in taste.

Because of that, the selling prices were different.

So, Lee Hyun chose to bring the youngest Half Sauce Half Fried raw rather than having him frozen.

If you are not Lee Hyun then don't even think about it!

After a bit more time had passed, it was the right time to get on the ferry.

“Well then, let's get on the boat. We're departing.”

With the professors leading, the students followed and boarded the ship.

The students had no intention to watch the sea from the deck.

The waves calmly rolled and the seagulls lazily glided above.

For the students who are first timer on a boat, this was a very strange experience for them.

“The boat's rocking.”

“This is a volleyball.”

Conversations broke out with the boys trying to cozy up with the girl they like as they straddled next to the girls.

A moment in time to enjoy the peaceful happiness.

Also, at Lee Hyun's side was Seoyoon.

Ever since Incheon, she stayed at Lee Hyun's side.

He was her only trusted friend, so she did not want to leave his side.

‘You’re planning to preoccupy me up till Incheon as well.’

While Lee Hyun was trembling in fear, he did not want to miss the opportunity of seeing Seoyoon's face so close to him.

‘Ima watch you in detail to make the best sculpture.’

Standing next to her, at this distance, he was close enough that it was possible for him to see any facial fuzz.

In the wind, her ebony hair dispersed gently as it passed.

In Baran village, and in the north, every time there was a need, he would sculpt Seoyoon from what he felt.

He wanted to express bits and bits more of her beauty when creating sculptures.

In this moment, he wanted to imprint a picture permanently onto something instead of his mind.

For Lee Hyun, this was the first time he ever felt that.

‘Need to have a picture, there’s no point in having it in my memory and can’t recall it when I need to...’

He felt as if the whole ocean was drowning in her ambiance.

Seoyoon's beauty was to that extent.

Additionally, the corners of her lip slightly elevated!

If he didn’t see it that close then he would have never saw the change in expression.

‘That’s nice to have.’

Lee Hyun had observed Seoyoon's expression very closely, but he did not know what she was feeling.

Seoyoon was happy, though she did not show a wider smile.

With the boat having been at sea for a long time, she was getting comfier with time.

The professors came out onto the deck and took off their coats.

They appeared to be Marine uniforms!

“This is the perfect time to tell you about this MT trip.”

The remark was made by Professor Ju Jonghun.

The students gathered together on the deck and wait for him to talk in silence.

“As you may have known, the original location of this MT was at Seung Bong Do. It is an extremely beautiful island. But it became clear that for this trip, for the purpose of having a wildlife experience, it was not fitting; so we cancelled. It’ll be better for you to visit Seung Bong Do at a later date.”

Ju Jonghun said this while expanding his smile.

“It’d be good to know in advance that it isn’t Seung Bong Do.”

“Then, where are we going for this MT, professor?”

Asked the senior students, be Ju Jonghun did not leak anything.

“You’ll find that out eventually. In the mean time, you don’t need to worry too much about it. It’s Sil...nah, though this island makes sense for this trip. It’s truly the wilderness and has the spirit of selflessness; it’s the best location to take advantage of the opportunity to nurture the blazing hot camaraderie!”

Due to the professor’s remark, the students were buzzing busily making guesses.

“Hmm where at. Certainly make sense if it’s one of the islands in the Yellow Sea.”

“Nope, not there.”

There are numerous of beautiful islands belonging Republic of Korea in the Yellow Sea.

The fishermen would board their ship and go fishing, while the rest of their families are to remain working on the fields in wait.

The students were still pondering about the island and had no intention of letting up guessing its name.

But many of the senior students had already given into the immense sense of disappointment and began gazing toward the abandoned Incheon ports.

“I should have never come on this MT.”

“With the new and returning students, I figured this is a great opportunity to mingle with girls.”

Lee Hyun too, wanted to clear the many misconceptions the students thought about him being a returnee.

He wanted to get along with the freshmen and reiterate that he was also a freshman.

Or else, all that was left about spending time at school was the depression of singularity.

With this ambition in mind, he was willing to carry this out during this trap of an MT.

“Why’d he say that place.”

“Huwew, please don’t remind me...”

“Give me a life vest so I can swim away from here.”

The returning students have already guessed the location.

The professor’s slip of the tongue of the first syllable pretty much gave them the island.

‘Sil’ was that character.

The island was the tile of a film with a base audience at the box office of a whopping 10 million viewers and made the island famous.

Nowadays, not many people knew of the island itself; in the usually cases, even the returning seniors, most made the connection to the film in its stead.

“Silmido.”

“Keoheuk!”

“Why that place...”

*

For the seniors, it was exactly like they predicted.

Southwest of the Ports of Incheon, the ship arrived at Silmido!

What welcomed them were the sandy beach and the foreshore.

Their hardship was just beginning.

“Here is the MT timetable. Please keep an eye out for this; hopefully we can smoothly match the times set for the MT.”

[Your day by day is tabulated here.]

Day 1 – Arrival at 1100.

-1200 Group meal:

Cannot use matches or lighters.

Live as those in the wilderness, make your own fire.

Once fire's done, you can start with the meal preparation.

-1400 Training course of hell #1:

Run one lap around the island on the shore; race to be the first 30 people.

Whoever arrives afterward must run another lap.

However, if you can't do it and give in, one of your members can take on the duty in your stead.

The group will do so until it is dinner hours; if not finished by then, having dinner is prohibited.

-1700 Group dinner and rest.

-2000 Courage test:

Each group will be given a specific target to be reclaimed in the mountain.

The group that obtains many targets will be presented with an exception.

-2300 Bed time.

Day 2 – Wake at 0600, toiletries.

-0700 Group meal.

-0800 Training course of hell #2:

Lunges 300 meters, then get on wooden canoes and row 1 trip around the island.

-1200 Group meal.

-1300 Sport competitions.

Events: Football(soccer), wrestling, log (bridge) boxing, lug of war, no exceptions. Unconditional participation.

Souvenirs to groups according to performance.

-1700 Break.

Sincere information exchanges between the grades as you share drinks. Talent show.

-2200 Free time from here.

If you want, you can sleep as long as possible.

Day 3 – wake at 0800, toiletries.

-0900 Meal:

Each group can make you own food and share with the entire lot.

-1000 Clean up.

-1100 Free to tour Silmido.

-1300 Returning.

[Writing this is an enormous pain...huek...]

The so-called timetable of hell!

If it was the usual MT, they'd be busy playing and eating.

But as the professors who planned this MT, they firmly swore.

“Unconditional wilderness! And hell's training!”

The groups were made to take care of the preparations themselves, and now the intensity of the training was raising the works to a higher height.

After putting together the timetable, the professors were very

pleased.

“We’ve completed this good timetable and are now heading back.”

“It’s necessary to adhere to this guideline.”

“This is a bit generous already so don’t ask for more. We won’t do it.”

“Never!”

The professors recalled last year’s Teacher’s Day.

It was a sad day since they did not receive a single flower or gift from the students!

But this was not done through vengeance due to that.

It most definitely was not.

*

The timetable was accepted with some concerns.

“Do you think they’ll really commit to this ridiculous thing?”

“It has to be a joke.”

The symptoms of escaping reality!

While still dubious, each set their baggage on the open and spacious sand.

“Well then, let’s set up our place.”

They did not care for breakfast and got started working on their settlement.

Each wanted to start early before night falls so they pulled out the equipments to set up the tents.

Most groups had essentially got a tent that could accommodate eight people to sleep in.

The tent, within the given allotted budget, spent most of it.

As for Lee Hyun, it was a different story.

“Our group will also set up an accommodation.”

Yet, the stuffs he removed from the compressed baggage were Styrofoam, aluminum rods, and building insulators that were used

on construction sites.

“That’s the tent?”

The group members were dazzled in confusion.

Lee Hyun was carrying most of the stuff so they didn’t know most of the things acquired.

“We’re not going to make a tent. We’re going to create a temporary place to live.”

“.....”

Park Sunjo asked cautiously.

“But we’re lacking a lot of materials to build something like that.”

Lee Hyun only removed a total of eight rods.

The insulators and the Styrofoam were barely able to fill one backpack.

“I know. Without the rest of the materials, these wont be enough.”

“Then how...”

“Local sourcing! I’m gonna go get things to make pillars and roof so you guys wait here.”

Lee Hyun pulled a saw from the tool box. Then he went into the woods nearby.

The group members then, were truly speechless.

Although the mountain was not very big and the woods weren’t completely dense or hazardous, his unexpected behavior caused them to be in the state of static panic.

Surprisingly, Lee Hyun returned pretty soon.

Along with the saw he brought, there was an additional tree he cut.

The dead and fallen tree branches were intertwined with other branches and kept close to the trunk.

He returned with the tree on his back, dragging it by the trunk.

Lee Hyun’s shoulders and arm muscles tighten as he kept the tension onto the material.

After his tendons thickened, he was overflowing with physical attractiveness.

It was not an exaggeration to call him a wreck once before, but thanks to the workouts in the Dojang, he built a strong body.

‘Look at those chest and forearm.’

‘His abdomen looks rock hard.’

Most of the girl’s eyes sparkled.

The members of the other groups privately talked about Lee Hyun.

Since then, the teachers also looked toward him with interests.

“Materials are all prepare, so I’ll build a house.”

Lee Hyun nailed the aluminum rods deep into the ground.

And on the ceiling, he has established a solid roof using the braches.

Choi Sang-jung didn’t like the roof very much.

“When it rains, it’ll leak through and put out the fire.”

The cut off branches were woven together and looked quite sturdy.

But if there were too many small openings, it would be too vulnerable against the rain drops regardless of its constitution.

Likewise, rain couldn't possibly come.

As for Choi Sang-jung, since he hadn't lifted a single finger, he wanted to be somewhat useful by pointing out and highlighting anything.

In fact, the other group members were also worrying over that point.

If they encounter a shower in the middle of their sleep, it can be a big problem.

"I'm not finished yet."

Lee Hyun relieved all the concerns of the group members.

The roof was covered with the throwaway transparent plastic.

Three or so layers of the see-through vinyl covering and secured with a line to complete the perfect roof.

The walls were formed by the transparent vinyl around the aluminum rods with silicon sealant briskly applied; the roof and the walls could handle a big storm quite a bit.

In comparison to the others' tents, their temporary residence was twice as spacious.

“Do you think making the entrance at the wall facing the sea is good?”

Lee Hyun asked for his group's opinions, but everyone simply nodded their heads, stunned.

Lee Hyun moved stompstompstomp on the material.(will mention below)

With each sound, the residence was getting closer and closer to completion.

Without a hint of hesitation, along with the proficiency in crafting, the pace was terrifyingly fast.

Lee Hyun pierced an entrance facing toward the sea.

After cutting the multiple overlapping layers of plastic, with the easy installation of a zipper, it was complete.

Lying in a tent, there was no view of the ocean.

With theirs, whether it was the wall, roof, or entrance, they were made of with transparent vinyl; so even when night comes, they can see the stars of the heaven.

The moonlit vinyl beach house!

Listening to the sound of the waves, the atmosphere will halt anyone and put them to sleep.

‘Making a house is insignificant; it is way easier than creating sculptures.’

To create the myriad of sculptures that he did required a significant imagination.

The basic of the sculptures was to harmonize with the surrounding environment.

To Lee Hyun, creating a house best suited for the beach was not a big deal.

He also strengthened the constitution of the ground below.

It took no time to do so, and then he lined it with Styrofoam with the building insulator to top it off.

These days, there was no problem to use these adequate building materials to make something of this level and have it last a couple of days.

Though, it could be a comfortable home for a month or so without the group.

It required a more robust built for it to last a storm if it was to hit; but it wasn't the season for such weather, so their concerns were alleviated.

“It's done. Let's move our luggage inside.”

Lee Hyun led them all inside; once in, the group members looked around.

It was pleasant and wide, while the floor was relatively cushioned.

“This is great.”

“Really comfortable. More so than tent for sure.”

Hong Seonye and Jung Eunhee were comfortable and didn't hold back their words.

The other groups were still busy setting up the tents and struggling with it; while they were the only group that had a

comfortable house that finished in a flash.

Until now, Hong Seonye, the once with no interest and negligent to Lee Hyun, came up to him.

“It seems you have an interest in interior design or architecture and such. I think a man with such a hobby is really ideal.”

It was evident that her awareness of Lee Hyun had positively improved.

Lee Hyun replied honestly.

“If they work 3 months as a manual laborers, anybody can do this.”

“You also have an excellent sense of humor.”

Hong Seonye took what he said as a joke and laughed it off.

Seoyoon also looked around the temporary residence and her face showed she was comforted.

She wasn't someone who can simply mingle with others. At night, it also wasn't easy for her to fall asleep.

Throughout the duration of the MT trip, she was concerned over

this point; but was relieved due to the comfortable and spacious house.

As such, it took Lee Hyun's group half the time of the other groups pitching their tents to complete their temporary residence.

Although it wasn't specifically anything awkward, Lee Hyun was fidgeting around because he had finished too fast in comparison to the other groups.

“Chaa, Let's eat.”

Lee Hyun grabbed hold of the materials to cook the meal himself.

As usual, there was no other reason than that it was difficult for the rest.

He washed the rice in the pot, and set it on a crevice of rocks.

Then a bit after, he picked up the pot and set it below the trees.

“By the way, about the fire.”

Lee Yuu-Chong and Min Sura as well as the girls came over with curious gaze.

There was no doubt Lee Hyun's actions further proved that he

was a returnee in their eyes.

The reason for their hearts lightening up was mainly because he easily set up the house.

“Ima make it of course.”

“How?”

“I wonder if I have some tool to make it easier...”

Lee Hyun wondered for a moment.

If he had a magnifying glass, then it was possible with the use of the sun’s rays and have it directed it a paper to make fire.

It was easily the easiest and most comfortable method.

‘Don’t have a magnifying glass, but there is a roundabout way to do it.’

He brought the clear vinyl to take advantage of them and create a habitat.

He could also use it to fill it with water to collect the rays.

But it’d be a bit tricky, since he’ll have to tear off some of the

vinyl he used earlier.

“Then we’ll just use wood to start a fire.”

Lee Hyun looked for a suitable tree.

On a piece of dry wood, he put a bit of some dry grass, then used a dry branch and rubbed it back and forth.

He did not forget to blow on it to refresh the oxygen in the bundle.

Chiiiiiii.

Pretty soon after, a thick bluish smoke preceded the coming fire.

Although it seemed like an easy thing to do; if one lacked the experience, it was absolutely not an easy task.

‘Done it plenty in Royal Road is all.’

When he was at the novice level, he didn’t have the money to get flint. Thus, he spent time rubbing branches to make fire.

Complete devotion to spare a penny!

Later in reality, he tried to do the same thing as his memories

entailed.

He was a Sculptor in Royal Road.

In real life also, sometimes, he would suddenly get the urges to make a fire out of wood as practice while he was shearing trees.

The first few times he failed plenty in succession, at the end of a four hours long endeavor that he could finally produce fire.

The Sculptor class brought him another advantage!

He used those experiences to kindle this fire.

“Wah!”

The group members were amazed while watching the flame.

In the usual case, one can use a readily available lighter to make a fire; but in this case, the speculation of creating a fire outdoor gave a different atmosphere.

Lee Hyun used that fire to cook the meal.

The given meal time was two hours due to condition set forth to make and keep the fire lit.

With the generous amount of time given, he leisurely took his time to boil the pork.

They could also boil the ham hocks to eat too.

“Ah, I’m hungry.”

“C’mon and boil!”

The other groups hurriedly took out their burners and cookware to boil water.

However, there was one thing they needed to first.

They were busy clamoring about with painful blisters forming while rubbing the wood.

“Can’t do it, it’s tough...”

“Copy that group over there.”

At the end of the groups’ suffering, using camera lens and such tools, they made a meal of ramen with their kindled fire.

Nevertheless, there were many groups that could not eat.

Because from then on, it was time for the training course of hell.

Chapter 4: Wild And Hell Training

Many students were hungry as they gathered on the sand when time called for it. The professors came first and waited for everyone to come.

“One lap around the beach and that’ll end today’s hell training.”

The students felt at ease.

‘We have until 5 to leisurely make it back.’

‘It’d be like a tour around Silmido in this case.’

During this, the freshman Kim Hyeonjun hand went up.

“Professor, I have a question. Our group did not eat. If we still have time after then lap around the island, can we eat then?”

The professor readily agreed.

“Sure. If you have time at the end of hell’s training, then it’s free time until the next item on the schedule. So, everybody ready?”

“Yes!”

The students wore comfortable running shoes; they did so in preparation for the running on the beach.

“Then, you run. GO!”

At the drop of the professor’s command, more than 100 students rumbled forward.

“With the sea breeze being fine like this, it’s good enough with a jog.”

“For your health, I think it’s good that we came to the MT. right, senior?”

“Yea, I’m thinking that as well.”

The student ran as if it was a leisure walk or stroll.

Even with the scorching sand below their feet, it wasn’t a hard terrain.

The fined grains of sands meshed as they trampled on.

But, some of the students led by their returning seniors were running with conviction.

“Heokheok!”

“Faster, faster, let’s go!”

The majority of the students did not understand their seniors’ reasoning.

“Run a bit slower, please.”

“Following that pace is too hard.”

Minor complaints erupted.

But, the seniors looked back while smiling brightly.

“Oh, then you can go slowly.”

“We won’t wait and are going ahead.”

The students eased off and asked.

“Is there some sort of reason?”

Then these returning students strongly shook their heads.

“It’s nothing. I just want to run, yeah.”

“Don’t you think it’s good to run in such a rare event to have such a nice sea breeze blowing into the island?”

“That’s right, we just want to run.”

With that, the seniors ran like fleeing arrows.

Lee Hyun too, didn’t care too much about having to run.

He was thinking that it was just one comfortable lap around the island.

However, he was watching the odd behavior of the returnees and became suspicious.

‘There’s something.’

Lee Hyun did not believe in anybody.

Everything was for the sake of his family’s well being!

He had long abandon trust in humanity and sympathetic compassion.

Once he learned of the harsh reality, he no longer had naivety.

He acted hard on himself as he lived while reciting ‘money

money money' in abundance.

But as if the world was truly trying to drag him to the bottom, his harsh life wasn't just that.

It gave him experienced a temporary feel of 30 billion Won in his grasp, only just to take it away moments later.

Reality hits!

Having truly fallen once into the pits, he will not easily put absolute faith in others.

'Be careful as to not get hit in the back of the head. There's no way I'll easily believe these guys.'

While Lee Hyun kept close eyes on these seniors, he raised his running speed.

This physical attribute didn't come from his time in the Dojang; it was already instilled in him by default before then, as he never once threw money to ride the bus for the good amount of distance.

With time to cherished, he raised his physical ability up a notch to turn walking into a running pace in this place.

Dadadadadadak!

His speed rose far beyond those of the students!

Pretty soon after, he caught up with the returning seniors.

However, he didn't care for the lead role while remained in their vicinity to find out the reason why.

He quickly found out the reason for the seniors course of actions.

No matter how much they ran, they couldn't see the end of Silmido's beach.

"Heokheok! I'm sure at this point we must have screwed up the direction somehow? Why are we going straight and seems to be going nowhere."

"I think it's already been way over 15 minutes."

"I'm hungry."

"Shit I'm hella hungry."

Several of the seniors knew.

With just a quick glance, most people are often not mistaken to think that the islands in Yellow Sea as small.

But, having to run from one end to another is not an easy task.

The circumference of Silmido's beach is more than six kilometers!

After having to run just one lap, you'll never want to do it again.

'I'm sorry. You young'uns'

For these knowing seniors, it was the first come first serve basis.

The effect took its toll as the other students also increased their running speed.

Their mind became impatient as they tread on continuously on the endless beach.

Physical limitations of hunger!

There were several students who were trying to catch up, but a while after, their overall speed quickly fell with shortness of breath.

For the students that neglected exercise, there was no other way to call the event but hellish.

From the once running speed they had, eventually they all came

to a walking halt later.

As for Lee Hyun, the one lap was easily accomplished within the first set of 30 people.

Among this first come first server basis group, there were good amounts of returning students, seniors, and even freshmen still seemingly fresh.

Seoyoon was among them. This was easier comparing to the usual morning jog with Cha Eunhee that became a habit.

For those that didn't make it within this group, they had to do another lap around Silmido.

From the exhaustion to the hunger, it was a proliferation of endlessness!

“Man, shit.”

“Somebody please help me, anybody.”

The students sought a helping hand from within their group, but nobody tried to lend one out.

The distance of six kilometers!

Although it seemed to be short at first sight, it was a very long distance.

It goes without saying for those that had to do it twice.

Now they finally understood why the given time was three hours.

If you cannot run, then you'd be better walk profusely to finish!

But during this second bit, they had little power to even walk, and were on the verge of collapsing.

"I...please help me. I'm really sorry but please, can you take my place."

Hong Seonye was having a hard time and asked Lee Hyun.

She was at her physical limit and waned to rely on Lee Hyun as he seemed to be still fine.

Lee Hyun, of course, said.

"Well...I don..."

He was trying to find the right moment to reject!

"Sure."

Lee Hyun changed his mind and ran.

It was due to the fact he had finished the lap quickly and had no particular work to do.

He figured it was better off to do a bit more physical training.

For those who had to do the second wheel, almost all of the students walked.

To be forced to do 12 kilometers was very difficult for those that didn't exercise normally.

The only people who were running were those who returned from the service where they were forced to do so.

“Keoheuheuk.”

“Yaheuheung.”

Among the students who were still running, strange moans and groans came about here and there.

Each was forcing their heavy footsteps as the tread.

They wanted to give up. But for the sake of their group members,

they could not do so at all costs.

They had not have lunch, and they could very well forgo dinner for their entire group.

‘This is why it’s called training of hell.’

‘Very fittingly put on the timetable.’

While contemplating again and again, they were forcing themselves to keep moving.

At this time, Min Sura sank to the floor in exhaustion. She sat there for a long time while panting.

“No, no more...I can’t do it anymore.”

At the sight of this, Lee Hyun who was far in front, came back.

“Piggyback.”

“Huh?”

“Piggyback. It didn’t mention anything about this on the board so I think it’s ok.”

“Yes, but...I’m heavy.”

“Don’t worry, you’re prolly not as much as before since you’ve spent a lot already.”

Lee Hyun had experience in rice delivery.

Giving a person a piggyback ride was much easier than carry a bag of rice!

‘In comparison to bringing up loads of brick up the stairs, this is much easier.’

Min Sura, with conflicted emotions, leaned on Lee Hyun’s back carefully.

“If it gets heavy...please let me off.”

“Okay.”

It wasn’t hard for Lee Hyun to carry.

He rested both hands on his thighs to push himself up and was moving slowly at first. This attracted the eyes of the students around them.

Some envied, some praised!

It was already a tough thing to carry a girl when one was already physically spent!

But what they saw after was the real surprise.

Dadadadadak.

Lee Hyun was holding onto Min Sura as he ran.

“Huh?”

“What th...”

They were already having a hard time walking!

If they had known Lee Hyun had to adjust his speed in consideration, they'd be in for a real surprise.

‘If I try to get back as soon as possible, I’ll have nothing to do but act appropriately with those people. I’ll just roughly match the leading ones and that’ll do.’

Lee Hyun ran within the leading group of the second lap.

“Aaa, so hard.”

“I’m dying, dying. If it have ice cream to eat right now would be

wonderful.”

“Even if it’s just some cold water...”

As soon as the other students arrived, they dropped to the ground and sounded sickly.

Min Sura’s face also strained.

‘He really gave me a piggyback and ran.’

She was filled with anxiety when she thought that she would be put back down if she was too heavy.

But they really arrived running steadfastly.

She knew he had lots of male friends, but she just realized that the sheet anchor she thought she had wasn’t there.

That projected onto Lee Hyun; and Lee Hyun appeared much more favorable in her eyes.

Having returned after two laps around the island, before long it was already time for dinner.

Lee Hyun immediately started preparing food.

The foods he was making this time were grilled chops covered in rosemary sauce and Mediterranean shellfish soup.

Although he could have just made the grilled pork to eat, he but specifically opted out for the more labor intensive dishes because he thought about the amount of work their jaws would be doing otherwise.

“Hyeong, let me help you.”

Park Sunjo came over with his hands ready.

The other group members, unless they weren't presented at the moment, were lying on the ground gasping for air intensively to be able to do anything else.

Fortunately for Park Sunjo as he made into the first group during the first lap at the 29th place.

Lee Hyun asked while trimming the ribs.

“Have you done or watched a lot of cooking at home?”

“No. I don't watch it. I don't go into the kitchen so I almost never see it.”

“But there must be a dish you can do.”

“Yes, I can make a bowl of ramen well.”

“...Do you know how to peel fruits?”

“Peeling? I’ve never seen it done before. If you leave it to me then I’ll try.”

“Wash the dishes.”

Lee Hyun rather chose to suffer alone.

In Royal Road, he can receive help from his party members as they have a basis for cooking to trim the materials and such.

But now in the real world, since there was no such thing as Cooking skill to keep things tolerable, he decided to directly work on them all.

But Seoyoon was exempt from cooking even with the skill.

The worse food!

Even comparing to fighting off a fever from the cold, a human with highest spirit would die if they were forced to eat something so tough.

If Seoyoon was somewhere within the vicinity of the dish, it

would dried up somehow.

‘Welp yeah. Anywhere in this world, there are people who are incompatible with this sort of stuff because they’re not fated to suffer.’

The smoke billow from the fire was huge as Lee Hyun grilled the ribs.

“You need?”

Hong Seonye offered him a towel.

She came and brought him a clean towel.

Her hair and face were wet as if she had just gone to wash her face with water.

“Because of me that you had to do two laps when you’re not supposed to. I’m so sorry. It must have been tough.”

This time also, Lee Hyun answered candidly.

“It was not a big deal.”

“The professors are really too much, If we come here for an MT then why the hell are we training!”

When women strongly criticize something, the point they're making usually lies contrary to what they're saying.

Essential, the right thing to do in this situation that could blossom into that of friendship is to agree and pass judgment on the said subject.

Rather than using one's logic or offer a solution, just use a few simple easy to understand words accordingly to increase points.

On the other hand, Lee Hyun took a good look at Hong Seonye like he had never done so before and roughly replied.

“The implied hell's training is too easy.”

“It's easy?”

“It doesn't need to be called ‘training of hell.’”

Generally, if something is named that, then it shouldn't be so easy.

If it was laid out like Lee Hyun's plan, then it wouldn't be so effortlessly doable. Upon arriving to the island, they would march orderly into the mountain for 20 kilometers.

At the end of the march, they would exercise for about three

hours through the mean of having battles. After that, a meal that takes about five minutes to finish then onto the next course.

In which they throws themselves into the sea; with sea water fill about half of their body, and they would run in that state while carrying logs!

It's also good to drag a log through the mudflats. One can get a really good workout with heavy logs.

After which, they can get about two hours of sleep at night.

At this point it can't be called basic training!

He had learned this from watching the instructors from the Dojang.

This was not the breaking point of humans!

If it's something you crave then you can do it.

Even if you can't make it.

To reach the pinnacle of strength, this is nothing at all.

After seeing them, Lee Hyun suddenly matched his workout to align himself to their standards.

“Uh huh.”

Hong Seonye had a totally different interpretation.

Although he showed he had a lot of strength running the lap for her, what she want in a man is the looks to show him off, and would not care for otherwise.

‘Does he like me?’

She had no other option but to be mistaken.

They finished their meal.

They had a sumptuous dinner while the other groups could do nothing except eyed them with envy.

The other groups’ food was simple: kimchi ramen, beef ramen, Neoguri Deung ramen, or some other types of food they couldn’t recollect.

Some also had cold noodles with spices, but that level of food could not compare in term of quality to Lee Hyun’s group.

Kkokkodaeg! (cockoldoo again)

It seemed as if every time the youngest of the chicken Half Sauce Half Fried cackled, the sounds of beating crackling flame torches and saliva swallowing could be heard.

“Did you hear? Over there have a chicken for food...”

“So jealous. That sounds really good.”

The desperation level in the wilderness was way different.

Perhaps, at this time, when asked what one would bring with him the three things they deemed essential; most of whom will answer as such.

Lee Hyun.

A lighter.

Half Sauce Half Fried.

The meal time ended with the constant envious eyes, now it was time for the courage test.

“Hidden within that mountain over there are slips of paper for you to find. The group with the most will receive a special award of having their liquor paid for.”

A courage test within the dark mountain!

Realistically, snakes or other animals had concealed themselves and attacked people.

This time too, Lee Hyun's group inadvertently ranked first.

"My legs are sore."

"Ahh, I'm sleepy. Hungry. Mommy."

Most were too tired to hike so there was no other group to join in.

Only Lee Hyun, Seoyoon, and Park Sunjo diligently walked around and were able to find as much as 10 sheets of paper.

Just as the night hits 11 o'clock, all easily fell asleep.

They rode the ship to come, set up their tents, made their food, and ran; because all of whom did things they normally never did before so they easily got tired.

From within the tents and from the temporary cursed beach, there were only the sounds of the wave and the sound of the snoring alternated between the two.

Slam!(wave)

Deureureung.(snore)

Slam!(wave)

Kuuuuuul!(also snore...not sure...sounds like crying...)

*

Lee Hyun woke up in the morning as he usually does.

‘I wonder if Hyeyeon is eating her meals properly. She should be bringing side dishes to grandma in the hospital too.’

There was nothing he could do on this island.

It was not possible to go to the homepage of the Dark Gamer website for information, nor could he go to an auction site to check up prices of items.

The only thing to do was to relax comfortably.

‘Rarely have this kind of rest before.’

Feeling comfortable for the first time in a few years, Lee Hyun quietly slipped out of the temporary residence.

He could hear the exchanges between the sounds of the students from the tent and those of the waves.

It was so dark that he could barely tell the oncoming dawn by the moon and stars.

“Nice.”

Lee Hyun walked on the white sand.

Like others, he too wanted to get to know them and hang out. But it was not possible.

‘I can’t stand out like the rest of them. I have to be concealed in the shadows, in order to earn money and make living easier.’

He had a strange relationship with the friends and seniors he knew.

The people he befriended back in primary school all believed he moved away.

Their parents had said so to Lee Hyun.

“Don’t play with our children.”

Since he was at a young age, Lee Hyun bluntly asked why; since he couldn't possibly have known.

“Your parents have both passed. And I heard you live in a very poor house. So do not come close to our kids anymore.”

On the grounds that he didn't have parents and his living environment was difficult that he was unable to make friends.

Whenever stuff goes missing and money was gone, even the teachers prosecute Lee Hyun.

Due to these experiences that forced Lee Hyun down the path of a moneygrubber.

But he really could understand the mindset of those parents.

‘My children are more important than others, huh. To interfere whenever they can to root out what they think are the bad influences.’

Lee Hyun no longer tried to recall the past.

He wanted to take time to rest comfortably here. Only here at the MT where he can do so, once he gets home he'd have to work hard again.

Lee Hyun took the ‘to be enjoy’ stroll in the morning.

But in the distant on a rock, someone had did so first and sat on it.

It was Seoyoon.

She was able to sleep a little at Lee Hyun's side, but it then somehow got uncomfortable and she quickly up and left.

“.....”

Seoyoon also noticed Lee Hyun but she did not say anything. She simply glanced at the side next to her.

Lee Hyun took a seat beside her. Of course, he didn't forget to check again and again to verify that it was an ok thing to do.

‘Sit down you mean? Can I sit down? Don't get angry when I sit. Maybe she'll take revenge on me in the future if I do...’

It was still dark.

Lee Hyun and Seoyoon were sitting on the rock watching the sea.

Under a myriad of stars under the sky, and the vast ocean stretched before them.

The little frustration melted away as they sat to relax.

“.....”

Seoyoon didn't fully open her mouth but she wanted to say something.

It was due to the tension that she could not say anything.

In fact, so much so that she specifically did not know how to put anything into words.

To her, being friends was factual. So, she wanted to have a nice chat but she did not know how to clear the tension she felt in the air.

‘I don't know what to say. So how does someone transmit their sincerity from just words?’

Seoyoon sometimes took deep looks into Lee Hyun's eyes for a long time.

In which, to Lee Hyun, the deep looks evoked his thoughts to go wild.

‘You know I created the statues or what? I knew that sculpture of Morata's beauty would give me away sooner or later. No, on the plain of despairs you watched me make the statues, did you figure

out since then? I don't know if you knew the Freya statue in Baran was based on you. Aah, these eyes are like those when I had that severe cold and you forced that poisonous food down my throat; they're the same exact eyes!'

Illusion and distrust, fear was budding along with the coming dawn.

*

The entrance to Morata.

"Hehe, thank you very much."

"We've been a lot of trouble to Da'in nim."

"Thanks to you that we were able to break this quest."

Before the gate, there was a party disbanding.

The place they explored at was the Spring of Oblivion within the Twilight Ruins!

"It's unbelievable. To think we could subjugate the Twilight Ruins like this."

"We got so many items, it was an interesting experience. It is all

due to Da'in nim.”

“Heh, don't mention it.”

Among the party members, one amazing Shaman who was very memorable.

Shamans were usually deemed as the jack of all trade.

Ranging from treatment and magical spells, buffs, and curses, it was a struggle of a class to have.

There was no upside to be seen as is.

So when ones form parties, they usually do not designate a spot for Shamans to join.

They lacked the ability to deal treatments to the level of the Clerics, or were they specifically able to work at any certain area; so in most cases, whenever Shamans were invited, they usually only played a supporting role.

But the Shaman Da'in was in a different dimension in comparison to the others.

Her treatment magic exceeded the tolerable of a Cleric, and her damage output was near those of the Wizards in term of magic attacks.

Blind.

Blockade magic.

Using vines of trees to bind and stop enemies' movements.

Invisible arrows.

Familiar summons.

While her variety of skills were correctly set to obtain the most advantage, her mastery of the skills were also very high.

No wonder the party members were smothered by Da'in.

“Hehehe, then do you all want to register as friends?”

At Dain's suggestion, the party welcomed it readily.

“Sure.”

“Then we'll do more some other times!”

So Da'in bid a final farewell to the party; after which, she roamed Morata wanting a tour.

Entering the town, she saw many shops were still in construction that she had never seen before.

“Need people to go hunting in the hills in the south. Preferably Wizard.”

“Need those beyond the level of 300. Need warriors that can take hits of those level 400 or more.”

“Want Wizards. Necromancers and Summoners welcome. To do quest.”

There were many people who were trying to recruit members to hunt or do quests.

While many blue collar workers in their rightful place began creating items, the other vendors set up their shops.

Tailors, faith, trading post opened!

From these small textile vendors, leather and cloths were woven.

Rather than going to other cities to buy the expensive leather, adventurers here paid money to have their customized equipments produced in exchange.

Since Morata was the leading in textile technology, pretty good

items were produced from the given materials.

The faith vendors relieved curses and gave blessings, while they also played a role in training Paladins and Clerics.

The trading post was a popular place that was always crowded with Merchants.

At Morata, with the rise in traffic of people, the need for luxurious goods, food, weapons and armors were also on the rise.

While some others obtained goods sold in Morata, and earned profits by selling the materials at other regions.

The Mercenary Guild was finally completed.

Members of the Red Shield mercenary gathered after their tough lives of mercenaries.

After one having exchange drinks with the mercenaries, they share a conversation regarding the employment of these hired guns.

In some cases, someone who doesn't want to for a party for a quest chooses to hire mercenaries.

The dialogue between them is to figure out whether the soon to be hire merc has the basic qualification to be do the job.

After considering the reputation, level, and occupation, the chance of the employment corresponds to the level of familiarity.

Although their services were expensive and on a daily allowance, endless amount of people had been looking for mercenaries because their costs spoke for their effectiveness.

While Da'in took a lap around the town to purchase the necessary goods, she walked to a party seeking a Wizard.

“Class Shaman. If you don't mind it, my level is 227.”

“It's a bit low, so...let me try to talk to the party members and I'll be happy to reply.”

The leader was Paikumaen(Pike-Man), with a pike polearm as a main weapon.

After having chatted with his party members via whispers, he nodded.

“It seemed you're quite famous and well known. Da'in nim is very welcome. Our commissioned quest is to punish the servitors of the Skull before the coming sunset. Would you like to join?”

“Yes!”

Da'in joined the party even if it was just a simple quest.

The location for their quest was at the Green Lake near the town of Morata.

Da'in with her new party moved toward their destination.

Chapter 5: Lee Hyun's Identity Uncovered

The second day of MT.

Morning came; along with a bunch of bizarre sounds came from the tents.

“Kkeueung, kkeung.”

“Heuheoheoheoheok!”

“Ma...my thigh.”

Pain resulted from the aftermath of yesterday's running.

Even with the pain occurring during the event, it was nothing comparable to the muscle ache of the following day!

“All rise. It's morning!”

The professors each went around the tents to wake everyone up.

With eyes so narrowed due to the sleepiness, they moved to wash their faces and hurried to prepare breakfast.

Each group nodded their heads grandly at their meals.

Due to the troubles of yesterday, they simply had ramen because they didn't have the will to cook the materials otherwise; today, there was a wide range of food.

Chigeulchigeul. (sizzles)

Grilling pork, and also opened a bottle of cider.

“Can I drink the Soju?”

Some students asked the professors with hoarse breath.

Drinking in the morning is not condoned during an MT!

The professors delightfully allowed.

“Go ahead! Drink and see if you can withstand today's training of hell!”

They withered and returned the Soju back to the box once again.

In Lee Hyun's group, he used the leftover materials to boil stew; along with a side dish of seasoned premature leaf mustard kimchi.

He steamed the rice in a sotdanji until thick smoke evaporated, till the rice seemingly burnt, then they were allowed to eat. (???it's like a flat kettle of a pan.)

“Hyeong, this food is really is the best!”

Choi Sang-jung gave it two thumbs up.

Min Sura also slurped down the meal and asked.

“Where did you learn to cook like this?”

It has long been settled that the ideal men are those that can make appealing dishes.

If you can cook day by day particularly for a woman, she can't be helped but fall in love with you.

So from that standpoint, learning how to cook is a virtue of a man!

“My cooking skill rises over the years at home. It has been more than a decade already.”

“So you cooked since childhood? And the qualities are so high.”

“There are circumstances. And I learned more specific dishes in

Royal Road.”

In Royal Road, there was a separate cooking skill. But simply relying on that could not lead to a finished dish from beginning to end.

In reality, even with just the improper adjustment of water in the rice cooker, the damage is enormous. At that point it's either to turn into porridge or throw it away completely.

Practicing in Royal Road helped reduce these mistakes and even acted as flavor analysis.

Thus, in order copy the taste properly, it required accurately finding the increments in the recipe exactly.

Lee Hyun studied such recipes for days.

Given that the various parts in the recipe in virtual reality did not transliterate precisely out in the real world.

After having finished breakfast, the hell's training started again!

“Group lunges. Just 300 meters worth.”

“Uooooooooooooooooo.”

After the professor's words, the students' grievances were enormous.

With cramps in their legs at one point or another, they forcibly lunged for 300 meters.

In fact, the length of it wasn't that long so it ended quickly.

"Today wasn't bad. Didn't even take more than 20 mins."

"The professors also have consciences, huh."

"I want to go back to sleeping more soundly."

The students' conversations were a bit relaxed.

Then as if to instilled more resentment, a professor spoke.

"Is the warm up exercise done?"

Since they overly abused their muscles during yesterday's run, this warm up was to release the pent up tension in their muscles!

The real hell on this training schedule was the coming boat ride.

Eight people riding at once on the wooden boat.

“The rule is simple. One lap around the island paddling your boat.”

Since the professors won't be able to keep an eye on everyone, they all were enclosed in life vests.

They also rented fishing boats to hover around, to watch out for any accidents that could occur.

Lee Hyun examined the detail of the boat.

‘The boat's pretty old. Think it's about 10 years old or so. I don't have any experience on boats, let's give it a try.’

Lee Hyun tried to reach for the oars and Choi Sang-jung grabbed hold of them first.

“Hyeong, let me do this.”

“Are you sure?”

“Yea, you get some rest. You can take over once I'm weary.”

Choi Sang-jung was feeling sorry about having left Lee Hyun to endure alone until now.

While the other groups suffered, it was all thanks to Lee Hyun that their current lifestyle was comfortable.

“Kkeungcha!” (exerting force)

Choi Sang-jung rowed.

Kkulreong.

“Huh?”

Kkulreongkkulreong.

With each row, the boat staggered aimlessly. Fortunately, the boat was surprisingly sturdier than it looked.

“Left, go left!”

“Ah! The waves are coming this way!”

The waves were pushing against them at the opposite flow instead of their intended one lap around the island.

Every time the waves came, it rocked the boat back and forth and slowing their speed to a crawl.

Choi Sang-jung and Park Sunjo alternately rowed the boat for

more than 40 minutes.

Suddenly, their backs were drenched in sweats.

“Wanna switch to me?”

“Yes, hyeong.”

Park Sunjo got up from the seat and switched to Lee Hyun.

Lee Hyun gripped the oar in both hands tightly. And stirred.

Kkulreong!

The distortion between the forces he exerted and that of Choi Sang-jung was too much!

The boat skewed for a bit before realigned itself.

It was difficult due to the fact one had to take into account of the incoming waves as they row.

‘Not easy.’

Lee Hyun relaxed himself.

He figured it'd cost more power if he had try to force against the flow. He adjusted his strength accordingly so he wouldn't get tired quickly.

After all, the paddle was simply an extension of the arms.

‘It's like brandishing the sword to a flow. No point to go against that.’

Lee Hyun rowed the oar as he felt the pushing force against the water.

He accepted the oncoming waves fully and allowed it to slip by.

After which he once again puts reasonable force into each paddle.

Seureureureureong.

While not a too overwhelming row, the ship moved forward with ease.

Without distorting the boat, it wasn't being pushed back.

It was nothing comparable to the experienced fishermen, but the boat's advancement was in a different dimension comparing to when Choi Sang-jung and Park Sunjo did it.

Choi Sang-Jung curiously asked.

“Hyeong, have you done sailing before?”

Of course, Lee Hyun had never been on another boat before. They were something beyond his reach.

Though there is a possibility if it was a shrimping boat. Though it's kind of like the worse case scenario of a job.

“I have the feel of the paddle.”

“Huh?”

To Lee Hyun it was an easy answer; but since that philosophical sentence was built off of his numerous experiences as he suffered, it wasn't for others.

If you don't endure physical labor then you'll suffer when experiencing it.

Such as working hard shoveling. After a period of tremendous effort, it becomes easier as one get well accustom to it.

The boat moved along soothingly whenever Lee Hyun paddled.

This island of unspoiled nature and wide blue sea!

While doing the lap, they were able to take in the scenery Silmido had to offer.

Afterward, it was lunch. Then followed by the sport competition.

The students were still tired and exhausted, but the heat from the sun remained strong.

Due to the view of the sea and the taste of fresh air, unexpected vitality arose from within all the students.

A gift from nature.

Lee Hyun too, played without regret.

Football(soccer), wrestling, and log boxing.

Even at the moderate level with the subtracted power, the totaled score represented his overwhelming vitality.

Thanks to his performance, it naturally attracted the attention of others.

A female student, Park Sumin, seemed to have realized something and clapped.

“That’s right! I’m sure I’ve seen him somewhere.”

Lee Hyun heard from corner of his ear ad his heart thumped.

‘Is it the fact that I’m Weed?’

Until now it was unlikely that they could recognize him.

His face wasn’t exposed from Continent of Magic back in the day, and the time he was Karichwi the Orc was when he was an Orc.

No matter how good or keen eyes anyone had, there was no way for any of them to call Lee Hyun out from the Orc.

Then the dragon hunt was also not possible.

In this case he was a skeleton. Only showed a skeleton body and a face without flesh.

The truth was never publicized.

Recently KMC Media started a program named ‘Weed.’

But it was never disclosed whether it was Jeonshin Weed of CoM or not.

It was due to the judgment of the broadcasters to deliberately

conceal his identity.

The content of the Kingdom of Vampires Todeum was a major broadcast.

An emerging hero of Versailles continent, Weed, to challenge the incomprehensible.

To intentionally keeping the mystery of Weed, they edited parts of him out or excluded him as a whole.

And Weed the Sculptor did not have that extent of popularity!

While it had only been two weeks since it started.

Being at the bottom ratings, there was a positive spin that the mysteriousness was kept.

Because Weed the Sculptor wasn't a completely unknown being.

The Lord of Morata, the Earl of Morata!

Scouts from guilds had constantly made offers to the one known as the best Sculptor of the Versailles continent.

Lee Hyun knew he once again became famous through his sculptures.

But while the Sculptor's popularity was nowhere near that of the Jeonshin Weed, only few knew that the two were one and the same in Royal Road.

All in all, in reality, there were very few people that can make the correlation between Lee Hyun and them.

Park Sumin pointed her finger toward Lee Hyun.

“I've seen him before! Once 2 years ago!”

All the faculty members presented and the students all focused their gaze at no one else but him!

Lee Hyun face contorted.

“2 years ago?”

He rocked his head to one side but nothing came to mind.

“What, where did you see me?”

“Don't you remember the event long ago?”

Everyone pondered in search for the reason why Park Sumin spoke with such confident tone.

“Princess Knight, right?”

Princess Knight.

He visited his sister and attended three events at the school.

Among them was one event called the ‘Princess Set.’

Then, Park Sumin tried to recollect the video she came across on the internet and recited it to see who else also remembered.

During that time, Lee Hyun’s movements were very incredible.

He dashed across the obstacles in a flurry, and defeated the water balloons using his fists and legs. Then used a leap and jumped past the wall.

Due to the fact that the event attracted a lot of participants because of the prize money, the video widespread further on the internet as there were a lot of viewers.

“Pr..Princess Knight?”

“Ah, then you’re that person from the festival.”

From Park Sumin recollection of the story, people began to recall

such event.

Lee Hyun face frowned. To him, having a nickname as the 'Princess Knight' was nothing flattering at all.

“You have the wrong guy. I’m not that person at all.”

A lie!

But Park Sumin nodded her head.

“Of course you’re the Princess Knight. Although the video was just a clip, you still have the same face, now and then.”

“Well, don’t be too sure.”

“The countenance you used to deny that wasn’t trustworthy at all.”

“.....”

At this point, Lee Hyun was dubbed as the Princess Knight and engraved in steel.

“Come, take a drink. Princess Knight!”

“Yes, Senior.”

At the end of the athletic event resulted to a drink party.

This could be considered as pretty much the last event of the MT.

Lee Hyun' popularity essentially skyrocketed as a resulted from that. Along with the professors called him to come around, many students also visited him several times.

“So you're Lee Hyun huh. You have been very unexpected at every tasks.....anyway, you did a good job in the MT. Now, take this drink here.”

“Yes, professor.”

Lee Hyun went around the professors and drank the offered alcohol without leaving a single drop.

Doing so to earn the credits from the professors to be able to make his college life more favorable.

Flattery through drinking spirit!

To the strong the weak, and to the weak be strong! (I think it means...the weak sucks up to the strong, while the strong takes care of the weak.)

There was something wrong with this old saying.

But it's a reasonable law for people to live by.

“Lee Hyun Oppa. Please help me here.”

“What is it.”

“Please light this fire here.”

There was a motive behind them to substantially changed the way the addressed him. Most of them, including the returning students, cautiously changed the way they addressed him to Oppa.

But with Lee Hyun lack of sensibility, he did not budge. He spat his words out as dry as the desert.

“Use a lighter.”

Lee Hyun built a cheeky facial expression. Nevertheless, the students did not give up.

“I want to see you make the fire using woods.”

Those who acted cold toward him before also showed their interest.

“Come here.”

“We owe you a drink.”

With motives of getting along with the Lee Hyun, the seniors called him over for a few words.

Especially with the female seniors, as he felt their intensity in their stares.

The focused eyes of strong stallions!

With their forcefulness and sizable groups, he had no choice but to quietly go to where the voices beckoned.

“The seniority isn’t that important, ok?”

“Look at those leg muscles. So solid. Hohoho.”

Lee Hyun had not grown accustomed to this.

From here and there, other freshmen and seniors chatted up amid laughter along with drinks in hands.

“Whew. No kidding. Rowing the boat was really hard, y’kno.”

“But thanks to senior that we finished the MT well.”

More familiarity!

Though they've reached the extreme of their fatigue; by overcoming such hardship and adversity, the freshman and the seniors formed a mutual respect for each other.

Whether it's the talent show or the training of hell, in several hours or so, they would all leave those behind and nothing will remain except for their happy memories.

So they all shared drinks as the night draped over.

At 11 PM, one by one, they all fell to sleep in exhaustion.

*

“Huaa.”

Lee Hyun woke up and soaked in the fresh air.

Although last night he seemed to have drunk too much till having a hangover, there was no change in his morning schedule.

‘And now, we’re going to return.’

He was a little disappointed, but it seemed he accomplished the motives he came with.

The fact was as soon as he returned home; he'd reconnect to Royal Road.

During the three days and two nights of absent, he was certain that things had developed somehow.

He'll once again slipped into the shadows in the subversive activities of a dark gamer by making money through quests and items with his ambitious colleagues; and this will become nothing more than just a dream.

It was a fierce battleground rather than just a game!

Lee Hyun needed to return to that world.

‘Today, I may have a bit of time to go to the Dojang. Need to do a bit of morning exercise.’

Lee Hyun removed himself out of the temporary residence.

He loosened his rigid muscles by moving around and had intended to run.

But just as yesterday, he spotted Seoyoon sitting on the rock.

‘When did that happen?’

Lee Hyun approached her and spoke.

“Hi.”

“.....”

“Why are you up early?”

“.....”

Still no reply. Lee Hyun quietly took a seat beside her, and that was all as he remains seated.

Once Lee Hyun sat down on the rock.

His mind was still troubled as he thought about being unable to exercise, so he didn't want to just silently sitting there.

Lee Hyun no longer spoke, while Seoyoon was still hesitantly trying to find what to say.

Even though she really wanted to share a lot, she did not know where to start or how long the wait in between each reply should be.

30 minutes in silence.

Cheosseokcheosseok!

The sound of the waves in their current vicinity could be heard, along with the cries of the seagulls.

The rise in Lee Hyun's anxiety was directly proportional to the rise in Seoyoon's feeling of comfort.

As the greeting breeze blew, the day was becoming brighter.

They watched the sun rising over at the faraway horizon!

Suddenly, there was a gentle touch on Lee Hyun's shoulder. It was the unable to win against the drowsiness Seoyoon's head leaning on it.

It was due to being the second day already that she could not sleep well, along with the fact that she was tired from the out of the norm alcoholic drinks.

And here it was, her trusted friend Lee Hyun, presented comfort from the built up tension and knocked her to sleep spontaneously.

Segeunsegeun.

Seoyoon's breathing rhythm sounded in Lee Hyun's ear.

With each exhale, Lee Hyun could feel his own heart reacted to it as the beats increased in strain.

In this place, it was just Lee Hyun and Seoyoon.

Although the students were still sleeping on the sandy beach, they were at a distance away.

Moreover, Seoyoon had already drifted to dreamland in a seemingly drunken slumber due to the hearty drinks from the previous day.

In other words, it was an opportunity given by the heavens!

There was no other way but to say Seoyoon was defenseless in this state before Lee Hyun.

Lee Hyun's eyes filled with murderous intentions.

‘You treat me like fodder, huh. And during my cold you jammed that food-to-kill porridge down my throat!’

It was a golden opportunity to take revenge.

As it seemed she was deeply in her doze, he could have picked her up and tossed her into the sea.

Holding grudges infinitely!

However, Lee Hyun's mind soon wandered off from the thought. Though vengeance would be thrilling, he was afraid of the troubles to come in the future.

‘I don't know how she will manage after I throw her into the sea!’

Still, in his internal rampage he paid careful attention to not wake up Seoyoon. Then a thought hit.

‘Let me adjust a bit to have you sleep more comfortably.’

Lee Hyun gently lifted up Seoyoon's head and placed it on his lap. After which, he observed Seoyoon's face in detail.

‘There's gotta be an ugly corner somewhere.’

He still had not given up on his childish revenge.

The first time Lee Hyun saw Seoyoon's face was in the instructor's cabin.

But because he noticed the ‘murderer’ mark during that event that he did not examined her beauty in more detail.

Nevertheless, a fragment of Seoyoon's face remained in his mind that he went to sculpt the Statue of Freya.

The image he had at that time was indeed beautiful.

But he did not know that the beauty exceeded what he had imagined.

The second meeting where he saw her was on the Plains of Despair, where her loveliness shone even more.

Then, during the times they risked their lives in the northern parts, he took peeks at her in his spare time.

But with each and every time he saw her, she continuously exuded attractiveness.

It wasn't because Seoyoon was increasingly becoming more and more beautiful.

She was already beautiful from the beginning. It was because the more closely he got to look at her face, the more beauty he saw in her.

Eyes, nose, eyebrows, forehead, chin and lips.

There was no way to totaled up her features.

While wondering how dreadfully beautiful something was, a new attraction came into play whenever he took a look.

No matter how long he stared at her face, he could not get tired from the sight. With each and every sight to admire, he had no choice but to look!

Lee Hyun wanted to find flaws in Seoyoon's face.

He leaned in so close that he can feel each of her breath, a rare chance to do so since she was still sleeping.

‘Skin. Well, it’s perfect. Not one crease and I can’t even see a single pore. How can human skin have such milk like quality? Facial feature. Great. It’s the perfect golden ratio of placements if I was sculpturing. Long eyebrows...how does her hair even have such orderly placements?’

Trying to find any facial flaw in her, even if it was just a tiny ugly part in her, did not work out.

‘Fine, I admit the face is too good. What about other places...’

Lee Hyun’s eyes ran downward. He could roughly make out the figure through the dress. And here still, he could not find a fault.

Tall and slender, her body was also good.

The calves, thighs, and even the waist line were smooth.

Even the freaking toes exposed from the sandals were also beautiful!

Lee Hyun did not hate women.

He simply wanted to avoid having a relationship with one because there will be money to spend. But this idea has changed quite a bit after watching Seoyoon.

‘If it’s her then it’s prolly ok to treat her to a Kimbap shop. No wait. If I do that then it’ll go bad if she develops a habit of wanting to go there. Oh yea, I suppose I could treat her at an udon stall or sumthin!’ (??? sushi shop or something, google image sushi, but not sure what else it also encompasses.)

This was a somewhat of a significant change in him.

Lee Hyun was still giving Seoyoon a lap pillow even as the sun fully emerges.

The sunrise from the sea was a spectacular sight to behold.

Due to the fact that yesterday morning was filled with fog that he could not able to see such sunrise; but today, not a single cloud in the sky could be seen in this sunny weather.

From where the sky and the ocean attempting to touch one another, the sun seemingly burned them both as it rose.

“Ahh!”

Lee Hyun’s morale also rose.

Anyone looking at such beautiful sunrise can feel their commitment on the rise; Lee Hyun was not an exception.

‘This year I have to earn a lot more money!’

The sun had risen completely so there was no way to differentiate anymore.

Lee Hyun returned his gaze onto his lap and focused on the Seoyoon on it.

She somehow became prettier in the given sunlight. Due to the alcoholic facet, the view became slightly enhanced.

At this close distance, she looked as if she was a sleeping baby.

Lee Hyun bent down and picked up a nearby piece of wood. And his arm pulled out a small knife.

Sagaksagak.

He was trying to carve the soundly sleeping Seoyoon.

The handy skill he learned in Royal Road made it easier for him to sculpt.

Making Masterpiece, Classic, or Magnum was not possible, but regardless of the Artistic Values, he could still sculpt as long as he had the cardiovascular control and will.

Though still, in reality, he still didn't have the Zahab carving knife.

Even if he gave it his best shot, in no way can he create exceptional works.

However, due to the innumerable experiences and commitment, the piece was becoming similar to what he wanted to make.

Lee Hyun was carefully carving the sleeping Seoyoon.

Chapter 6: The Loots' Shadow

Weed finished the MT and re-entered Royal Road.

But he didn't feel very good. It was entirely due to Seoyoon.

'I was too careless.'

Weed had face several people.

The malicious humans.

At the core, all humans are parasites leeching off on others.

The weak align themselves with the strong, while being subservient to those who are stronger than them.

Those who fail to be careful and aren't hesitant to hold back their trust are only susceptible to being exploited in the world.

The usual seeds of discord are sown once the family members can not receive much from the given salary.

The first salary he was going to receive for working was 600,000 Won; of course, that doesn't even come close to the minimum cost of living.

But at that time, he greatly thrilled.

It was the first time he could be paid in full for cost of labor.

And with the money, he planned on going on a shopping spree to buy his sister and grandmother clothing.

He was purely delighted.

But even at that low wage, the president did not give the full amount to him.

Using the terms of condition, the 'unemployment insurance' or whatever, to take from him.

Saying 'few fellow colleagues left the factory last month so being their unemployed self, each will reap 30,000 Won from you.'

At the end of all the 'difficult calculations' in order to pull few a few bucks back into the factory, he received a total of 450,000 Won.

They removed a whopping 150,000 Won.

The month after, the same thing happened.

By claiming it was for the ridiculous ‘the employment insurance of employing illegal minors;’ of course he did not know, so all that was left was to believe.

Only to find out later through other colleagues that he shivered from the feeling of betrayal!

The anger wasn’t just placed on the president.

It was also toward his fellow colleagues, whom kept on spitting speeches about him being the youngest and through cumbersome and hard work that he could make something of himself.

Knowing he had suffered the injustice from the president was one thing, but finding out that the people he worked with used these spiel to tease him was another thing entirely.

Weed well knew he was at the bottom.

Just like those gamblers, drunkards, and debtors, not a single hope to living life!

Then having fallen down the pit a second time, it was difficult having to climb up once again.

So he did not believe in anyone easily.

Lee Hyun was confident that through his own suffering, he had

already seen the many sides of people. But contrastively, Seoyoon was the first being unique from those he saw.

The completed sculpture was in fact, not pretty.

Its level could be counted as a souvenir; although there was a bit of resemblance, it was difficult to capture the feel of Seoyoon in the real.

The lack of time, tools, materials, and the many thing weighted in his mind weren't at all encouraging.

Filled with his sincerest intention, he placed it secretly in her pocket.

‘I'm repaying some of the debt I owe to you.’

As in the many sculptures he made of her candidly.

No secret could be kept forever; this was simply a gesture of concession on his part to show he conceded first if it someday will be discovered.

He wanted to make sure that at least in real life he wasn't going to get beaten to death!

For dark gamers, a death within Royal Road directly correlated to the financial loss; but comparatively, it was comforting to the

mind if it was just simply that out in the real world too.

By the way, the awoken Seoyoon wasn't angry.

She remained silent just like from the events to the meals preparations. Sometimes while watching Lee Hyun her face blushed as well!

‘She’s still drunk huh? Nah, those look as if she’s angry.’

Lee Hyun was making speculation, but the reason was actually a simple one as for the why of Seoyoon's face.

‘I let him see me sleeping.’

Seoyoon was just a girl.

She was embarrassed to let him see her sleeping face. And the coloring of his knee meant that she had done that for quite a long time too.

‘Was my head heavy?’

She had all sorts of imagination running. Even her nose corrugated from the concerns.

So every time she turned to see Lee Hyun's face, it lit up a pinkish

dye of embarrassment.

But an incident occurred when they returned to the MT group.

The chicken Lee Hyun brought. Half Sauce Half Fried.

They still had a lot of foods left over before returning safely to the mainland. It seemed as if they didn't eat as much during the MT as he thought they would.

Lee Hyun often made food for the Dojang practitioners whenever they went on training, so he bought the ingredients this time based loosely on their input.

However, the usual students' appetite weren't like them, plus this second day was just a lap around the island via boats, so the hunger built up wasn't as much as before.

So, there was a considerable amount of food ingredients still remained.

It happened during the distribution of leftover food ingredients, when Min Sura suddenly asked.

“What are we going to do about the chicken?”

“I brought him from home to eat. You want to take him?”

Lee Hyun calmly replied. It was too much of an obvious question.

If Min Sura was to get Half Sauce Half Fried, it would be more beneficial than dividing for him portions of different meat or other food ingredients.

But, the fact was that Min Sura would have difficulties carrying Half Sauce Half Fried home.

Lee Hyun added a side note.

“If you want, I can twist the neck now to make it...”

He was offering a favor.

But suddenly, Seoyoon revealed a shocked expression.

With face seemingly about to tear up, she grabbed hold of Half Sauce Half Fried with no intention of letting go.

Lee Hyun, at this impass, did not know the seriousness of the situation.

“Give me that.”

“.....”

“Don’t mess around when it comes to food.”

“.....”

Yet she was still stubbornly holding onto Half Sauce Half Fried.

Lee Hyun thought perhaps Seoyoon wanted Half Sauce Half Fried to eat.

“If you insist on it, then take it. So instead, you won’t get the other food materials, okay? Then please give it to me for a minute. I’ll just quickly twist its neck.”

Lee Hyun thoughtlessly stretched his hand out. But suddenly, tears flowed from Seoyoon's eyes.

“.....”

In matter of seconds, criticism and looks of resentment gravitated toward Lee Hyun!

The Seoyoon with Half Sauce Half Fried was too cute.

No one could imagine how many hours she put into feeding grains of rice to it during the MT, and thus she developed feelings of affection towards it. She caught him with the intention to protect.

“What’s going on?”

“Why’s she crying?”

“Who was it!”

“Look like it was because of that chicken...”

“Seems like he forcefully tried to take the chicken and made senior Seoyoon cried?”

“How could he do something like that...”

The demonstrative power of a beauty’s tears was unspeakably powerful.

The image he built during that MT trip collapsed all at once.

It was as if he was driven to an execution without a single reason given.

‘Damn it!’

Lee Hyun wanted to punch himself.

Why was it he didn’t have his defenses up against Seoyoon at this point.

He had anticipated her hiding her evilness all this while, and it was reprimended for lowering his guard.

This was due to him obtaining finer details about Seoyoon.

She had the presence and can imprint in people's mind of a good woman who loves life.

On the other hand, Lee Hyun received glares as if he was a savage and cruel being.

Lee Hyun was naturally victimized.

‘I was diligently diving up the meat here and all of the sudden the subject switched to animal protection.’

At this point, Lee Hyun sharply observed Seoyoon.

She was weeping without a sound while gazing at Half Sauce Half Fried affectionately.

‘You want to eat him as well.’

Lee Hyun was offering his service of wringing its neck, but to him it didn't seem like that was something required in her case.

‘So you want to feel it while using your hands, aint it. I bet as soon as you come home you’ll twist his neck on your own.’

It was hazardous for him to continue down this way, so he took a step back.

He wanted to win against the Seoyoon at least once.

“Wait of a minute. There seems to be some kind of misunderstanding, it was just a little joke...you thought I actually wanted to eat that chicken?”

Firstly, Lee Hyun decided to take an ethical attitude. Its purpose was to deceive the public.

“Please return Half Sauce Half Fried to me. I brought him up from when he was just a chick. And in fact, his entire family is living at home. So if he does not come back, Mother Hen will be very sad.”

Justification and legitimacy!

It was just a short while, but Seoyoon could not rebuke against that logic.

Even if Seoyoon could open her mouth to express her intentions, she could not win against Lee Hyun in this situation.

“Give me him.”

Lee Hyun confidently reached his hand toward Half Sauce Half Fried again.

It was then.

Kkokkodek!

The Half Sauce Half Fried who was on standby pecked at him!

The chicken once belongs to Lee Hyun refused to go back to him.

*

Weed along with the Geomchis and together with other colleagues were retargeting the Todeum castles.

32 castles remaining!

“From now on, we’ll be targeting castles with maybe 40 Unicorns and Pegasus minimum, so don’t be too lax.”

At the moment, they were already too used to battle within the Todeum castles, that Weed didn’t want to lose too much tension.

But the resulting effect was very little.

“Encircle him!”

“Get him!”

Since the beginning, the Geomchis were already used to risking their lives fighting while wounded.

Despite not having experiences, weapon, and armor necessary to go forward, they already surrounded many enemies and were busy attacking their limbs.

As for Weed, as the battle raged on, did not keep an eye out for them.

“Pale nim, Maylon nim! The Pegasus is attempting to use magic! Romuna nim, try to intercept the Unicorns’ elemental summonings!”

“Yes!”

Whenever they start using magic, the level of difficulty increases tremendously. Therefore, the party had to use whatever they could in order to halt the Unicorns and Pegasus from doing so.

In the first place, if there was a distance between the two forces, the fight would turn into defeat in an instant for Weed’s.

If all 40 or so of these divine creatures were to use elemental summoning and magic, it was bound to have catastrophic consequences on the opposing force.

However, fortunately, they typically like to charge in head first at the beginning.

“No way buddy!”

Geomchi felt an interest for the first time after a long while.

Nothing in Royal Road could fill him with enough tension to run a sweat down his spine.

In the real world, he had encounter several hundreds of battles, each and every time he walked away with his life.

To overcome the worries of life and death was his way of getting stronger.

Though there had been those whom were hopelessly aggressive against him, his position as the strongest was never really challenged.

Though he had been reprimanded numerous of times due to fighting; for some reason, fighting was his reason to be excited about being alive.

In the midst of the fierce battle, Geomchi briefly looked around.

The Unicorns and Pegasus were rampaging about, while the practitioners struggled in order to stop them.

Their battle buddies as well as colleagues also brandished their weapons in order to win.

Each and every one of them struggled on desperately as they fought.

It felt as if this was the real urgency of a war.

The encirclement tactic, while seeming dangerous, pretty much held up against the unruly movement of the creatures.

“Let me have a go!”

“Unicorn meat tonight!”

The units under Geomchi² and Geomchi³ shouted.

Geomchi and the instructors were pleased while fighting, which also lit the fighting spirit of the practitioners.

They continued deploying this fighting method while not backing down in the slightest.

“Our sword is invincible!”

“Our sword is invincible!”

The Geomchis shouted their slogan in unison. Even during this seeming war situation, they did not care a single bit.

Hwaryeong had put seven creatures to sleep.

Even with that, there were still 34 of the beasts left, and the circumstance was overwhelming.

While holding back just two of these divine creatures, five of the Geomchis had already lost their lives.

While the rotten armors made from the dragon’s bone they wore increased their primary defenses; but if they were struck with an excruciatingly damaging piercing blow, the damage would directly result onto their bodies.

The reason why many were able to barely hang on was because of the organization of the encirclement tactic they practiced.

As the situation grew increasingly precarious due to the accumulated damages dealt by the Unicorns and Pegasus, Weed scored a yell.

“Tori!”

Tori in his black cape while majestically played around with the Pegasus, replied.

“Why you call?”

“We have to change tactics now. You do not focus on just one single beast, agro as many of their attention as possible and kite them.”

In short, put up with being pummeled!

Weed also gave the similar order to the Death Knight.

“Van Hawk! Focus on defense rather than attack.”

“As the owner’s command.”

The Death Knight showed his loyalty.

But Tori did not cooperate.

If he was able to kill one his own, his growth would be substantial.

But he did not want to bear all of their oncoming attacks alone.

“I’m sorry but I will not do as you asked.”

Tori simply refused.

The subordinate relationship he had with Weed had ended. So there was no reason to comply to Weed request this time around.

Furthermore, he was now engaged in an all-out battle to do anything else!

Weed cried out.

“I will give Mapan nim!”

Tori could not understand what was said and blinked his eyes.

“Why?”

“So you can drink heartily!”

“If under that condition then OK!”

Got a deal!

Weed had sold Mapan willingly for the deal.

“Weed nim.”

Mapan built a frown, but Weed remained cool.

“This is your battle to obtain more loot.”

“LOOT! Gulp!”

Mapan swallowed his built up saliva.

Not all the loot obtained at the same.

Let propose that the most expensive parts from wolves or foxes are the claws and fangs if they're obtainable.

But any drops from the Unicorns and Pegasus would be on a different dimension altogether from those.

For any piece of loot, one can receive more than 10 Gold per!

Mapan shouted.

“Please leave it to me!”

*

Bread, cake, beverages.

Movie tickets, concert tickets, figures, games, CD, etc... whenever he wanted any of these, he'd go and sell his blood.

So given since childhood, he had been funding himself through selling his blood; doing so now wouldn't have been a big deal.

Tori with Mapan at his side were fending off attacks from Unicorns and Pegasus left and right.

Whenever his health declines, he would plug his fangs into Mapan's nape and take how blood supplements!

“Tornado Blade!”

Tori used his skill without a hint of hesitation.

From then on, the watching from side line Mapan that wasn't suited for fighting also had several tense moments.

Thanks to Tori's guerilla assault of hit and kite, the practitioners could take turn for a breather.

Since then, Weed began focusing on one at a time and knocking them down.

Due to not being able to focus the intensity of the attacks, the battle dragged on nearly twice as long as before, and was victorious afterward.

Fought against the Shinsu in the 16th castle of Todeum.

Remaining castles: 31.

Reputation rise by 60.

Receives an additional 60% combat experiences.

A time for a bit of rest and relaxation!

They had come out victorious after a lot of difficult battles, but there are still more than 30 castles remained.

“Something like this is an A grade difficulty quest, eh.”

Geomchi² let out a prideful smile.

“It’s interesting as well. It really sends shivers down my spine!”

Geomchi was already getting prepared to putting an end to resting and go back to fighting.

“C’mon, let’s go. It’s unfortunate that we only have 30 more of these interesting battles.”

For those that enjoy battle, it was something not to get excited about.

Pale and the party mustered up some energy.

The battles were hard but even more rewarding. The focus during the fight was just the battle at hand without a single pause.

The divine beasts they had to battle at this point always numbered above 60. Each and every battle, everybody fulfilled their role without a single one slacking off.

During the battle in the 19th castle against these beasts, Geomchi, the instructors, and all the practitioners crossed the threshold of 293.

The growth rate was incredible.

Aside from receiving the basic experience points from the Unicorns and Pegasus, the additional combat experience was the greatest gain.

After having looked at his level, Geomchi9 said.

“Leveling is easy.”

Geomchi11 agrees.

“I know huh. When we hunted on our own here and there, it was really slow in comparison to how easy it is to level when we hunt with Weed.”

As soon as he heard, Pale’s head began to spin.

Usually when people hear these words, they would jump up to yell.

“Leveling this way is by no mean easier!”

Leveling beyond level 200 was something similar to having stuck in traffic.

As the required experience point to reach the next level increases exponentially, even killing similarly level monsters give little to nothing EXP.

However, the Geomchis do not know the meaning of mental fatigue along with the excessive movements of the body.

18 hours of hunting a day and even more so when having the pleasure of hunting in groups.

Here, Weed is unusually fast.

By simply belong to the party he leads, they are forced to be immerse in the battle he makes.

Ridiculous hunting speed!

Eating and hunting, he pushes them to their limits.

Weed's level was at 347 at a sudden speed.

But that was just the level not mentioning his other growth.

Fencing, Archery, Magic, and other kinds of combat skills! Attacking skills' development also had their growth.

To get beyond the Intermediate levels and reaching the Advanced levels of skills, through conventional means was difficult due to having numerous skills; however, it was easier here thanks to the strength of the monsters he battled against.

Precision attacks to increase hit rates against the monsters that are higher level than you are, you can obtain a healthier amount than the usual.

Through this method, the proficiency of his skills, too, rose significantly.

Then, Maylon asked as if it suddenly struck her.

“Oh, Weed nim.”

“Yes?”

“Why haven’t you sculpt a sculpture by now?”

Sewing, Blacksmithing, Bandage, Herbs, Cooking, and combat skills!

Weed had raise the proficiency of all other skill but not sculpting. She was quite curious about the reason why.

To Weed, there were circumstances.

Until now he had been shearing wood to making wooden sculptures in his spare time whenever possible.

But he did not try to create something in the earnest.

‘A large sculpture. There’s no space to make such a thing.’

To create one of ten meters or more meant having to stick close to the sculpture and working on it for weeks.

Procuring the material was also a problem.

So besides having to create a huge sculpture, he would need to find something fitting the size along with the difficulty of it being a worthy material.

Then again, Todeum was a place filled many perfected compositions and a considerable number of sculptures.

They have not discovered Classic or Magnum pieces as of yet, but there are decent sculptures and pictures to gain proficiency through viewing so he did not feel the need to make a piece.

Weed explained it simply.

“The inspiration to create a piece has not hit me as of yet. And in Todeum vampires’ castles, there are a lot of paintings and sculptures yet to be discover.”

“Ah, so that’s it.”

Quickly convinced, Maylon pulled away from going deeper. Hwaryeong seemingly brooded over something, asked.

“Does it need to be some specific tree or stone for you to sculpt something?”

“Huh?”

“That is, I figured if it’s something you’d want to express, such

things wouldn't matter much anyway.”

In the vampire's castles, the majority of the sculptures founded were carved into the walls or ceilings.

Though some are simply too plain and nothing like the grandly crafted statues to attract much attention.

Hwaryeong wondered.

“Why does it need to be something physical to make the statues?”

Weed recalled the light tower he made in Morata.

Rather than the beauty of the Light Tower itself, the harmony of lights refracted shown an even greater beauty.

He even obtained ‘The sculptor that governs light’ as a nickname!

Due to it being so amazingly creative and expressive!

For a Sculptor, there's no better praise than that.

In reality, Weed was unaware he was dubbed as such since it surfaced from the forums.

If it was something outside money unlike something as the fox he

sculpted and sold for 3 Silvers; rumors and such things was nothing for him to be concerned about.

Hwaryeong was overestimating Weed.

The Light Tower was not something he was susceptible to create at any point in time.

“You made the Light Tower from light, why not do the same with a statue?”

Weed considered seriously.

‘It’s true that I’ve been neglecting sculpture.’

Todeum itself was a very good hunting ground. Because of so, he excessively obsessed with hunting and sculpting remained on the sideline forgotten.

‘Light based sculpture.’

There was some sort of potential seen in sculpting the moonlight. Although it was a bit awkward for him to find his footing, the Moonlight Sculptor has yet to disappoint.

Weed pondered about what to create because he still did not have an idea after all had said.

“Hmmmm.”

“What kind of sculpture will be good?”

“What was made and still have words going around?”

“It has to fit into the limited ability of light being able to take shape.”

Everybody pondered.

Having fought in the castles, they would ponder over this in the middle of break time and still had trouble coming up with something.

‘So this is the pain of creativity.’

‘Art takes more time anguishing over what to make than actually making it huh.’

Even a vague concept as to how to create the sculpture had not been suggested.

After all the contemplations, Sureuka spoke.

“Well, how about this? Conversely of light, how about demonstrating the shadow’s?”

Showing an expression of not being able to get what Sureuka was talking about, Romuna looked at her.

“Shadow what?”

“The shadows of things. Using the shadow as a piece of created artwork.”

“What do you mean by making an artwork through shadows?”

“If there an object, then there’s a shadow. We can create some form by means of shadows like shadow puppeteer, y’know.”

“I think that’s not a bad idea, but is it feasible to create something through shadows and is it worth doing so?”

Romuna was dubious. To use an object and expresses it through its shadow didn’t appear to be tasteful.

But Weed regarded as a very good idea.

The usual Sculptor with common sense wouldn’t have easily attempted this idea, but he saw the advantage that could be found from this.

‘Instead of light, express it with shadows huh. Though this mean, I can make it as big as I can try.’

Composition!

Weed's desired formation!

There was no need to get the materials also.

There are tons of materials that create shadows!

Weed made the decision in matter of seconds.

“The loot. Ima use the loots to create the sculpture.”

This expensive piece's materials will come from the items obtained through the hunt so this was an ambitious plan of creating a sculpture!

“Good.”

“Wherever you see.”

Believed in Weed's ability, Geomchi and the instructors readily pulled out their mats.

Everybody's loots gathered in one place.

The gathered mats obtained from the land of vampires were a tremendous amount settled all in one place!

Given the fact that the loots were simple ingredient materials, the price of all these gathered here could amount to hundreds of thousands of Gold.

“I think this amount should be sufficient.”

Weed went to a hill located near Todeum to create a tower of loot that was about five meters high.

Ttiring!

The Tower of Miscellaneous Items was completed.

Its status does not live up what was attempted and the piece will remain unknown.

Although built with great dexterity, nobody will be able to consider and will have the difficulty understanding the eccentricity of the Sculptor's intention.

Artistic Value: 15.

The 'Excellent Sculptor' Weed's work.

Special Option(s):

Those that seen The Tower of Miscellaneous Items will have their Luck increase by 20 throughout the day.

It didn't even match normal works.

With the current Weed's carving skills, his smaller animal sculptures also have Artistic Values.

But compare to those completed pieces.

"It's still not done yet."

Weed did not stop there.

The amount used was not even 1/10th of the amount gathered.

"It's a start."

Weed continued stacking the loots as its size and height unrelentingly grew.

Ttiring!

A Masterpiece! The Remarkable Items Tower was completed.

Its status does not live up what was attempted and the piece will remain unknown.

With great craftsmanship, the tower height reached an excess of 20 meters.

The concept of creating something through the accumulation of goods is a fresh idea but Artistic Value is hard to obtain.

Artistic Value: 360.

The 'Excellent Sculptor' Weed's work.

Special Option(s):

Those that seen The Remarkable Items Tower will have their Luck increase by 20 throughout the day.

The number of Masterpiece pieces completed until now: 25.

Sculpting skill has been improved.

Fame increases by 3.

Weed did not stop building the tower there. It was still smaller than he had originally envisioned it to be.

‘Gotta lay the basic foundation or else it’ll fall in the future.’

He continued to strengthen its foundation as the tower constantly rises.

Carefully lain where the mats would be placed.

Including empty space intentionally left bare was also considered.

‘Three moons. The brightest light should be... I should take into the changes and the path of each moon.’

Though seemingly easy to start; at this point, it was never easy.

Two days spent building the tower.

The loot’s tower size was overwhelming.

The topmost of the thing was at a staggering 50 meters!

He completely used up all the materials gathered.

“We need more mats. Let’s hunt again.”

He began hunting Unicorns and Pegasus in Todeum's castles once again.

Every time they did so, the loots obtained made the tower to continually grow bigger and bigger.

Feathers, pieces of broken glass, metal fragments, arrowhead and roots; along with other forms of ingredient materials, the tower was in a state of beauty that was difficult to comprehend.

It was then, the tower exceeded 55 meters.

Ttiring!

A Classic! The Mysterious Tower of Items was completed!

The tower was stacked with at least 300 kinds of goods or more!

The meaning is not known, however, this odd tower does not exist anywhere on the Versailles continent.

It's hard to deem the massive work with any artistry, but this could be a unique monument.

Even children and mercenaries can't not hear of Weed's sculpture.

Artistic Value: 490.

The 'Excellent Sculptor' Weed's work.

Special Option(s):

Those that seen The Mysterious Tower of Items will have their HP and MP regeneration increase by 10% throughout the day.

Those that seen The Mysterious Tower of Items will have an increase in drop rate by 15% throughout the day.

Luck increases by 150.

Stamina increases by 60.

The number of Classic pieces completed until now: 10.

Sculpting skill has been improved.

Sculpting skill has been improved.

Fame increases by 106.

Stamina increases by 1.

Charisma increases by 2.

The Mysterious Tower of Items have been included in the Wonders of Todeum.

Ownership of The Mysterious Tower of Items belongs to Weed.

If dismantling the great tower of goods for monetary gain, the acquired Fame will be reduced.

Also, for the residents of Todeum who are art lovers, the backlash from doing so could result in the decrease of Familiarity.

In exchange for creating a Classic sculpture, the previous stat will increase by 1.

Finally a Classic!

Even if it was just a few percentage increase in the drop rate of an item, that in itself was a great effect.

At this point of the hunt, the tower was a desperate necessity.

Weed continues to put in the effort by piling up the loot whenever he could.

With the consistent endeavor in doing so, the tower reached the height of 60 meters. And with that, the purpose of the tower was achieved.

“Fufufu.”

Weed sat on top of the result and smiled.

Today was the last.

‘The trouble was rewarding.’

Building the loot’s tower was rather easier than sculpting a piece.

With just one wrong move while carving, an irreversible scar will remain on the piece for all time.

Still, the tower had to be completed within the certain time so he had to work on it on an hourly basis.

“But still, it’s safely completed.”

Weed just sat and waited for the time which watching the finished product.

Balun, Gorun, and Seyirun.

The three moons peaked through the fog and were approaching the center of the sky.

The moons shine brightly.

Todeum’s unusually bright moonlights shone and everything

seems as if it was out in daytime.

The tower bathes in the moonlights' glow.

Gold and silver, jewels and swords, along with armors were glistening in the moonlights.

Having swept all of Todeum's artwork and viewing them, the completed loot's tower was many more times beautiful in the moonlights.

Weed's breathing became a slight pant.

"Heoeok. So beautiful!"

He was more ecstatic about this piece more so than any thus far.

Who you think he is! This was a towering pile of cash of loots that he could sit on.

A dark gamer's dream!

Weed was thrilled.

'All this money. I'm sitting on money.'

The accumulated sea of loot he could swim in, the mountain of

loot he could sit on, and even able to take a nap on; Weed happiness was peaked such as the sunrise at the highest point in the sky.

‘Have the relish the money made from this as well.’

Still continuing, the shadow of the tower loomed toward Todeum.

The tower’s changing shadow.

He depended on the positions of the three moons for the transformation of the shadow.

The tower shadow’s shape was becoming more and more evidently specific.

Ttiring!

A Magnum! The first attempted work of glory! The Mysterious Shadow Tower was completed!

The mysterious tower was stacked with at least 300 kinds of goods or more!

At other times, the meaning of the tower cannot be understood; but at a certain time, the expression becomes evident in the shadow.

An unusual attempt by a renown Sculptor!

Nothing beside the dexterity was applied.

Nevertheless, the Sculptor's name will be heralded throughout the continent.

Artistic Value: 3640.

The 'Excellent Sculptor' Weed's work.

Special Option(s):

Those that seen The Mysterious Shadow Tower will have their HP and MP regeneration increase by 25% throughout the day.

Those that seen The Mysterious Shadow Tower will have an increase in drop rate by 19% throughout the day.

Luck increases by 180.

Stamina increases by 60.

Critical attacks have 30% chance of success.

The person who completed this sculpture will be granted a title.

Not to be combined with other sculptures.

The number of Magnum pieces completed until now: 5.?

Advanced Sculpturing skill have risen to 4.

Sculpture will be phenomenally more detailed. Finer craftsmanship in jewelry will have outstanding results.

Handicraft skill proficiency have increased.

Understanding of Sculptures skill reached Intermediate level.

The effect of carving skills will increase by 20%.

Can turn into flying creatures.

When use Shapeshifting Piece, one kind of property will be granted.

Fame increased by 1265.

Art stat increased by 19.

Stamina increased by 3.

Patience increased by 9.

Charisma increased by 5.

Has earned the title 'The Artisan of Excellent Works.'

Can erect and Engraver Guild, and can exert influences in culture and art.

Attractiveness increased by 100.

Restriction: Advanced Sculpting level 3 or higher.

Sculptures that can obtain great reputation at completion.

Non-physical sculpture through shadow!

The compensation for the completion of the first ever attempt was tremendous.

“A piece with no regret. A well done work!”

Weed also felt very relieved.

His work still seemed to be deemed within the law of sensibility of the artists!

If he did not mention the meaning of the piece, then the degree of understanding and fulfillment was hard to feel.

But anyone can easily recognize the implication of the piece through the shadow of the tower.

The shadow of the tower shows just one figure.

A man.

Twisting the neck of a chicken.

He still did not let go of the grudge!

The sadness of not being able to eat Half Sauce Half Fried was evident through the shadow of the tower.

Chapter 7: The Victories In Heaven And On Earth

Due to the effects from the manifested shadow of the loot's tower, the battle was bit more stimulating.

However, due to the resistance of the Unicorns and Pegasus, the practitioners were still dying 2-3 during each battle.

Even though with better armors, and also the growth of the levels, the battle were still against numerous enemies.

They were on their 33rd battle of suppressing the castles.

Sureuka took a kick from a Unicorn and fell dead.

After the battle, the situation was, beside the party members, the number of practitioners remain was just 212 people.

Geomchi spat at himself.

“I couldn't be there when the fragile girl died.”

Weed soon lowered his head.

“No. It was my responsibility. I wasn't aware and should have

taken better care of my party member.”

“No. I could not provide a good example.”

“Rather Master, I think we should not be allowed to eat unless no one dies.”

“You think so?”

“Yes. It’s ok to not care about the speed of doing things.”

Geomchi carefully thought about the suggestion for a while.

“Ok then. If it’s punishment at this level then in my opinion should be sufficient. It’s true that we’ve been too fed up with the constantly similar battles in Todeum, so from now on, let’s go with what you said.”

For the instructors and the practitioners, the battlefield in Todeum provided a great training course.

It encourages camaraderie, builds backbone, and sends electrifying sensation to enjoy the game.

Therefore, it was a great place to gain power by fighting against the powerful.

Swordsmanship was not a true necessity; a steady mind was a better weapon.

Even with the death of several practitioners, it was still entertaining to fight.

But Sureuka was a simple girl; and with her death, the fights were no longer enjoyable.

Weed declared.

“No more death or no more food!”

With the suppression of Todeum’s castles, the liberated vampires also joined in the battle!

It was a time for Weed Charisma and Leadership stats to shine.

Not only the Geomchis and colleagues fought, they intended to overwhelm the Unicorns and Pegasus through numbers.

The number of released vampires thus far was 4600.

Many of the weak and common Vampire Familiars entered the fray here and there whenever the Shinsui became weary.

Now was the time for them to begin fighting in the earnest.

“Fight. Your. Enemies. To. Reclaim. Your. Lost. Dignity. And. Pride!”

You have used the skill Yell.

All allies within the proximity of Yell will have a 200% increase in morale.

All the disarray will be diminished.

Leadership will increase by 200% for 5 minutes.

“We vampires do not follow the commands of others, but Weed has proven he is a rational man.”

“His words have not been damaging.”

“The Unicorns and Pegasus are enemies we eventually will have to defeat anyway.”

The male Vampires left streaks of capes sailed by as they assaulted the Pegasus.

“Ohohohohoho! Please look at me. Allow me just a drop of your blood.”

“Kak kak kak. Charging into this world without a sense of decency, we’ll show you fools who your real enemies are.”

“They’re coming. Let’s see who the real rulers of the land are.”

The Vampire Queens’ dresses were very flashy. Wrapped tightly in full leather, and carried whips to boot.

The Queens chanted their wail of psyche curses in unison.

In the past, many of the Freya’s Knights fell victim to these deceptive techniques.

“Euhuhyuhyung!”

“Yihihing!”

The Unicorn’s horns lit up with purple light.

This was a mechanism for the mind and magic to resist and won’t be easily deceived. They were immune to black magic.

However, the Queens constantly sending those curses in and summoned insects to bother the divine creatures.

The weakly Vampire Familiars transformed into bats and flippantly clung onto the beasts.

The Shinsui's resisted vigorously, but the bats clung on and sucked their blood until death.

Chyureureup!

The bats weren't able to avoid the damages; but through the blood consumption, they were able to recover and reclaimed the losses.

These were awfully tough opponents.

The Vampire Queens with their constant curses while summons of numerous insects and sent their enemies through many agonies.

Though, whenever there was a battle, the loss was as many as 200 Vampires.

Severe times where the losses were more than 300.

But through such battles, the surviving Vampires were much stronger.

Through the characteristics of the Vampires.

The Vampire's traits!

Very powerful weapons.

Whenever Vampires hunt, the experience gained was dramatic and also contributed to the development of their adaptability.

With the blood consumed from the Unicorns and Pegasus, the Vampires can lessen the damage of the beasts' magic attacks.

And with a certain amount consumed where the blood was completely digested, their power would temporarily increase.

These vampires provided Weed and the Geomchis considerable reinforcements.

Where the Vampires would die in a large amount in battle, the Geomchis hadn't lost a single person.

Even though it was a bit risky buffing the legion; but right now, it was a powerful army of Vampires!

Weed completely controlled the legion of Vampires.

Thanks to a series of victorious battles, the Vampires moved as if they were an extension of his limbs.

Ttiring!

Legions of Vampires completely under controlled.

The Vampires acknowledged you as an avid leader of the darkness.

Their dedicated loyalties will contribute to your notoriety.

Familiarity with the Vampires is at the best state.

They would even gives You the most delicious nape of women to drink out of respect.

Infamy increased by 350.

Leadership increased by 2.

Charisma increased by 5.

They weren't all good news.

Infamy sometimes helps with quests that required them, but the consequence was too great.

Villagers take one look at those with infamy points and would run away, or even chase them out!

In any case, the Infamy he has thus far was not something high enough to be concern about.

'If it's Infamy, it'll go away if I donate to the church or finish

some quests.'

Of course, for him to make donation to the temple was something highly unlikely; but if it's a true necessity, it was the quickest way to rid of it.

The problem lies elsewhere.

Ttiring!

Have joined up with the despicable Vampires to hunt the innocent Shinsui.

In exchange for all the vicious acts You committed, your actions will be reflected.

Weed's forehead was inscribed in red.

The mark of a murderer!

Anyone could understand the mark shone in crimson.

"Why this happens to me..."

Weed said in distress.

If the mark was received by the others, it wouldn't be so unfair.

But even while hunted in groups, he alone obtained the mark of a murderer.

There are tremendous penalties being the recipient of the mark.

While being vulnerable to the attacks of other users, the drop rate for items would be higher than most at death.

Obtaining quests are more difficult, making it harder to be release from the mark.

“Why did this only happens to me?”

Even someone like Weed wanted to complain.

Pale took some time and answered with the most likely reason.

“Could it be because you killed a lot of Unicorn and Pegasus?”

Weed was the highest level and the best in damage output, hence being the one that killed the most.

Romuna stealthily noted.

“The person who proposed to come to Todeum was Weed nim.”

Irene, while blinking her eyes innocently, said.

“Being the mastermind behind all the bad things.”

“.....”

As she knew of all the reasons, Weed could not rebuke.

The Geomchis looked rather envious.

“That look wicked.”

“Manly.”

“They say you’re famous when you are a murderer...”

The mark was well received from the Vampires.

“From the beginning he wasn’t a good man.”

“We were right, placing our expectations.”

“Here, while it’s a bit vulgar, you can plug your teeth into the colleague’s nape.”

While being hailed by the Vampires, they continued attacking

Todeum's castles.

Weed efficiently manages the power of the Vampires.

Irien's holy power could only heal the people. They did not work on the Vampires.

'Holy powers are rather poisonous to Vamps, huh.'

The thing Vampires want is blood!

While near the brink of death, with a generous 'donation' of blood, the dying Vampires can be reinvigorated.

An increasing number of Unicorns and Pegasus fell victim to the life stealing Vampires.

The Vampires' level continues to climb.

On the other hand, the members of Weed's party obtained less and less experience and loot, but it was something inevitable.

Even with the reduction of Vampires, their number still increases.

Through the battles, a huge number of them died, but with the awakening of more, the number was made up and then some.

The Vampires led by Tori, his family Jinhyeo, was also upgraded.

Different vampire Lords also woke up one after another.

They lead a huge variety of Vampires.

Dream Vampires.

Non physical beings, uses illusions to cause confusion and paralysis.

Shadow Vampires.

Those that hide in the darkness in wait to attack their enemies.

Only reveal their canines at propitious times of attack, something hard to react to.

Assassin Vampires.

An unknown type of vampires.

Other elegant and art loving aristocrats of that aspect, though similar, was difficult to be placed in the same class.

Power! Prowess!

On chest and arms and such, hair was all over the place like bizarre beasts with formidable strength.

Natural fighters with no use of magic.

The only ways to separate them from the normal beast were their fangs and their capes.

All in all, with more than 5000 Vampires under his control, they far exceed the capacity of Weed's Leadership no matter how meticulous his management was.

In fact, more than 100 of them were out of his control.

He had seen this before back when he conducted the Orcs and Dark Elves; if the number exceeds the capacity of his Leadership ability, then the crowd would play around or resists the order if he was just a bit distracted.

Weed was reaching his limits to conduct with the lack of Leadership, the Charisma to Yell, and Familiarity.

Weed entrusted the excess Vampires to the Orc Seechwi.

*

Orc Seechwi. She took a breath toward the sky and sigh.

“Chwiik, with the Orc’s body, I, I can’t make the posture freely, chwichwit!”

If she tries to bend forward, a bunch of fat flaps would prevent her from doing so.

The fats on each side would rock whenever she moves.

Ffs!

And the face when she seriously tried and ends in failure were also something beyond belief.

At each time, she pants like no tomorrow.

“With all due respect, Orc is a joke! Chwichwhik!”

Seechwi was wonderfully and graciously enjoying the solitude.

During the battle thus far, she really didn’t have anything else to do.

Simply taking care of herself!

She was assigned some errands as she was fitting for them.

But it has change henceforth.

Group Conducting Skill has been created.

Group Conducting Skill 1 (0%):

Depending on the skill level, the Orc is able to configure up to 35 members (Orcs) in the unit.

Of different species, the Orc can configure 20 members.

Depending on the skill level, the influence of Leadership increases by 3%.

All party members and the unit can have an increase in Stats.

An increase in Strength, Agility, Stamina, and Physical Resistance.

Experience received will increase by 2% for all party members and the troop. (16% increase at skill mastery.)

All party members and the unit have an increase resistance to Confusion and Fear.

Rises in Leadership will have extra effects on the skill!

In the case of human, though slightly different depending on the occupation, usually can form a party up to five members.

Then, with each additional 50 points in Leadership, the party can increase by one member.

Orcs are exempt from this.

From the beginning, they can form parties consist of 10, 20 members to hunt.

In Seechwi's case, due to her obtaining the Group Conducting skill, the size of the party was much larger under her command.

From the skill to her Leadership, a substantial number of 50 members can be grouped into the party.

In addition to being able to strengthen her party members, even able to conduct monsters was a big help.

“Wi, with this, I'm also a force, chwiik! Not imposing as an Orc but as a commander. Chwichwichiik.”

Seechwi wiped away her tears of sorrow, and moved around showing off freely.

While the protruding belly extends to the utmost, and even loud

nasal nose!

“Chwichwichwit. If you listen closely to what I say, I will feed you with lots of delicious food!”

Seechwi shouted her commands at the controlled Vampire Familiars.

She had doubts in the ability of Weed's conducting when she watched from afar. But now the idea has changed.

‘Those wild Geomchis. If it's someone else then they won't be able to command them.’

Her first impression of the Geomchis was that they were tougher.

Nearly the size of the Orcs with close-cropped hair, and body of twitching muscles.

And murderous gaze to boot. An accidental eye contact would spell constant apologies from the other party!

The intimidation level was something not typical.

So much so that when ordinary people came near them, those people would naturally shrink and got out of the way.

And then, with the intensity of 500 worth of them together, who would have the galls to issue them an order. (I wanted to say balls, a letter apart.)

Constantly going to fight, along with the stubbornness and pride to boot.

Wherever they'd go, there was no other way but to cause trouble.

But in front of Weed, they were just naïve pigs.

'If they get food then they're good. Then rushes to fight to rid of everything that pent up.'

The food Weed made were satisfying scrumptious, aromatic, and even prospective to they eyes.

Pudding that melts or tasteful shark's fins in their mouth!

Seechwi also, couldn't sum up how many times her fingers reached for the entrée.

Nevertheless, if it seemed like how simple humans the Geomchis were at first sight, then one would definitely be puzzled at how they acts.

But, those that came to know them, their problem was understandable.

For the Geomchis, the shortest time being 10 years, while the more severe were more than 30 years, lived with strict regimen.

Their foods too, simply consisted of cooked chicken breasts or egg whites only, were something tiresome.

For them, their diet in the Dojang was simple.

300 grams of boiled chicken breasts without any sauce at every meal.

The egg whites too, 10 to 20 worth of them without a speckle of salt.

If you lived such a life for 10 years or so, then you would even be ecstatic with just the taste of a chewing gum.

With just the fish and boneless chicken breasts lain out on the grill and the pork ribs getting bake, their hearts thump thump in anticipation.

Just by watching the sizzling sound of the ripening meat as its juices flown out, their mouth would essentially do the same with drools.

Having this second life in Royal Road, being able to indulge in this world without having any repercussion on their bodies in real

life; the Geomchis lost themselves in their gluttony.

And whenever they encounter strong opponents, they can expend all their energy to fight.

The only fear they have was hunger!

Laughter and heartbreak over food, simple and fierce men.

Holding all their rights was Weed.

‘Domesticated them with food. He have been cleverly give them tastier and tastier food...he won’t come out with a full entrée else they’ll be fully indulged and he loses them.’

Weed far exceeded the skillfulness of being the leader of the party or that of an expedition.

The recognizable talent of an exceptional being whom able to leads an underdeveloped third world country with dictatorship.

Skillful politician, the instigator, the vicious defamer! The perfect representation of a dictator!

It could be said because of Weed, the Geomchis and regular users like Pale should be well received everywhere.

‘He might as well have put the highest additive drug in the food! Charisma and Leadership should only be able do so much. You fit the definition of unrefined and jerk to a T.’

Seechwi too, from that moment, was probably being drugged by Weed with the drink in hand.

*

The Vampire army commanded by Weed was more sustainable as the battles continued.

The size was larger, and they were getting stronger.

So of course, the experience and the acquisition of items greatly reduced.

As the EXP dispersed among the Vampires, full experience could no longer be obtained.

“Let’s go to the next castle.”

Weed said with a harsh impression.

Having won all the battles thus far, he had yet shone a single delighted expression.

This was not always the right course of action befitting that of a great leader in the face of a crisis.

The reason behind this was because he couldn't get anything.

Appalling to the core!

‘All the loots after death are going to the Vampires!’

Anyway, with the progression of the quest, it was to be expected since the force was needed in the first place.

In fact, their earning summed up weren't much to speak of. This was due to the fact that the Death Knight Van Hawk was participating in all of their battles with stronger brutality each time.

The knight of the darkness Death Knight!

Van Hawk was a powerful DPS that inflicted a great deal of damage to the Unicorns and Pegasus.

Naturally, lots of the drops went to him when dead.

A quick check of his level, suddenly he exceeded 368.

He was proportional to the general Death Knights at around level

But now, the growth beseeched him to that of the higher grade monster.

“Death Knight information window!”

Name

Van Hawk

Alignment

Darkness

Race

Undead

Level

Class

The Evoker of Despair Death Knight

Title

The Dark Hand of Army Commander

Reputation

7904

Health

126930

Mana

23850

Strength

964

Agility

675

Stamina

650

Wisdom

220

Intellect

220

Fighting Spirit

594

Endurance

455

Fortitude

315

Physical Resistance

268

Charisma

242

Leadership

502

Luck

-200

Faith

-200

Loyal Knight of the Kallamore Kingdom.

Stained with the forces of darkness and was reborn a Death Knight.

Had a part in commanding the Legions of Immortality under

Barkhan; but in the recent years had deviated from his control.

Death Knight with terrible damage and has the ability to command.

Death Knight is head of the unit.

Vulnerable to Holy magic.

Can control Undead, Monster corps.

Less than 4 Black magic circles available.

Fully grasped the art of Kallamore Kingdom's swordsmanship.

Originally a Darkness army commander, the Death Knight!

Able to be at the center and called on the members of darkness, he could call them to war.

Even though the damages taken by the unit Weed entrusted in him were higher due to the characteristic of the Death Knight, but they were able to attack as much as they could so there was no complaint.

Van Hawk forces his way toward the boss level mobs as a Death Knight without fear.

Weed recalled the past.

'Ever since I met him at the City of Heaven Laviyas, we've been to so many places.'

He prevailed through several hunting grounds with Death Knight Van Hawk at his side.

Thanks to having him watching the rear, Weed could fight on heartily.

Although recently he have been hunting with his colleagues and the Sahyeongs, but there were many times where Weed hunted alone.

Even during the time where he was together with Seoyoon in the north, when she wasn't around Van Hawk would enter the scene.

Weed gazed at Van Hawk nostalgically.

“This damned fellow.”

“.....”

“Don't take a breather and fight diligently.”

The feeling disappeared and Weed spat out the cold words.

So they continuously drove from one castle to the next for conquest.

In fear of the vampiric effect disappearance and having their adaptive and attacking powers plummet, they fought with minimal amount of rest.

The Vampires' complaints were ceaseless.

“I only want to fight just once a night.”

“Give us a break.”

In order to avoid them getting tired, Weed pushed his forearm forward to sooth the Vampires and fill them.

“Drink.”

He provided them with fresh blood to satiate their fountain like Stamina.

Weed went first, then the weak willed Pale, Irene, and others also joined in.

Now only four remaining castles!

“Huhihihing!”

There were golden horn Royal Unicorns, flowing argent mane on Silver Pegasus.

At the sight of their skin, Zephyr gulp with a little nervousness.

“Gulp! They’re monsters that have never been disclosed, Hyeongnim.”

“But they’re not huge in numbers. If we push from the sides, we got it.”

Weed replied with clarity and with his right hand.

A drop of it to signal the push of thousands of Vampires!

The Royal Unicorns and Silver Pegasus lasted in matters of minutes before kneeling and disappearing from sight.

That was how all the last remaining castles subjugation essentially went.

Hwaryeong, with admiration, said.

“I think Weed nim’s was born with excellent memory.”

“Hm?”

“You’ve remember Todeum’s geography exactly. Even the order of up to 47 castles.”

The party too was amazed with the information.

Of course it wasn’t all in Weed’s memory.

“It’s ‘cause there’s a map.”

“A map?”

“I learned how to draw from Yurin so I made one myself.”

Hwaryeong eyes lit up. She was very curious at Weed’s painting.

“Could I see the map?”

“I don’t think it’s a problem.”

From Weed’s chest, a straightened out crumbled sheet of paper was shown.

An outline of Todeum’s entrance was drawn, and then castles were drawn a bit small up to the fifth castle.

After that, due to the size of the paper, castles were increasingly getting smaller.

Although from the entrance to the few castles were drawn, the rest including the roads were a mess.

Instead, they were replaced with explanations.

Long rise from entrance on the right of the heroes’ tower a beautifully large castle

Lots of apple trees castle.

Across the bridge north, a blossoming yellow flower castle.

10mins walk into the alley, gate to the blue castle.

The only person who can tell head from tail of this map was probably just Weed.

Hwaryeong trembled.

‘I can’t believe we followed this map to hunt.’

Anyway, the conquest of the last castle ended safely.

All the Vampires of Todeum has been liberated.

Since then, Weed, the Geomchis, and the party began setting their sights toward Todeum for the unfolding event of their service.

Todeum!

The kingdom of legend where Vampire lives!

Three glowing moons.

Weed’s made loot’s tower at a distance, old fashioned castles, and an unknown Heroes’ Tower.

Above all those, the Unicorns and Pegasus took flight throughout Todeum.

Also on the ground were those drinking and leisurely grazing about.

But then, from far away, dark clouds rapidly descended.

The dark clouds pretty soon enveloped Todeum from all over.

Fierce wind blew, heavy rain poured.

Kureureureung. (wind)

Kwagwagwang! (bullet rain)

Every time thunder and lightning struck, only flashes of light were seen.

The bodies of the Unicorns and Pegasus who drank and grazed on the ground soon were covered with huge swarms of bats that clung on.

The Vampires also broke out of the castle through the windows in unison.

For vampires, the darkness had no effect in their vision.

They surrounded the herd of Unicorns and Pegasus that were covered with bats, and with soulless stares, aimed straight at the necks.

Kwaak!

Vampires were weaker than the Shinsuis, but a multitude of vampire fangs entered their necks.

Sneakily within the disruptive bats, the divine creatures' health and stamina were rapidly absorbed.

“Euhihihing!”

The Unicorn cries.

The Royal Unicorn spoke.

“As members of the virtuous forest clan, we cannot be force back by those of the night clans. Burn everything. Summon Kasya.”

Fire spirits were summoned.

The swarm of bats that covered the common Unicorns also protected the sneaky Vampires from the effect of the spirits.

“Summon Undine!”

Turned the rain water into spears and flew around fighting the swarm of bats.

Silver Pegasus used their magic.

“Dancing Light.”

“Fire Arrow!”

In the darkness, light in flight and fire arrows made of magic penetrates the bats and Vampires.

The battle between the Vampire and the Shinsui raged throughout Todeum.

Within the raining of cats and dogs, magic spells and summoned spirits, along with bats, all were clustered.

The Vampires that rushed in early on and had a definite clutch.

“The blood of Unicorn is really sweet.”

The vampire Queen giggled flirtingly.

Some seemed to pay heed and chuckled at every sluggish movement the Unicorns made.

The Queens were women.

The Unicorns like things that are beautiful, and falling asleep on the lap of virgins would be the ideal happiness for them.

‘Beautiful.’

‘It’s too fishy if I go over to them. Yihing!’

They stood firm and weren’t tempted, but their summoned spirits were hesitant and did not attack.

The situation in the sky for the valiant Pegasus cutting through the sky also wasn’t good.

Steeds of the sky!

Largely filled with muscles, neurotic and couldn’t have been more violent.

In addition, their rushing speed was something hard to follow.

Because of that, the Pegasus shouldn’t have been allowed to soar the sky.

Though now, their body swiveled due to the bats clinging on like leeches.

“Woheheng!”

The Pegasus landed and with their limbs, crazily stomped the ground.

Nape, sides, hip, forelimbs, the bats covered all with their teeth inserted.

With sharp pain, the paralysis had taken place.

Then the Vampires drove in to ensure the kill.

The Unicorns and Pegasus fell to the ground in rhythm with the beating of the thunder and lightning.

Their screams of death were buried within the pounding of the heavy rain.

But further away, in the higher place, the watching divine beasts flew in to see the crisis of their brethren.

“You still have not gone away, you of the night clan still have not gone to your slumber. I shall send you to an eternal rest.”

The Unicorns, while in the air, cast their magic.

Regardless of their own kind, they brandished their magic toward all the bats and the Vampires.

The Pegasus were scary sprinters.

During the Todeum castle hunts, the thing that victimized the practitioners the most was their full speed charge!

Several dozens Pegasus rushed through the sky while hitting the swarm of bats and Vampires.

In the areas swept through by the dashing Pegasus, a few surviving Vampires staggered with injuries.

“Whew, barely survive. Blood, I need blood.”

“Shall we turn into bats and give chase?”

“Even with our top speed we can’t match up to them.”

A glance of the Vampires and they saw the beasts were more than 300 meters away in the distance.

In the brief moment of a single breath, the herd of Pegasus was

already circling the sky.

Their gestures in the sky, when switching from one direction to the next, differed from that of a flock of birds.

The Pegasus spun in an orbit similar to that of a wheel in the sky above.

Along with a straighten head squared off, their feet once again accelerated terribly in midair.

Dududududududududu!

The Vampires who turned into bats, with the thought of being a safe distance far away, but in a moment, they were nose to nose due to the beasts lightning like dash!

The area where the Pegasus had swept by once again, the Vampire bats disappeared without even trace of their cloak remained.

“Wohihing!”

The movements the Pegasus shown during the battle against the practitioners seemed to be something like child’s play; the piercing speed they demonstrate in this battle field was tremendous.

At those times, it was due to the marrow space that they couldn’t

fully utilize their speed.

Their summons and magic were also essential blocked and forced into close combat.

The Unicorns and Pegasus' attacking powers were pretty much sealed.

However, in the vast open space, they swept through the Vampires using charge as if they were nothing.

“No vampire could take this!”

“Should we just be sacrificial and hung onto their nape with our fangs?”

Clamoring of the Vampires who were struck.

They could not come up with an adequate solution to deal with the divine beasts.

Their movements were too fast; a turn of one's head was enough for them to be breathing down his neck.

Along with the use of spirit summons and magic, the once shrouded darkness the Vampires was given was no longer explicitly important during the fight.

Whether it was Weed, the practitioners, or the party, no remorse were given from these high level Shinsuis.

Though the Vampires did deal hazardous amount of damage, it was nothing comparable to their intensity.

The Vampires that took a big hit to their health and mana, plummeted to the ground.

Some wounded lay motionless, while others reached for close by Shinsuis that were molested by swarms of bats.

The Vampires slammed their fangs into the beasts and drank their blood.

“Kyaah.”

“This vitality filled hot blood.”

The degrading staggering Vampires obtained more vigor.

From the eyes that were losing focus to their arms, vitality, stamina, and mana too, all recovered.

Even at their deathbed, the Vampires were still not done.

Using this life stealing technique, they can regain their original

power with a sip of fresh blood!

The Vampires would once again battle after having regained their vitality.

Also, not one of the Vampire Lords died.

They were far superior than other Vampires; and if the Unicorns and Pegasus weren't cooperating with one another, then the Lords were stronger than them too.

Such were the Vampire Lords!

The vampire clan Jinhyeo that was led by Tori.

Even though his Intelligence wasn't high in the first place, a lot of battle experience and skill proficiency built up when he battled with Weed.

Tori knew by watching Weed how to control the unruly Pegasus.

Tori used magic.

“Summon Spider!”

Huge spider webs were generated in the sky.

Sticky webs that connected every castles!

Obviously since the sky had no support, they couldn't act as fixed location for the web.

Nevertheless, large networks were formed by the interweaving spider webs, and caught swarms of bats flying about.

Seeing these bats stuck on the webs, the Unicorns and Pegasus rushed at them with terrific speed.

The webs were pierced through and went limp.

But every time they pass though the webs, the beasts' speed were increasing getting slower.

From the head to their limbs, the Shinsuis were tangled in the sticky webs and their movements were slowing down.

“Summon Spider!”

“Summon Spider!”

Seeing how the Jinhyeo clan effectively acted, other Vampires also simultaneously cast the skill.

Todeum's castles, streets, and the sky above were struck with

countless of intertwining spider webs.

Having pierced through many webs, the Pegasus had significantly dropped their speed, and many flocks of bats came like ominous clouds and drank their blood.

*

Weed, Geomchis, and the party were equipped and ready to embark.

As soon as the last battle in the castle ended, they all sank in exhaustion.

Without a pause to be happy about the accomplishment or a blissful rest, the war broke out between the Vampires and Shinsuis.

So for them, the recovery of health, stamina, and mana were all delayed.

“Let’s go. The final hunt!”

“It’s time we go out.”

The rumbling made Weed and the Geomchis jumped. And that still could not represent the massive situation going on about.

The entire castle felt the progression of the war.

With magic and summoned spirits rampant, the castle walls were in rumbles.

The Vampires, Unicorns, and Pegasus were in the middle of a fierce battle in mid air.

It was not an exaggeration to say that was where the main battlefield was.

Geomchi² muttered in vanity.

“But how the heck are we going to fight in the sky?”

The activation of some skills had prerequisites. However, they were still severely depleted of mana.

Since they overly invested in Strength and some in Agility, the Geomchis were fundamentally fast and strong, and can use various weapons in all range.

Geomchi showed that he was the one with the most experience.

“We’re not limited to one weapon. If we can’t use sword, then we got our bow.”

“We have that as well!”

Therefore, following Geomchi’s actions, the instructors and practitioners all drew their bow in unison.

“All ready! Fire!”

The arrows that were seemingly to be coming off of siege weapons shot into the sky.

Many flew into the cobwebs but not only did they strike the Unicorns and Pegasus, the swarms of bats and Vampires were also hit.

“Keuaaang!”

“The humans are attacking us.”

The Vampires complained.

While only a few of the divine beasts were hit, the Vampires suffered heavy damage from those.

The reason being Weed created those bows for their strength and not accuracy; so instead of the targeted Shinsuis, they hit the pursuing Vampire flock instead.

“Hit it!”

“Continue shooting!”

Completely oblivious to this matter, the Geomchi group continues shooting toward the sky.

After having repeatedly attacked by the arrows, the Vampires were fiercely angry.

Even at this time, the unaware Geomchis kept doing it while not knowing this method was wrong.

Geomchi roamed around.

“Weed!”

He was to be called whenever things did not work out!

For some situation, it was up to Weed to find an appropriate solution and they waited on his commands.

However, Weed was nowhere near Geomchi’s vicinity.

“Geomchi2.”

“Yes, master!”

“Where’s Weed?”

“Uhh. He was here a while ago...”

“Look for him.”

“Yes.”

Geomchi2 and all the practitioners looked for Weed.

Moments later, they found him at a distance.

He was in a place where many Unicorns and Pegasus had fallen during combat.

Due to their high level, the fallen had remarkably survived.

They continued a strenuous effort to get airborne by flapping away, but to no avail.

Along with the Vampires and bats that fell and were subjected to their life stealing technique, the Shinsuis were paralyzed.

Resistance owes more misery!

Weed quietly grabbed the horn on one of the Unicorns.

“You won’t feel the horn.”

“Kkwaeaeaek!”

This time, he pulled out Zahab’s carving knife.

“The smoothness of this shiny polished leather.”

“Kkeueoeoeok!”

The strength of these muscles. I think its well taken care of.”

“Peuheheheng!”

The horn taken, leather skin skinned, and even up the muscles, he took them all.

Even after death, horns or leathers could be obtained.

But the odds of selling them at a premium price were higher if they were obtained when the beasts were alive.

In several cases, the Shinsuis bellowed just once more, and then died.

Since the beasts were already almost near death in this state, the EXP attained weren't much when killed, but generous amount of items could be acquired through this method.

Each one dropped several loots such as Gold or Silvers, mats, and even armors and weapons!

Such luck won't return a second time.

It was like a dream for Weed.

'The loot's tower also came out good. The Japtem(Loot) God is so gracious to me.'

On the Versailles continent, this was not a recognized religion. Its existence was solely through rumors and words of mouth.

Nevertheless, the Japtem God was just as great as any other!

In the past, someone obtained five Unique Grade equipments in just 2 hours of grinding on the Honose plains!

In the mountains around Fort Ohdein, someone found a cart of Dwarfen made gloves just by walking around!

And someone claimed to have found 70000 Gold worth of loots from a treasure chest in a cave nobody lives in; myths like these of

the Japtem God has been endless.

Weed has been a devoted follower of the loots and items' faith.

Of course of course, he absolutely won't ever make a donation.

One being there was no formal temple.

Also, the Japtem God was generous. Simple prayer in one's room was enough to beget His grace.

A single doctrine.

'Do not throw japtem away in vain. In this world, no japtem was useless.'

Among the Dark Gamers, the sensation of this japtem doctrine reverberated considerably and its ideal was widely valued.

'At last, I have received the Japtem God's blessing I've heard so much about.'

Whenever he seized one, he could earn at least 900 Gold.

If they couldn't recover their wounds and take to the sky, those that could barely function pretty much considered themselves dead.

This too, was a battle against the Unicorns and Pegasus who were on the ground, so Weed had no reason to hesitate.

And then, noticing Weed's behaviors, Pale, Maylon, Zephyr, Hwaryeong, and Romuna too, diligently attacked the Shinsuis.

If you can believe it, Mapan also went out.

As a Merchant, he was weaker than most; and even though his main objective was to stay alive in most battles, he now held a huge ax up and singled out a dropped Unicorn to hit.

Geomchis also realized.

“We’re going to catch those that are down on land. Get them all!”

“Yeah!”

The Geomchi troop changed their targets and aimed at the fallen beasts.

The Shinsuis’ nature was that of horses, and did little to resist after having fallen.

Unless you’re paralyzed, standing around on your feet giving up is pathetic!

Even a dismay bear that had given in could easily be caught.

The hardest thing in the spacious Todeum was the sneaking around approaching the fallen Unicorns and Pegasus.

While the battle still raged on in the air, magic spells and summoned spirits occasionally made their way down to the ground.

So they had to be mindful of the battle above to avoid the incomings while paying attention to how they spread themselves.

But even so, for the Geomchi, the instructors, and practitioners, it wasn't an easy thing to do!

Geomchi took off his armor and moved around exposed.

“Our sword is invincible!”

The instructors' interest was aroused. They followed Geomshi's footsteps and took off their tops.

Twitching muscles on their sturdy physique!

“Our sword is invincible!”

The practitioners also fought undressed. The perilous path!

To take your armor off means a dramatic decrease of your defense. If in this state you are attacked, the received damage can amount to five times the damage you would get with your armor on.

That means just a twitch of the Unicorn's hind limb was equivalence to death!

Along with that, their lives were also at the risk of getting hit by stray magic or summoned spirits.

But because Geomchi and his students enjoy the tension, it was their decision to do so.

Moreover, the only person who could seemingly restrained them, Weed, was hunting blindly.

Weed had long since noticed the abnormal behavior of Geomchi and the students.

“Hm. Why not run fast like that?”

Because the armor he worn wasn't a heavy armor that his speed was great. The defense given was little, but it had maximized his Agility.

“This...!”

Weed too, quickly took off his armor.

Even though it was risky, and if something does happen, then nothing can be done.

While carrying his full baggage, only at this moment when the Japtem God sent his rare blessing, that there was no reason to hesitate.

“JAPTEM!”

Weed’s eyes were bloodshot and he ran circles around the Unicorns and Pegasus.

Along with him, more than 200 others did the same!

“Our sword is invincible!”

On the ground, along with the resounding shouts, the number of Shinsui plummeted.

Fear, fear, fear.

From the dark sky.

Thunder, lightning, and heavy rain pounded down.

Vampires and flock of bats attacks continued on soundlessly having been drowned in these.

Many of the horses' falling brethren cry!

Now the few remaining Shinsui began their escape.

But were relentlessly pursued to their ends by the Vampires.

Not even able to reach beyond the boundaries of Todeum, all the divine creatures were wiped out.

All the surviving Vampires landed on castles and the tower wearily.

The rain stopped, and the clouds were disappearing.

Todeum's castles were filled with Vampires.

Their bodies wrapped in black cloaks as they stood gracefully. At last, the long battle had ended.

An aged Vampire came toward Weed.

“Thank you, human. You saved us.”

While looking at the Vampire's aged face, Weed asked.

“Were you the Vampire that left the message?”

“That's correct.”

“But unlike a lot of other Vampires, your face looked rather old.”

“Well, that's because I drank past the upper limit of blood before going to sleep.”

“.....”

“If I drink a bit of fresh blood from a virgin, I will heal. Now that they no longer exist, nothing in Todeum can oppose us. We can regain the luxurious and enjoyable life again. Thanks to all you humans.”

From Weed, Geomchis, and up to the party members, message windows popped up.

Ttiring!

The request from an unknown Vampire.

Todeum's past was as old as their night as long.

Human loving Vampire.

Solitude liking Vampire.

If watching flowers, the shy Vampire.

The jewelry collecting Vampire.

Enjoying painting and sculpting Vampire.

With stones, castle building Vampire.

Nature caring Vampire.

The Vampires that had been deserted by Gods.

Parasitic to humans, they were beings that lived by hiding in the darkness, and were determined to establish their own kingdom.

The continent wandering Vampires found a place to rest and made it their home.

Peace has once again arrived to Todeum, and now, the Vampire civilization will shine even more brilliant.

You had become the Vampire Kingdom Todeum's savior.

Fame increased by 4420.

Charisma increased by 25.

Hostility with clans of the forest increased by 100.

Having experienced in an extraordinary battle, all combat related Stats will increase by 3.

Level has increased.

Level has increased.

Level has increased.

Level has increased.

Level has increased.

With the successful quest, Weed had gained six levels.

The others ranged between 9-12 levels.

The one that had gained the most levels was Seechwi, having attained as much as 17 levels in compensation.

Since the beginning, this was one of the characteristic of the fast growing Orc.

In this moment, all the accumulated tension the Geomchis and the party members felt was all released.

“Ahh.”

“We did it.”

“Success.”

All the party members simultaneously in glee and their faces filled with happiness.

An improbably A Grade difficult quest was successful. And the level up was something from a dream!

Their chests were filled with achievements and delights.

The Geomchis however, grunts in dissatisfaction

“Weed levels were raised too, my chase continues.”

“Ah, this, didn’t expect levels to rise so easily.”

“.....”

The Geomchis continued with their complaints, and Weed again stood in front of the Vampire.

The compensation for the quest hasn't ended yet. The Vampires' treasure still remains.

“For God's and our faith, we have done our best for you. Now please bestow on us what has promised.”

The Vampire nodded.

“Adventurers, while there had been many wandered freely about, none had accepted the responsibility like you have. The Vampire race does not ever forget a promise made. We may commit fraud or lies, but never will we forget a promise.”

There was something disturbing in that remark.

The Vampire pulled out a rusty key.

“In Todeum's treasury, there are many rare treasures. As promised, here is the key to the warehouse. For us nobles of the night, we have many of the heavy things so if it's something you want, take it.”

“What about the location of the treasury?”

“That, you'll need to look for yourself. But be careful and heed my words. That old key can no be replaced.”

The Vampire let out an insidious laughter.

Weed received the key.

Ttiring!

You have acquired the key to the Vampire's treasury. Be careful, the durability of it is very low.

Chapter 8: Prisoner Of War

Kingdom of Haven.

The central powerhouse of the continent, wide and fertile territories, along with mineral rich mountains.

For these reasons, many users chose this kingdom when they first started out playing Royal Road.

“A lot of mountains, meaning a lot of dungeons, lairs, and dangerous hunting grounds exist here.”

Here, it’s primarily filled with adventurous classes or Bard.

“The trading posts here are great too. It has convenient access to all other kingdoms, and...with the amount of adventurer types, there’s no end to the spoils.”

Merchants also chose the Kingdom of Haven.

Warriors, Priests, and even those that wanted to hunt, also decided on the kingdom.

Thanks to this, the kingdom flourished commercially along with explosive military might.

A person unrelated to the kingdom will probably see this as a crowded town.

Whether it was Illuin, Khiden, or Balkiseu castles, even as soon as dawn the streets were bustling with crowds.

But the too many people, Mulline, has endless amount of disputes.

Whether they were at dungeon, lair, mountain, or in the plains, endless amount of battles took place among guilds.

“The first to strike will not be eaten.”

“War! We should get together for war!”

It was filled with counsel and tactical meetings.

Guild alliances and unions often met with repeated disbandment and betrayal.

In the Kingdom of Haven, there exists several thousands of guilds ready to go to war.

Along with mercenaries obtained from other countries, increasingly larger wars were fought.

The powerhouse Bar-Ray leads the Hermes Guild to occupied the Noreunjawi castles led by Bar Ray with the intention to reign over the entire kingdom.

Blood Knights, lone Mercenaries, red Mages units set their flag where the oppositions of Hermes had fallen.

*

Kallamore Kingdom.

Once, the kingdom had a vast territory.

But in the royal palace's weakened state due to the members of the imperial court scrambling up the nation's power; in its opening, the capital got burned down as they suffered a downfall from the aggression of the neighboring countries.

Nevertheless, they tried to resurrect the empire by once again lifting their flag.

They deployed the strongest knight of the royal family, one that was venerated and revered by other countries as the strongest traditional military power of the central continent.

And since it was exclusive to the nobles and its inhabitants, as travelers deemed it an inconvenience; not many users chose to start from Kallamore Kingdom.

Similar to other countries, they have a huge population with developed mining, technology, and commerce; but unlike the others, guild wars did not occur frequently.

This was due to the fact that they were surrounded by the Senbain mountains; so every week, a huge wave of monsters poured down and spread throughout the kingdom.

Looting and destruction.

If the frontline fell, the village and its inhabitants were fated for complete disappearance.

Because of this, the user base rather dislikes the Kallamore Kingdom.

- It's too hard, and you can lose everything in an instant in the kingdom.

- I don't recommend it. Unless you're the type that wants to die.

- Don't go, the protection at Sebain is no good.

Travelers turned their sight away from getting anywhere closer within the range of Kallamore Kingdom due to the outbreak of monsters.

In the kingdom, though reluctantly, thanks to the subjugations of the monsters, its military steadily grew; it was a gritty place for adventurers.

However, there are a variety of people in the world.

Some accepted the commissioned quest of their Knights from Senbain to find the reason for source of the monster infestation in Kallamore Kingdom.

Those that were insane enough and wanted a new experience without fearing of losing their lives did so for the enjoyment.

And so together with the kingdom's troops, they fought against the downpour of monsters from the mountain.

And gained fame!

As Senbain's defender, You have earned 3 Honor points.

The Honor points that were exclusive to Knights could be obtained.

If you have enough Honor points, your subordinates will always be loyal, and everywhere you go, you will always be regarded as nobles to some extent.

Sometimes, gifts can be received from nobles or those of the

imperial courts, and popularity with the ladies will increase.

Honor points were essential for those that wanted to join the order of the Knights or to become higher ranked officers.

Those that performed this quest spread the news of this fact widely.

Frankly, there were desires to hold this info to themselves.

But in fear of the danger fighting in Senbain, they needed more.

“We can get the valuable Honor points?”

“The hard to obtain Honor points that could only gained through dueling victories or special achievements...”

The combatants rushed to Senbain. And all fought there.

Many died intercepting the hordes of monsters, but the pleasure of successfully blocking them was something beyond belief.

Volunteers were also dispatched around the Senbain castles.

With the rise in Fame and Honor, some could be assigned to lead troops of the new volunteers.

While extra contribution to the kingdom will rise, it was possible to obtain more combat experience every time.

The requests were awfully dangerous and although there were a lot of failures, everybody found themselves immersed in defending.

Infantries, Warriors, Archers, Knights, and so on so forth. The tens of thousands became members of the kingdom's troop and gathered to fight fierce battles against the monsters.

All for the thrilling joy of being within the Kallamore Kingdom's war.

“War? So what about the guilds, how do they fight for territories?”

“Just go up the Senbain mountains, you can find a wealth of monster's villages to occupy...”

Even so, when the hunting started here and there, the fixed number of the downpour of the hordes of monsters didn't decrease.

Dungeons and lairs weren't around, but across the vast mountainous range, monsters continued to descend.

Even in exhaustion, there was no other choice but to fight until death.

It was the highest honor in Kallamore Kingdom to defend Senbain!

Having played their roles in preserving peace of a kingdom and actively gaining prizes, many guilds' influence was wide spread; but conversely, in Senbain mountains, numerous guilds united under one flag.

Rather than warmongers, they were disciplined soldiers.

Particularly in Kallamore Kingdom, Knights were engaged in remarkable activities.

They worshipped the traditional belief held by the original knighthood, and as the nation's Knights, they've given their generous support.

In the vicinities of Senbain, there were a variety of terrains.

The valley in between the mountains was a huge plain. This plain acted a substantial final line of defense.

Here, monsters have to be stopped or else the granary zone and the villages will have to pay the price.

Horseback riding Knights fearlessly charges in!

All having blessed by the Clerics, they were an armor wearing monsters slaughtering wave.

The assault of more than 3000 Knights of the country!

Through the thick fog, the knights sped toward the hungry swarm of monsters on their steed.

For the people participating, there was no other time more exhilarating than this.

“I can’t describe it. It’s just awesome. The feel of breaking through the line of monsters on horseback, it’s really, really thrilling.”

“I have no fear. But my hands are shaking.”

“As a knight, if you’ve never fought till death against these waves of monsters, then it’s just too sad.”

The Kallamore Kingdom’s pubs were always crowded with Knights.

It was a place to boast about having fought with no regret and to unfold their tensions, or where they could get a drink before going off to the next defending battle.

The pubs had become the most attended spots for those that

defended Senbain to release their experiences.

On the other hand, those of the other kingdoms could not understand those from the Kallamore Kingdom.

Travelers asked.

“But still, aren’t you scared of getting killed?”

“If I die, the penalty’s pretty hefty aint it. The knight armors and weapons are so pricy...and I might even lose my horse too.”

“Your level and skill proficiency will drop too.”

“You’re right. But Honor is more important. If I can get more, I can get a better mount, and even troops will be assigned to me.”

In front of the combatants, they could only see death and rains of blood.

The hooves beating on land, the thickening fog, the scattering blood.

Along with the breakthrough, blockage, and up to collapsing on horsebacks, everything came along with the excitement of piercing through the monsters corp.

The combatants of the Kallamore Kingdom traveled about while carrying their growth.

And surely, the time will come where they will show the skill they've obtained during their time in Senbain.

The chivalry of those that survives in the Kallamore Kingdom!

*

Kallamore Kingdom's royal court.

Before the king and the imperial court official, the Knight Koldeurim appeared after 30 long years of absence.

“You, how...”

Choking on his own words, the King's eyes moistened.

From the Kallamore, Haven, Toreupan, Masen, Thor, Aidel, the scene unfolded for all the users to see.

In the middle of all their activities, their sights were suddenly filled with the scenes unfolding at Kallamore's royal court.

“What?”

“What’s going on?”

“What kind of Event is this?”

The users from all over the place wondered about the event that was taking place in Kallamore’s royal court.

“I’m truly sorry, my King. I have returned.”

“What happened? How have you come back 30 years later?”

“I fell into the deceitful hands of the Kingdom of Haven...if it hadn’t been for some great adventurers, I would have never been able to return to fight for my King and my Country.”

“So the fault lies in the Kingdom of Haven as well. Is this the day I’ve been waiting for? Come back as my officer again. With us, the Kallamore Kingdom will once again be able to spread its wings.”

Vincent Kallamore III.

The current king, as soon as he rose to his throne, along with Koldeurim, they were truly fierce together.

Together they led the Kallamore Kingdom against their nemesis, the Kingdom of Haven, and were on a winning streak!

Expanded their borders, and became dignitaries throughout the continent.

As the nation's heroes and its salvation from chaos; at the time, they were favorites to be able to obtain the whole continent within their grasps.

The best Knight has returned and lifted the kingdom's spirits once more!

But reasons unbeknownst to him, after his disappearance, due to the strong resistance of the Kingdom of Haven, the war was finished.

Kallamore III proclaimed.

"The war I've started in my younger days, and still, I have not seen its end yet. Now that you've returned, the kingdom will be at its peak; and though we have no castle to speak of, the pride of our soldiers can never halt, Koldeurim."

"Yes, your Majesty!"

"I shall leave you our troops, make our enemies of the Kingdom of Haven realize the greatness we all shared."

"We will march on with our trumpets nonstop and will destroy all until none are left of the cowards."

Ttiring!

With this act, the Kallamore Kingdom is on an outbreak of war.

The Minister of War Koldeurim leads 90000 men of Kallamore Kingdom's army!

8500 Knights.

60000 Infantries.

16000 Archers.

3500 Clerics.

2000 Monks.

Not only the troops of Kallamore Kingdom are very powerful, they are also ruthless and non-forgiving groups.

Even though they have not gone to war in the past 30 years; they've reached the peak of their fighting power due extensive combat experience against monsters.

In addition, if the Kallamore Kingdom allows it, all sorts of mercenaries can participate in the war on their side.

The goal is the occupation of the Kingdom of Haven.

As of this moment, all achievements, weapons, armors, and the prices of all basic necessities, will be frozen at the current

place/price in all towns belonging to the Kallamore Kingdom and the Kingdom of Haven.

User who participates in the war will acquire an increase of 20% of the Experience points.

The users were astonished.

“Welp, it’s war.”

“Finally the war broke out.”

They’ve known from earlier on that the Kallamore Kingdom and the Kingdom of Haven hated one another.

But still, a full scale war between the two was something they couldn’t fathom.

*

Weed also saw the flash screen of the events unfolding at the Kallamore Kingdom royal court. The party too, was able to participate in the quest.

Weed, in a very short time, thought about the aftermath of the war in approximately 0.01 second.

“Well, no skin off my back. It’s not my job.”

This cool attitude!

Geomchi treated it as natural and nodded.

“If we join up in this battle then the balance will be tipped. Dead or alive, I don’t need to worry about such details for them.”

Geomchi₃ inputted.

“Against those kids, give me three days and it’ll be enough to beat them all.”

Geomchi₄ also recalled his past.

“I spent my days hitting a lot, but strangely I still sleep well.”

Whether it was those of the Kallamore Kingdom or the Kingdom of Haven, they had very little interest in whether the users would die or not.

Pale on the other, slightly felt a bit of remorse.

His forehead furrowed deep and hadn’t straightened out.

“The war...”

Irene was also very anxious.

“You think the users of the two kingdoms will be ok?”

Pale could not answer for a while.

The war was an opportunity.

It was a golden moment to for the two forces between the kingdoms to try and tips the scale of dominance!

There were those with nothing to do while waiting for this day, and others that will inevitably be harmed as casualties of war.

The Kallamore Kingdom and the Kingdom of Haven.

If either side loses their territory or it facing its destruction, to the users, it would be an incredible loss as it was their base.

Also, the efforts they’ve put the raising Familiarity with the nobles or knights in those area would essentially be moot when those character dies.

In the worst case scenario, they would be exiled.

For users like Pale or Irene that were based in Rosenheim, to

attend the war would mean having to travel a long distance and didn't need to do so; but for the lot of other users, they couldn't just abandon their country.

Because the places were their homeland where they started out.

They got along with the inhabitants of the town, and knew information about the surrounding vicinities.

Having watched it grow to its current state, the pile of contribution to gain Familiarity, most users would be reluctant to go anywhere else than staying put.

Even users whose levels were beyond 300, having received quests from nobles to go off on an expedition, could not simply leave their country as if it was nothing.

Nevertheless, Pale did not know whether to choose to be in the Kallamore Kingdom or that of the Kingdom of Haven, due to not knowing the entire truth of the complex web the countries spun.

Pale came out with the most comfortable and reasonable answer.

“As long as we don't get caught, then all is well.”

“A really good comment.”

Zephyr displayed his agreement.

“If they don’t find out then it’s good.”

“Yes, let’s say it’s none of our business.”

Pale’s opinion was welcomed by all.

Toward the whole lot, Weed’s wickedness was slowly affecting them.

Maylon too, in order to prevent having founded out.

“I’ll edit this part out.”

If they could keep the fact that they released Koldeurim out of his confinement, then there was nothing to worry about.

If she deletes this section out before handling the videos over to the broadcasters, then none of them will be the wiser.

Turning their attention away from the full scale war between the two kingdoms that will most definitely be acts of brutality, the interest of the party once again returned to the Vampire’s treasure.

Having successfully completed the quest, Weed obtained a rusty key close to losing its durability, but it was not something that could prevent Weed.

Key to the Treasury.

Durability 2/20.

After using it several times and of the rust, the Key is nearing its obsolete.

With severe corrosion, its most likely will be able be used three times.

‘Che, only one or two uses after the quest. Well whatever, a piece of cake.’

The location of the treasure was a necessity.

The vampire did not give out the location of the treasury so they will have to explore with the rusty key.

However, Weed had already survey all of Todeum and had confirmed the location of the said treasury.

“It’s in the spire above, located directly below the moon in the center of Todeum.”

For Weed, every time he wanted to give up on the quest, he would look toward at the spire and would break out in drools.

Even through the lighting, thunder, and the cataclysm of the day before, he would do the same.

All he could see were the garishly appeal of gold within the interior of that spire.

Maylon expresses her doubts.

“But that spire doesn’t have any ascending path with a closed door leading to it?”

“The window is the answer to that.”

“Huh?”

“It’s a characteristic of Vampires. All they really need is a window. Once they get in through the window, then they can activate the stairs to go up on the other side within it. Its location will be revealed exactly where the moon will hit it.”

The whole party watched Weed.

Weed, without any difficulty, went through the window of the Vampire’s treasury.

And then, along with him came a Vampire that confirmed that this was indeed the location of the treasury.

The unnamed Vampire spoke.

“One person can only take one object, one weapon, or one piece of armor. Any more than that, will incur the wrath of us Vampires.”

Only one item is allowed.

Since the Vampires does not allow any more beyond that, they will be pressed to attack.

When the Vampires lose their lives, the items in the treasury will be deprived of.

In the treasury, they could see items of those that have their spirits extricated such as Koldeurim.

Even with Koldeurim's body liberated, without his soul, he remained incomplete.

There were dozens of beads on display, Koldeurim's soul was depicted in one of the transparent bead.

-Ooo, finally signs of humans...

The ghostly voice of Koldeurim.

Though it was a ghostly cry, it was filled with emotions such as joy and ecstasy.

-Human, get me out. I'm Koldeurim of the Kallamore Kingdom; finally, I will be able to devote my allegiance to the king again.

But alas, this was a treasury of the Vampires, they were not obligated to do anything for a human.

Beside money, Weed doesn't know of anything; the party too, seemingly resembles him, while the Geomchis do not care about anybody but themselves!

Weed said annoyingly.

"Who are you?"

-You do not know about me? I'm the Knight of Kallamore Kingdom, Koldeurim.

"Is that so? You got trapped."

-.....

Koldeurim spoke much more carefully now.

-If I can break free from the bind of this bead, then my soul will be set free. Due to the Vampire's trickery my soul was captured; even now, my body is somewhere waiting for the day that my soul can return.

“How do you know it's not rotting away right now?”

-.....

Weed's sentence was a few words away from making Koldeurim burst in frustration!

The hope he felt that came along with the humans explicitly plummeted down all the way to hell.

Within the bead the filled with Koldeurim's soul, the glint was getting dimmer and dimmer.

The wounded soul of a Knight!

Maylon gently whispered into Weed's ear.

“Weed nim, in this case, his resurrection would be just fine since it was already been determined.”

“How so?”

“With people of the past, there were some prerequisites for resurrection, such as occupying a new body...well, virtually all of them searches for a Warlock’s body. Or if there’s a body existed in the temple, that could be used too. If the soul of the missing and the body haven’t disappeared, the body can be preserve through magic or placed in a dungeon accordingly to repel any intruders, so it’s possible for the body to survive.”

“So, you’re saying that he could really be resurrected on the continent.”

“It’s fully possible.”

But even with that, Weed wouldn’t release Koldeurim just like that.

“But Koldeurim will never know how hard we’ve fought just to get our ways up to here. To save you, we have to give into the demands of the Vampires. It’s like throwing mud all over our bodies after we came all the way here...If we just release you all willy nilly, then you’ll just forget the favor you receive.”

-A Knight would never forget the grace of others.

“Koldeurim, if you practice chivalry just as you do against monsters, I hope you do not forget to stand straight with conviction. That’s all I really wanted you to do.”

Golden-hearted mode!

Without having to break the bead that contains the soul, Weed was operating to increase Familiarity with the being inside it.

For the upright Knights, his intention was to imitate having integrity and innocence.

However, Koldeurim wasn't a great knight for nothing as he wasn't easily swayed.

-That's strange. A second ago you said you don't care to relea.....

"That's the conviction I want to see in you...in fact, in order to save you, we've lost a lot of our colleagues...keuheuk!"

Weed even tried to squeeze out a few tears!

He flashed a smile with a thought of the dead practitioners.

'I suppose they have earned their keep.'

Nevertheless, seeing an adventurer who prioritized camaraderie like that, Koldeurim's voice softened.

-I..in order to save just me...in the future when I may return to Kallamore Kingdom, I will never forget you. I'm sorry. I do not possess anything at the moment to present to you; but in the future, I promise I will not forget to do so.

If one befriended a king or nobles, then the chance of receiving quests is higher while the gain is greater.

But with just a slight Familiarity made here, then they could set up the framework to have an easier access to Kallamore Kingdom to come and go as they pleased.

As a dark gamer, he needed to work on having Familiarity with several kingdoms, no matter how risky that may be.

Weed was already satisfied with this, but a sudden idea popped up.

“Call Death Knight Van Hawk!”

“I answer your call, Master!”

Death Knight.

The reason he was summoned was because he used to be a Knight of Kallamore.

“Were you also a Knight of Kallamore Kingdom?”

“A day to day life. Now as a Death Knight, I’m faithfully dedicated to the owner.”

“Even so, you can have a little chat between the two of since you both are Kallamore natives.”

“Understood.”

The Death Knight eyed Kodeurim who was trapped in the bead.

“You’re a Kallamore native?”

-Yes. But I cannot reveal my name to a Death Knight.

Koldeurim was trying to deny the idea of being in the same prestigious knighthood with a Death Knight.

The Death Knight patiently asked.

“From which platoon?”

-What?

“I asked which platoon you were assigned to from the knight academy.”

-The 694th.

Having heard that, the Death Knight sneered.

“It has already gotten that far huh? I was in the 164th.”

-Seonbae nim!

Once a Knight, always a Knight!

Van Hawk was a seonbae to Koldeurim for a lifetime due to having served for Kallamore empire.

It was not a matter of Familiarity.

It's the Rank!

Death Knight Van Hawk and Koldeurim's ranking hierarchy was formed.

In a sense, it was the same as those with higher rank in the military to not even lift a finger.

The Death Knight has lived for a long period of time.

“When I was in Kallamore, we had the entire continent shaking fear. Since when did Kallamore seem so dead?”

-I'm sorry Seonbae. Our national power has been weakened a lot

by the neighboring countries that we're not even on the map anymore.

“That’s just wonderful.”

-It was entirely our fault for being insufficient. If I had not been capture by the Vampires then...ah! Seonbae nim please save me.

“As a former Knight of Kallamore, that’s my course of action.”

-Thank you, Seonbae nim.

“What the hell man! I can’t believe you got held captive by those of the Vampire kind.”

-.....

The high self-esteemed spirit Koldeurim shrunk before Weed and the Death Knight.

Chapter 9: Elemental Sculpturing Skill

So then, a serious incident occurred after releasing Koldeurim.

But before their sight was the treasures, so the war of Kallamore Kingdom and Kingdom of Haven was soon forgotten.

“How much are all of these.”

“Ima pick up a weapon, if there’s none then I’ll take gloves with boosted Strength.”

“There are Cleric’s gowns here too.”

“Even Wizard’s robes too!”

There were a lot of goods so that made it hard for them to decide.

If they decided on one, another would pop up at some obscure angle of their line of sight and essentially turned it into a conflicted debate.

In addition, the Unique grade items in the vampire storage were at level 400 or more!

There were more than 450 items.

Although they were superior in performance, there were a number of them that wasn't available for immediate usage.

Hwaryeong found a fan.

“Weed nim, please check it.”

Since she did not have the necessary skill, every time she found something, she would hand it to Weed to check on its information.

“Identify!”

Celine's Fan:

Durability 55/55.

Damage 12~21.

Eastern styles folding fan.

Fan carved out of bamboo with 12 kinds of colorful silk attached.

It can be spread out with just a flick due to its silky attachments.

Small grains of gems are embedded within this, so its beauty can

still be seen even within the dark.

Dancers often use Celine's Fan.

Reason being the alluring seduction.

Restriction:

Bard, Dancer only.

Level 400.

Attractiveness more than 620.

Option(s):

If the Dancer is famous or have more than 700 Attractiveness, then the Restriction will decrease by 25%.

+60 Attractiveness.

+60 Charisma.

+30 Stamina.

+20 Agility.

All Bard skills +20% effectiveness.

All Dancer skills +40% effectiveness.

Dance skill has to be in Advanced to use the following skill.

*The Fan Dance:

Advanced dance skill.

A very elegant Easter style dance.

Make monsters with Intelligence fall in shame and suffer damages.

While lifting moral of colleagues and recover from status, enhance their combat capacity by 15%.

In times of peace, if danced before the royal family or nobles, will gain the residences' favor.

The effect of Attractiveness and Charisma increases by 80%.

As expected of a Unique item, there were many effects given as well as a new skill.

In fact, for a level 400 weapon, it was not an outstanding item.

Though there was the option of reducing the usage restriction, so Hwaryeong could use it as is.

Weed returned the fan back to Hwaryeong who was jumping in delight.

“Ohh thank god. I can use it right away. This fan is really perfect.”

“Though the performance is a bit...”

“But it's beautiful so that's fine.”

Weed nodded.

‘It’s a good choice.’

It was a wise decision to select one and use it right now than having to wait until reaching level 400.

As of now, the number of those over 400 was very low!

With the option to decrease the restriction, the fan would always get a high price when selling.

Weed’s point of view was rather practical, but Hwaryeong’s view was rather simple.

‘If it’s pretty then it’s fine.’

As long as it could grab the attention of others, then the possibility of selling a rubber band for 1000 Won would increase.

Seeing how Hwaryeong chose her good, the others opted out and picked up items with level reduction option also.

Only the Geomchis didn’t care about the restriction and freely went about picking their favorite sword.

“The sword fits in my hand.”

“I want a practical sword rather than an ornate one.”

They picked up excellent swords but due to the level restriction, they couldn't use it.

Pale once again thought about the Geomchis naivety and though they were causing trouble for themselves again.

“Geomchi2 Hyeongnim.”

“Hm?”

“Shouldn't it be better to choose a sword you can use immediately? And then later on you can get better swords, faster and stronger ones.”

Pale inquired seriously and Geomchi2 replied back dully.

“That's not all when wielding swords.”

“Huh?”

“What makes a good sword? As long as you mind the sword with sharpening and cleaning; until you are able to use that sword, you'll be forcing yourself to get stronger and preparing for the day you can use it.”

The Geomchis picked up the level 400 weapons.

If they want to use those level 400 weapons, then they would have to get stronger faster.

The feeling of holding the swords in their hands was bound to be different from those bamboo blades they've held for years.

Having acquired those wonderful Unique grade weapons, their goals changed to one day being able to swing them.

Weed wandered around the treasury looking for a worthy weapon.

‘Level 400 weapon...’

Since having the Blacksmithing skill, he didn't have to care about those with the level restriction reduction options.

What was important was the strong attack.

‘And then in the future, I can clean it up and sell it for a good price.’

He carefully searches for weapons, though most of the being the already discarded by the Geomchis as they deemed them as modest swords.

However, Weed was still rummaging through the remaining

swords as he could never absolutely deem them moot.

The use, price, preference, appearance, and usefulness in battle, he weighed all of them carefully.

‘The 200 Won more expensive salt I bought at the market. I will not allow such a thing to happen again.’

Endless regret about buying that on impulse!

Without forgetting the incident, he thoroughly analyzed all the weapons.

“What is this? Identify!”

Paskran’s Lance:

Durability 60/60.

Damage 79~97.

The lance used by the Knight Paskran during the Reign of Chaos.

There is no way to check for more detail at this time.

Restriction:

Knight, Spearman, Paladin only.

Option(s):

Damages will increase 3x when attack on horseback.

Penetrate through enemy's shield and armor with an increase of 65% to inflict critical damage.

Paskran's Lance!

‘Where have I heard this name before?’

The item used by Paskran, one of a kind Unique item in the world.

Weed's head flashed a moment in the past.

‘That's right. I've seen a post about this on the Dark Gamer Union board.’

The purchaser being a diamond rated buyer was looking for this stuff.

‘The average price he usually pays was 2000000 Won.’

Though filled with regrets, he refused to choose or think about choosing Paskran's Lance.

Weed couldn't use it since he did not learn anything outside of swordsmanship. (gained archery when started out, staff is just a stick to cast spells and smacking)

Although he was able to use the lance due to the Blacksmith's characteristic, he could not utilize the addition effect given.

‘Better pick a different weapon. I want something I can use while can still get a decently high price for it.’

As a dark gamer, obtaining items to sell was important, but one's growth still takes precedent.

Aside from the Paskran's Lance, Weed found an old sword among the abundance of swords he looked into.

“Should a sword no good as this be in the treasury? Identify!”

Koldeurim's Old Sword:

Durability 12/27.

Damage 16~37.

The sword of a famous knight from the Kallamore Kingdom.

The best blacksmiths of the kingdom commissioned by the king

toiled for three months, pouring their heart and soul into creating this weapon.

More graceful elegance and splendidly ornate than any of their previous work that they filled with dignity.

Having gone through countless battles, the blade became rugged and the decorations all fell off.

The final damage to the blade came from the battle against the Vampires.

In the middle of Koldeurim's knightly duty, the sword retained a little of a lesser demon Ice Daemon power.

Restrictions:

Knight only.

Level 440.

Option(s):

Demon cutting sword.

Strength +2.

+3 Dexterity.

+25 Fame.

The sword used by the Knight Koldeurim!

Severely worn, had holes in it for a long time, the durability was no good too.

‘Since the maximum durability fell, there’s no way to tell if this was the true damage.’

If he went by the damage output itself, then the level requirement of the weapon would probably be around 50 or so to properly use the sword.

It couldn’t possibly be graded as a Unique grade item!

Looking at the level restriction was something ridiculous, Weed felt that the potential of this sword couldn’t just amount to this.

“Just like how a pearl is buried under all the mud. If I could get it back to the original damage then it is fine.”

It was not an easy choice deciding on something unknown.

Repair to try to get it back to the original state!

Even though it was a shame to use the Mithril, it was worth a try.

“This valuable opportunity is a gamble I can not blow. With something like this, I’m going to start right away.”

Weed immediately started a fire in the furnace.

The Blacksmith's fire!

Two hours went by as he hammered away at Koldeurim's Old Sword.

But beside from just knocking off the rusty parts, the lumpy golden part in between the sword didn't give a response.

"Indeed...a Unique item."

Seven more hours passed.

All the others were tired of waiting, so they left the treasury.

Only the Vampire guards remained watches while yawning away.

The fire's smokes that expelled from the hearth were limited by its boundary, so those outside the repair weren't affected at all.

Weed raised the output of the hearth's flame.

Satiation level have dropped below 20%.

Weed held a sweet potato toward the furnace to bake.

By the time the day had passed, the color of the flame had changed to blue. Though still, there was no reaction from the old sword.

“Keuheuheuheuheu.”

Weed’s obsession did not waver.

He had strengthened its center, but he did not recheck the sword.

His pride couldn’t let him do that with just that amount of hard work!

That was Weed’s source of endless strength.

“It’s a start. If I can go out to briefly rest my eyes for 20 minutes then I’m good. With that, I can hold out for at least a month.”

Sitting in front of this poison waiting was nothing to him.

So while focusing on the frame before him, time continued to pass.

When the flame burned a complete white color, he put the old sword back into the hearth.

Jjijjik.

This time, there was a reaction.

With this, the blade was tolerable to the grinding.

With greater force than before, he consistently hammered the blade.

But because of the badly eroded shape it was in, he had to re-smelt the worn out sword again.

Working on a Unique grade level 440 was no easy task!

Ttangttangttang!

While continuously refining the sword, Weed kept hammering away.

And with its cooling, Weed added in the Mithril he obtained when he hunted.

As a result, after an additional of more than six hours of repairing, he was able to recover the sword.

“Identify!”

Koldeurim Daemon Sword:

Durability 160/160.

Damage 103~121.

Sword of a famous knight from the Kallamore Kingdom.

The best blacksmiths of the kingdom commissioned by the king toiled for three months pouring their heart and soul into creating this weapon.

More graceful elegance and splendidly ornate than any of their previous work that they filled with dignity.

Had recently undergone through a major repair.

Does not expect to fully recover to its former state due to having gone through the hands of less talented than the blacksmiths.

Couldn't not be completely repaired, the Durability and Damage will be less than its initial completed state.

In the middle of Koldeurim's knightly duty, the sword retained a little of a lesser demon Ice Daemon power.

Restrictions:

Knight only.

Level 440.

Strength, Agility, Charisma, Leadership, Fighting Spirit, Faith all have to be more than 500.

Fame more than 12000.

Option(s):

Demon cutting sword.

Whenever the Daemon Sword cuts, it can inflict up to 7 different types of curses.

Monsters that are weaker than the sword owner will severely wither.

+20 Strength.

+35 Agility.

+ 150% Leadership stat on Human soldiers.

+3% Attack Speed.

+46% Magic Resistance.

+2500 Fame.

Brilliant options and attack!

The sword once owned by Koldeurim showed amazing stats.

“Jackpot.”

Weed packed the Demon Sword.

A Grade A difficulty quest with reward of great weapon and may have even obtained contribution points to the Kallamore Kingdom; with these, his heart was lighter.

‘Later ima go to Kallamore Kingdom and have him give me treasures or some supplies.’

It feels like a loan shark leaving somebody’s house in the morning after having clearing them out!

Weed cheerfully left the treasury.

After Weed and his companion left the Vampire treasury, the place found its peace once again.

Dozens of scattered bags that used to contain weapons dizzily rolled about.

The remaining weapons were poor; so of course, nobody wanted to take the terrible lot.

At the end of the disturbance, only clouds of dust float about.

-Heumm, this guy wasn’t it as well, is there nobody eligible to wield me?

Surprisingly, the sword was thinking.

Self awareness Ego Sword!

Usually those with more than one kind of special property are known as magical items.

Rarer grade of those are things that have been granted special magic or properties.

On the continent, the rarity doesn't exceed that of the highest degree Unique grade weapons or armors.

However, the disparity between those within the Unique grade is huge.

Such as the cane held by the Goblin Chief and the staff of the Archmage, the differences between them was as enormous as the distance between heaven and earth.

Among them, the Ego Sword is classified as a premium grade weapon.

The sword itself remembers the experiences of combat.

Therefore, the next time it reencounters the same monster type again, it would speak of the mob's weakness; and at the sword's discretion, it may use skills or magic accordingly.

The level requirement was 520!

While people still can't use the sword as of yet, the Ego Sword chooses a qualified master on its own.

Since it deemed Weed as one who was not eligible, it masked itself as nothing more than an ordinary sword.

In the Vampire's treasury, within all the remaining swords laid the finest sword that chose to be left behind in the obscure darkness.

*

KMC Media had prepared an ambitious TV program called "Weed."

Started from the quest accepted in Seirun town on the Land of the Vampires to stimulate the viewer's interests.

Viewers gathered because this was an adventure they could not perform on the Versailles continent. But later on.

-It's irrelevant to us.

-Only show us this, we can't get there.

However the show of the northern part of the continent was still tremendously growing in popularity.

Because the users were still in the dark, all kinds of events took place.

If it was a newly coming up town, then there would be cases where it called for the annihilation of the crowds of monsters attacking.

While solving quests, new heroic sagas were created every single day.

The newscast that specializes in just the north has rating of 16%!

In contrast, the program “Weed” at its beginning was poor, having only accounted for 2~4% of the viewers.

It was easy to see the falling interests in the show as they were not part of the party in the Vampire Kingdom.

-Those idiots!

-Dumbasses. Pigs.

-Look at how over the top they are. Haha!

-One eats over 10 whole servings.

The program 'Weed' bulletin board was filled with just cynicism.

As shown before then, the mere actions of the Geomchis made it a fun sitcom.

It was somewhat enjoyable to the audience to see the loads of ingredients going into preparing the food only to disappear a moment later.

Masking the food to feed the group was funny too, but that was it.

So with that, the viewership remained at a standstill after three episodes.

KMC Media was at the bottom of the audience's favorites.

The production and the planning departments that were related to 'Weed' were subjected to a written affidavit.

Dear Esteemed Director,

We did not consider the users' interests...

But we've attempted a combination of ideas, but ultimately,

we're asking for the station to give us a bit more...

This was the affidavit most directors would write.

Director Khang's written statement was different.

Dear manager of operations,

Not long ago, I sent your wife roses and she was very pleased.

Hope you can find some time of peace...and let's go play golf again sometime.

The level of intimacy was shown in the statement.

Director Khang maintained his withering integrity, but also, the manager of operations was a fan of Weed so he did not mind the ratings.

"Even monkeys can fall from trees. Failures too, have it good points."

The broadcasting station had expected the show to somewhat fold.

However, but the time the quests in Seirun ended, the viewership rose to 5.5%.

With the Geomchi troops combat skills, and the highlights of Weed's seriousness with Cooking, Sewing, and Blacksmithing skills to help out his party members, the audience increased.

And it was worth the wait having released their anticipation to finally see the genuine Vampire Kingdom Todeum.

Those with the broadcasting station saw with Weed's leadership, the quests to Todeum also seen its end.

The planning committee, the production team, and all the others, witnessed the sensation of a Grade A difficulty quest.

Incredibly, the once rabble-looking group showed their years of training and indomitable fighting spirits for the quest's triumphant.

In the station's open dinner.

"Hurrah!"

"With this, I suppose my mind is comforted for a while."

"The quest still's progressing in real-time so I still gets butterflies."

The production staffs seemed to have lost weight and their face

shown a pale-ish hue.

Now it was truly at the bottom of the ratings.

Because if that, they did not sell any advertising space.

Each episode was organized to run for two hours; now, they were given just one hour every week to run the episodes.

But the next broadcast would be the adventure in Todeum, and while the broadcasters also deemed it an impossibility to solve the quest; they expected the ratings to rise with the scenes set to air.

*

The Vampire's Kingdom Todeum.

Unlike the soothing quietness liking Vampires of Seirun, this was a colorful and bustling place.

Black magic school, underground relic dealers, a place to drink fresh blood at any time on everyday, etc.

There were lots of shops that fit the characteristic of Vampires.

“We sells broken wings of Unicorns.”

“Pegasus’ horn for sale.” (I feel so trippy here, like it’s switched around. But that’s how it is on the raw.)

“Freshly received blood here, for the youngling.”

Vampire merchants went around in their black capes.

Their arrogant deals made it thrilling for the spectators within Todeum.

Mapan checked the prices and his eyes lit up.

“Most component items and loots’ prices are all lower than normal.”

It was the time not long after the combat with the Unicorns and Pegasus.

These guys were selling miscellaneous goods at low prices, while art, handicrafts, and jewels were sold at high prices.

Mapan pulled out all of the carpets, furs, and jewels he had in stock.

“With so much jewelries how many am I going to sell? I wonder if I have enough to fulfill all the Vampires’ desires. In comparison to here, the humans don’t pay nearly as much.”

Mapan began to bargain and all of his quantities were sold off.

It was a huge victory of an investment; then on the empty carriage, he filled it with miscellaneous goods.

For Merchants, this moment was such a win.

“Euhahahaha!”

Within Mapan’s poignant laughter, Weed also hid a smile during the conversation.

Later Mapan will have to pay tax in Morata!

‘Probably more Merchants and adventurers will have to stop by to pay taxes in Morata.’

Weed had this secret expectation when he returns to Morata.

With the lot of Vampires, the quests they could receive from the easy Grade F or even to Grade B were available.

Since there was nobody else beside them, this was the golden land of quests.

“You humans who we fought with. These days, there were issues that popped up in the east. We were asleep so we don’t know what

had happened. I'd like you to investigate."

With just those few words, quests of Grade C or B were released!

There was no way other people could come to Todeum, so it was a complete monopolization of quests!

"We will try to find out what's wrong."

Geomchis and the party members had accepted the quest. Weed also tried to perform the quest.

"We'll investigate things in the east and will come back."

But the Vampire shook his head.

"You cannot."

Has been denied to perform the Quest.

"What?"

Weed hesitated for a moment in this embarrassing situation.

Most of the time when one's unable to receive a quest, it is due to the lack of Reputation or level.

But Pale, Zephyr, or even the Geomchis could accept the quest without having being rejected.

“You have a special job to do.”

At the end of the sentence, Weed’s eyes sparkled.

“Is it important work?”

“Yes. It is very important work.”

Other colleagues weren’t in the Vampire’s selection. Only just Weed was chosen.

So the quest lying in wait must be something special!

At this moment, the party looked very enviable.

“This time as well, it’s Weed nim.”

“Perhaps...the Vamp is implying it’s something we don’t have...”

Weed shown the party an apologetic façade. However, it was a rotten face to cover up the intense joy he was feeling!

Weed carefully asked the Vampire.

“What’s this adventure that I have to do? Just leave it to me and I will faithfully commit to it, even if it’s hard or even lonesome.”

“It’s not an adventure so to speak. That’s not it. As you know, from our earlier battles, the city we live in has been severely damaged. Statues on the streets, and sculptures in castles too, has been significantly destroyed.”

“.....”

With the sudden talk of sculptures, Weed had an ominous feeling surfacing. Unfortunately, it wasn’t a mistake.

“My ‘Child Holding an Apple Figure’ was also damaged. I woke up at night and the first Sculptor I remember is you... so as an exceptional human Sculptor, I have you repair the sculpture for me. Is it possible?”

Ttiring!

The broken ‘Child Holding an Apple Figure.’

The sculpture the Vampire Metson purchased 36 years ago for 120 Gold!

The treasured sculpture is severely damage due to this battle.

To repair the sculpture, you need an exceptional Sculptor with keen eyes.

Difficulty: F

Compensation: 3 Unicorn's feathers.

Quest Limitation:

Specifically Sculptor.

To deny the quest, Metson's trust will fall.

“.....”

Weed was speechless.

An absolutely unwanted quest by profession!

The Vampire seriously asked.

“I realized that besides having attained an exceptional state in sculpturing to explore the land as a human, to sculpt would be impossible if you don't have affection toward the work. So you won't refuse my request, would you?”

Weed, of course, wanted to refuse.

“I’m sorry. What art is are passion and creativity. I cannot accept this because I am busy dedicating my time to create new things.”

If there were no other quests around the maybe he would; but he did not want to begin repairing sculptures with the plentiful amount commissioned quests with large rewards lying around.

Of course he’d take if it the compensation was a lot of money; but regrettably, the reward was just three Unicorn’s feathers.

The Vampire was considerably disappointed.

“Oh, I guess I got the wrong human.”

Quest refused.

Received Vampire Metson’s distrust.

Weed noticed and spoke gently.

“So instead of repairing, I want to help you out by investigating the east.”

The Vampire shook his head again.

“You can not.”

Has been denied to perform the Quest.

All other colleagues were able to accept while just Weed was denied.

“I would never entrust that to a human who won’t even repair a sculpture.”

“.....”

The situation had completely put him on the spot!

Along with Weed’s face faltering, the party members held their stomachs.

“Kikkikkik.”

“Haha, so funny.”

“Really interesting. I thought with everything Weed nim does, he was great; but he’s like this too.”

Zephyr, Mapan, Irene, Maylon, Hwaryeong, and Seechwi were laughing.

Weed kept all their names in his memory so he could later in the future take his vengeance.

But now, the quest took priority.

“Actually, come to think of it, I’d like to repair the sculpture.”

The Vampire bluntly refused.

“Didn’t you already refuse my request to repair a few minutes ago?

“If someone like Metson nim with such keen eyes to deem a sculpture is good, shouldn’t it be worth it for me to try and put it back together? New creation is important, but I want to see what kind of sculpture it is that retained Metson nim’s interests.”

The Vampire cleared his throat.

“Hum! But human, it’s just something trivial to the eyes of the one was deemed as an exceptional sculptor.”

“Artworks, sculptures, how can anyone tell whether it is good or bad? All I see in the sculptures are beauty and its noble values, not whether it could fetch a price or not.”

“Yes, I truly feel what you do. Then, can I count on you to repair my sculpture?”

“I really want to work on it.”

You have accepted the quest.

The party and Geomchis left to do the quest.

Weed also intended to work on the lowly compensated quest he received.

‘I’ll roughly work on this and then follow up with the commissioned quest.’

The sculpture the Vampire brought out was badly damaged.

The boy’s neck had broken off, and it seemed as if something had tried to eat the apple as there were plenty of holes dug into it.

The torso and legs had minor incontinences, and broken off in many places due to having been hit by debris.

“I don’t know if I can attach the boy’s neck since the damage was too great. I need to take some additional steps in order to support the weight of it. It’s better to just replace the apple. If you give me three hours then I’ll finish the job.”

His estimation was correct.

Weed, at the beginning of the process, created the dough-like hardening agent.

Component things, such as stones bonding agents use for constructions, are sold in the item shops or sculpture shops.

Even Todeum's shops sold the item, and could even get them in their natural states.

Weed doesn't make mistakes when he creates or fixes sculptures.

The reason why he didn't buy them was because each barrel costs up to 2 Silvers!

The substance was limited to how much weight it could afford to support.

If he was to repair a large-scale sculpture, then he wouldn't have used the thing at all; but for this purpose, he had an idea of what to do.

“First I need to help his head straight.”

Weed nailed where the neck was broken off.

Ttangttangttang!

At first glance, the cruelty of this is unmatched!

But it was essential to the repair, regardless of what it represents.

In fact, while carving Seoyoon, he had unearthly guilt spreading throughout his body as he sculpts her body.

At the sculpture's completion, you would view it as beautiful; but the fact is that its creator would obsessively focuses on specific areas and tries to make it as good as possible.

In order to express the delicate body that is being sculpted, strenuous observation have to be made along with experiencing the delicate body parts.

That said, touching the breasts and buttocks are musts.

Sculptors, or any other type of artists, in their lonesome freed environment, they would listen to their perversion in most cases.

Frankly speaking, for Weed also, in this portion, was not honorable.

When he sculpts Seoyoon's face, her toxic lips would draw him closer.

And when he sculpts her breasts or posterior, his face would

blush for no apparent reason.

Another enjoyable moment when sculpturing!

Weed too, was a dark man.

“There we go.”

Weed then applied the bonding agent and placed the head where he nailed.

Then he nailed the head to attach, to ensure that it wouldn't be able to fall off.

“Next part, the hand.”

He carved another apple similarly to the one the boy was holding.

Due to the hardening agent's quickness, the roundness of the apple wasn't attractively well represented.

Minor damages on the torso and the legs were quickly covered up smoothly; the substance he made lasted till the end.

He had only intended to roughly repair the sculpture; but due to Weed's nature, the moment he touches on something he has to

complete it fully without a single loose end.

The Vampire was overjoyed since the repair was made excellently.

“Human! You human have potential of which we Vampires do not.”

And Weed receives the quest reward of 3 Unicorn feathers.

You have completed the repair of the sculpture and has been subjected to Vampire Metson’s trust.

Now he gains the condition to take up the quest again!

Weed receives the commissioned quest and tries to leave.

But the Vampire that waited for him to finish wasn’t just one.

Suddenly, there were hundreds of Vampires had gathered around.

“At our home, we also have a sculpture that is in need of repair, human. The Compensation being 15 Gold.”

“Could you restore my broken statue? It’ll be difficult but I wish it to be restored...”

“The engraved sculpture on my wall was crushed. Quickly come and fix it!”

The Vampires stampeded in and commissioned quests left and right.

Weed’s face wrinkled with extreme prejudice.

The Vampires had no desire to give any combat quests.

And probably similar to what Metson did, they would deny him of all beside these.

“You have shown my people great power in our times of need. And has good tastes in sculpture. Then to you, I will get Todeum’s sculpture to regain its splendid past by just me.”

The circumstance has already forced him to repair the sculptures and was unalterable.

The numbers of Vampire referrals had exceeded hundreds.

‘If I finished all the repairs then the taste of compensation shouldn’t be so bad.’

With that, Weed launched a physically laborious campaign.

The first day.

Eight sculptures were repaired.

Exterior corners were trimmed carefully, and the overall proportions matched.

The damages were many but since they were just F quests, their degrees weren't so hard.

The second day rose in difficulty.

In most cases, one Vampire would have several commissions, so various materials were needed.

Particularly, severe damages on wooden sculptures were hard for Weed to recover.

Grade E quest.

"I'd rather create new ones instead."

Weed assembled the remains of the sculptures, and similarly, recreated some parts.

Although having Sculpting and Handicraft were useful, having

keen eyes were even more so.

While scouting and fighting the battles in Todeum, he had seen almost all of the decent looking sculptures at least once.

If it were Warriors then they would just regard sculptures as ordinary ornaments, just one glance and it was over with.

But Weed, as a professional Sculptor, meticulously looked at them to remember the details.

‘Should always memorize so in a later time it could be used.’

Memorization for imitation!

The memory served as a great strength when it can to restore the sculptures.

With the third day’s passing, he had finished 29 grade E quests.

The levels of fame and reward were still poor.

“But still, there are even more sculptures that have yet to be repaired.”

Weed’s sunken eyes filled with motivation.

In Todeum, there was an enormous amount of broken sculptures.

The works on the street were just stepping stones.

The quests to raise his levels and to gain items still weren't available to him, but he still has sculpturing quests.

Experiences given from recovering the sculptures were little, but Fame and skill level improved as well.

With positive thoughts in mind, this was an unreal opportunity for a Sculptor.

Repair is finished.

Sculpturing Skill proficiency has been improved.

Fame increased by 2.

Art stat has increased by 1.

Understanding of Sculptures has leveled up.

Weed spent a month or so repairing sculptures in Todeum.

A plentiful of sculptor quests!

For the usual Sculptors, this would have been enough and needed to play around; but this was not Weed.

‘Hurry or it might end. Must go get battle quests.’

The sculpturing quests rewards weren’t too bad because it simply relied on hard work.

So, even on the smallest sculpture, he meticulously repaired it until not a single scratch remained.

He applied new paint at spots where paint chipped off, and newly created duplicate for those with damages too severe and impossible to fix.

The sculptured pieces!

All are based loosely on the Sculptor’s personality or sensitivity.

In addition, the works of art had historical values so the chance to work on them wouldn’t happen again.

Although only modestly challenging and weren’t at all complex, they were something rather handy to Weed.

“I’ve gotten so many different experiences.”

If it was an evil looking monster, then it would be represented by a monster model.

The mentor-less Weed's instilled his own interpretation as it evolved.

Uses of Handicraft to raise the maximum precision of the fundamental likeness of objects!

By crafting duplicate of a work by another Sculptor, the gain was great.

"In this way, I can make sculptures like this too..."

Weed did not understand some of the sculptures as to what they depicted.

Women that resembled the land, sky, and sun were carved.

If the women were the expression of attractiveness, then the other object accentuates the meaning of it.

Exquisite harmonizing beauty!

Whenever he restores these types of sculpture, the Handicraft proficiency rises.

"When I create Classic or Magnum pieces, the increase in proficiency is unparalleled; but this is fairly good."

Weed's Sculpturing and Handicraft skills were in Advanced level 4!

The two skills were at 54% and 42%, respectively.

At the beginning when he started learning how to sculpt, the Handicraft skill improved very rapidly; but having attained the Advanced stage, it hadn't increase at all.

"For even more advanced sculptures, it alone was not even enough for Handicraft?"

Weed could only guess.

With only just Sculpturing, Handicraft skill is very difficult to master.

Nobody has ventured to achieve Handicraft Mastery yet!

Even when creating sculptures, or to take advantage of other production skills, and even in battle; the impact of Handicraft is enormous.

"To master Handicraft for just combat classes is highly unlikely."

One would rather go through the process of upgrading the class to gain much stronger attacks.

After having completed 2nd job advancement, the Knights or Warriors statistically would have an increase in stamina and higher damage output.

Despite the Geomchis low levels, their attacks are very excellent.

Weed too, although not on the weak side, but the speed of his growth through battles isn't something comparable to theirs.

His Handicraft and Sculpturing stats could be obtained through creating sculptures.

With these given points, his combat effectiveness wasn't pale comparing to the Geomchis.

Aside from the Stamina, Physical Resistance, and Strength, the will to fight without a single break was just as high.

“Give Life to Sculpture, Sculpture Blade, Sculpture Destruction Skill, Shape-shifting Sculpture. Even with all these my melee isn't comparable to the Sahyeongs...”

In essence, all of Weed's combat capabilities were Sculpture based.

The ability to understand one's character is important to one's growth.

Weed's growth was optimized according to his characteristics comparing to everybody else.

So it was hard to find an opponent who was akin to him at the same level.

And even the learned life-skill Fishing skill boosted his health and vitality to an extraordinary level for his profession.

He also has manufacturing skills such as Sword Grind, Armor Shine, Ironing; the likes the normal Sculptors would ever see.

“I gotta gain more experiences. The experiences accumulated in the various fields can affect the Handicraft Mastery.”

In addition, the Understanding of Sculptures skill rose very rapidly.

Having repaired more than 300 sculptures, the skill suddenly reached Intermediate level 7.

At the rate that it was going, just a bit more and it may reach Advanced level.

If that was possible then he could morph into the fairytale like monster.

“Giant Weed. Not bad!”

Weed with a satisfied smile moved his hands busily repairing the sculptures.

And if the Shape-shifting Sculpture growth was also just as fast, then it could compensate for the lowly stat Sculptor class.

“Puchihihihihit!”

Weed broke down in a vulgar laugh. One that was similar to days when he was the Orc Karichwi.

While the Vampires who were carefully watching the scene.

“Crazy.”

“He’s not normal.”

“I should keep in mind to never drink that human’s blood.”

*

The time on Versailles continent has reached two and a half months.

Geomchis and the party were surprised whenever they returned to Todeum.

Sculptures that were destroyed changed into those in perfect form.

When viewing Weed's efforts, there was no way to describe their admiration.

Even the pious minded Pale said.

“He's not human. How can you honestly work like that? I thought it was impossible to finish repairing that many sculptures...”

Hwaryeong eyes twinkled.

“I think a man who doesn't give up and devoted is so great.”

Weed's endless source of willpower was already formed even since he was 10.

At the valuable critical period of one's lifetime!

He learned life from suffering under the hands of the loan sharks.

Money!

Miasma! (A noxious atmosphere or influence)

Persistence!

To describe Weed without mentioning these three things would make him obsolete.

So nearing the end of two and a half months, all the sculptures in Todeum that required repairs were finished.

The achievement was incredible.

The hard repair sculpture quest of Grade B!

As of now, the level of his Sculpturing skill was in the late Advanced level 4, and his Handicraft was the same.

Understanding of Sculptures hit the Intermediate level 9, and readily able to reach the Advanced stage any moment now.

Since crossing the mid threshold of Advanced level 4 of his Sculpturing Skill, he heard mysterious sounds coming into his ears.

-Please sculpt me.

-I want to see the world.

-If it's you then you should be able.

-Be strong, c'mon!

Whenever he repairs the sculptures, he would hear these voices.

Not just one of them, he heard several mysterious voices.

“Is this the Vampire's joke?”

Whenever the voices appeared, Weed would jump upright and turn around, but there was no one.

The Vampire's Stealth skill, the ability for them to conceal and roam around, especially at night, was incredible.

Weed did not throw that suspicion out even if the visibility of the plaza was as clear as day.

-Me...please sculpt me.

The mysterious voices seemed to be coming from his immediate vicinity.

-Please, do me. Please carve my appearance.

He kept his eyes open and looked around, but there was no

visible Vampire.

They have a general tendency to sleep during the day, so there was no reason for any of them to be around.

The vivid whispers seemed to be coming from right beside him.

Occasionally, the voices also sounded ominous.

-C'mon, sculpt me! I'll kill you. I'll kill you all!

-Do you want to have power? If so then carve me. Keukeukeukeuk. As a piece, I'll bring hell to the world.

-You're angry. Be angry. I'll do everything to take revenge on those that harassed you.

The dried and wretched men's voice could be heard.

Having heard dozens of voices in his ears, Weed was annoyed.

“You want me to sculpt what?”

He did not know the identities of the voices to his ear.

They on their own went on and on without a single story asking to be carved just like a herd of children.

As if Weed knew what to sculpt to satisfy their wishes.

“I really don’t know.”

While not having a single clue of what to do, Weed sculpted.

He carved out human beings, men and women.

Having repaired a lot of sculptures, he could produce Masterpieces from his keen perspectives.

However, the unidentified voices revealed their disappointments.

-That’s not it.

-These aspects are not me.

-I thought you were a competent Sculptor.

For a while, there was no sound to his ears again.

Then, midst of repairing the sculptures, they came and whispers.

They want to be carved!

While being afflicted with these, Weed finished repairing all the sculptures.

As reward for the quests, he gathered from swords for Knights, gloves, armors, and a huge amount of loot.

Where one would drop them and nod off, he survives by adapting!

So then, Pale party and the Geomchis were standing before all the works by just one Sculptor.

They were completely overwhelmed.

‘The Emperor of physical labor.’

‘The fallen God of hard work.’

As if she understood something, Maylon nodded.

“The Weed of CoM. No reason why this shouldn’t be the case.”

If the goal is too much; instead of giving up, move your body and solve a bit at a time.

Such continual effort will build up and eventually, the quest will

be squared away.

Weed told the party.

“Done. Now I can go along to do them.”

The Geomchis looked away and tried to whistle.

Pale and the party members looked sideways at each other.

‘Pale nim, go ahead.’

‘I’d rather Hwaryeong nim do it.’

‘I don’t want to say that to Weed nim and be hated.’

‘But still, we need to give him an explanation...’

Finally, Pale went.

“Will you go hunting?”

“Yes. I finished preparing. I obtained many ingredients while doing the sculpture repair quests in Todeum. I’m ready to cook. I gained a lot of grinding wheels too. We’ll be ready anywhere.”

While staying in Todeum, Weed had firmly prepared to go to battle.

But Pale broke his expectation and confessed as there was no round-about way to do it.

“Sorry, Weed nim. Actually, we broke all the decent quests.”

“.....”

Weed’s face contorted.

The face was the worst Pale had ever seen!

Nevertheless, he couldn’t help but to explain.

“We did all the Grade C and D. The follow up hunting quests were easily achieved.”

“What about Grade B quest?”

“We were quite successful with them too...”

“.....”

“Though actually, there were a few that we couldn’t do.”

“Is that so?”

Weed’s face dramatically lit up. But again, Fail’s voice resonated with depression.

“We were blocked from accepting them. They didn’t become quests because it was essentially from the other side. And several others, the risks were too high. We have had too many of Geomchimis died, so we gave up cause we couldn’t move any further.”

During the time when Weed wasn’t around, they were hooked on quests.

In exchange for accepting the worrisome Vampires’ commissions, the paid reward and high level quests made them gleeful.

So instead of raising their levels solely through battles, they tend to do quests together as they were twice as efficient.

While receiving quest experiences, Fame, and compensations, their activities were wide spread among the Todeum’s Vampires, and the range of their activities increased.

The quests set the foundation for them with the Vampires! Then there were quests to negotiate with small ethnic groups also!

In between the Vampires' slumber to awaken period, they had to find new grounds for the groups while avoiding the Vampires to escape their oppression.

Find a safe area for them.

Mapan's quest was to procure supplies for these ethnic groups.

So within two months, they established a new order at Todeum.

Within the Vampire dominated land!

These minorities cultivate their lives in peace dwelling in caves or forests.

Quests to hunt dangerous monsters, necessities, or lost children were given.

Having already almost exhausted all the quests in Todeum.

And as the situation continually changes, new original quests were given.

The best advantage of Royal Road.

Even now, when there was no quest readily available; until the new order needed to be fully established, no big event will happen

right away.

Grade F or E, or quests that were for beginners, they didn't accept them if they were outside the requirement of their commissions.

The Vampire Kingdom Todeum was as vast as the Versailles continent, and the number of quests they could accept was limited, so they had to cut some out.

Weed said quietly.

"I only got quests to fix while you guys got good commission quests."

"Yea, well...I guess. But Weed nim also got a lot of quests."

Weed also acquired a lot of Fame; he regained about 2/3 of the Fame lost while hunting the Unicorns and Pegasus, and also got to develop his Sculpturing Skill further.

Advanced level's proficiency was indeed hard to increase. And the requirement to do so wasn't just a few.

Still, Weed's stomach aches.

"How come ever since I came to Todeum, I've not received a single good commission..."

With the remark of regret made, Pale couldn't come up with an excuse and was speechless.

In good conscience, it was Weed that attracted them to go come to Todeum or else they wouldn't have.

In the middle of all sorts of jobs; from castle to castle, he still fought and with him, the Grade A difficulty quest was a success.

Weed's impact during the ordeal was absolute!

Although he was disappointed that the party went and abandoned him for two and a half months, it was unavoidable.

Keeping that in mind, Pale felt it the most since he obtained the most points during the course of the quests.

But if they didn't do the quests, they along with the Geomchis wouldn't have had anything to do.

Not knowing when the repairs might be finished, they couldn't just idle around indefinitely waiting on him to finish.

So they rushed through the quests without minding him at all.

Weed started looking around toward the Geomchis and asked.

“But Sahyeongs.”

“Hmm?”

“The number of Sahyeongs seems to have reduced a lot.”

“Well, some died midst of the fighting yo.”

After having finished fighting the Unicorns and Pegasus, the number of Geomchis remained was 174!

During the course of doing the quests, the number steadily declined and now, there were only 102 people remaining.

Along with these Geomchis, they could do something together.

While their level was also highest amongst themselves, Geomchi2 and the other teachers also survived.

Weed decided.

‘With this now, we can’t afford to take on anymore quests.’

The Todeum that was dominated by the Vampires, was a modest Kingdom.

Nevertheless, more quests still remained.

With Weed's Fame and his ability to raise Familiarity, with just a twist of the dried-up quest towel, he could wring out a few acceptable quests.

Grade B still remained, and even A could also be hiding somewhere.

However, too much of the Geomchis died.

With no Bandages left, even with Sword Grind and Armor Shine, it was impossible.

He could not see the benefit of Cooking either, even if the remaining people had the best development.

This was a terrible sacrifice.

'We have to stop here. If anymore of the Sahyeongs died, then we'll be too weak. And we won't able to climb the most important place.'

With that decision, Weed looked up to the highest tower in Todeum he had to repair.

"There is one final thing we can do."

The ancient building, the Tower of Heroes!

As the unnamed Vampire has said, the Intermediate Training Tower was located somewhere.

Weed's body burned.

In the City of Heaven Lavi after having separated from Dain, he went through the Beginner Training Center.

Where he learned how to Yell and increased his strength by 50 or so.

'About 3800 people passed the Basic Training Center. And 400 among them passed the Beginner Training Center. And after that, I bet many more went through the training centers.'

Even the large number of Geomchis made it past the Beginner Training Center, and they accepted the Martial Artist profession.

On the Versailles continent, information among users isn't something secretive.

Because of them, Lavi has already been open to the public so quite a few numbers should have passed the Beginner Training Center.

'I'm not interested in how many people have passed the BeTC.

The Intermediate Training Center is important. I can catch up to those who are ahead of me with this.'

The condition poses by Todeum made the Intermediate Training Center here very difficult.

Whatever test is waiting in there, a death spells expulsion from here. Meaning only one opportunity to pass through the test!

In Continent of Magic, Weed was the God of War. Every battle he led he won, he became the absolute existence.

That Weed's blood boiled as if it had resurfaced.

Weed spoke.

"Before climbing the Tower of Heroes, there is work needed to be done."

His voice was filled with strong conviction of resolution.

"First, I have to dismantle the loot's tower."

"....."

The piled high mountain of spoils that created a large sculpture!

Even if the japtem was only worth just 1 Copper, Weed would not ever let it go.

Chapter 10: Tower Of Heroes

The Weed leading the Geomchis with ambitions to climb the Tower of Heroes.

“As humans, humm. How dare you tread here without permission.”

The Heraim people who were barely covered by the primitive leather clothing spat coldly.

“Humans, this is not a place for those who have not learned the ancient martial art. If you turn back now, then you can preserve the life that you have.”

The Heraims resembled beast type humans.

While their whole body filled with coarse hair and porous; their hands, feet, and head were large.

Their muscular bodies were on the verge of exploding; seemed as though the race had been optimized for battle.

Weed hurriedly stepped forward before the Geomchis starting some sort of incident.

“The reason we came here is to put ourselves to the test.”

They immediately reacted.

“What is the test called?”

“It’s a topic among the weak human; is it possible for to go through if we passed the Beginner Training Center?”

The presented Heraims on the first floor murmured.

Weed said quickly.

“So yeah. By passing the Beginner Training Center, we came to the Tower of Heroes. In order for us to test our strength.”

And then, an older Heraim approached.

“Outside have a lot of bats of darkness; didn’t expect you to defeat them to make it here.”

“.....”

Weed did not speak of the fact they conspired with the Vampire by doing commissions and gaining money in return.

In a brief moment, he had already identified the characteristics of the Heraims.

‘So that’s how it is with all the training center instructors huh. Venerate strength and likes to sweat.’

Fortunately, the older Heraim did not ask about the Vampires.

“I understand the willingness of you humans. The weak human could not have possibly passed through the Beginner Training Center. But this is different. If you want to test it then be ready with your life.”

“We understand that that is the price to pay in order to attain strength. We are prepared in order to save the persecuted human beings, and in order to build a just world by our definition.”

The illustrious Weed filled with chivalry of the knights kicked it.

The aged Heraim nodded.

“If your determination is at that level then it’s adequate enough. On the first floor, you will need to learn how to be patient. On the second floor, if you do not walk the road you must tread, then you will not survive in the third. If you can reach the third floor, you will succeed in challenging of the Tower of Heroes.”

Weed was not satisfied with just that. If he survives till the third floor, there wouldn’t be any desire to go back down.

“What about the fourth floor also?”

“On the fourth floor you will need to overcome your limitation. On the fifth, you will be able to see a legend. We’ll see how far you can climb against vicious hordes of Monsters.”

Weed no longer cared for the Heraims.

The behavior was just to gain enough information and that was that.

*

Pale, Hwaryeong, Zephyr, etc, were not qualified to climb the Tower of Heroes.

But the tower was something they’ve only heard, so they did not want to miss the opportunity to watch the climb.

Thus, they decided to assemble at KMC Media broadcasting station.

In the station, they could watch the live feed via Weed.

Shin Hyemin picked them up and explained as she led them to the cinema room.

“The Tower of Heroes. 12 were built on the Versailles continent by the Heraims. But only available to those that passed the earlier ones.”

Kim In Young, who uses the nickname Irene, eyes were filled with curiosity.

“How do you know?”

“Actually, the Tower of Heroes was just a secret rumor.”

The information regarding the Tower of Heroes belongs in the top class of info.

Even if the person knows the location of it, he would keep it to himself rather than tell others.

Monopoly of information!

The station was also barely able to pick up this data.

“The story spreading regarding it is that there’s some kind of tower that if you pass, you’d be considered as a true warrior. I too, until I heard the name Tower of Heroes, was also convinced that it was such.”

Without knowing, they arrived to the cinema room.

In there, the events happening in the Tower of Heroes was already underway in full swing.

*

Dark dungeon.

Weed and the Geomchis were fighting against an enormous amount of Stone Golems in the passageway.

Bearing their swords, sparks were flying off but there were no cut.

Also, they couldn't go back.

The entrance happened to be blocked.

“So this is the endurance stage huh.”

Weed was clearly worn out.

They had to get through the Golems and search throughout the complex maze.

More heavily weighted Golems were also dropping from the ceiling.

Hidden pitfalls and hidden arrows were also presented.

Weed and the Geomchis moved forward slowly while defeating numerous Golems.

The Golems did not give them time to rest.

As if to replace the fallen, from all directions in the passageways, a lot more were attracted.

The battle in the labyrinth went on for seven hours!

The weariness in the body increased, so did the fun.

‘EXP is rising, and the item from the golems looks good.’

No matter how dangerous. If it’s the chance to make money, he’ll get stronger.

That was Weed’s soul.

“Ajajajajaja!”

Bursting shout of joy!

“Let’s go!”

“Let’s kill them all!”

The Geomchis too, desperation filled and fought.

They did not fear death. However, a death here meant an embarrassing failure. So they tried their best not to die.

Pushing through the enemies while taking care of each other, they found the staircase to the second floor.

The fight with the Golem was 14 hours since its conception.

*

The cinema room.

Rumor spread of Weed challenging the Tower of Heroes, and suddenly the station employees gathered.

The program ‘Weed’ rating was significantly low.

They were trying to give the audience an accurate depiction of Seirun so it was inevitable.

Earlier on, the Weed’s presence wasn’t great.

From food, sword grinding, ironing, and up to bandaging, he was the person who did all sorts of chores.

Even when they did not edit the battles, all could really be seen from him was the ability to conduct the attack and sweep of surrounding areas.

Although that alone was awesome, each time they saw the Jeonshin Weed and built up on the traumatic experiences, and his charismatic self falls short each time.

Not only that, the Geomchis were somewhat of insectivores.

‘But it may be different if we watch it this time.’

The staffs hyped themselves.

They also came to the cinema room and watched for about an hour or so, and were bored.

‘Just fighting golems.’

‘Tired, tired.’

Even after three hours they were still fighting while searching.

The Royal Road footage was played at the rate of 4x the norm.

Endless fighting, monsters wearing away.

From the viewers' perspective, everything they saw up to the strike of the swords, there was no hint of giving up.

At the end of the bloody battle, the staircase to the second floor was found.

Then, they felt a lump in their chest.

If it's time for dungeon quests, then most will take the more rational approach.

First, they will gather up each type of the needed occupation, and readied the equipments.

After entering the dungeon, reconnaissance and dismantle traps.

Wizards attacks and archers suppresses!

Also conversely, traps are installed to fight effectively.

There are still a lot of risks; even with the Clerics' heals.

But this was the most commonly used method most large guilds practiced.

‘It has been a long time since I’ve seen bodies collided like that to solve a quest.’

‘A lack of the combination of cooperation and faith means no way to persevere through this...’

‘Seeing this these days is rare.’

*

Weed and the Geomchis arrived at the second floor and a parchment could be seen.

Gold skill book!

The Tower of Heroes had prepared the compensation.

Weed read the skill book.

Stone Skin: makes skin hard as rock. The User can protect himself from Fire and Ice, even sharp weapons.

The Defense increase is based on Perseverance, Physical Resistance, and skill level. 100 Mana consume to activate the skill.

15 Mana per second consume to maintain the skill.

Due to the heavy weight gain, Agility will decrease by 25%, Damage will increase by 15%.

Limitation:

Contestant of Basic Training Center.

Available to all.

Must have Mana to use.

A skill to directly protect the body.

In the case of Warriors, they can increase Defense by temporarily increases Morale. This was a bit different.

It is at a disadvantage since it consumes more Mana. And in place of outstanding increase in Damage, Agility declines.

Weed found how he could take advantage of this skill.

‘If I’m surrounded by enemies and cuts come in from all directions, this would useful.’

The other skill is only for the Warriors, those that don’t meet the condition demanded can’t use it.

Then it’s the same as Eyes Tightly Shut!

Stone Skin may seem a bit weak against air-based attacks or charging attacks, but the great gain in defensive capability is useful.

Defensive skills against aggressive attacks weren't so rare though.

“Skill Acquisition!”

Have learned Stone Skin.

By means of acquiring new Ancient Skill, Intelligence increased by 7.

Wisdom increased by 6.

Having learned the skill, they moved slowly forward to the next challenge.

As oppose to the first floor, it wasn't dark at all.

It was too bright to the eyes.

On the ground the glowing fire burned, and the flames covered up any sight of the staircase.

Even with the Wizards ability to fly, due the low ceiling above,

there was no way to avoid the flames.

“So this is what he meant by walking the path you must tread, huh. Stone Skin!”

Weed activated the skill he just learned, and walked into the fire.

This was the quickest way and there was no going back.

If the quest required this method, rather than coming up with tips and tricks, he took a chance and made a bet by stepping in.

Under special circumstances.

The rate of acquiring Stone Skin's proficiency will increase 20% of the norm.

Each step he took, the proficiency increased by 1%.

Even though the level was still at Beginner, the speed was great. However, the pain had not subsided.

The hardest thing imagined.

The whole entire body was covered in flames. Hands and feet seemed to have dried up as bone as they evaporated.

Before his harassed by flames sight lies the gateway of the second

floor.

“Let’s go. The third floor will be waiting with something more interesting.”

A rather confident Weed walked excitedly.

The Geomchis also followed.

The pain in their body transcended.

Something for the likes of the sick minded.

“33 year old bachelor.”

“If I think about girlfriends then my limbs shrivel like this.”

“Can’t be weakened just because of some stupid stage.”

Their pace had fallen along with their speed and vitality, while fatigue jumped with every step they took.

But thanks to Stone Skin, they were able to withstand it of that level.

Stone Skin skill level increased by 1. Due to the rock-like hardened skin, a chance of bouncing off enemies’ weapons

improves.

Base armor increases by 1%.

Stone Skin skill level increased by 1.

Due to the rock-like hardened skin, a chance of bouncing off enemies' weapons improves.

Base armor increases by 2%.

The growth the Stone Skin was a pleasurable feeling.

“Keuheuheuheuheu.”

Weed enjoyed the bodily aches.

Even if it was physical hardship, the growth of a skill was the best of feelings.

For others, they may not want to walk the length because of the pain; but for the sake of the skill, there is no reason to not persist.

Then they discovered the stairs to the third floor.

Weed and the Geomchis sufficiently rested before climbing up the stairs.

Again, they were filled with Health and Mana. And again, they returned to the flames.

“Grow skill, grow!”

With the Stone Skin mastery in mind, the jumped into the flames!

Only Weed would ever come up with that logic.

Stone Skin have reached the Intermediate level. Increases base Defense by 4%.

Magic Resistance increases by 7%, the Mana to maintain the skill reduces by half.

At this point, they could say the inferno was a bit generous.

Along with the Mana cost depletion, the tension left somewhere as well.

Geomchi's forehead sweated like during a workout.

“Oh cool.”

Geomchi's body also felt refreshed.

“Master, isn't it a pleasure to feel the sweat falling?”

The Geomchis sat and relaxed as if this was a sauna!

They stayed on the second floor for a day or so.

Enjoying the pain of the flames, all for the mastery of the skill!

After the means, they mastered the skill and climbed toward the third floor.

*

In the cinema room, the station's staffs couldn't close their mouth while watching the sight.

“Are these people humans?”

“Maybe it's not that hot?”

They simply had to be dubious.

However, the inferno there was no illusion.

Whether it was Weed or the Geomchis, all had to shed the clothes they were wearing!

They suffered an unexplainably high fever that was impossible to explain.

Weed had to continually repair the broken armors, and later was forced to enjoy the blazing inferno with just pants on.

The swimming in the fire Geomchi10.

The baking potatoes in both hands while eating another Geomchi17.

The roasted juipo eating Geomchi38. (dried fish jerky.)

Even Oh Dongman who was familiar to Weed and the Geomchis placed his hand on his heart.

‘I’m human. I appreciate the fact that I’m just a normal human!’

Now was a time where he could not be proud of the fact he knew Weed and the Geomchis.

Those eternally absurd human beings once again amaze.

Park Heeyeon was also frustrated.

“I’m seriously going down the path of a professional Flame Magician, but I can never be a carefree as that in that situation...”

She attended the conference on the Flame Magic series.

The pain of the magical flame is something substantial.

Although it burns like the real, of course, it is not.

But in order to counteract the burning one will feel, the parts need to be covered in very hot spring water or something comparable, which were fiercely expensive.

But here, Weed and the Geomchis seemed a bit too impervious.

They stay in the flames for long and still seems like the flames were softening.

With the lowering resistance, the pain will get even more severe.

Perhaps, the pain they are feeling at the moment may have been close to the maximum.

Nevertheless, they still enjoyed it.

“Perverts, those Ahjussi!”

When they reached the floor, they obtained more stats.

Ttiring!

Passing the Intermediate Training Center has been logged.

Physical Resistance increases by 60.

Perseverance increases by 60.

Endurance increases by 60.

Physical Resistance, Perseverance, and Endurance all increased by 60!

With the Stone Skin mastered, Defense had almost doubled.

At their current self, it was as if they've acquired the effect of a high end defensive item.

Other Tower of Heroes would have also provided users with the Stone Skin skill.

But no one would ever reach the height of the skill of which Weed and the Geomchis achieved.

It was an exceptional opportunity for the weaker than most defensive-wise Geomchis!

However, the degree of difficulty on the third floor was much greater.

Thieves and Assassins made traps while waiting for a more opportune time to attack.

Poisoned daggers and crossbow arrows flew.

“Thunderous Lightning!”

“Fire Blast!”

“Aqua Arrow!”

They were subjected to a widespread of magical attacks.

The third stage was the stage of survival!

The Assassins and Thieves made their way in between the Geomchis, with magic attacks followed.

If they were distracted by the Assassins or the Thieves, then they would have received a direct hit from the magic attack.

And if they had tried to avoid magical attacks by dodging, their body would suffer thrusting blows from the hidden Assassins.

“Keeuu.”

“Oh shit. This sucks...”

Geomchi54 and Geomchi77 died.

They will not be able to exceed the third floor of the Intermediate Training Center.

Now, they will re-spawn back on the Versailles continent at their saved location.

Weed used Yell

“Do. Not. Divide!”

The yell overwhelmed all disturbances.

Geomchi2 asked urgently.

“Weed, is there a way?”

Geomchis and the other instructors were safe.

They were those who can take care of themselves even in the midst of chaos.

But due to the sudden change in circumstances, they have not figured out a solution.

“I also have no way.”

“That so?”

“The Wizards should attack the center of where we gathered because it’ll be a concentrated zone. But for some reason, they want us to disperse; which means their line based attacks are more damaging. We gotta fight united.”

“Wouldn’t they do what you said though, attack the center?”

“Still, we have stick together. Even if we scatter, it has to be in groups of 3.”

Weed instinctively found a respond.

Geomchi2 relied on his judgment.

Any lack of rational conviction, and they’ll suffer from the thrusts of the enemies.

Geomchi2 had always been the best disciple at the Dojang, and decisions were often forced on him.

He had always been watching over the other instructors and practitioners as they gain experiences.

However, at this time, there was no need for Geomchi2 to make a decision.

‘For me I have a trustworthy apprentice. If it’s his judgment, then I’ll follow it.’

The Geomchis gathered.

Magic attacks concentrated before them, and the dagger wielding Assassins and Thieves rushed forward.

Weed exclaimed.

“Stone Skin!”

He utilized the skill he had just learned.

“Stone Skin!”

“Stone Skin!”

The Geomchis hurriedly used the skill.

Their skins were as hard as rocks. Magic enveloped above them.

Kwaahahahang!

Dozen of colorful magic attacks exploded above Weed and the Geomchis.

Thanks to the power of Stone Skin, the loss of life was not large.

Most likely due to the benefits of attaining mastery of the skill.

‘It’s holding up against the power of magic.’

The Geomchis were vaguely afraid of magic attacks.

They were not accustomed to magic as they did not use it.

If they saw an oncoming flying spell, they would avoid it.

But not just the Geomchis, anybody else will choose the same course of action.

The destructivity of magic doesn’t just stop at the initial hit.

Some fire or ice skills, they have two three phases in one attack.

Completely damages all except for the caster himself; while many other magical attacks covers a large area of complex damages.

That's why magicians are widely recognized as best offensive class!

While also difficult to completely avoid, the huge area affected means far less work for them.

However, due to the effect of Stone Skin, they were at least able to survive through the non-direct magic attacks.

The earth-based magical attacks with two, three phases were deflected by the stone skins.

The Geomchis overcame the magical storm as rooted trees.

“Survived.”

“I'm not dead!”

Meanwhile, the Assassins and Thieves were in shock.

Having received the damage, but the Geomchis' situation wasn't chaotic.

Chaaeng!

Geomchis skillfully brandished their blades that their respective

Assassins and Thieves.

Deadly attacks!

The Assassins and Thieves had not prepared their guard in the first place, so they were taking a beating.

“Strike!”

“Killing away!”

Even before, they weren't afraid of the Assassins and Thieves who overwhelmed them by the numbers.

Holding their swords rushing their enemies, the Geomchis solidified their footings while keeping their opponent at bay.

Magic attacks occasionally made their ways in, and some Assassins and Thieves relied on suicidal rushes.

On the third floor, it was literally a fight for survival.

Just a single moment of loss of concentration spelt a wider gap of vulnerability.

The Assassins' stealth skill was very impressive; they were only able to be seen within a few meters.

But still, they were just like moths to a flame, deathly counterattacks soon followed.

While holding their positions, Weed and the Geomchis took care of all the Assassins and Thieves.

Then to each their own, they took on the remaining cast of Wizards.

Along with their deathly attacks, only 37 Geomchis were left after the damage of their magical attacks.

Weed and the Geomchis headed toward the fourth floor.

Have learned Heraim Sword Skill.

By means of acquiring new Ancient Sword Skill, Strength increased by 15.

Agility increased by 20.

Heraim Sword Skill:

The developed sword skill of the Combat Race Heraim.

A very difficult skill to operate; evidently resulted in its extinction.

While moving forward without stopping, can deliver five consecutive strikes.

Depending on the skill level, the maximum possible of consecutive attacks and effect will increase.

Whenever success at continuous attacks, Strength and Agility will temporarily increase.

If the sword stopped moving, or is blocked, the skill will cease automatically.

200 Mana will be consumed when using the skill.

Restriction:

For those that learned swordsmanship.

Available to all.

Must have Mana to use.

The compensation for having made it to the forth floor was an ancient sword skill.

Whether it was limited sword skill, unique sword skill, or the extent of its power, all were unknown.

As soon as they learned the skill, the enemies flocked.

The feeling of hopelessness came from some unknown place seeped into Weed to a decent extent.

“The humans who woke us up.”

“The living humans...kill.”

“So I can...rest.”

The cursed Ghost Knights.

The knights were equipped with old swords and armors.

For having betrayed their commitment and having fallen into corruption during their lifetime, they had to pay by constantly living in suffering.

The number of knights and soldiers' ghosts had gathered beyond the hundreds.

Even now, more and more of them were spawning from the ground.

Weed drew his sword.

“Let's break through them.”

He intended to rush in the second he saw the dozens of the awakening ghosts of knights and soldiers!

Weed and the Geomchis all headed toward the same direction.

“Skill cast. Heraim Sword Skill!”

Above head, and toward the stomach, the hits landed.

When the continuous attacks were successful, the sword flew much faster.

First order of continuous attacks was successful.

Agility increases by 20%.

Second order of continuous attacks was successful.

Strength increases by 40%.

Third order of continuous attacks was successful.

Agility increases by an additional 40%.

Fourth order of continuous attacks was successful.

Strength increases by an additional 40%.

Fifth order of continuous attacks was successful.

Sent the enemy into Confusion.

Degrade the enemy's Fighting Spirit.

The initial combo gave the second faster sword speed.

By the time of the third, the Ghost Knight dropped to his knees because of its awesome power!

The sword did not stop.

It returned in a smooth circle and connected at the exact point where Ghost Knight's armor was most vulnerable.

And the transverse swung of the buffed up fifth blew away all the attacks of the enemy.

The Ghost Knight lays, crushed.

Heraim Sword Skill proficiency increased by 0.2%.

For the series of attacks to be successful up to the fifth order: sense of balance, visual acuity of the body, and proficiency in

swordsmanship were all needed.

While not stopping the movement of the blade, one must respond immediately to the actions of the enemy.

Weed and the Geomchis having already mastered swordsmanship, thus quickly picked up the Heraim Sword Skill.

Fighting against the oncoming enemies, the Heraim Sword Skill demonstrated its ability by blowing them all away.

But rather, having already suppressed at least 80 of them, the number of enemies increased by twice of that.

“Damn.”

“This will not be easy.”

From Geomchi up till the instructors, their faces seemed solemn.

Even if you're gifted in the art of the sword, it is limited within Royal Road.

With more and more enemies to fight, Health, Stamina, and Mana all decreases with each one.

Overtime, the end of their time was drawing near.

“Break them!”

“C’mon!”

Only the sound of Weed and the Geomchis reverberated.

“Heraim Sword Skill!”

First order of continuous attacks was successful.

Agility increases by 20%.

Second order of continuous attacks was successful.

Strength increases by 40%.

Third order of continuous attacks was successful.

Agility increases by an additional 40%.

Fourth order of continuous attacks was successful.

Strength increases by an additional 40%.

Fifth order of continuous attacks was successful.

The enemy has Fainted.

Has lost the ability to attack.

Whenever they used the skill, the Ghost Knights and Ghost Soldiers were crushed.

Their surrounding was unbearable; even with just moving a step, they were confronted by the lapping waves of enemies.

The Geomchis' eyes turned cold.

Received a fatal blow!

The successive attacks were only able to be so when targeting the sensitive areas.

The Geomchis earnestly battled.

But with just that, it wasn't going to turn the favor back to them in this war like situation.

For the first time, they could only advance toward one direction.

While more enemies spawned, they were forced to be wary of

their rear.

Eventually, they were encircled, which further delayed their progress even more.

More than a third of those that arrived on the fourth floor died.

“Keook!”

“To die here...is really...inconvenient.”

They fought without regret.

Not a mistake on their part, the fault was on the lack of Stamina and Strength.

Some Geomchis died, fallen and turned into nothingness.

All those fought at one point or another almost collapsed from exhaustion.

All the Geomchis were killed.

In minutes, it was just Weed by himself.

“Sculpturing Blade!”

His most basic of sword skill.

A sword skill that while uses less Mana, able to fight off multiple opponents.

While wounded, he ferociously fought against the lance and sword wielding Ghost Knights and Solders.

Attack, attack, attack!

The ghost knights lost their lives, the soldiers fallen.

But Weed, by himself, could no longer move forward.

With each and every of the enemies' attacks, his wounds deepened.

‘Damn.’

If he had not surpassed the Warrior's Perseverance and Physical Resistance, he would have died in this situation already.

He could not use the Eyes Tightly Shut skill either.

While have already been surrounded by enemies, he also could not fully control his body as of now.

Weed alone, bravely fought against the horde of enemies for more than 10 minutes.

Less than 5% Stamina, Mana already depleted, and HP dipped below 23%; it was a situation where he could not win.

With the diminishing Strength, his arm felt heavy with the sword in his hand.

His body no longer moves fluid-like as before.

“I’ll take one more fool!”

He abandoned blocking the hits of his enemies.

Each and every attack using sword required a certain amount of Strength and Stamina.

He chose to decrease the distance between him and an enemy.

Weed having completely abandoned defending himself, the number of wounds rapidly shot up.

And in return, he was able to thrust his sword through the helmet of one of the knights.

“Up to here?”

Weed then gave up preventing their attacks landing.

However, he did not give up on picking up the items.

Having battled in one spot for a long time, it was a plate like area filled with items and loots!

There were so many items dropped by the Ghost Knight that were just scraps.

But if they were to go through the smelting process, all were able to be recycled.

In some cases, he obtained jewelries and fallen Gold.

If he left the Ghost Knights and the Ghost Soldiers alone, he could pick them up.

Hwiriririk!

Weed rolled on the ground.

Focusing everything into his hands, he quickly reached for the surrounding items.

Aimed for the more expensive items first, then onto the lowly japtems.

Then by the sword of a Ghost Knight, he died.

You have died.

The Weed who died fighting till the end.

The ghosts, once again, returned to their original position.

“Kkirikkirik. All challengers have died.”

“Too bad they could not remove our curse.”

“Now I will return to my slumber once more.”

They burst into laughter and ridiculed their human challengers.

They believed everything has already been terminated!

At the spot where Weed died, the body had been replaced by a set of bones.

An unsightly sword wielding white skeleton!

A power received from the Necromancer; due to the power to deny death, a Skeleton Knight will be resurrected.

*

The Manager of Operation was brought in.

Because of the known fact that Weed and the Geomchis were challenging the Tower of Heroes.

Director Khang and the entire production staff were watching the attempt together.

“Such splendid and precise movements.”

“Have anyone ever seen such accurate movements like that from a user?”

“Whew, receiving hits from the Assassins and Thieves and still not even panicking.”

“How many people can fight covering for each other like that?”

The fight was full of admiration.

In order to master the Stone Skin Skill, they also had to bathe in flames.

But that as well could not drown their fighting spirit.

Watching Weed and the Geomchis' fight scene, it was as if their souls were drawn into the screen. Nothing short of admiration.

“And what floor is this now?”

“The 4th.”

Within the station, from one acquaintance to the next, the news of being able to watch the first ever seen attempt of the Tower of Heroes spread among them.

The first or second floor wasn't anything comparing to the excitement of the fourth floor.

Weed and the Geomchis arrived to the fourth floor and still showed tremendous fighting spirits.

The thrill was something difficult for any other movie to match to as they lead into the battles.

It was as if their roles were natural born warriors fending off enemies.

Too exhilarating.

Their hands shook unknowingly as if they wanted to enter the scene.

It was something simply breathtaking and exciting.

A perfect stage to fight until the end where each and absolutely all enemies must be eliminated without retreating.

The Geomchis were wiped out.

Even though Weed had put up an excellent resistance, he also lost his life.

“Ah!”

The group sighed.

Oh Dongman, Shin Hyemin, Kim In Young, as well as all those who knew Weed and the Geomchis, and of course the station's staffs, all lamented.

It was the emphatically feeling of wanting Weed and the group to pass the Tower of Heroes.

“That was it, just like that?”

“It was just a hunch from the beginning anyway. But what they did was great. If it were us, we wouldn’t even dare to do it.”

They then collapsed from exhaustion.

It felt as if they’ve stayed up for two, three nights; all were not able to do anything.

And then, the transmission transferred to the screen stunned them all as they watched.

From where Weed died, a skeleton rose in his place.

For some reason, the skeleton felt familiar.

The skeleton that appeared at the right moment during the Fellowship led by the Cold Rose Guild to fight the dragon Kurenberg!

Using magic of the Necromancer, he produced thousands of Undead.

Amazing close range dogfight against the dragon while mounted on a wyvern.

Even yelled and called forth the ice dragon.

The impact achieved at that time was something unrivalled.

Though it looked a different from the first skeleton, the skeleton had appeared once again.

The station employees cried in excitement.

“He came!”

“The Jeonshin Weed!”

Book 13: Dwarf Kingdom

Chapter 1: Skeleton Knight

Ttadadadak.

Weed knocked on his jaw and looked at his body.

The appearance of a perfect bone set devoid of any flesh!

This was all due to the Power to Deny Death that he was able to resurrect as an undead.

The body looked weird with nothing but bones, but comparing to the last time, this set seemed to be thicker and more nutritiously filled with power.

Ding!

Have returned from darkness of the abyss. The skill level of the Power to Deny Death has increased by one. Reached Beginner level 2.

Health will gain an extra 3%, 1% derived from the Power of Darkness.

Additional effect will be granted by fighting more wickedly.

Possibility to raise the Undead increases.

After resurrection, the number of available type within the category increases as well as the skill level.

It was impossible to gain experience for the Power to Deny Death

any other way.

The only way was to die.

“Character information!”

Character Name

Weed

Alignment

Undead

Level

354

Class

Skeleton Knight

Reputation

7904

HP

146800

MP

6400

Strength

1265

Agility

1130

Stamina

Infinite

Wisdom

70

Intelligence

65

Fighting Spirit

922

Endurance

Infinite

Perseverance

665

Physical Resistance

470

Leadership

459

Guilt

96

*Due to the unique characteristic of the Skeleton Knight, You do not

feel fatigue.

*Sword skills +2.

*Due to the power of darkness covering the entire body, add additional

damage and Defense.

*Extremely vulnerable to Holy magic.

*Weakens before the sun and fire.

Weed's original level was 355. Having died, his level dropped by one.

Mastery of skills also dove considerably.

Having already died plenty, he took a deep breath and could somewhat calmly accepted it. Hard work will refill the proficiency once again.

“Skeleton Knight. Been a while since I can move my body, need to get this off my chest.”

Weed drew the sword and cut the Ghost Knight that killed him.

“Keueuk!”

“Enemy.”

All the Ghost Knights suddenly blocked each and every one of his potential paths.

Still, they had not attacked Weed just yet, because they could not

tell whether he was an ally or an enemy.

He was an undead that had a cursed skeleton for a physical body.

But due to Weed's preemptive attack, they all raised their rusty sword, rotten shield, and broken lances towards him.

"Painful, so painful."

"Painful. The suffering came from humans, that skeleton too isn't one of us."

"We were betrayed. This traitor. Unng, I'll kill ya."

Large number of Ghost Knights took place.

To finish the fight and return to their slumber.

As time passed, more and more Ghost Knights and Soldiers spawned from the ground.

These ghosts!

They were those who were betrayer of friends, sinned against their king, and committed treason against their country.

Within a few seconds, 30 or more enemies returned and ready to

fight.

Even after having been reborn as a fleshless being by the Power of Darkness, the answer for his resurrection was as clear as day.

“Stone Skin.”

Weed’s white bones hardened like stones.

The amount of Mana was too small so he could not use his attacking Skills anymore after that.

“You’re a traitor, buddy. You’ll suffer like us!”

A Ghost Soldier came running in first.

Weed quickly leaned to avoid the oncoming lance, then he stretched his sword toward the assailant’s neck.

A fatal blow!

Puseuseu.

The ghost became a blurred smoke then disappeared.

When he was alive, as a fault of the Sculptor class, his stats were evenly distributed matching to his profession. Art, Faith, and

Appeal all played a role on his low Strength.

But after having been reborn as a Skeleton Knight, his damage output was incredibly high. Similarly with Agility, his moving speed has gotten noticeably faster.

His base defense had also increased greatly.

Pababababak!

Weed continued to advance while taking a beating from all direction.

There was no need to be cautious of distant enemies.

‘I only need to concentrate at this point.’

With multiple attacks coming in at the same time, he countered them by hitting the weapons, and then uses the technique to disarm the lot of entangled weapons.

Still, colleagues of those adversaries did not stop the assault.

Puwak!

Lances pierced through Ghost Soldiers’ body as they attacked.

Weed brandished his sword as if he had already anticipated the attack coming from the rear.

He fought as if he was possessed.

He had a constant flow within the battle.

Having already fought for a day or so, the number of them kept growing for at an enormous rate.

Synchronized breathing with the attacks of the enemy and his own movements.

He assimilated himself at this point.

Weed's movements had surpassed his earlier ability with the sword.

The possibility of this was no less owe to the role of the Skeleton Knight.

Because of the physical limitation of being human, commitment made to vigorous movement at every time seems moot. With quicker movements, more stamina is consumed and will soon tire oneself out.

Let's say at the earlier part of the battle, 100% of the damage can be carried out; however, along with the decrease of Stamina, the

damage output also decreases.

In the case of Defense, Stamina plays a small role even if it had been severely depleted; but Physical Resistance, Perseverance, Wisdom, and many others all will be greatly affected by Stamina.

However, thanks to the unique characteristic of the Skeleton Knight, he never gets tired. Even an hour of constant battling, Stamina remained as it is without fail.

Furthermore, he doesn't get hungry.

Weed was immersed in the fighting, but he felt so miserable.

“Because of the Sculptor I miss out on the Skeleton Knight!”

Grief and chagrin!

In exchange, he fought vigorously with every bone in his body.

With the countless of combat experiences in here, as well as the learned swordsmanship in real life.

Even with the Skills, he still must confront in direct battles.

As a reward, Weed gained his body perfectly under his control.

Although not akin to that of Geomchi's, his mindset was nothing short of comparatively.

The fourth floor of the Tower of Heroes tests one's sword skills and determination.

If he flinched from the enemy's attacks, more and more of these ghostly adversaries would gather and wouldn't allow him to penetrate.

This stage was not meant to be passed by those with weak heart.

‘Give me flesh and whittle to the bones.’

Whenever Weed's heavy stride stepped forward, huge number of Ghost Knights and Ghost Soldiers falls in its quake.

“Uhaaaaaa!”

From Weed's mouth, shouts of excitement erupted.

During this impossible challenge, he was having fun. Whether it'll be successful or end in failure, he no longer cares!

Chwararara!

In return, Weed's elbow and wrist violently broke.

Spectacular sword wielding. In contrast to the impossibility in reality, it was possible here.

With the usage of Skills, the attacks can be even more bizarre; but without having Mana to use, he mainly fought by brandishing his sword and stabbing.

‘The sword should not be stopped; to retain the state of force when cut.’

After acquiring the Heraim Sword Skill, he pretty soon discovered the gist of this since experiencing it.

With the scream of the sword coming down from an attack, the repulsion force of blocking forces him to be in a momentary delay. But now under the same situation, he no longer block but instead attack.

Weed’s Swordsmanship Skill was at Intermediate level 4!

Of course, it was not something comparable to the Geomchis’ Skill which was at the Advanced levels. Due to the nature of a Sculptor, the growth of the skill was twice as slow as theirs.

But now, the rate lined up due to the fact that he was a Skeleton Knight; and along with this attribute, his power was also flawless.

“Kkirikkirik!”

“Though a Skeleton Knight, still he’s a great knight.”

With the ongoing battle, the attitude of the Ghost Knights has changed.

“Our mission is to stop you here.”

“Pain, this sucks... In exchange for the betrayal I have to undergo this eternal torment.”

“We are of the Knights. So I acknowledge your strength and courage.”

“But we cannot allow you to pass here.”

Nearing the 8th time he penetrated through the hordes of ghost knights on the fourth floor, they began rushing in more violently.

Weed faithfully relied on just his sword.

There was no other option, and with the given infinite amount of Stamina, the only thing to do was to wield the sword.

Similar to the scarecrows back in Saraborg Castle!

Except for brief breaks in between, he had never wield a sword so tirelessly before.

So neglecting everything, he fought on.

Finally, there wasn't a single Ghost Knight or Ghost Soldier blocking his way any longer.

Before Weed, a white staircase was seen.

He passed the fourth floor challenge!

With one step at a time, he proceeded to the end; climbing the stairs leading to the fifth floor of the Tower of Heroes.

“Keukeukeukeu.”

“A great knight.”

“It has been an honor.”

With that, the ghosts no longer rushed at him, showing proper etiquette. Though having been battered, they acknowledged their defeat.

‘Seems like even though they have been ghosts and specters for a long while, they still retained some of their codes even after

death.'

Weed checked on the state of his body.

63% remaining HP.

Thanks to the Power to Deny Death, the base health was enormous.

He shed the Talrock Armor and Divine Integral Rings and such; and in their places, he wore the armor made of the dragon's bones as well as the Payrote's Ring, which increases his mana recovery.

Normally, he maintained all of his equipments in their best state by means of repairing. Thanks to his constant care, though having been through a lot just now, their Durability were still above 80%. Now he donned a much harder armor that was made from dragon's bones.

The Durability of the sword was still at 75%.

'It's enough.'

Weed turned away from the stairs in front of him. And from behind, the Ghost Knights rushed with their swords swinging in slow motion.

"It hurts!"

“Wh...why is this plaguing us!?”

The knights and soldiers clamored and struck.

They were barely hanging on and were suffering.

They passed through the gateway after having climbed the stairs in order to pit themselves against Weed.

Weed did not speak of an answer.

‘I have never refused any quests, monsters, or challenges to fight.’

Back on Continent of Magic, Weed did not know how to refrain himself.

If it was something obtrusive, whether they were people or monsters, he simply shattered and pierced through all.

Smash everything, crushes all.

Those were the days where he would stand alone amongst all those eradicated.

On the stairs of the fourth floor leading to the top, that

disposition of the Jeonshin Weed was resurrected.

*

Jeong Ilhun was staring at the phone.

“The time for the phone to ring is coming.”

He was Geom-2-chi in Royal Road!

Jeong Ilhun hospitably took care of Orc Seechwi. And yet his feelings deepened as he got to know more about her.

The Jeong Ilhun who would make a complete fool of himself in opposition to a woman, but somehow he could comfortably deal with Seechwi.

Eventually, the two became lovers in Royal Road.

And today, she had said she would call Jeong.

“How long must I wait.”

Jeong Ilhun joyously spoke.

The expensive dating service phone call, the old bachelor that was difficult to pull away from the phone call with a woman that

would requires a card to talk to.

But he never thought he would have a girlfriend to give him a call!

Ddareuu!

Jeong Ilhun heard the phone rang once and immediately picked it up.

“Yes! I’m Jeong Ilhun!”

His voice tightened to that of a recruit in the service.

‘Forgot that I had 7 raw eggs, is my voice gunna be ok?’

He never once been troubled over this fact. But still, being on a call with somebody he loves, anyone would start to care a little.

-Hello, Mr. Ilhun.

Over the line, a melodious voice of a woman was heard.

Jeong forehead began to furrow.

‘It’s not her voice.’

She was suppose to have strong nasally sound. Groggy like a man, rusty voice.

Her voice was not pretty.

Jeong Ilhun spoke quickly with a harsh tone.

“I don’t want to sign up for a card. Don’t want to use a loan phone. Don’t want to join a high speed communication network. Please disconnect because I urgently need the phone.”

For a bachelor on the phone, with calls that comes, it needs to go instead of having being hung up on. He believed the phone call right now was for a lending or some subscription, and told them off!

But this was Joeng Ilhun’s mistake.

-I’m guessing you’re busy, Mr. Ilhun. I insisted to make a call at this time...well, I guess I’ll go. I’ll try and call again tomorrow.

“Ah! Wait! Could you be Seechwi?”

-Yes, that’s right.

He could hear a light laughter coming from over the phone as she answered.

The call with Orc Seechwi was a bit awkward.

That was her race in Royal Road. So of course, her voice there was not something common. Just like an Orc, she'd chwiichwii, along with a stale and groggy voice.

Because of that, Jeong Ilhun mistook that as her original voice; but still, he did not realize the truth.

‘The voice on the phone seems to be in pretty form. Maybe just like me, she ate a few raw eggs.’

However, having received his first call from her, Joeng Ilhun was already happy with that fact alone.

Five minutes of talk!

Even though he could easily hold the heavy metal sword with just one hand; he held the receiver with both.

This was the most intense of time ever in Joeng's life.

His calls always simply to the point; even when he spoke to his apprentices, it never once passed the seventh syllable mark.

Come.

Let's go!

Keep it up.

Get them!

Seal the door shut.

Let's eat.

He primarily spoke in short and concise answers; and this was the most interesting time he ever had on the phone. Though just the talk was about the little stories in Royal Road, what they had for breakfast, and a bit of catching up to some extent, he was happy.

‘Free 300 minutes. I can see why they gave out this service.’

Now the call must end.

Hearing her sweet voice was good, but now his heart filled of delight made it hard for him to continue the call.

The lack of topic was another issue.

‘Talked about the weather, abusing politicians, military stories,

even talks about soccer; I've ran out of things to talk to her.'

He finished all the conversation prepared to talk with a girlfriend already, he figured he should end it neatly and take a rain check for another day. Knowing that he could share a conversation with her at any time, there was no need to be impatient.

"To have shared the dialogue with you, it was an honor, miss Seechwi!"

-No, it was good to hear Ilhun ssi's voice for me too.

"Phone call is good but it'd be nice if we can meet directly."

Without much forethought, Jeong Ilhun spoke clearly unconsciously.

She readily agreed.

-Well, shall we?

"Yes?"

He took in a deep breath as he heard it. It was something incredible that he could listen tens of thousands times over.

-Let's meet tomorrow at around noon. Our first meeting....I

would like this very much. I'll pack kimbap and liked to have lunch with you. Is it alright if we meet at the Dojang?

“Ki, kimbap?”

-Why, do you not like kimbap?

“N, n, n, no, no ma'am! I really love kimbap. I look forward to meeting you! If by chance you're late, or something came up tomorrow, and even if you don't come, I'm looking forward to it!”

Jeong Ilhun screams into the handset!

The call got cut off.

“.....”

He sat in a daze. After a long while needed to clear his mind, the other instructors came out and the lot of apprentices could be seen.

Choe Jongbeom, Ma Sangbeom, and Lee Indo!

Though not the violent types, they were sturdy guys that deserved to be called monsters of the human species.

Some while after he initially saw his brothers that he could finally hear them.

Rather than a dream, it was his reality.

“Sahyeong!”

“Did the call with Seechwi nim go well?”

At their questions, Jeong Ilhun nodded his head.

“Yea, it went well. Though tomorrow she’s coming with kimbap.”

“Heok.”

“Ki, kimbap...”

An explosive reaction from all the practitioners.

Lee Indo remained the calmest of the lot.

“Did you mean she’s coming with bought food from Kimbap Haven or hand-packed one?”

“The latter. She said she’ll also put in tuna.”

“Including tuna!”

The entire body of people was envious of Jeong Ilhun.

*

The final fifth story!

Ding!

Reached the final stage of the Tower of Heroes.

Charisma increases by 10.

Strength increases by 15.

Fighting Spirit increases by 60.

Having been able transcend the limit, You will obtain valuable EXP.

Level has increased.

Level has increased.

Improved permanent stats, along with two levels.

Weed's level once again hit 356.

With the given levels accolades, he granted all the stat points to Agility.

Passing through the fourth floor has leveled his sword skill, and now it has reached Intermediate level 5.

Fighting against the undefined number of spawning specters improved his proficiency considerably.

Only after the completeness of the battle that he realized his sword was down to 23% Durability. It was his willingness to fight against the Ghost Knights and Ghost Soldiers that the drop was so much.

“We succumbed to a great warrior.”

“Our life, concluded.”

No longer did they want to receive Weed’s damaging blows and having to revive for more.

Fundamentally, the specters having been at the receiving end of the endless suffering, their mind was already weak. And now, their pride, confidence, fighting spirits, all collapsed.

On the fourth floor, Weed repaired his equipment and waited until he was in perfect condition before climbing the stairs to the fifth.

‘Some great thing awaits.’

He refused to be scared or dreaded.

There was no doubt that the fifth barrier of the Tower of Heroes was something difficult.

He took in deep breaths and had already put an end to the jittering.

When he arrived to the fifth floor, the expectation of a Monster filled area broke into nothingness; instead, a round table could be seen.

There laid different copies of books.

《Knight》

《Blade Master》

《Champion》

《Fighter》

《Warrior》

《Paladin》

《Kung-Fu Master》

《Archer》

《Ranger》

《Hunter》

《Thief》

A total of 11 books of golden glow.

“Well that’s vague.”

Weed realized he must select one.

If he was an adventurer type of class, he could have use either ‘Research’ or ‘Observation’ skill on them. Which could allow him to see if there was some hidden trap, or permits him to investigate on the books.

It could be said that this was one of the privileges of being an adventurer type.

Understandably, this was not a skill existed for the Sculptor

class. And while being the Skeleton Knight, he had no such skill either.

“Make no difference to me then.”

Weed agonized for a moment then opened up the book for the Knight.

He reserved a bit of interest in either the Thief or the Hunter. But in his current self as a Skeleton Knight, he picked up the matching class's book instead.

From a distance, it seemed as if a skeleton from an anatomy class was inconceivably reading a book.

“Times of war. The Kings fought in competitive wars of invasion. Due to the expanding human’s territories, the Goblins, Demons, Elves, and Dwarves resisted terribly. From all across the borders, the aggressive Monsters made life on the huge continent impoverish to all. Incompetent rulers and corrupted noblemen, and the brutality of the Monsters all drove lives into those of rotting corpses, lain out everywhere. The fate of all Humans, the other species, and that of the Monsters rested on the battle at the Jagsen Plains, located at Bromba Kingdom of 102 years in the past.”

Weed read the book up to there.

Then the area around him was engulfed in light.

“Kill him!”

“Dirty bastards! Cut up the garbage of the Bromba Kingdom!”

“Elite warriors of the Mapon Kingdom! Fight and win!”

“For the glory of Her Majesty!”

Weed awoke in a place filled with noises. Not only that, it was too chaotic of a place.

Drakes soaring in the sky while pumping out fire; while from a distance, Archers and Magicians were pouring out their attacks.

A gigantic battlefield!

Weed fell in the middle of a large scale battle that was taking place.

“Keulelelel!”

“Hueumcha!”

Shouts from afar along with the sounds of incoming collection of rocks.

Weed thought that mobilizing onto his feet wasn't a good idea, but that was a mistake. There were giant one eyed Cyclops pulling stones from dug into the ground and tossing them as hard as they could.

Suuuuuuuuung-kwakwakwakwang!

The stone flew in the sky ripping through the wind, landed on the ground and shattered apart.

Soldiers and Knights who were the unfortunate souls that caught the rocks clamored.

“Please save me!”

The commanders remained undeterred.

“As Bromba Kingdom's soldiers, die with honor!”

“Don't let them get slaughtered like that!”

The soldiers were at war with themselves.

Humans versus Humans; as well as the Enchanters attacks.

Along with a massive march of legion of Monsters coming toward them from a distance.

Puhihing!

Suddenly, a white horse was next to Weed.

Though not being able to fly like the Pegasus, it was still a well defined and muscular horse.

The horse stuck his tongue toward Weed's skull.

Chyabchyabchab!

His skull was slobbered like having a dog putting sunscreen on him with its tongue. The white horse showed a sign of affection towards Weed.

Weed reassessed his situation.

'I was reading the Knight's book on the top floor of the Tower of Heroes...then this place must be the Palrangka Conflict on the Jagsen Plains.'

His immediate situation was in one of the fiercest battle on the Versailles continent, the Palrangka Conflict!

Seven kingdoms that held powers on the continent fought at this battle on the Jagsen Plains. Especially those of the Bromba and Mapon kingdoms, who fought as if to devour one another.

At the climax of the Human made battle, the Monsters army intervened. They marched toward the smell of blood from a long distance to be included in the conflict.

Other species were also involved.

The Elves and the Barbarians, who no longer want to lose anymore of their nests, also came to the plains.

Cumulatively, all resulted into this.

Each race, with each respective flags held high, attacked everything in order to live.

Sturdy Barbarians swung their swords and clubs while the Elves penetrated the troops with their emanating bows.

But they weren't secured either. From behind, these species were rushed by Monsters who gathered like the clouds.

In the midst of this battlefield, standing at its center, was Weed.

To make matter worse, there was a girl riding on the white horse that chewed him.

The girl was even prettier than the beautifully grown flower that came from Morata!

She delicately looked at Weed and opened her red lips.

“Knight nim, I believe that you are the one. Please take me to where it’s safe.”

Ding!

The request of Princess Remy

The first Princess of a small country on the frontier with a population of 80000 people, Isran.

She likes the sea and wanted to live at home. But she was scheduled to become the Crown Prince of Bromba fifth concubine.

However, due to the sudden outburst and the escalation of the war, the two could not be wedded because the Crown Prince had entered the fray of the battle.

She wants to go home again.

Quest difficulty

Heroic History Quest

compensation

Experience in the combat of History, may become the Hero of History.

quest Restriction

Having gained the Princess's favor, the Knight cannot refuse.

Weed was conflicted for a while.

‘How should I do this?’

Weed had received a lot of seemingly impossible quests before, but he could see route for each to some extent.

He was in a temporary standstill, so Princess Remy red lips puffed up and spoke.

“For me, there's no one else but Knight nim. Even now, in your current cursed form; though strange, I can still tell. All I know that it is Knight nim who will help me.”

You have accepted the quest.

Completely option-less!

The quest had just accepted itself.

For the Knights, some of these cases do occur.

Whether it was the frail women, aristocratic women, or their enshrined lord's will, they could not refuse.

This was a characteristic of the Knights!

'Terrrrrrific.'

Weed felt the cold wind blowing through his ribs.

He looked around; the place was flooded with Monsters, Humans, Elves, and Barbarians.

One of the most intense battles in history, the Palrangka Conflict!

He was to deliver the Princess away from here.

The beauty and the white horse.

Enemies everywhere!

This perfectly fits into the romance of the Knight.

And there were even the high-leveled fire-breathing monster

Drakes.

Along with the fact that the current human Knights who were fighting seemed to be at level 300 at the very least.

The ordinary Soldiers were also formidable. Beings of the warring age, they were high level soldiers.

Not to mention the Barbarians, Elves, and Monsters ranking from lower tier to the top, along with giant monsters, all presented.

Plenty of them, if not at the rank of Lich Shire, were about the class of the Vampire Lords.

Extensive range magic blasts all around; huge rocks flew for a great distance and when lands, dented the earth and ruptured as easily as an egg spattering.

He must work alone and survive while escorting the Princess on the white horse to breakthrough the battlefield, ranging in miles.

Chapter 2: The Princess's Knight

Weed's eyes shone sharply.

‘Anyway, I can only do my best.’

Having received the commission, he could not back out.

As the fight goes on, he would not have a single moment of rest; Weed courteously bowed to the waist.

“Remy; no, Princess.”

“Yes, Knight nim.”

Princess Remy's starry eyes were looking down on Weed.

In Weed's eyes, he saw her small and delicate feet and calves.

To some men, the women's feet were poisonous things. But Weed did not have such a hobby.

“You must be willing to believe in me. Do not be alarm of whatever happens, you must trust only in me.”

“Yes, I understand. My life, I will leave it in thee.”

Weed ended it there and did not talking anymore.

The Human troops approaching were increasing in number all around them; and flying rocks as well as magic spells were at their doorstep.

This place they stumbled on was on the verge of becoming a vortex of the war.

Weed modestly accepted the rein to become the master of the white horse.

He then pulled the Princess up and placed her behind him.

Puhihing!

The horse lightly neighs.

While one hand holding onto the rein, the other pulled out a sword.

Ding!

Have equipped the Knight of Kallamore Kingdom Koldrim's sword; Reputation will increase by 2500.

Attack Speed increases.

Strength increases.

Agility increases.

With the powerful Charisma, will overwhelm weaker Monsters.

The power of the Ice Daemon retained in this blade.

Weed tapped the horse to accelerate towards the center of the enemy's camp.

“Go, giddy up!”

With each of its propagating steps, the white horse accelerated to a scary speed.

This steed was in another dimension when comparing to the colt he had to accept back in Rosenheim Kingdom, during the operation in the Lair of Litvart.

A Knight's assault is significantly affected by the charge of the horse.

A good steed isn't all based on its stamina or speed, even its gene is deliberate when raising one from conception.

For the most valuable of horses, the beginning of the deliberation starts at the horse's lineage!

He did not know, but he could tell that the horse he was currently riding must have been extremely expensive.

Due to the horse's terribly rapid sprint, the wind was getting sliced up before them.

A speed comparable to an arrow in flight.

Weed's eyes widened and held out his sword.

From now on, the only thing he felt was the hilt of his blade. He did not feel the tender and delicate warmth of the Princess who was hanging onto his back.

*

Swordsmanship Dojang.

Jeong Ilhun, dressed in his uniform, was waiting for Cha Eunhee.

“Yo.”

“Yes, Sahyeong.”

“Women say, appearance isn't everything. So you shouldn't mind that, k?”

Cheo Jongbeom made haste and spoke.

“Your words are right.”

Ma Sangbeom also patted him.

“I believe Miss Seechwi is fair in nature. And she seems to like you. She’s even coming to the Dojang to meet you, you know?”

She'd even bringing homemade kimbap over too.

The appointed time was approaching.

“Calm your heart for the moment, yo.”

For Jeong Ilhun, it was his shyly first love. He had more butterflies in his stomach due to this first actual meeting than any of the swordsmanship competitions.

It was the same for Cheo Jongbeom, Ma Sangbeom, and Lee Indo.

It was something really unexpected. Their first Sahyeong got a girlfriend.

Although the subject in question was an Orc: a foul, ugly, and a fat Orc, it was something they could congratulate him on.

They all watched them during their adventures in Royal Road;

Seechwi's wisdom was something that could rival Jeong Ilhun's heart.

“It's time for her to come now...”

Jeong Ilhun was anxiously dreading during the wait, when a lady carrying a lunchbox wandered into the Dojang.

“.....”

Cheo Jongbeom, Ma Sangbeom, Lee Indo all gasped.

‘It's that woman!’

‘She resembles a bit to Seechwi.’

‘But her age is wow...late 30, 40 maybe?’

The plumped body auntie continued to walk toward the Dojang.

Jeong Ilhun's face still retained a great smile and went out for a face to face.

“You're just in time. Thank you for coming. Was it tough coming here?”

Jeong Ilhun was the first to extend out his hand.

Though the action was miniscule, the courage it took was tremendous.

In order to not make her feel awkward, he smiled and asked to shake hands.

It wasn't her appearance but her heart that was important; so he tried to welcome her.

However!

“Who are you?”

The women's face squinted. Then from within the Dojang, someone who looked like an elementary student came running out.

“Mom! You brought my lunch?”

“Here. Don't you go forgetting it the next time.”

“Um, ok. Ah, Masters. Hello!”

The little boy bowed like a cute pup before Jeong Ilhun and the other instructors before scampered back into the Dojang.

The boy's mother went away.

“Keuheum~!”

Jeong Ilhun embarrassingly cleared his throat for a long time, and once again waited for Cha Eunhee.

Then, an eye contact with a woman coming from the street made his body stiff.

‘Is that her?’

She was coming while carrying kimbap luncheons. If she was empty handed, he wouldn't have looked otherwise.

She had fair skin, sparkling eyes, and a beauty that was noticeable within the thousands.

A single person within the lot of thousands. He could stay still in the mid of the center of the city while facing the beauty.

She held two large shopping bags and was walking toward the Dojang.

Jeong Ilhun thought.

‘That's not her.’

The other instructors also had similar ideas.

‘I don’t think it’s that lady.’

‘But she is coming this way.’

‘What’s going on? Maybe a solicitor for the credit card company? Or to sell stuff. If she tells me to join, then maybe I will. Let’s see how she is with a few words...’

Lee Indo was the most eager.

All of their mind weren't on the heavy shopping bags. If they had seen her grunting due to their weighs, they wouldn't have just sat there in daze.

Their eyes all attached to the young and beautiful lady approaching and couldn't open their mouth edgewise.

‘Why is she still coming this way?’

‘What does she have to come in this direction?’

‘Did we somehow do something wrong?’

In all four men’ head, a myriad of thoughts was blowing through

their mind.

She came and precisely stood before Jeong Ilhun; then fondly spoke.

“Hello, Ilhun ssi!”

Suspicion flew across Jeong Ilhun’s eyes.

“How did you come to know of my name? Could you perhaps be a scout from another Dojang coming to make a proposal...”

Even if they tried to lure him away with a beauty, he wouldn’t leave the Dojang.

No matter whom they received the offer from; whether it was the instructors or their students, none would accept it from anybody. With the time they’ve accumulated learning the way of the sword; the depth of their honor outweighs any amount of the money offered.

Her bright smile formed a slight dimple and she asked.

“What? I’m not a scout, but weren’t you waiting for me?”

Now Jeong Ilhun was really surprised.

“Wa, waa, wha, what?”

The Dojang eldest Hyeong!

Even when facing someone carrying a real blade unarmed, he maintained his cool; but now, he was really in shock.

“N, n, nuh, no way...suh, suh, some, something...nuh, uh, uh, couldn’t be! Fo, fo, for, for you know what I’m doing...”

“Goem-2-chi. Are you not Jeong Ilhun ssi?”

“T, th, tha, thaa, that’s...right...”

“I’m Seechwi, Ilhun ssi!”

Jeong Ilhun had lost his soul looking at Cha Eunhee’s human form.

The other teachers were also frozen still.

‘No way.’

‘That’s impossible.’

‘The hell is happening here.’

‘The girl...Orc Seechwi.’

‘Wait a sec. We can change our appearances in Royal Road, can’t we? We remained the same, but in her case, she changed her appearance. Why didn’t we think of that?’

Even up till now, they were still relatively unfamiliar with Royal Road.

“.....”

“.....”

“.....”

There was a long silence inside the Dojang.

Jeong Ilhun, the other instructors, along with the grand master An Hyeon Soo, all were silent.

The trainees also did not spoke a word. All were simply looking at Cha Eunhee blankly.

‘To think Ilhun have such a talent.’

An Hyeon Soo was more surprised in this than when he

unearthed Jeong Ilhun's talent with the sword.

‘A pretty woman like that is First Hyeong's girlfriend.’

‘No. I don't think this is reality. Let this be a dream, I'll wake up soon.’

An Hyeon Soo, the instructors, as well as all the practitioners, did not eat Cha Eunhee's wrapped kimbap. No, they wanted to but could not muster the courage to do so.

Because the faces on the rolls were too cute. But they were compelled by the rolls and as soon as the first one entered, its taste spread.

‘Keueuk! These cute and daintily kimbap rolls.’

‘She's even good with cooking.’

‘I would definitely give up a lifetime of Ramyeon for these.’

An Hyeon Soo, the instructors, and the trainees all saddened, making the rolls seemingly hardened as they were becoming difficult to chew.

This was the first time since birth that they were hesitant with food.

After a while, the one with the most age, An Hyeon Soo drew a long sigh.

“Wheww~! So, you are Seechwi?”

Cha Eunhee politely replied.

“Yes, sir.”

She wore a gorgeous beige blouse, along with a cute skirt that ran down to her knees. Her entire body had all the right curves. She exuded the pinnacle beauty of a lady.

Although it was not a beauty comparable to that of Hwaryeong and Jeong Hyorin, she was extremely beautiful among the general public.

An Hyeon Soo nodded his head.

“Well then. Continue treating our Ilhun well.”

He got up and quietly headed toward his office.

In a neat manner.

But in actuality, his stomach aches to an extent that he had to get out of there.

For the remaining instructors, Cha Eunhee the object of interest.

Words escaped Cheo Jongbeom's mouth.

“Hyeongsu nim, may I ask you of something I was wondering?”

Just then, Jeong Ilhun had leaked out a grin that couldn't be stopped.

“Fufufu.”

He said ‘Hyeongsu nim’! A term he had no idea was so enjoyable.

Cha Eunhee revealed her sparkly white teeth while smiling slightly.

“Yes. Please ask.”

Cheo Jongbeom asked cautiously.

“Umm...what school did you graduate from?”

“That is...”

Cha Eunhee attempted to answer but Jeong Ilhun's strained and

rebuked.

“Dude, Jongbeom! Why is school important here?”

Jeong Ilhun was a high school dropout.

The other instructors and students were also in some form, middle school or high school dropouts. It was not something they'd (proudly) put on the end of their belts.

If someone graduated from high school, that person would be classified as an elite here.

So when Cheo Jongbeom threw out this question unconscious of its hidden notion, Jeong Ilhun thought differently.

‘She must have been embarrassed for not being able to graduate due to some incident.’

A caring man's consideration.

The reason why Jeong Ilhun had captivated her mind.

Cha Eunhee replied with a smile.

“It's fine. I have no reason to not answer. I graduated from Harvard.”

“Huh?”

Cheo Jongbeom was confused.

“You mean the Harvard institution in downtown for cramming to repeat college entrance exam?”

“It’s the University in Boston, US.”

“Keoheok!”

Which resulted in a flurry of screams, then a deep silence.

The instructors and practitioners alike just inadvertently know of someone from Harvard University.

This time, Ma Sangbeom asked.

“Excuse me for asking, but what do you do now?”

“I’m in the hospital.”

“Oh, you’re a nurse.”

“No, I’m a doctor.”

“Do, doctor?”

“Yes. I’m a psychiatrist.”

Ma Sangbeom eyeballs alarmed.

For Jeong Ilhun to get a girlfriend, the mid 30 year old instructors breathing had become clogged.

The trainees too, were desperate.

‘No no. This is not a time for us to aimlessly eating away.’

‘We're in our late 20s, while 30 is just around the corner. To be able to land a beautiful and intelligent girlfriend...’

The future was looking bleaker and bleaker for them.

Within, falling rain and thunderous crashes pounded away at them.

‘It can’t be this way.’

‘There is no time to waste.’

The instructors and practitioners all shot up.

“We have to connect to Royal Road!”

“C’mon and let’s connect!”

“The Orc village! We should go to that village!”

All of them gave birth to a great goal all at the same time.

At the time, An Hyeon Soo’s capsule was already occupied and connected. As soon as they spawned into Morata, all of them violently charged toward the Orc village.

*

It was a state of urgency inside KMC Media cinema room

“Toppled the second line of defense!”

“He’s fighting with the third perimeter.”

“Seven Spearmen slaughtered, he can’t be stopped.”

“Killed a Bromba Kingdom’s Knight! Level estimated to be around 360.”

Director Khang was busy checking the Broadcasting Schedule that he couldn't watch the screen at the moment.

“He killed them in just a few minutes?”

The staffs inside the cinema room hesitated for a bit before replying.

“Almost instantaneously really...didn't even get up to one minute.”

“Are you talking about the situation on horseback? I think you all know how strong a single level 360 Knight is. Aren't you all mistaken?”

“The horse didn't stop at all. It ran toward one direction and he was fighting while on horseback...in a brief moment, he slashed over 10 times.”

“Is that possible? Swinging sword while on horseback will disturb the rider's balance.”

“I too...in my shoes, I couldn't fathom it. But he did it.”

“What a monster.”

Nothing outside of admiration on the continuing battle!

From the beginning, Weed, while on the white horse's back along with the Princess situated behind him, rode toward the enemy's lines.

The Archer units fired arrows at an enormous rate, but he boldly charges through. Even before the arrows lands at the targeted spot via above, he had already crossed past the space.

The enemy's Magicians cast their magical attacks, but the horse exquisitely dodged them by redirect his body.

Explosive flames, ice shards, and storms of lightning!

The Skeleton Knight demonstrated his trustworthy riding skills and penetrated aboard the white stallion.

He then came face to face with the Spearmen and Archers' line.

By just adjusting the hinds of the horse, whenever the stomps landed, pikes and swords cracked up, and the Spearmen at the end of the romp stomping without a doubt lost their lives.

An irresistible assault!

A Knight on horseback's base damage is so much higher during the charge.

At least, by two or three times.

It can get to the maximum of seven times the damage depending on the speed of the steed's assault.

A shield to prevent it will result in broken pieces; armor plates are crush, shatter, or even tears off.

Regular infantry troops cannot stop the galloping speed of the Knights.

On foot, Knights have reliable strength and very good defense, along with high vitality; but, to really display the true strength of a Knight is when he's ridden on horseback.

Weed with the aforementioned speed attached, charged and penetrated the perimeter.

Above calling forth the terrific speed of the horse, Weed's movements were notoriously flamboyant. The sword within his hand seemed to be dancing about.

Formidable strength and speed.

He dove into the heart of the enemy's territory with just himself and swung his sword through the infantries.

Also, in spite of a duel against a full-fledged Knight amongst

them, he still triumphed.

Even though he was under the effect of the Power to Deny Death, it was nothing short of greatness.

Director Khang suspiciously asked under a cold tone.

“Could he possibly have experience being a Knight...originally?”

“Maybe, but we don’t know.”

“The application said he’s a Sculptor.”

“Might just be a side hobby.”

Mere speculations, but the broadcasters determined that was something sensible enough.

In fact, with the images being sent over, there was no point dwelling deep into the character’s information. Something along the line of a principle to the broadcasters.

Things such as Weed’s circumstances were also unknown.

For the broadcasters to beseech things such as items, skills, or character information in order to form a contract was something nearing the border of an unreasonable request; because they were

important secrets.

“He’s versatile everywhere on the battlefield.”

“I’d like to have a Knight saving me like that too...”

“Romantic, so romantic. The excitement of having a Knight on a white steed is something I can enjoy...”

The female writers indulged in the battle.

A naïve Princess wanting to return to her home country! She entrusted herself to a Knight with a white horse.

It was something out of a romance novel, or something of a yearned-for dream.

Of course, within those stories, the Knights were often handsome young men; in contrast, the Knight was a skeleton without a single flesh attached.

“Don’t you just want to be held in that chest?”

“I think the Knights in Royal Road are soo reassuring and cool.”

On the other hand, seeing Weed’s battle, Director Khang spearheaded the lot in the cinema room.

“We don’t know what will arise, the production team members, don’t you dare miss a thing!”

“Yes!”

“The investigation staff. Depending on the work for today, you could be set with bonuses for this year. Do not fall asleep. Even if you are sleepy don’t you dare.”

“We absolutely won’t do so until the end of the battle, Director nim.”

“Other staff members too, if you saw something unique or have question regarding something, you have to speak.”

The battle that was noted in the history of the Versailles Continent.

A battle of the past that was unbeknownst to all except for what was written in the continent's history book.

But now, the scenes from the fiercest battle of the past could be seen again.

“Found a rare robe! Don’t know what it is but the Magic Defense is outstanding.”

“There is also a race of giants. Seem to be over 200 of them or so.”

“Special ability?”

“Demonstrated marvelous strength...doesn't use weapons or magic.”

“Alright. Let's see...so far, this founded species haven't been recorded. On the skill side, is it obvious?”

“Now? sorta. On the magician side, there are 57 new, no, undiscovered spells used.”

Their eyes were filled with Magicians' magic or the Knights and Warriors' skills during the Palrangka Conflict.

At the present time, the magic that weren't passed down by profession was too large a number.

Here, those lost magics' effects and their powers were able to be revealed.

For Magicians, trying to recover past practical magic or developing new magic, it was something along the line of spending days and nights hoping for a rain drop in the middle of a drought.

In line with the characteristic chosen for those Magicians that

had completed the second job advancement upgrade; they can choose to either create their own magic through the proper channels, or to gather information to restore ancient magic.

Magical data, items, species, etc.; all were rare.

It was more special for these types of adventurers.

From those chasing to attain information on rare quests, special requests of information after having seen the Palrangka Conflict would most likely be a high number.

Along with the species, and kingdoms participated at the time of the war, who are now extinct.

If it was toward these, those adventurers will definitely respond to the Palrangka Conflict.

“Jackpot.”

“An enormous amount of information; and look at the scale of this battle.”

“It doesn’t even matter where the viewership is at anymore.”

“There will be at least 2 months worth of controversy over the Palrangka Conflict.”

The investigation staff members cried out with joy.

Since the show of Weed in Todoom, they've held their disappointment calmly inward for so long!

However, it was clear to them as to why Weed's course of actions was as such during the adventure.

For others, if they tried to forcefully breakthrough a hard quest, they would fundamentally cause more hardship onto themselves rather than anything else.

'Sunbain Kingdom. I've just arrived to the Herotai Province of the place...I wonder what kind of quest I can get from there?'

Director Khang body was getting twitchy and it was becoming difficult to endure.

A few minutes passed.

"Weed. What's he doing now?"

He was scanning the hastily written analysis papers from the investigation staff that he did not raise his head when asking.

"....."

Though he waited for a long time, there was no answer.

There were over a hundred people inside the cinema room, but not one had answered him after he inquired. Sure there were those who were in the other departments which meant it wasn't their place to answer; but among those presented, more than 50 people were under his command.

Then, there was a sudden silence in the cinema room.

“Why is nobody answering me?”

Director Khang raised his head.

This time too, it did not take him long to behold the huge spectacle.

He turned his attention toward the screen.

Weed was flying in the sky.

More surprisingly, he was above a Drake.

“Wha, what, what happened?”

It wasn't the employees who answered but Odong Man.

“That is, he was severely attacked by several Drakes. Along with the fire attacks from the air, they also used their claws to scratch him up; he struggled considerably to avoid these.”

It was amazing to avoid the onslaught of arrows or magic attacks with just his riding skills. But as for the Drakes, not only did they breathe fire, they irritatingly chased him down; making it a tiresome task.

Even if their pace on the plain was decent, it was still difficult to throw the Drakes off; along with the fact that the ground surface was filled with Monsters and enemy soldiers.

“Then what?”

“Then at one point, he jumped up above a Drake and ridden the thing.”

The Drake wasn't domesticated by humans, so it fiercely resisted. The beast tried its best to get rid of Weed by shooting off fire and rolling its body in mid air.

Fellow Drakes also sighted the scene.

They collectively helped out by huffing out fire through their snouts.

Whenever they did that, Weed moved like lightning onto the opposite side aboard the Drake and attacked the others within his

vicinity.

Airborne dogfight!

Amidst the bunch of Drakes in the sky, the battle was a breathtaking one with every single movement.

“Waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!”

With Weed’s hit, explosive hollering rang out.

The Drake urgently fluttered its wing and began soaring to greater heights.

Along with the lot of ascending Drakes, the spirits of the people watching was also high.

“Keoeoeok!”

“Oh my gosh!”

“This here, 20%, 30% viewership is not even enough.”

“Jackpot, jackpot! With this done properly, our bonuses this year is set.”

On the ground, the historic Palrangka Conflict was still going on.

Tens of thousands of Humans and of other races quarreling over the supremacy of this world.

Somewhere in the sky, the airborne battle with the Drakes is still taking place.

Amidst the irritating sunshine, alongside the drifting clouds.

The Drakes has tremendous speed and incredibly erratic movements, and the one fighting against them is the Skeleton Knight Weed!

Their excitement was so high that they forgot to gulp.

“This is really like a painting. The heroic knight fighting like that in order to protect the princess...”

The tale was good.

Because it was so romantic, for those with only a decent amount of sensitivity, they would have no choice but to be submerged into it.

Then suddenly, one person clapped.

“Ah!”

“Why, what happened? Find anything?”

“That...is...”

“Is what?!”

“The Princess died.”

“Wha, what?”

“Umm...look at the bottom of the screen. She got neglected so she died; along with the white horse.”

“.....”

Apparently, the Weed who was completely immersed in battle had abandoned the fact that he was to take care of the Princess and the white horse!

He alone jumped on the Drake and boldly fought the exciting fight while the Princess ended up dead within the lot of Monsters.

The female writers were frustrated.

“Princess Remyyyy!”

“Ahk! Our princess died!”

They had given their full empathy to the Princess so the shock was as huge as the collapse of the heavens!

The staff members gathered in the cinema room were just as discouraged.

They had such high expectation placed on Weed; then saddened when he was unable to keep the Princess alive.

“Our bonuses.”

“My vacation...”

“The promotion too...”

While sounding sickly, the staffs still had hopes.

With this Palrangka Conflict, and Weed’s participation in it; they did not know how this will reverberate among the audiences when they broadcast.

Though at the moment, they all felt rewarded working in KMC Media after having seen the Jeonshin Weed’s feat.

Chapter 3: The Historic Battle

That night, Lee Hyun's evening started as usual.

Homemade spicy sweet-and-sour pork.

At other times, due to it taking a good amount of time to cook, it was difficult to prepare.

“It takes in too much oil so I can't cook this often.”

Frying dishes annoyingly uses a lot of oil. At home, they wastefully consume the oil, making it harder for him to make.

Even to the miser Lee Hyun, it was already barely tolerable that he had to use it; he too, did not recycle it.

“If it's deficient to my sister, then it's no good.”

Although it was just something as simple as boiling food to eat, he tried to make his best sweet-and-sour pork for the sake of his younger sibling.

Then after dinner, Lee Hyun accessed the homepage of the Dark Gamer Union website.

-Buying Jackal Sword.

-Buying Golden Candle Stick. Need it immediately for the ‘Rural Wolf’ quest; please email me.

-Looking for group to hunt with. Still nubby but better than the rest. Level 312. Occupation hand combat series.

Today too, many articles were posted.

Lee Hyun looked at the item pricing.

“Have plenty of time now to properly spend them.”

Anyway, he was not able to log in during the next 24 hours.

Lee Hyun couldn’t hang on and also lost the second life he was given.

*

Palrangka Conflict was literally the gateway to death.

Endless ranks of enemies.

While battling the Drake and its ever climbing heights, he was able to catch a glimpse of the entire field of enemies.

The Orcs he encountered in the past were led by leader so they have never gone to war; but the number here surpasses the current number and was waging war with the others.

The matter in the sky was also similar, with giant Monsters that resembles dragonflies flew in.

He was about to have control of the Drake, but it was not possible to escape the area. It was due to the fact that even the aerial Monsters were waging war amongst themselves.

Monsters' relationship was often no good in the first place; from things such as being one another's natural predator, or be it over territories; they fought.

Weed was aboard the Drake so he was locked into such a fight. And unfortunately, he did not last long within the battle due to the wounds.

He fell out of the sky, and the bones of the Skeleton Knight got smashed and scattered due to the huge impact of the fall.

It was a large loss of vitality and combat ability.

His aim was to hunt the Drake, but other vengeful Drakes kept harassing him with their fire breaths.

Looking toward the sky, his sword wielding actions moments ago seemed meaningless.

It seems as though with just one hit, the Drakes became wary and never even descended near the ground again.

Weed changed his objective and blew a whistle loudly.

Hwiiiiiiik!

If it was a trained steed, it would return from anywhere once having heard the whistle.

“.....”

He waited for the figure of the white horse to breakthrough the hoard of Monsters for him to hop on.

But over time, there was no response.

The Princess had died, and the white horse was also already dead.

There was no way out for about 10 Kilometer radius.

“The skull rider that escorted Princess Remy.”

“The ugly culprit incited the Princess with his insidious words and tried to escape! By the honor of the Templar of Bromba Kingdom, cut him!”

“Charge him. Charge!”

The powers of the Templar Knights rose to an outrageous degree.

Whether it was Monsters or magic, they just went on and slashed away at them.

Once recuperated from his loss of words, Weed was unable to escape, and all the paths converged to a single passageway: to fight and win.

His bones were badly cracked and broken because of the fall from the air, and although his vitality somewhat lingers, it was dissipating as time passes. Weed calmly stood in one place, and he roughly estimated the number of the Knights belonging to Bromba Kingdom.

Weed’s skull ophthalmic optics flashed.

‘Sword. The Knights, has to be the sword, huh. At least levels of 270 or more. While providing defense against arrows and throwing weapons, I think it can restore wounds using divine powers too.’

It was just a feeling, he couldn’t have truly know.

He was observing the scene of the Knights fighting against other Monsters, and he identified the information of the weapon via that

method.

He contemplated with his broad perspective over the entire battlefield.

In this massive Palrangka Conflict, he had to learn of the exact location of good swords and armors in order to seize them.

‘But for now, it’s too much of a fight to face them head on.’

Even if he had a great and tough body, the weapons with Holy powers caused the Undead him to be uneasy.

He had been revived thanks to the Power to Deny Death, but along with the advantages of being an Undead, he was at risk with several weaknesses.

Weed picked up a stone in his immediate vicinity and threw it in between the Cyclops.

“Kyaohoh!”

“Kuwaahahang!”

They treated the stone as an annoying insect and yelled loudly, they picked up a collection of rocks and hurled them as hard as they could.

BAAAAAAAMM!

Few feet away from Weed's location, he could feel the earth trembled whenever each of them landed.

“Kill!”

“Knights of Bromba Kingdom do not know the meaning of defeat!”

The Templar rushed off at the forefront, while Weed rushed off to catch up to the Cyclops.

“H, hu, humans.”

“Bad tasting humans!”

“Cheeky bastards.”

The Cyclops changed their positioning, and threw rocks towards the Templar.

Clearly in Weed's eyes, the Templar who were struck by the rocks suffered enormous damage.

The charging Templar, regular infantry troops, or even the Knights trying to defend their position, the rocks weren't

something they could stop. But unlike those of arrow, the thrown weapons had relatively weak range.

And arrows could even pierce through the cracks in the helmet; speaking bluntly, it will kill.

In contrast, the huge stones thrown by the Cyclops toward the Knights not only hit; but when they lands, it shattered and dispersed, causing tremendous damages in the immediate vicinity to occur all at the same time.

However, the flags of the Bromba Kingdom continued to rise to further heights within the Templar grasp.

“Wipe them all out!”

“For the glory of the Kingdom!”

Like moths drawn to the flames, to protect their honor as well as their pride, they bravely jumped onto the giants who were 10 times their size.

Making use of the number one assault of the Knights; ridden on their galloping horses, they charged furiously with their lances tightly within their grasps.

“Keoeoeoeo!”

The Cyclops fell from their wounded feet.

The Knights with their plunging lances and their cutting sword attacked the Cyclops.

The remaining Cyclops brandished their wielded rocks as if they were clubs in resistance. Horses got struck and collapsed at once... there wasn't a melee battle like this one.

‘Now, opportunity.’

Weed hopped on the Cyclops back and dealt with any charging Knight.

Surprisingly it was too easy for him to avoid the Cyclops' rocks.

Not only did having just one eye lowering their accuracy, there also were plenty of blind spots.

For throwing, they simply lift a rock over their heads. Then looked to their predetermined trajectory to throw; the forewarning makes it not impossible to dodge.

Because of the risks of being crushed coming from the dropping airborne stones, his hamstrings were prohibited from yielding!

“I'm Bromba Kingdom Silver Knight...”

“Me, Skeleton Knight Weed.”

Weed made a short greeting, then he and the Knight clashed for the victory.

Only very short time gaps in between the Cyclops rock throwing that they had the time to duel.

The moment he subdued the Knight, the others came over to help out; but by throwing his body in the apertures of the pouring rocks, he escaped.

He rushed deeply toward where there were healthy Cyclops had attracted many Knights.

Even if the place was lacking of disasters, he could formulate much confusion within the area; and in the midst of it, he will fight.

In the location of the Cyclops, Knights of the Mapon Kingdom jumped in.

“Beat up the Bromba Kingdom’s henchmen!”

“Cut up the one-eyed monster’s throat!”

“Yaaaahhh!”

A large confusing fight was going on.

While the two kingdoms at war, Bromba and Mapon, were going at it; Humans of other countries also intervened.

This naturally attracted the attention of other Monsters who head toward the commotion. The Cyclops stomped their feet and crushes with picked up column like boulders. The once tossed up into the sky stones fell and the feeling of shattering Human bodies could be felt; aside from that, the Cyclops also simply threw the stones straight downward.

In the massive confusion that took place, Weed snuck to the front and clashed one-on-one with the Knights and came out winning.

He killed as many as 17 Knights before kneeling on the ground.

His HP was only at a mere 30 points; there was nothing left.

“Oooooowoooo!”

“C’mo!”

Even though they had easy access to the readily-given Weed’s life, soldiers of Bromba Kingdom and soldiers of Mapon Kingdom were busily backing off.

They looked to the sky and continued to recede.

Weed too looked up at the sky.

Then he saw a small dot that was growing rapidly.

It was a rock of more than 10 meters in diameter falling toward where he was located.

‘Ain’t it great for the final moment of a jackal to be soooo colorful.’

Weed waited with the sword dug into the earth grasp in hand.

BAAAAAAAMM!

You will leave a distinctive mark in one of the fiercest battle in history, the Palrangka Conflict.

History Book of the Versailles Continent. Original Palrangka Conflict.

It was a time where greed and jealousy were at their peak.

The Humans, in order to hoard wheat and iron for themselves, held expansion wars that did not stop.

The other Species joined forces with the Humans in order to avoid disputes; but their similar intentions deteriorated.

Having received the Humans' influence of pursuing what they desire, the other Species gathered up their own members and fought for self interest.

As if corresponding to the Humans territorial wars which undermined their powers, the highly fertile Monsters spread across the continent like a poisonous mushroom.

Newly restored content.

Palrangka Conflict Secret History.

Can only be deciphered by adventurers who reached Mastery in Linguistics and Archeology.

Even at the time, Monsters' Intelligence was pretty exceptional, so coarse language was possible; and with that, they formed larger groupings for activities.

And on the plains of Jaksen, they fought a decisive battle over who will dominate the continent.

The eventual winners were the non-Human Monsters.

But the few remnants that came out alive from the fray of the dangerous battle spread tales of a Skeleton Knight's role on the battlefield.

Having received the favor of the Princess of Kingdom of Isran, Remy, he tried to rescue her.

He was very brave; and had amazing horseback combat skills. But having been distracted in between the lot of winged Monsters, the white horse and the Princess lost their lives.

The angry Knight fought on the very spot in order to fill the sadness of losing the Princess; and eventually lost.

Geographically, the Bromba Kingdom location was on the Jaksen Plains.

It was a vast fertile plains; the most extensive canary of the Versailles Continent.

But along with the downfall of Bromba, its territories were torn apart; and became that of the Kingdom of Breman.

At the time, it was said that more than a million of corpses of Humans, other Species, and Monsters were collected separately and stored in a massive underground tomb.

Then, over the course of three decades, along with the continual fighting over the wheat, ownership of the kingdom undergo constant changes.

The plains of Jaksen also disappeared; its terrains all changed due to the Humans incessant effort to build barrier and forts.

Now, in unison, the name of the Palrangka Conflict is more widely known among the Monster groups.

《History Book of the Versailles Continent.》

From the Records of the Palrangka Conflict.

*

Lee Hyun continued to complain.

“If I had not been revived as a Skeleton Knight...”

He was still regretting over the fact he was revived as a Skeleton Knight.

Due to the fact that the being didn't really demonstrate the level of an Undead.

The first revived skeleton was nearing that of a Boss type level.

Aside from having great physical abilities, its magic ability was excellent above all else.

Powerful Black Magic!

With being able to utilize the Necromancer's skills, he could fight more pleasantly.

With fallen bodies, he could conjured up Dullahans and Death Knights, he could even summon the skeletons of the long deceased to make the fight more exciting!

In contrast, the Skeleton Knight was a skull head who was ignorance with magic.

It had even weakened out in the sun, and severely vulnerable to Holy magic.

It was an Undead who was vulnerable to being hunted in broad daylight.

He felt slightly weakened during the fight in the Palrangka Conflict in the broad daylight.

If it was back on Continent of Magic, he would have welcomed the Knight. Relying on their mighty force, he would have wrecked all the enemies in his way; there was nothing wrong with the Knight.

But then again, there was no destructive Necromancer fighting in the battlefield of the continent either.

“If I could have used the Necromancer’s magic...”

Lee Hyun did not conceal his contemplation.

If he was reborn as an Undead with Necromancy, the results of the Palrangka Conflict would have been brilliantly flipped upside down. The spacious battlefield was something good for the Necromancer, something along the line of being in his own front yard.

Reviving Cyclops, producing Zombies and Ghouls. Skeleton Soldiers and Knights weren’t impossible to raise either.

By using the Ender Saint’s Cane along with the Necromancer’s magic; it was like icing on the cake.

“Come to think of it, I don’t really have control over the kinds of Undead I can revive with necromancy, huh. It’s entirely possible for me to revive things such as ghosts or winged beasts. The risk that comes along with this skill is too great.”

Since it wasn’t something that goes according to his will, it was rather disturbing to use the skill based on luck.

Lee Hyun now emptied his mind and searched for pricing of items.

He intended to sell the weapons and armors that he doesn't use after resurrecting on the Versailles Continent.

“It'd be better if I put these on the auction side of the site.”

Lee Hyun then got a price quote, went onto the item trading site and registered the items for auctions.

-Bromba Kingdom Knight's Sword. Starting auction price: 1000 Won.

-Mapon Kingdom Knight's Sword. Starting auction price: 1000 Won.

-Honorable Knight Armor. Starting auction price: 1000 Won.

-Gloves of Blessing. Starting auction price: 1000 Won.

-Armor of War. Starting auction price: 1000 Won.

-Cyclops' Helmet. Starting auction price: 1000 Won.

He went ahead and registered the items obtained from the Palrangka Conflict.

Most of the items he got in Todoom were ingredient items or the lot of japtem.

From the Pegasus or the Unicorns. Things he happened to obtain almost inevitably during the battle with these divine creatures.

In Morata, he can directly manufacture these and can sell for a fair market price, or even tagged them with a high price.

But things such as complete items like weapon or armor, it was easier for these items to find a buyer by putting them on the auction site.

The weapon he acquired from the Vampire treasury was limited to level 440 players, Koldrim Demon Sword. He suspected that it wouldn't sell for a high price if he had putting up to sell.

With the competition between the players making prices rise heartily; it was better for him to use it in the meantime and sell it for a reasonable price after a wait for these competitive individuals.

“Of course I can just sell it right now...oh that reminds me, the Paskran Lance.”

The lance he identified but did not take from the Vampire's treasury!

Clearly, he recalled that somebody had posted an article on the Dark Gamer Union asking to get it.

Lee Hyun failed to best a fight against his curiosity, found the author of the post and sent a message.

In the past, you're the guy that wanted to get the Paskran Lance, right? How much were you willing to pay for it?

Lee Hyun had things to do so he ended it with that.

It has been quite some time that he was able to rest comfortably for a day, then the feeling sunk into him.

"It's been almost 100 days since i last posted huh."

For Dark Gamers, their working hours wasn't something belonging to the five days a week category. They must play well with others, have to be eager to hunt or lose out, and must raise their skills.

Before turning off the computer, Lee Hyun went to the information page and posts an article.

Information on Monsters in the North.

Together with Seoyun, they found the Valley of Death when crossing into the northern borders.

From things such as procuring food, routes, and information on habitats of Monsters.

For the Dark Gamers who primarily hunts alone in order to get more money; needless to say, these were valuable information.

Give as much as you receive.

At the expense of gaining information from the Dark Gamers, Lee Hyun too had to give a bit of something back.

As for the current information given, grade ‘C.’

Lee Hyun published the self-written article, then got up and headed toward the kitchen.

“On a rest day like this, I gotta soak a bit of kimchi.”

Thinking it was a bit too early, he quickly immersed the kimchi.

“The common salt is just as good as any. Pricier salt isn't even a good thing.”

*

Today as well, millions of people have accessed the Royal Road webpage. The lot of them were watching the live feed on the Hall of Fame page.

-The Tower of Light Guild went into the Cruel Urolba cave.

-In just a bit, Urolba will appear.

The Tower of Light was a guild with a towering number of 30000 members.

It wasn't a guild filled with high-leveled personnel, but the number was something of a huge force.

They occupied a territory that contains the Urolba Lair.

Cruel Urolba.

A typical Boss Monster, an evil spirit whom revives itself once every month on the Versailles Continent.

The power of the Electric Whip it wields was not something comparable to that of a Dragon's breath; but if having been struck, one's body will be Paralyzed as well as being depleted of Stamina. Preceding its emerging familiars, the Evil Spirits, which does so in an extremely quick manner, their resistance made the hunt much more difficult.

The Tower of Light Guild mobilized a massive scale of personnel to raid this Urolba.

“We are in a position to establish justice on the Versailles

Continent. The cowardly monster Urolba, it hides itself instead of coming out. It is in my position to punish this wicked being for the sake of all!”

The Guild Master Hertz proudly exclaimed in the huge cave. Then, Urolba emerged.

And the appropriate battle began!

The focus of the battle for the Guild was to obtain a new item; the Blessing of Enormous Wealth from the God of Battle, Tyr.

‘This is an opportunity to elevate the guild’s honor that we can’t afford to miss.’

Until now, the number of guilds that have hunted Urolba didn’t even reach six. Among all these prestigious guilds, only the Hermes Guild’s hunt came out successful.

The Tower of Light Guild didn’t hold back on investing their all on this gamble.

“Take Urolba treasure. Let's get his whip too.”

The warriors too, craved for the stats.

The person who bears the occupation of a Sculptor, Weed, his stats rise when he is able to create Masterpieces, Classics, or

Magnums. This method was only available to the Sculptors and not to any other occupation.

In cases with the melee's lot, if it was a successful hunt after risking it all with Boss Monsters, Reputation and sometimes, stats, could be obtained.

Though this was something easier said than done.

Their targets were often something terrible; most times, they would risk their lives and fight with their all.

The Cruel Urolba fits the category.

As for the non-melee type adventurers: in this case Grave Robbers, there were rumors that their stats would rise if they identify locations that haven't been discovered, a grave belonging to someone who once was a celebrity, or when they investigate dungeons.

While the clergymen can gain Piety stat points by treating someone in deadly condition, and gain Faith through deliverance of monks from the grasp of evil.

Art occupations such as professional Painters, can simply gain stats by drawing qualifying pictures. Architects gains stats by creating architectural marvels. Of course, Blacksmiths that produces luxurious weapons and armors can gain stats.

The advantage of being a Sculptor and other blue collar occupations is that they didn't need to risk their lives in order to gain stats.

At the very least, constructions and creating a huge artwork poses a bit of risk; but it was nothing really dangerous to one's vitality.

Nevertheless, the warriors that has to face higher risks by hunting dangerous Bosses obtain a lot more stats, more spoils, more Reputation; while are continually able to fight stronger and stronger Monsters.

“Iyaaahh!”

“Watch his hand.”

“Melee, spread out to prevent getting hit by the whip!”

“Going head to head is our only way!”

The warriors rushed Urolba.

Meanwhile, the Evil Spirits within the cave made their appearances.

Out of the rocks, Cave Worms appeared and overtook the Clerics and Wizards.

“Save me!”

“Help us here!”

They cried out insanely, but the melees who were locked in the battle with Urolba did not heed their calls.

Though the size of the guild was big, due to the lack in ability to lead its members, as many as 2000 of the Tower of Light Guild members lost their lives outright.

The people who were watching the stream on the Hall of Fame page had already determined their debacle before Urolba and its familiars.

-Waste of time.

-In my eyes, seems like they already gave up.

-Although it's their first time hunting this Boss Monster, I think the Tower of Light Guild fell too easily.

They did not conceal their disappointment.

Then on the forum, someone posted on the bulletin board after checking out the auction site.

-Weed! Weed came back. Check on his auction site!

The fact that Weed was selling off Bromba and Mapon kingdoms' Knights' weapons and Cyclops' helmets was widespread.

-What the hell happened?!

-I wonder what Weed went through again.

When it came to Weed, raving fans flocked like the clouds.

There was no news regarding Weed after he had bested against the Dragon, so the mysterious disappearance as well as his activities were bound to stimulate people's curiosity.

Again, they checked on the goods he registered on the auction site.

-The performance on the weapons is quite excellent.

-The auction price had already surpassed 500000 Won.

-Weed huh. Oh my, he hunted Cyclops...! Alone, I wonder? I think he musta have colleagues.

-As I understand it, Weed is almost always alone. Even with

strong Monsters like the Cyclops, even Dragons, for Weed, abnormal opponents are normal to him.

-Keuu! There ought to be a movie of the hunt. Weed's combat capabilities and the Single Point Attack skill just swept by like a storm; I can't get it out of my head.

-But does anybody know where the Bromba Kingdom is?

-I have no idea on Mapon either.

-Maybe they're new kingdoms in the North?

People plunged into questioning the location of Bromba and Mapon on the central of the continent. The number those that deduced that they were small countries in the north wasn't small either.

But, those that were in the north refuted the possibility of the kingdoms being there.

Then someone on the forum found the answer.

-Bromba Kingdom, Mapon Kingdom. They're ancient kingdoms that existed centuries in the past.

-Really? I don't believe it.

-It's an irrefutable fact. You can find them on the Versailles Continent History Book.

Some other user then posted by quoting the whole history of the continent. Then and there, they found out about the war waged between the Bromba Kingdom and Mapon Kingdom.

Most of the people, unlike Weed, did not go and memorize the whole history of the continent.

-How'd he get ancient kingdom's weapons...?

-What kind of adventure was it? Like, did he unearthed the remains of the ancient kingdoms? Or like, he explored an ancient dungeon?

-Grrr. I want to see. I want to see.

The people's curiosity reached their peak.

Nobody can really escape the ponderosity weighing down on their body.

So with the craziness, they herded themselves toward the homepage of KMC Media.

-Is there any truth that Weed went on an adventure, or anything at all relating to the matter?

-Did he cross into the ancient kingdoms?

-Do you plan to broadcast Weed's adventure? If yes, please do it tomorrow.

-I believe in the ability of KMC Media. My channel is fixed and I'll wait; even if it's just a special, please show it.

In writing tantrum, the viewers commented page after page!

*

KMC Media staff members' feet were on fire.

"Overtime, working overtime!"

"Order boxed dinner. We can't go home before editing all the material."

The staffs' tears faded as they must indulged in their work.

Due to the nature of Weed's adventure, even with the short section of the Palrangka Conflict up to his termination, it could come out to be at least a few hours.

Meeting with Princess Remy, assault on horseback, battling in

the air, the fight against the Cyclops and Knights!

There were many prominent scenes that were indispensable.

In addition, this was the historic Palrangka Conflict.

Not only are they broadcasting the adventure of Weed, they are to provide information on skills, items, and monsters on the spot.

Due to this, all hands at the station were on deck.

Prior to the final edits, the MCs were also preparing.

The writers had to write the script while watching the video playback in real-time at the station, the hosts had to stay up all night busy memorizing the established information on the battle.

They tried to shorten the time to the broadcast in consideration to the viewers' degrading attention span as well as to live up to their collective expectation.

Shin Hye Min reads the confirmed script on air.

“This is the battle of the Jeonshin Weed, the being who is unique in virtue and the embodiment of adventure himself! We will introduce the viewers to the breathless passion and chest pounding jubilation of a romance with the Princess within the Palrangka Conflict.”

*

Bwakk bwakk!

Half Seasoned Half Fried!

The chicken that betrayed Lee Hyun and went to Seoyun haven't eaten anything.

The hospital nurses gave it rice, millet, sesame seed, as well as other different types of chicken feed they've obtained, but all were in vain.

“Why don’t you eat?”

“He’s going to starve to death.”

The nurses in Seoyun hospital room watched the rooster with anxious eyes.

To be precise, they were worried about Seoyun.

The tenderhearted and kind Seoyun, for if the chicken that was kept by her dies, she would be greatly damaged.

Half Seasoned Half Fried just lay there weakly.

“.....”

Seoyun sadly stroke the chicken.

She lamented that there was nothing else she could give to the chicken outside of this.

‘Do you want to go back to your owner?’

Seoyun’s eyes filled with fret.

It may have been a mistake for her to take Half Seasoned Half Fried.

She believes that she could not have the love of anyone!

More so, she couldn't even gain trust and love from a chicken.

‘Lee Hyun. I have to take it to him.’

Having decided, Seoyun tried to lift Half Seasoned Half Fried.

But the chicken strongly resisted as she attempted to lift it from its roost.

The gesture of never wanting to go!

The nurse who were observing the situation were quite impressed.

“Chickens are also more intelligent than most creatures. They're able feel and think more than what people believes.”

“It's a really good chicken; it like the heart of its new owner while it also misses its old home. It would be nice if it could take just a bit of food...”

While filled with wrenching sympathy, Seoyun and the nurses tried to be quiet so Half Seasoned Half Fried could go to sleep.

Then, in the middle of this, another nurse opened the door and came in.

She brought Seoyun's meal on a platter.

Vitamin rich vegetable and pork dishes.

Bwakkk!

At that moment, Half Seasoned Half Fried flapped its feathered wings and flew straight toward the tray. It then began pecking up the pork to eat.

Ttototototok.

It was just going at it on the tray.

“...!”

After eating a huge amount of food, the chicken peacefully fell asleep.

‘I have heard stories of chicken eating pork, but...’

‘This wasn’t about separation anxiety. That chicken is just a pig.’

The nurses have realized it.

Seoyun was also in deep thought.

‘I just wanted to receive love; but I have never tried reaching out first.’

The only person whom she felt comfortable with was Lee Hyun.

In Royal Road, he was the one who made the food for her to eat. During the MT too, she also ate the food he cooked. But she did not offer a word of gratitude.

‘There’s nothing I can do for him.’

Seoyun then nodded her head.

From now on, she wanted change, even if it just a little.

‘Next time...I’ll give him my food.’

She knew where he would go to eat during lunch.

‘On my own...not some cheap already-made lunch. I want to make the food to give to him.’

Seoyun fell into deep thoughts, for she was busy determining what to prepare.

*

“Guys, come here.”

Lee Hyeyeon came into the yard.

She had prepared the portion of food for the chicken that Lee Hyun have started raising from long ago. She wanted to directly and tidily give the chickens their meal; and as a brother, Lee Hyun could not reject.

Lee Hyeyeon happily gave them the feed she worked on.

“Today’s meal is kalbi.”

Bwaaaak!

The first, Boiled Egg, pecked at the little strings of kalbi as he eats.

Afterward, Sunny Side Up, Mother Hen, Soup, Fried, Seasoned, and even the newly replaced Half Seasoned Half Fried went at the remaining kalbi.

The chicks that were recently hatched!

The growing chicks had already eaten the worms that Mother Hen gave them, but they’ve smartened up and hovered towards the kalbi.

“A very harmonious scene.”

Lee Hyeyeon felt happy.

The chickens and the chicks were gathering along side the kalbi. It was a very cute sight.

A considerable amount of leftover of meat on the bones after the chicken had finish eating.

Not one to abandon food, Lee Hyeyeon called forth for one more animal who was sitting in wait from a distance.

“Boshin, come here.”

Woof woof!

It went at the leftover portion of the kalbi.

The dog’s name was Mohm Boshin!

She brought in a young stray pup in the neighborhood to eat, but did not do so because she had grown attached to him.

[TL : Mohm Boshin(몸 보신): This term here has 2 meanings that are nearly identical to each other. The verb 몸보신하다 means to 'improve[build up] one's health,' with the 몸보신 as 'nurture, restore' in the compound. The second meaning is when you break up his name, 몸 means 'body' while 보신 means 'self-preservation.' That is, 'for my preservation.' Oh and, 보신탕(boshintang) means 'dog soup'; take that with a grain of salt. Won't add this to Glossary, since it's a name.]

“You must have been hungry.”

Lee Hyeyeon stroked Mohm Boshin’s head.

It's a known fact to not touch a dog while it is eating; but Mohm Boshin was fine with it.

Arf arf!

As if asking to be petted some more, after finishing up the kalbi, it rolled over and assumed the belly up position with its limbs held high.

Usually not that clever of a dog, it can still chase birds and even knew where to take care of its business.

Whenever he does this, Lee Hyeyeon lets out a brilliant smile.

“Our Boshin is very sweet.”

A girl and a dog.

A very peaceful scene.

But, Mohm Boshin have not forgotten.

During the days when he was younger, she personally named him as such with her wickedly staring gaze.

Chapter 4: Weed's Return

In Morata, on the Crimson Mercenary Guild's wall, the Bounty's board was pack tightly with wanted posters.

“What, what happened?”

“Where are the good requests?”

Departing and returning adventurers flocked to the board.

Wanted: Geomchi

Bounty: 550 Gold

Crime: Corruption, Murder, Evasion

Appearance: Aged fellow

Body style is similar to a Barbarian

Known for wearing a strong odorous armor

Strength: Enough to fight on equal standing with a Hell Lord Knight. Skill and Strength are excellent

Special note: Sided with the Vampires and massacred Humans

Location last spotted: Morata South Entrance

Wanted: Geom-2-chi

Bounty: 548 Gold

Crime: Corruption, Murder, Evasion

Appearance: Could not stop his incessant laughter

Great muscular body

Known for wearing a strong odorous armor

Strength: Can hold and win a fight against five Vikings

Special note: Sided with the Vampires and massacred Humans

Location last spotted: Morata South Entrance

From Geomchi, Geom-2-chi, Geom-3-chi, and so on and so forth until Geom-505-chi.

Despite the fact that the description did not match their characteristics to a tee, their names were still exposed due to the bestowed Murderer's mark.

To reiterate, in exchange for doing quests for the Vampires, they were deemed wicked.

“They appeared yesterday and rampaged off.”

“I heard they hastily departed southward.”

A considerable number of their tracks could be witnessed.

In fact, there was an attempt to apprehend the lot.

Besides the bounty assigned; Reputation, Public Value, as well as Mercenary rating could all be obtained along with the gold. In addition, if one was lucky enough, he could steal the equipment they donned. As a result, people promptly jumped on this.

“Ah, hells.”

“We aint like that.”

“AH! girls!”

“Keugg! Even women are trying to kill me.”

Alas, the Geomchis paid little mind to their immediate situation and quickly rushed off. Whatever urgency they were in, they looked so furious as they were rushing toward the south;so much so that those tried to pursue them didn't want to stand in their path.

There were many people whose level were higher than the Geomchis in Morata. If the Geomchis had been just one or two of them, then these people would have been surrounded them. But with many of them appearing and suddenly bolted off as if they were sails with wind pushes on them, people simply backed out of the way.

And now.

From Morata's West Gate, one person with his name inscribed in the crimson Murderer's mark approaches.

“On the subject of killers, there's one trying to enter the town fearlessly.”

“Is he crazy?”

There's no army in Morata. Instead, Paladins of the Freya's Church stationed and were standing guard at every gate.

“Damn, I wanted the kill. Miss the opportunity to raise my Reputation.”

Freya's Paladins were known to be unforgiving.

Merchants and adventurers alike were watching the oncoming person whom was without a single measure against the Paladins.

In a few moment, he will be caught by the Paladins and he will be beaten mercilessly.

Everybody have expected this since they've witnessed how the Freya Paladins treated the rebelling monsters and sinners near their vicinity.

However, as the Murderer advances toward them, they hoist up their swords and performed salutations as if they were greeting an aristocrat.

"May all harmonizes according to the Goddess' will."

The visitor too, lightly saluted back.

"May all harmonizes according to the Goddess' will."

Then, without a single sign of resistance from the Paladins, he casually passes through the entrance to the village.

Weed was the person that came into Morata.

After journeying to the Vampire Kingdom and passing the Intermediate Training Center, he returned once again to the Versailles Continent.

Wherever Weed step, people just scampered off out of his path.

“What?”

“What’s going on?”

“It’s a Murderer. A Murderer came into the town.”

“How? I know Morata has poor public security, but...aren’t there the Freya Paladins?”

“Dunno. It’s hard to believe, look there. The Paladins around the town doesn’t bother him at all.”

The crowd gathered and was pondering about the terrible fact, Weed continued his stride toward the center of the square from the entrance of the village while people continues to part.

The they all followed him immediately as he passes.

For one donning the wicked mark of a Murderer to be walking so unabashedly inside the town, they felt an intensive interest and curiosity towards Weed.

‘It has developed a lot since I left for Todoom.’

The large-scale investment of 260000 Gold!

The roads widened and were filled with decent pebbles, making it convenient for the carriages as they make their way through the streets without having to pay expensive tolls; unusual for a village.

Along the street: pubs, smithies, trading posts, textile shops have been completed. The Freya Church’s post could be seen from a distance as well. Mercenary Guild and Vigilante spot were also created, each crowded with people.

A spectacle that haven’t been seen in any other villages or provinces (in the North.)

‘The number of people have grown by a lot.’

Even before Weed left for Todoom, there was quite a lot of travelers who paid Morata a visit. But now, due to the rumors circulated by words of mouth regarding the Light Tower, a lot more people came and always set Morata as a Starting Point for their adventure in the North.

The number wasn’t as large as when Weed started in Rosenheim

Kingdom, but people were filled with vigor just the same.

As for the reason, this was all due their adventurous spirit as well as their will to face challenges, along with the fact that this was the new frontier for exploration.

Splash splash splash.

A waterway was also made from the river. And in the center of the path, an artistic bridge have been made and was filled with sculptures and works of art.

All thanks to the Elder for his endless and aggressive investments into art and cultural activities; for he took the fact that Lord of Morata, Weed, was a Sculptor.

Weed was satisfied while looking at the artwork.

‘These are also nothing like cheap decorative artwork.’

But still, artwork were still dirt cheap!

Though, artists weren’t just some cheap laborers.

Sculptures, pictures, building, all are things to elevate sightseers’ satisfaction who stands before them.

The money they sprinkled on this in order to stimulate Morata's economy, in which it will eventually return back to Weed's pocket.

There was no need for Weed to fret over this, because the travelers will in turn recompense them with money from on Morata's resident to the next.

He's like a delighted IRS agent watching the birth of a newborn!

Or the feeling the joy of a loan shark with its newly found first time customer.

Weed, who inadvertently attracted a crowd, sat down on a vacant spot in the square.

“Selling manufacturing goods. Sewing, smithing, sculpture; and although it's weak, I'll paint if am commissioned. Chaa! pick, pick! Whatever material you have in mind for custom-made work, I'll do it.”

Weed wanted to produce items while donning Murderer mark!

Reasoning flew past the users head.

“What the, this guy.”

“I thought you can only take one, but a Tailor, Blacksmith, and a

Sculptor?”

“I’d imagine he’s no good, there no prospective seen in the combination.”

The users were appalled.

While he marred with the Murderer’s mark, the users were being considerably conscious around him.

‘The Ranker i heard about.’

In the spacious Versailles Continent, it was difficult to even meet just one user with a ranking position.

They weren't viable to come across even in the Central continent’s largest provinces; for they were usually in the nearby villages or mining towns that were close to dungeons or hunting grounds.

‘He’ll be very strong.’

‘He won’t attack me all of the sudden, will he?’

They trembled in fear while following behind him, but in fact, there was no need to worry about the range in power.

The clue has been provided by the Paladins; for they politely make way as he passes and have not once made an attempt to attack.

Although, if the regular users attack Weed, they would overwhelm him and his situation would have been difficult.

As a matter of fact, there was no beginner among the Morata's user base.

Surely, the level of those who were here wasn't as high as Weed, or are they as methodical as him; but they absolutely had the majority.

If someone made a simple pillory, things could spark into a huge event.

But as he subdue the initiative and showing no erratic behaviors, the attacking mood would simply diffuse itself.

In fact, Weed have had a lot of experiences being on this side.

Back in the days on the Continent of Magic, if the scattering of broken glass bothered him just a bit, Weed would kill all.

He would even kill the soliciting Merchants for nagging him. And there was no exception when it came to hunting grounds, as he wanted it all to himself.

There was no forgiveness even for a couple having discreet conversations in some corner of the dungeon either.

All the challengers who dared rise time and time again were crushed thoroughly.

The notoriety he had then wasn't just there, for it had shifted in location.

‘This is why the fact that I’m 'that' Weed should not be known.’

The accumulated reputation Weed gained back in CoM was huge.

Due to the tremendous widespread of his name by the stations, he was revered by the adventurers and regular users alike on the Versailles Continent.

As a result, he was the target of many people.

The Jeonshin Weed's killer.

A glorious title.

Along with the people with grudges back in the days of CoM, a huge number of them who are high-level users on the Versailles Continent haven't been constantly grinding their axes contemplating the day.

He must not be recognized; for these people have scattered about, lying in waits to have the honor of intercepting Weed.

To make matter worse, Information Guild, Assassin Guild, Dark Gamer Guild, etc. made a lot of attempts to find his location as well as his (ingame) identity.

As long as they know who he was, hundreds of Rankers would swarm him and challenges him as soon as tomorrow.

Even large, prestigious Guilds would trample one another trying to get at him.

Assiduously with the logic of power in mind, a rather simple way to increase the guild's influence was to hold that title. While not on the same level as the famed adventures of chasing after the presence of myths or legends; but all in all, to maximize the guild's strength, Weed was a good prey.

With the Invincible Gambler, the God of War and such titles following him, he was at risk as he walked on such thin ice.

On the subject of Royal Road, while the game poses as enjoyment for many others, this was Weed's livelihood.

‘Without this, warmth and a full belly isn't possible. All these weak guys wouldn't mind ratting out a person like me for all the food to survive. There's no such person who is sweet, naïve, and

modest.'

Then, a girl raised her hand.

"Sir."

"Yes?"

"I want to align new attire...a Robe that's trendy and fit me perfectly. Also, if you could, I'd like to have high Magic Defense."

Although a bit reluctant, the girl placed an order.

He sifted through his backpack to look for the mats.

He had already memorized the kind of mats he has as well as the amount of quantity, but he wanted to confirm it at least once more before doing anything.

"I have Strong Pegasus Leather, as well as Strong Unicorn Leather. And I also have Premium Vampire Leather. Note that if you decide to pick this type, I'd charge you a bit more for repair charges."

"The premium leather?"

"Yes, the leather that the Vampire uses. I could dismantle the

cape again and gain the mats to create the garment. A short enough skirt can lose out on Defense, would you like me to make a tight fit that runs along the curvatures of your body?”

The new skill he obtained upon reaching Intermediate level 2 of Sewing, Raw Material Extraction!

Recycling from clothing that have already been made, he could essentially create new items through this skill.

Making good items from older items was a high gamble though; but being able to make more diverse items as well being able to correct it with all the necessities, the skill's advantages was not a small matter.

Weed continued ahead without stopping.

“The prices are subjected to the materials. And I charge 10 Gold per hour for the labor fee.”

Weed’s proposed price of labor was sufficient enough to cause rejection from the users.

From the rear of the crowd, one person bluntly protested.

“If it’s 10 Gold then that's too expensive. Don’t you know that the Sewing prices from all over are cheaper in comparison, you complete crook.”

Though it had a tone of cynicism, it incurred the responses of other users.

“That right. He did that and became a Murderer.”

“I know right. Having no decency like a crooked taxi driver.”

For a skilled tailor, receiving 10 Gold per hour price wasn't something so expensive.

Because comparing to the vocational profession, others could hunt for even more money during that same while.

However, due to the excessive competition of the blue-collar workers, as well as the decline of the delivery of goods, it was uncommon for a person to request that price.

The people who crowded around Weed began to lose interest and were starting to disband.

Weed then spoke.

“My Sewing Skill is Intermediate, Blacksmithing Skill's Intermediate, and my Handicraft Skill is on the Advanced level. Whatever item it is, I will make them to the best of their ability. Believe and please leave it to me.”

The reaction from those people changed at once.

“Intermediate Sewing, Intermediate Blacksmithing, Advanced Handicraft? Did the Versailles Continent ever have a user like that?”

“That’s impossible, it’s a ridiculous combination.”

“Maybe he’s a person who sits all day in a cave just to increase his manufacturing skills?”

“If you look at the equipment he’s wearing, its level seems a bit low. I don’t think he’s a user of the blue-collar job who reached the Advanced stages of the Handicraft skill yet...”

“Then, the stature of his craftsmanship is unknown. He’s a scam artist, an impostor.”

“By the way, his name’s Weed. No way, could he be the Sculptor Weed?”

Weed’s name has been openly revealed in red. Murderers are unable to hide their names as it is a forced exposure.

“If he’s that Sculptor Weed, then he’s that famous user who is the Lord of Morata, similar to that of an Earl?”

“Weed was the said user who overstepped the Intermediate

stages of the Sculpturing Skill long ago. That means he's just returned from his trip to the Kingdom of Vampires Todoom...”

“He must have returned just now!”

“Morata’s Lord is back!”

The Sculptor Weed’s name had significant recognition across the Versailles Continent.

At least, everybody in Morata knew he was its peculiar Lord.

“No wonder the Freya Paladins didn’t attack him...”

“And the residents too, were amicable even when seeing a Murderer.”

The space between Weed and Morata’s inhabitants was very small.

A result of the power of Reputation on the Versailles Continent!

The users with all their completely uncoiled doubts rushed together.

“Please make me the Robe!”

The girl from a while before, followed by the lot of denizens.

“Me too. Please make me a pair of Boots. Is it possible to grant it Options? Boots that is as light as possible.”

“I’d hope you can make a coat...for Warrior that is. Something that can be worn over the armor, please produce a good fit for me.”

It was still rare for a user to attain Intermediate Sewing, even with Morata’s expedition on Tailoring. Because of that, most of the items the users obtained were through hunting or were things they bartered for by trading necessary items.

Since a user with Intermediate level in Blacksmith and Sewing appeared, they swarmed together with their own Advanced materials.

Furthermore, the user’s Handicraft Skill attained the Advanced level, this was something they couldn't fathom.

“For me, a Sword.”

“I need a Shield that protects, could you make it?”

The users’ ordered goods were very diverse, the mats Weed saved up from Todoom ended up selling as manufactured goods.

“Excuses me...I understand you are a Sculptor.”

A male user approached.

“That’s right.”

Weed replied as he beats the hammer. It had just turned the evening, so he didn’t see too many customers.

In contrast, during the morning and in the afternoon, he was manufacturing ordered goods without a single break.

“Could you carve me a bouquet of flowers for commemoration? For my girlfriend?”

“.....”

It was a prime time for him to make money, so Weed wasn’t very enthused.

“I have orders backed up at the moment; I might finish with them some time tomorrow evening...”

Noticing a sign of discomfort coming from Weed, the user held out an item.

“This is Pure Iron. I’ll pay for the fee along with this here.”

Pure Iron!

Compare to the Common Iron, this has higher intensity of iron packed in.

Weed suddenly clasped the man’s hand.

“I’ll make it!”

“.....”

The Sculptor class really isn’t one to rely on to make living.

Since the fee for the work is really cheap in comparison to anything else, any tip that come with an order is something they cannot refuse.

‘I’m used to using the Sculpturing skill anyway, this’ll just a bit and I’m done.’

As usual, he took out a piece of wood and began to carving a flower.

Since he manufactured so many floral merchandise in the past; the output would still result to something desirable even if he had

kept his eyes closed.

But soon after he had activated the Sculpturing Skill, whispers from unknown beings could be heard.

-Please sculpt me.

-Carve us!

-Human sculptor, I'm sure you're able to do it.

-I say hurry and sculpt us!

Ever since attaining the level 5 in the Advanced stages of Sculpturing, he could hear the voices of these unknown presence without fail.

Not only can they be heard, they can impart themselves.

-If you do not free us...

-If you are not willing to give life to us...

-It would be better off for this fool of a Sculptor to die.

Weed's body suddenly went ablaze.

His whole body caught on fire and roaring of the flames ensued.

This happened in the center of the square, at midnight in Morata.

Received the Curse of Fire.

Will sustain continuous Fire damage.

All Durability of worn good will deteriorate quickly.

While his body was burning, Weed's Health was defusing out of him at a rate of 300HP per second.

The wood he was carving also caught on fire without a moment of delay.

“Stone Skin!”

Weed reflexively used his protection skill, and the decline of his HP decreased by 65%.

“Waah! Look at him.”

“That's cool.”

“How’s he doing that?”

Morata’ square got nosier again.

Thanks to the spectacle that is Weed!

“Bright.”

“He’s beautifully on fire.”

The number of users watching Weed as he burns was quite large. But of course, there were well meaning Clerics there too.

Noticing something bad had happened, the Clerics simultaneously casts treatment and curse removal Holy magic.

“Cure!”

“Recovery!”

“Round Heal!”

Weed was being treated with several different types of divine magic used over and over again.

“Iron Protect.”

“Holy Shield.”

Along with the overlapping protection magic bestowed onto him, the fire covering Weed finally dispersed.

Weed was discouraged.

“Now it looks like I’m putting on a circus act.”

He became the eventful and suffering Sculptor on the move!

Who would have thought the road of a Sculptor could be so colorful?

When he started carving again, he took on a Curse of Ice.

He slowly carved the bouquet in on piece while being frozen in the block of ice.

“Th, thank you.”

The one who ordered the item received it then hastily disappeared.

Now it was raining atop of Weed’s head. The large clouds just over his head without targeting anything else, and thunders within

the clouds could be heard.

Kureureung, kwawang!

The other users in the square deviated from him.

“Strange things are happening around just that guy.”

“Look at the cursed character.”

“Shh. Don’t get close, you might get infected by the curse.”

Still, Weed was released unharmed from the curses with help from the Clerics.

As a test, each time he tries to sculpt: either burning fire, infectious poison, falling rain, shaking earth occurs.

Sewing Skill proficiency increased by 0.1%.

Weed gave up working on sculpturing commissions for the foreseeable future and just focus on the received smithing and sewing orders.

Skill mastery and money, as well as building up reputation while manufacturing goods!

There was no less coming from the recognized Weed's preaching either!

The essence of the products increased rose higher due to his great articulation.

“This may just be clothing, but I'm not selling you just some common dress. Sedona nim, was it? This is made tailored specifically to Sedona nim. This pleasingly fits over the base line of Sedona nim's chest, waist, and buttocks with Defense and Durability fundamentally in mind. Thanks to the luxurious Unicorn Leather, the clothes appearance won't fall short at any time. This thing can essentially save Sedona nim at least 10 times over the course.”

“What about the prices?”

“Price...it really doesn't have a thing like a price tag attached; but if you trust in me and regard me to a status in mind, then please give me what you think is right by that standard.”

He looked toward the person while talking about the prices.

Any exhilarated and goodhearted man would willingly shell out money after watching the work that took place. Rather than presenting a specific price for the service, Weed got more revenue this way.

For those who were sensitive with money, they were not forced

down to a predefined cost and in turn believed they received a bargain.

For the users who wanted to use Advanced material, Weed sold imported items obtained from Todoom without care for the money.

Unlike the fairly affluent goods in the Central continent, the prices for Leather and Iron in Morata were still more expensive. Here, while selling according to the prices set for each material, Weed's pocket was growing and growing with more money accumulated.

Unlike doing sculpturing on the fly back then, he received more money and more skill proficiency thanks to the positive response from the people.

This was infinitely impressive!

‘Not as an artist, but I’m more befitting of a simple hard working technician, huh.’

While seriously thinking about his vocation, Weed's hand was moving as he calculates money without a misstep.

In the midst of creating the armor piece, his mind ventured on next order: calculating the materials needed, pricing on the said mats, and the cap the customer payment for the item; the scale of workload he put on himself that could be considered as amazing.

Traveled by the words of mouth, the armor or clothing Weed made obtained greater responses due to their performance.

“Look at this, the Durability is no joke.”

“How vigilant is his work to get the Durability of a Robe to such an extent?”

Even from cheaper fabric, he was able to generate something out of it.

While the Lord of Morata Weed's produces premium goods, people congregated.

Through this method of disposing the mats, Weed's Tailoring and Blacksmithing skills were able to gain a level each.

The revenue obtained was a larger sum when he manufacturing goods out of these material items; and this method earned him a stagger profit of 340000 Gold.

If he had disposed them as individual item, this path wouldn't make as much money as he did.

Receiving these materials in place of creating the armor set out of bones for the Geomchis, the payoff was huge!

This earned him more money comparing to when he sold the treasure of the Nippleheim Empire.

Additionally, Weed's popularity varies.

“Hey, I came here from Rosenheim Kingdom to eat porridge!”

“Are you planning to build something like the Pyramid again? While making it, I got a lot of points for Public Value for the country...”

“Whether it's grade B or C is fine with me. If you can accommodate the porridge during the work, I'll make sure to work to the bone.”

There was a considerable amount of users from Rosenheim Kingdom that liked Weed.

Every time he sees them, Weed felt very satisfying.

*

It was when Weed finished with his business that the Freya's Paladins together with Alberone approached him.

“Weed nim, you have sinned a lot in the time we have not met.”

Weed spoke matter-of-factly.

“Yeah. I was rescuing the Vampires and it became so.”

He didn't hesitate to speak so informal towards the Pope candidate because they have gone through quests together, as well as once having treated Alberone through food; so naturally, Familiarity between the two was high.

Alberone had a look of pity.

“How could that had happ...ahh I understand. It's all due to the fault of Weed nim's compassionate heart, is it not?”

“.....”

“Obviously, the Vampires pinpointed Weed nim's goodness and used it to their own gain. You must have thought their preordained fate was too much, even for them; your mercy surely has no end.”

“.....”

Weed figured it was best to let Alberone theory to run its course in order to keep Familiarity with the Freya Church.

The Church has a very high Public Value.

There are faith stalls built in Morata village for the villagers as well as the contribution made by the Church to the village.

Owing much to the close relationship between the two, they decided to put their trust in Weed, even if he was on this side.

Rather than right or wrong, sometime the influence of Familiarity is heavily relied on.

“I’m going to pray for you, Weed nim. By the mercy of Goddess Freya, I believe She will forgive you.”

But Weed coarsened.

‘Prayer!? I don’t have money to eat or to die and you want me to make a donation?’

The fastest way to get out of the Murderer state is to donate money to the Church.

For the sake of receiving more quests with the lessen notoriety as oppose to more. In this state, chances to have a dialogue with the residents is slimmer because they will choose to avoid you, additionally blowing one's chances to commence business transaction.

The more pressing matter beyond such consequences of Infamy is that under the status of a Murderer, it'll be more likely for users to initiate the attacking.

Weed made it looked as if he hadn't eaten anything while being embarrassed.

“Alberone nim, I understand your intention. But I don't have much money. I'm even worried about what I'm going have for food tonight...”

“By the blessing of Goddess Freya, She has filled those with hunger. The development in the Morata province has been many. Thanks to Weed nim's excellent decision making in spreading the wealth, there are not many who are in need.”

“.....”

Weed was driving at trying to compromise at getting a discount in making donations, but thanks to Alberone simply genuine trust in him, he just swerved for nothing.

‘Morata's development...excellent decision making?’

During the time he was in Todoom, he was getting bits of information regarding the matter. Talks on the Versailles Continent and such, and also through the Dark Gamer Information Network; he read a few articles written how people significantly like Morata.

‘In order to get concrete information on how good it has been, I should to meet up with the Village Elder.’

The idea brushed past in Weed's head as he walked toward Alberone and knelt down, with both of his eyes closed.

Weed was praying.

His surrounding filled with divine power.

“This being here fought against the Vampires on behalf of the Goddess. Although his actions have been deemed as something comparable what humanity's standard regards as atrocities; he believes that the Vampires are also your beloved beings and they too deserve the Goddess's prosperity and richness...”

The candidate for the next Pope spoke with no less inferior in faith and divine power to anybody!

Ding!

Due to the mercy of Goddess Freya, 45% of Your outrageous sins were saved.

Infamy have been reduced to 500.

The loss of Infamy also resulted in the decrease of Leadership by 10.

In many ways, Infamy isn't completely useless.

Through means of threatening the NPC residents, you'll be able to obtain quests they won't give you otherwise; and you can also impose on the price set for items in stores. If and when you meet with fur trading NPCs at a secluded location, if your Infamy is high enough, even without the need to pose for a brawl, you'll be able to get your goods intact.

Subsequently, also affects Leadership when dealing with your own subordinates.

But due to having received Freya's blessing through praying, along with Infamy, his Leadership also decreased.

A side effect of the prayer for salvation.

After the prayer finishes, Alberone readily extended out his hand.

"Weed nim, let's go out to dinner. Let me go instruct them to set supper at the dinning hall."

Weed replied.

"Thanks, Alberone."

Having received what he yearned for, his tone changed slightly.

In Freya's Church, the meals aren't something light such as potato or sweet potatoes. There will be more than three or four main courses, as well as deserts, salads, and wine that will be served.

Lead by Alberone's hand and disappeared, Weed was admired by the gawking users.

"Ahh! Come to think of it, there's no need real need to question this...from the Light Tower to how he is Morata's Lord, after all."

"The relationship he has with the Freya Church is no joke."

"Might also be about money, isn't it? As a Lord, he had heavily invested in Morata."

"Maybe it's because he's heckla rich; he was able to be in a close knit relationship with the Church using the money."

"I heard they were pretty tight ever since Rosenheim Kingdom."

*

Weed was leisurely enjoying dinner at the Freya Church. There were fresh and plentiful foods all around.

Back in the cold and bleaker days of Morata, the residents wouldn't even have the homemade food to hold a celebration.

During those days, they didn't even have a rotten potato to fill their bellies. A stark contrast to the present, where food are bountiful.

All thanks to the due diligent of the Village Elder with expansion of the irrigation of food.

‘Morata’s truly having an revolution.’

If comparing to the provinces in the Central continent, Morata was just a minuscule portion of them; nonetheless, this was very impressive.

A town of mixed residents and users were living happily together!

He couldn’t help but be pleased due to all the taxes coming in from all the commerce.

Weed chomped on and on till his Satiety became full, and the Alberone talked to him.

“Weed nim, the Freya Church have been looking for you for a long time.”

“What for?”

“Actually, it’s about of the eradication of Monsters...”

After the ice melted in the North, Monsters with atrophies to the cold were coming out gradually.

It was because of these Monsters who have seemingly risen from their slumber that the northern exploration was in a state of stagnation.

From the story coming from Alberone, it seemed other developing villages were blindsided and got looted, and there were cases where the villagers decided not to leave for greener pastures. Merchants, on a large scale, did not travel for their businesses.

Weed anxiously asked.

“Is Morata going to be ok?”

In his position as Lord of Morata, the invested money that he earned with his flesh was the reason for his fretting.

“With the trustworthy Paladins of Freya here, we’ll try to maintain.”

Fortunately, Alberone’s words assured him.

At Morata, aside from the Paladins, there were also quite a few of adventurers as well as mercenaries available.

As a matter of fact, Morata have quite a force due to the users' tendency to consider the place as a strategic pioneering location. Quite frankly, if this place is to be overrun with Monsters, then the result would spell the fall of the whole northern region to the Monsters.

“Subsequently, there is something I need to ask of Weed nim. It would be greatly appreciated if we have your permission to gain reinforcements of Paladins and Priests of Freya Church from Somren Liberty City.”

Weed saw that there was nothing wrong with the proposal.

“If there are unrests because of Monsters here in the North, I would be thankful to have more to Paladins come and make certain of the excellent work of ensuring the public's safety thus far.”

“And...”

Alberone reticently slurred.

“In addition, there is one more thing that's a bit difficult to ask. The High Priest nim necessarily asked of Weed nim to listen and work on this.”

“What is it?”

If the talk wasn't about his money, then Weed would want to listen to any decent proposal.

The quests he received from the Freya Church, though a bit difficult, were all good ones. Such as the Jin-Hyeol Vampires, the war with the Legion of Immortals, all were quests that led to the second tier.

The question is how to avoid spending the substantial income he raised.

The commission coming from Freya Church was something he must accept as he did not want to just abandon the pile of contribution that comes along with it.

“Morata is a place known for its culture and art. However, there is no statue to symbolize the Goddess Freya anywhere to be seen. This can lead to the disappointment of Priests whom dedicated themselves to the Goddess. Due to this reason, the High Priest nim chose Weed nim to erect a colossal statue of the Goddess Freya.”

Ding!

The Statue of the Freya Church

On the northern part of the Versailles Continent, a statue that symbolizes the Goddess Freya is to be made.

The Freya Church want this to be a symbol to subtly state that it

doesn't want competition from any other churches.

If successful in making the statue for the Church, the Sculptor's name will resound greatly throughout the Versailles Continent.

Workers can be coordinated with during the creation of the statue.

Diamond is given for the expenses of the operation.

Quest difficulty

Religious Quest

compensation

The faith of the believers towards the subject will become three times more effective than usual.

For those involve, they can be compensated with skill proficiency as well as Reputation three times the norm with the successful completing of the statue.

If this fails, the Freya Church dependency on them will decline.

Quest Restriction

Because the Monsters will hate the object that represents the Freya Church, they will try to break it before completion.

The statue must never be destroyed.

Chapter 5: A Symbol Of Prosperity That Is Morata

Needless to say, Weed was going to accept the quest.

The current state of his body was not normal, but he cannot deny a request made by the Freya Church. Above all, there was nobody else in which he could forcibly impose the request onto.

He could not turn a blind eye to the compensation either.

A quest that can't be dissimilar to that of a Grade A difficulty where he can gain Reputation and rewards through creating the best of sculptures.

An opportune for the Advanced level 5 Sculpturing and Handicraft skills to rise!

In particular, if the piece is a large religious symbol, one can ask for assistance from the Subject with every changing season through prayers. In the Goddess's case, they can ask for an increase in grain yield, even if it's just a small amount; and even ask for the reduction of raiding Monsters.

In order for Morata that was trailing behind to progress further, the sacred statue was a necessity.

All in all, he did not miss the chance to be able to take the credit for it.

“The difficulty of the labor is all the same regardless, but if it's Alberone asking for the favor, I cannot refuse.”

Have accepted the quest.

The Murderer state disappeared with the acceptance of the referral from the Freya Church.

Infamy has decreased by 30 with the successful acquiescent.

“I’m sorry, Weed nim. There is nothing else our Church can offer outside of providing this for the difficult task.”

While being apologetic, Alberone offered up the Diamond.

The size of the Diamond was larger than that of any coin.

As he gratefully accepts the money-pot that the Freya Church put up for the commission, the trembled Weed pondered.

‘If I hand this over to the Jewelers, I can get over 130000 Gold. The most expensive of jewelry to make a living out of is the Diamond, after all. I’m going to finish the statue with care.’

It can take one week at the very least to create a large sculpture, and can span as long as three months. However, if you have a lot of people helping out during the process, it can be much shorter a time period.

‘All the Sahyeongs went to the Orc village.’

The Geomchis who ran off to the Orc village were busy. He sent them messages but none had replied.

“I’ve gotta ask for help from Fail nim.”

Weed decided to send a whisper to Fail.

-Fail nim.

-Yes, Weed nim!

-Where are you now?

We're still at Todoom.

Fail and the others were still doing some remaining quests there.

As a result of not being able to qualify to climb the Tower of Heroes, they were performing commissions from the Vampires until experiencing death.

-When are you returning to Morata?

-I don't know really. If Weed nim call for us, we can go anytime. But what do you need us to do?

-Well...

Secretly, Weed hesitantly reconsiders.

If he tell them that he was just commanding them to create the statue, they can chose not to come immediately. This was due to the fact they have already suffered a similar experience during the creation of the Pyramid.

-I have an ok quest, you know? Like the quests I once took up from the Freya Church led to the Jin-Hyeol Vampires and the Legion of Immortals.

-Gulp! Is that so?

-I received a quest from that same division of the Freya Church this time too. If you like to do it, then please come.

-Please wait there. We'll go now.

Weed smiled.

“Got a group liaisons.”

Still, to create the statue, he needed more help.

“It is essential to get help from workers with vigorous vitality in order to finish the sculpture in a short amount of time.”

He didn't know the magnitude of how many Monster will come to attack; but assuming there will be a significant amount of them in the raid, he can't afford to be lacking of people.

In order to create it as quickly as possible; from this standpoint, Weed was filled with motivation.

Who do you think he is?!

He's a Korean!

Driving taxis at the speed of bullets, not to mention buses too.

The buses that closes their doors even before passengers can get on; or have already zoomed off before they could even get off.

The culturally excellent transport that rushed its unfortunate passengers to their destinations while its gears settled at a single place.

On the construction industry side. Once they passes regulation, the building of however million of apartments will pretty soon be constructed.

Even though collapsed department store and broken leg of bridge had happened as a side effect, the pace is unmatched.

Nothing like them beside the nations of the economic beasts that are the Jewish and Japanese!

The Korean that care about a relaxed and easy-going labor hour is not going to happen here either.

“Gonna go to the South Entrance of Morata. That’s where I’m gonna see oncoming visitors from the Central continent first!”

*

Weed once again returned to the square to obtain more workers.

“Pick pick! Cheap pindaetteog!”

“Armor for sale. A piece of work by Warlord Olsen! Who is Olsen? Just me. A Blacksmith that fully understands steel.”

“Looking for a person that knows where Rubelin is! Is there a guide to go with to catch the Blue Beetle? I’ll even compensate.”

The square was in turmoil with people trying to deal at the stalls, obtaining colleagues, asking questions regarding information on the terrain or things for quests.

Busily moving feet and face filled with energy. Comparing to the Central continent, there was a lack of goods; but the spirit of adventure and vitality of life was nothing short of.

The blue collar jobs were festive as well.

The Monsters in Morata's vicinity never dries out.

Monster's head that is covered with green fish-like scales.

Crocodile monster that walks on two legs.

As the day warms up and the coming rain, new Monsters will spawn.

“Kui. Kuu!”

“Pwapapwa!”

Emerging weapons and armors using Monsters' materials made by the craftsmen sold like hot cakes.

“By making these, I gain money and skills proficiency too.”

“Here, this place is heaven.”

The artisans were ingenuity without any distraught.

*

Mishya bought a rod from them for Staff Techniques.

“Ah, feels really good.”

She twirled it to her heart content. There was no hiding her excitement.

Recalling the first time when she bought the latest rod and was in the mood for her first hunt!

She received praises from her colleagues as she overpowers the Monsters.

Rods were longer than swords, and were useful for defense. Along with sharing about 80% of Lancing Skills, of which were widely diverse with a huge range of weapons.

When she tried to leave the center square, Mishya met Weed.

“Eek!”

It was like a school girl screaming when meeting with a pervert!

“Morata Lord!”

Mishya’s words were able to pull the attention of the people who were absorbed in their own affairs.

“Sculptor Weed.”

“Morata’s Lord has returned.”

“Wait, he doesn’t have the Murderer mark. It’s gone. His name no longer shows.”

Momentarily, the crowd all noticed that the noticeably crimson mark has disappeared.

“Ya ya. Watch your words. You’re talking about the Lord of Morata here.”

“Morata’s Lord! Ack, you’re right, I forgot.”

“A wrong word toward a Noble or a guild Master spells death, you know.”

“Lower your voice. Be careful.”

Creator of the Pyramid and the Light Tower, the Lord of Morata Weed!

In Morata, whether they're of the trading or of the hunt, people can't help but be wary of Weed. If they somehow seemed to be opposing in the Lord's eyes, he can mobilize the province's entire army just for the sake of punishment. Of course, these were the cases of those who weren't residents of Morata.

Weed looked at the square filled with people.

Because of the developments in Morata, a lot of people coming to visit meant that the town was a nice place to live.

Weed wasn't just its loving Lord, he was just as much a user and its resident.

‘My lovely tax piggies.’

Whether they were users or the residents, he saw them as money.

Due to it being the middle of the day, a dramatic influx of users could be seen.

These people concerning about their commerce made the market an uproar.

“The method of a good ruler is to only to reveal himself during the tough times. I’m the Lord of Morata, Weed, who have made all the governing decisions. I welcome all those who have gathered.”

The reaction of the users gathered in the square wasn’t all that welcoming.

“Che, what kind decisions have you make? Every decision was done by the grandpa Elder alone. You were just playing somewhere else and just returned.”

“Earlier you were ripping people off selling the stuff.”

“I thought you were selling at the listed price but it seems to be a stretch. 'Cause comparing to the friend who knows of the right price, it wasn’t even off by a few. So why didn’t you offer the information to those who didn’t know?”

The users were getting more agitated with the increase in murmuring.

In a short period of time, he became the subject of their distrust, their Lord!

Weed can understand the suffering of politicians during those 10 minutes.

'Here, I have to be a bit more vulgar and cunning. I thought it was going to be easy tricking them by feeding them a bit. Here as well, only those that want an honest living life loses out.'

He broke out a Yell in order to quell the increasing disturbance.

“Keu..ha.heu..heuu heump! Uhh, I have a Religious Quest in Morata. I need helpers to create a colossal statue for the Freya Church. Unlimited number of people, providing free room and board! Accepting those who would work for the whole duration.”

Gathering as much workers as he can was a good thing for Weed.

But he would only take those that could shoulder the responsibility.

For the people who were busying trading, manufacturing, hunting, it wasn't for them. Because then, the production of the statue would just be leisure work!

In aspect, those who have never participated didn't know how much compensation there were for the sculpture quest.

“Me! I'll do it!”

Then from behind, there was a number of beginners!

Supposedly, they were tourists, but they were those from

Rosenheim Kingdom who had a hand in making the Pyramid.

Or users who heard from these guy came running together.

“If you have Porridge then I’ll join!”

“What are you going to create this time?”

“Do you remember me? I’m Lemon!”

The cute girl seemed to still be in her mid teens.

Weed navigated within himself to remember and showed her his rotten smile.

“Ahh, of course I remember. You’re the Lemon nim that moved stones 39 times to build the Pyramid. I will offer my porridge as well as Gopaegi too.”

“Yes! That’s right!”

Weed made greetings with those who returned.

*

Morata’s large-scale construction!

Ever since the first dig of the shovel, it went very smoothly.

There were 20 people who participated in the production of Rosenheim Kingdom's Pyramid.

These Mana lacking personnel were rather lacking in comparing to the necessary number, but they wind up shoveling at a good pace.

“Do it quickly and we can eat porridge.”

“Hurray! We're also creating something this time around.”

They were rejoicing while humming and singing along; at the same time, the more dubious participants numbering in 300s who wanted to try experiencing in sculpture creation were rather embarrassed.

“What's so good about this to be in an uproar?”

“This isn't even Rosenheim Kingdom ffs.”

Rosenheim Kingdom was still classified as a new kingdom.

Because a good proportion of the user base were still novices, thus it was obvious that quest sharing made them very enthusiastic.

The further lagging behind of development in the north did not have the beginner starting point option for the users. Although it was renowned for tourism following the influx of adventurers, the number was still modest.

Nevertheless, more than 300 people joined up to take on the new experience together through Weed's quest in collaboration with the Freya Church as the Lord of Morata.

Ever since the initial dig of the workers have gather, the composition of Morata's South Entrance change dramatically from then on.

*

“Well, I'll die if I go too far from the gate. Hence, that's why I'm working here.”

“I came to Morata to adjust my equipment, but between here and there, my money is meh; so receiving another hunting quest right now is too big of a risk...I figured I might as well dig, whatever this is?”

“Yulha, wanna do it together? I think it'll be a good monument.”

“Yea, lets.”

These kinds of conversation were shared with the participating workers that uncover their intentions.

Those who came from Rosenheim Kingdom also shared their source of pride.

“The Pyramid in Rosenheim Kingdom! Any of you who directly worked on it? I moved the stones 56 times horizontally AND 19 times vertically.”

Rumors of the piece becoming a wonder of the Versailles Continent circulated among the diggers.

A tavern where men and women eat and drink in!

“Hwaryeong nim, have you heard?”

“Hm? What is it?”

“Before Sculptor Weed sculpts something, he usually doesn't have a clue of what to do.”

“So the sculpture is still a mystery? I hope this statue would be just as wonderful as the ones before it.”

“It's the work of the Sculptor Weed after all, it'll certainly come to that.”

“But Jaffe nim.”

“Yes?”

“Actually, this is kind of a secret.”

“What is it? It’ll be just between us...”

“It’s something that’s absolutely must not be publicized.”

The woman spoke in a very low tone.

“It’s ok. I will not tell anybody, so let me know.”

A rather crowded pub that was once boisterous with shouts; now, the volume had dim down as people were listening to the man and woman's conversation. Even the drinking drinkers stopped doing so as they were interested in listening of the content.

Inside the tavern, it quickly became still.

“The item he has to create, it was commissioned by the Freya Church.”

“That I know.”

“Typically, the Church doesn't give out commission to anybody

to make anything. Because then, the Church has to grant credits to those who do. Now what do you think will happen if you join up in making the statue?”

“Gulp! So this is what Hwaryeong nim means...”

“That’s right. First of all, isn’t the contribution made to the Freya Church is greatly boosted? It’s three times the norm. And, in exchange for participating in creation of the most iconic symbol of the Freya Church, you’ll get free blessing and treatment; and even able to arrange a way to get to the Clergymen that you don’t know before, in anywhere there is the Freya Church. For a lifetime.”

“That’s like, befriending with the Freya Church. Being friends.”

“It’s not even fair, you know. If there is the contribution, then it could even be beneficial to the possibility of receive a quest from the Freya Church.”

“Yea, to think of it, the reward is too much...”

“It’s the Church, you know. To the Clergymen, what could be more important than piety? Taking a few Monster’s head? No. If the person that creates the statue know of this, then he wouldn’t have spread the commission quest to a lot of other people, you know. And above all, it’s a rare chance. If it’s something like hunting, then you can go anytime. Dungeon? It’s not like it’s going to collapse if you don’t show up! But do you think it’s a common thing to have an opportunity to participate in the creation of a statue?”

Mhmm mhmm.

It was coherent enough for the users in the tavern to agreed.

‘So that’s it. Although it’s a bit hard and cumbersome, if it’s for the sake of the contribution, wouldn’t it be nice to take the quest on the side?’

‘I don’t know if there’s a lot of contribution to the Church...but it’s three times the usual. Even if it’s just a sculpturing quest, there’s not much reward out there that as decent as this.’

‘It’ll become a monument, huh. I’d feel proud of it for sure. I can hold Monsters no matter how high their levels are, but it’s an unlikely event that any opportunity of creating a sculpture will happen again. It’s something I’ve never experienced before even up till now.’

‘Hwaryeong in it too? She’s really pretty. Like beautiful women on them sculptures. Making this statue, it’s an important experience!’

People at the pubs were messaging their friends, families, and guild members in privates ; men and women were disappearing quietly.

During this while, a similar conversation were shared when they went to the weapon shop.

Groups consisted of Fail and Meiron, Romyuna and Sureuka, and Mapan and Irien were doing similar activity.

Manipulation of information!

Forming public opinions, spreading fuzzy logic, thus forming a consensus among the crowd; towards this end, suckers will fall.

Pretty soon, the attention of Morata turned to the creation of the statue at the South Entrance.

Workers flocked to volunteer due to the Royal Road forums, the Hall of Fame movies, as well as coverage by stations.

Even though Weed charges 10 Gold per person; nonetheless, there was a growing number of registering workers.

Participating users who were high-level had the highest working efficiency.

A gesture of the hand from a Wizard beckon the earth to dig, while Warriors can move five or more bags all at once.

Weed was selling warmed porridge.

“Some porridge to eat.”

“Kyaa! Good.”

“Delicious food to eat. Could I have another please?”

“I don’t know how many times I have had this now.”

The workers did not forget to give their thanks.

The tasty porridge was gulp down quickly in their times of hunger, and it quickly recovers their Stamina!

Weed was a working bee going at a tremendous speed.

This first step was where the entire vast area of soil was now hollowed out.

“Soil is essential as material for any type of construction. It’s going to be biggg money selling this to a guild for construction.”

Working on his plan for self-interest!

He’d grab the chance the change the large-scale public work and put it into his back pocket.

Creating a vast lake, then a road in the center of the lake, imposing tolls on the five lanes street on carriages that would have

to come through.

“Harmony with nature is important for the sculpture. Therefore, the statue needs to be where there is a large body of water for it to be most effective.”

He was the most outstanding Sculptor on the Versailles Continent, so nobody can really question his point-of-view.

The majority of people remained silence because they were the usual type that had no interest in sculpting.

“Well, his words do have a point.”

“He’s the person in the Advanced stages of the Sculpturing Skill after all...I guess he’s right.”

They had their doubts, but he seemed to be a Sculptor passionate enough to take care of the details to make his work a good piece; so they let him to his own accord.

In fact, the higher the level of the sculpture, the higher the reward they’ll be compensated with.

The number of those who assembled, those who considered him as most outstanding Sculptor on the Versailles Continent, who wishes to do his best, wasn't just a few.

Reacting on their conversation, Weed formed a smile.

“Smart people are much easy to fool, huh.”

Having a good head on their shoulder meant they did not ask questions!

While being pampered, they generously dug out the road. From there, the composition was given the same effect as installed moat and canals.

In order for Morata to be attack now, aside from the narrow transit, enemies would have to swim across a lake.

Not only can it narrow down their perimeter, but during their swim, they were left defenseless against arrows and magic attacks!

Also, normally, canals are used by houseboats for tourism, a resource that was available to be developed.

Jaffe had already drawn plans for the moonlighting business.

“Ima catch fishes and set them here. If you create some sort of a fishing spot, then it’ll be really good.”

If they create a fishing hole next to Morata, it wouldn't be so bad.

Even if they weren't truly interested in it, it can still lead to a positive image with the involvement of the general public.

Having moved more than a whopping 10 Kilometers area of land; but after only four minutes of digging work, Weed suddenly stopped.

There was no limit to his laborious self. The number of workers was sufficient, but he determined that the losses were too large.

“It’s becoming too severe for people doing this kind of work. They have to stop now for the sake Morata’s other economic activities.”

At this point, he stopped the work on the lake at its current size, because it seemed to have disrupted the smooth tax income from the people going to the hunt.

Now, in the center of the authentic Lake Park, it was the right time to create the statue!

He didn’t have to worry about the bricking materials due to all the help stacking it up.

Weed confidently held onto the carving knife, however, a more worrisome problem started from here on out.

-Carve me.

-For God's sake.

-Make a representation of me. Unless you're as stupid as before, I'll exert my talent on you again. Keuhahahahaha!

-What reason do you have to ignore us? If you ignore us, then we'll forever remain away from the world.

-Why are you sculpting Freya, but us...

The whispering in his ears of those with unknown circumstances was giving him an epilepsy.

“Why don't you talk about what you want me to carve you into?!!!”

Weed, who could not repress himself struck a Yell, but then turned to the nearby users.

“What was that all about?”

“His true nature is no good huh.”

“Leave it be. All artists are like that.”

“It must be the anguish of a Sculptor to think of something to

sculpt.”

Fortunately, the users showed understandings and moved on.

Still, Weed was almost sick with the party going on inside him.

-Make me a piece, me!

-You're not going to carve me? It's would be a great honor to you...

-Ignorant Sculptor, free us.

While not telling Weed what they wanted to be carved as, they constantly bugged him to use his skill to create them.

Although he took on as many as hundreds of curses, his life was by no mean in danger with the help of protection skills.

Later on he was able to be released from the curses with the help of the Clergymen; but due to the great amount of suffering, he could not carry out the normal pace he could have had regarding sculpting.

Others may have not been able to withstand the complaint; but to Weed, the sounds weren't just some random noise.

‘I feel like, since it’s not some obvious sculpture, it must be a quest of some sort.’

Weed noticed that it was something unusual, but it was difficult to relate the subject to something specific.

Ever since Todoom, after his Sculpturing Skill reached Advanced level 5 that he began hearing these voices; so he figured that there must be some sort of correlation.

But he did not know of what to do.

Back then, during breaks in between creating and repairing statues, he took his time and calmly sculpt statues of both men and women.

-No. this is not it.

-How does any of us look as shamelessly shabby as these shits...

-You’re not a very talented Sculptor.

The unidentifiable voices revealed their disappointment and anger as soon as they saw.

Weed felt that the mystery must be solved soon.

‘If whenever I start to sculpt and the curses break out, this will make it hard for me to concentrate in the long run.’

He would carve little sculptures during the time he takes breaks in between the hunt.

Even if one’s profession is a Sculptor, it is still rather hard to sculpt; as each sculpture that he’d make can take a long time to reach completion.

Even though Weed did create Masterpieces, Classics, and even Magnums, it was all due to the foundation he accumulated by making so many statues.

-Kuekeokeokeo. Foolish guy.

-This Sculptor that doesn’t even know of our gloriousness, he’s overworked to make us.

Weed's anguish, as he takes on more and more damnation, deepened day by day.

He was struggling with the progression of making the Statue of Freya.

Weed was forced into using the Stone Skin skill as he worked stiffly through the ordeal.

His body was heavier by the thousands.

Ttaddak!

Eventually, due to the curses taxing on his Stamina, he scratched the statue he was carving with his chisel.

‘This is a huge deal.’

Sweats were falling down Weed’s spine.

If the statue fails, he will ruin the quest.

There will be a decline of his reputation as a Sculptor, as well as Familiarity with the Freya Church; not to mention the grievances that will be brought up by the many users who participated.

Weed reassured himself that the scratch wasn’t that big of a deal, but it was a mistake as he continued.

The agony!

With the poor health his body was in and the curses causing him to stiffen, causing minor mishaps to happened in rapid successions.

‘I can tell that this is far from being a Magnum. But please, don’t

let this fail.'

Weed was forced to pour even more concentration as he sculpted.

*

Near Morata, black shrouds were forming.

The sun had not risen as night continued to dominate the land; the ominous looking darkness loomed as it intensified the Monsters' power.

"What is that thing?"

"Dunno. I think something big will happen."

"I can feel an unusual aura coming from those shrewd users. They're making a commotion for something."

"This region is ours."

"This is not a place for the Human to invade."

Beast-type monsters covered with fur from head to tail, magically inclined Goblins, Werewolves that transform with the appearance of the moon, groups of Thieves living and hiding in caves along with other predators like a cloud descended on Morata.

Monsters in the north have increase by a huge number; and as if to prove this point, while numbering in the hundreds of thousands, they foray towards Morata.

“A Monster Legion.”

“They’re targeting our village.”

For everybody who was on the outer walls, sweats were running down their spines.

This was something similar to the few sieges they've watched before. And for the lot of them, the sieges they've seen on television was already enough excitement.

However, for them to be directly confronting the horde of oncoming Monsters, they were completely appalled.

“Could Morata army defend against this?”

“Nah. Morata doesn’t have an armed force...”

There were Paladins and Clergymen of the Freya Church, but they alone could not prevail against a force of this magnitude.

“Why the hell are Monsters suddenly attacking like this? There a must be reason why even races who had bad affinity amongst

themselves come together like this...”

“The statue! Do you think the statue have anything to do with this?”

The users who once accepted the referral without a single worry finally grasp the risk pertaining to this production of the statue.

“This is a really dangerous quest.”

The situation increased to something even scarier than mounting on a tiger. At the same time, it was a waste of effort if they have given it up in the middle of the quest, nor was there a place where they could hide from this invasion.

Fail and the other Archers clustered on the wall.

“You have to survive.”

Meiron, Fail’s lover, was holding onto his hand.

“Yes, Fail nim too.”

Romyuna went on the offensive while staying close to the Archers. Irien was busying doing a thorough blessing of all the users who were taking part in the battle.

Which included Surka, who was near the gate to intercept them.

The users who were fighting for the Freya Church as well as protecting Morata rallied!

“We cannot back down in the face of these Monsters. Fight! Fight for victory!”

“This is the pioneering town of the North! If we lose this place to them Monsters, then we essentially loses the North; afterward, they will push toward the the Central too.”

Knights who were on horseback bellowed for encouragement.

Similarly, the legion of Monsters charges. However, as oppose to the vulnerable spots in Morata's walls, they hurdled themselves toward the statue.

Plop. Plop.

They plunged into the lake in their attempt to crush the statue.

The vast lake which was dug for its soil; the soil that will be sold at a later time for landscaping.

“Eopu, eopu!”

“Kkorororeuuu.”

Though, the Monsters needed a considerable amount of time in order to cross the lake as their bodies were much heavier than that of the average Human.

After making a third of the way to the statue, the Monsters were subjected to the Archers arrow flying freely at them.

“They’re slow targets. And in water.”

“Shoot!”

Densely packed arrow attack.

The magic troops also moved vigorously.

In comparison to the weapon wielding Warriors, damages coming from the Magicians are stronger than physical attacks by 5~6 times. Additionally, if Magician uses even stronger magic, the differences in damage can get up to as much as 30 times.

Of course, they were subjected to the disadvantage of having to take up a lot of time preparing those stronger grade magic for usage.

“The incessant blazing flames of pain at the bottom of hell. Flame of Hell!”

The flame enveloped the head of the Monsters that were trying to keep afloat.

Still, even in water, there were Monsters who made an attempt to attack the residents that were in their striking distance; though the attacks could easily be avoided as the residents spread themselves out.

In between the time the Magicians have to recuperate and to wreak havoc.

There were those who didn't have anything to do.

“Damn.”

“Wanna jump into the lake?”

The battleground deep within the lake!

Among the Monsters, there were those who knew how to fight underwater, such as the Lizard-type.

The heavy clad Knights and Warriors flocked out.

“Let's shoot them. Hopefully we can hit somebody.”

To that end, arrows flew into the lake.

The oncoming Monsters faced near annihilation; insurmountable number of arrow and magic blast flew into the lake, added the effect of great splendor.

“This is new.”

“It’s interesting.”

There weren’t many opportunity for these guy to experience something new.

Some Monsters came close the vicinity of the statue, but facing the fiercely impenetrable resistance of the Knights and the likes, they were defeated in an instant.

The Monsters army had to withdraw, leaving many casualties; but repeatedly, they kept on invading night and day.

In the meantime, Weed was facing an increase in difficulty with the increasing ascension; having completed the hips and the waist, now he was going to create the chest and the shoulders.

From the roughly constructed form, he was going to give the regions the finer details.

“Moonlight Chisel!”

Gentle light trailed the path of his carving.

Ever since attaining Advanced level 5 of the Sculpturing Skill, he was able to use the skill to carve by weakening the output.

Strike by strike, the shape of the statue mellowed out with soft curves and flown with more refinement.

Since the statue have a direct effect on when the invasion of Monsters will come to an end, Weed continued on ceaselessly as he carved in the middle of the night.

He clung onto the rope as he work, the vicinity of the to be completed statue was filled with crowding shimmers.

A dreamlike spectacle was given to the statue as it collect the moonlight and stars to the ground.

“Sculpturing is beautiful.”

“It’s really romantic.”

Single men, women, and couples among the user base picked out good locations to sit while watching Weed’s sculpture to unfold.

The left hand of the statue was holding a money bag, while its right held up high in the sky.

The statue was holding a torch!

The Freya Statue of Liberty.

“Waaa! Awesome.”

As they watches the form of the statue becoming more defined, their gaping mouths were falling all at the same while.

Mere moment before its completion, the statue towered at a height of 160 meters.

The statue’s head donned a huge jewel embedded in the carved crown, its figure seemed to be covered in fur.

It was decorated with a luxurious watches, jewel rings, necklaces, and of course, not to be without earrings.

It was truly a symbol of wealth, and Weed branded each of its adornment.

The Music Box Plaza Merchants Association.

Supply and Demand Association.

Merchant Mapan.

He received advertisement fees from active merchant associations from Morata, as well as the entire Versailles Continent, to inscribed what they wish.

Here, the received advertisement fees came out to be more than the Diamond the Freya Church paid for the expenses.

No matter how painful the never ending curses continued, he persisted on in order to get at this.

Weed once again found another way to make money from sculpting!

He would even tenaciously pocket money from other sources if they choose to put socks and shoes on the statue.

Lastly, the finished face of the statue was a direct depiction of Hwaryong's face.

The face of a westernized person fitted well to the luxurious feel of the statue, and he only proceeded after asking her for permission in advance.

When Weed told her that he wanted to sculpt her face, Hwaryong's face lit up like a ripe apple.

“It's Weed nim...so.....”

She have consider Weed to be a rather insensitive being. He was too busy making a living to ever consider luxurious things, such as love. His worries and inner thoughts weren't very forthcoming, which made it difficult to generate a deep conversations with him. He was a man in which things such as Event or romance were something impossible to expect from.

[TL : Event(오벤트): This term here is a sort of a a loan word from English, it actually vocalizes as 'event'. This symbolizes as a 'setting up a romantic event' in this context.]

‘I was wrong about everything.’

Hwaryong could not sleep that day.

Morata giant statue. Massive waves of people seeking answers from the Sculptor as to why he sculpted her face!

‘This is the greatest Event on earth.’

Even though it seems that the phases of their relationship have skipped a few steps; but to Hwaryong, this was a very auspicious moment.

And now, the Freya Church's statue reached finalization.

Ding!

The Freya Statue have been completed

The goddess of beauty, Goddess Freya.

At the request of the Freya Church, the statue was erected in Morata; and will poses as the exemplification of thickened Faith, and make this region more fertile than ever before.

To commemorate the Statue commissioned by the Freya Chuch, annual pilgrimage to the Church will be made.

The effect of the Statue

Crop yield in the surrounding area will increase by 45%.

The rate of commercial development will accelerate by 3%.

The rate of industrial development will increase by 2%.

Will be alleviated from drought, flood, and storms damages.

The residents' rate of increasing Faith will be doubled.

Residents happiness increases.

Willingness of residents to pay taxes increase by 12%.

Freya Church's Paladins and Clergymen's Divine power increased by 30% in Morata's Province.

Chapter 6: The Sculpture Of A Daughter

Lee Hyun logged into the Dark Gamer Union website.

Fortunately, production of the statue was completed safely. Videos related to it were posted on the Hall of Fame and appeared to be sensational; but he could not afford to watch the video.

He changed his daily routine of checking of prices to heading straight toward the information forum.

“I can’t put up with this anymore.”

The tantrums of these unknown entities!

Not only did they tax on his head and ears, his concentration was affected by them as well. The curses dampened the creative side regarding sculpture's inception; and what made the interim intolerable was that he noticed the rate his Stamina recovery was also disturbed by this.

“There must be a hidden secret about the Sculpturing Skill.”

He knew what the problem was, but he did not know the answer of how to resolve it. Thus, he came to the Dark Gamer Union lurking for the information.

Lee Hyun's disclosure of information was adjusted to 'Grade B,' which now entitled him to see more resources.

- Expected fluctuation of materials of precious metal.

- Price of Iron Ore in Uto Kingdom's Gamal town is scheduled to plummet.

Information from Merchants popped up.

As for the Dark Gamer Union, there were a variety of classes.

For most of them, the commonplace profession such as Hunters and Warriors was hard for them to make money. Since they weren't aptitude to the combat scene, and if they didn't want to hunt in dungeon alone each and every time, then it was best for them to adopt a non-combatant occupation.

As a result, many of the dark gamers chose to be Merchants.

Additionally, they also chose a secondary class such as a craftsman, a metal smith, or a tailor of sort could spell something lucrative for them. As for the reason why, they could utilize the skills from the secondary class for the collection of materials, as well as making them; then selling them to the stores in their Merchant-persona.

Converting bought japtem by reselling them back to users, through such ways while gathering capital, which accrues in a

large profit.

For the Merchant, depending on his capital or even the fortune he will eventually earn, he could hire Mercenaries by means of the forming a trading company; which in essence, forming his own armed force. It's even possible for them to form contract with Mercenary Guild or even guilds; so to reiterate, there were many dark gamers who were Merchants.

As for them, they had the highest frequency when it came to exchanging information; but still, there was a wide variety of classes within the Dark Gamer Union.

-Jorbin Earl is recruiting Mercenaries. Generous compensation. High risk.

-Kemal Mountain Monsters rebel activity. Very high possibility of finding dungeon. Seek for adventurer Uten. Want support.

-In the capital of Meda Kingdom, urgently looking for an NPC who used to give the level 300 or more Rare Grade shield. Must show quest.

“These aren’t it.”

Lee Hyun looked further down on the information that were coming-up in real-time.

-The Lancing Skill’s secret skill book. Bestow from Terian from

the Thor Kingdom. Level 250, he only teaches those who are at the Intermediate level(or more) of the Lancing techniques.

-How to nurture Accounting Skill: Classify more than 12 kinds of precious stones, mastery of Lapidary Skill will increase about 5%. After that, if you deal the jewels to a Noble-type NPC for more than 15% of its worth, then you can earn a lot for the skill's proficiency. And you also gain Reputation as a Jewel Dealer.

-Quick examination of weapon, Saber. A very wide body and short weapon...

There were a lot of information of various occupations shown, but only a little bit of information on the Sculptor class was actually posted.

-The study of the relationship between the Sculpturing Skill and Handicraft.

-Study on the synergistic effect of Handicraft.

-Distribution of sculptures on the Versailles Continent characteristic and effects.

And, they were only basic information too. There was no information on the presence of these unknown beings who were related to the sculptures that Lee Hyun wanted to find.

“Figures!”

Lee Hyun tossed his head.

Though, he'd actually feel disappointed if the Dark Gamer Union had these information on Sculpturing Skill instead.

“It'll be troublesome if there's a more outstanding Sculptor than me out there.”

While a side of him feel relieved, Lee Hyun was searching for more information.

Even if the information wasn't directly related to what he wanted to find, they could help him indirectly by providing some clue.

- Skill gap of Blacksmiths between each kingdom.

- Unresolved craftsmen's quests.

- Characteristic of wandering NPCs.

- Blacksmith of the legendary kingdom.

- The birthplace of art.

Lee Hyun stored the information carefully in his head.

Once the appropriate information is obtained from the Dark Gamer Union, all that is left is to solve the presented problem.

Afterward, whether it was the library, the Sculptor Guild, or anywhere else, he had to find out the reason as to why these unknown beings have to be carved.

Lee Hyun knows of the possibility that there is a solution to the presence.

He figured there must be lost traces of the Sculpturing skill.

“Need to get back Royal Road.”

But before that, he checked on his messages. Last time, he sent a message to a person looking for the Paskran Lance.

Sent by: Hyperman

Subject: Do you have the Paskran Lance?

Was the replied message.

“You replied fairly quickly.”

Lee Hyun clicked on the title he saw.

If you have it, please, pleeeaaase sell it to me.

I will send you the money.

The amount of cash I have right now is approximately 1500000 Won.

If your intention of selling for more than this, then we can somehow negotiate for the price.

Please reply quickly because I'm very anxious right now.

“Keoeok! 1500000 Won!”

Lee Hyun's heart jumped out of his chest.

The experience he had when selling his account for 3900000000 Won. The price was rather too extreme to be consider as something realistic. But pretty soon, it was something that was quickly deprived from him.

However, 1500000 Won seemed more pragmatic.

A whopping of 15 crispy 100000 Won bills to receive.

“If I put this money into savings, then at an interest of 7% on the money...I can get more than 100000 Won in return...I missed a

jackpot!”

Lee Hyun was so sad.

Adults often say that money isn't everything in life. Lee Hyun too, concur with this sentiment.

“Money is not everything in life. It’s roughly 98%. The other 2% are desires, consideration, friendship, and promises.”

Lee Hyun reflected on the painful memory he retained about the 200 Won he wasted by buying the more expensive salt.

But he just missed out on the chance of getting 1500000 Won!

Lee Hyun could not sleep that night.

“Ahhhh my money! ohhh God noo! 1500000 Won!”

*

Along with the Light Tower, pretty soon, the Freya Statue was referred to as one of the two main attractions of Morata.

“This is the Freya Statue huh.”

“This statue that swept the entire continent isn’t even rare. But

even though each denomination had their statue built, this was the first a thing like this was made by a user.”

“The Clergymen told me they received substantial benefits.”

“I heard that those of the melee classes doesn’t even want to leave Morata’s vicinity because of the Light Tower.”

“Even if there is a better hunting ground elsewhere, with the effect of the Light Tower, you shouldn’t even bother going anywhere far. By the time you get there, hours of the effects’ duration will be gone.”

“Yep. If you’re talking about effectiveness of the hunting grounds, then the places near Morata are the best. You can even find members for the party immediately in town.”

While looking up at the Freya Statue, the users were impressed.

Having come to Morata, they had thought the region was completely underdeveloped. Besides the pub and smithies, it was lacking of many essential buildings.

Merchants and craftsmen were also low when it comes to the supply chain.

The addition of the beautiful statue was an excellent touch to this lacking town.

About 300 meters from the statue, the Architects created a stairway toward the Goddess.

Climbing the staircase meant that they could see the statue in a closer proximity.

Of course there was an admission fee, but there was a line of visitors.

The scenic view high, above the staircase, it was something meant to be commemorated with pictures or video.

“It’s by the Weed that made the Light Tower; I think it’s more amazing than I initially thought.”

“Not only Sculpturing Skill, he also raised other skills to significant levels too; in this field, he can’t not be the most significant presence. He’d have no problem receiving proposal to join a prestigious guild.”

“Isn’t it harder for him now? Other users are going to learn Sculpture too.”

The user who said that was spurn back the other users.

“I know, ‘cause I’ve seen the tremendous, physically laborious work that he did. Can you put in just as much labor as Weed does?”

“IF that, then yes.”

“There are limits, dude, even for a Sculptor. Like any other classes out there.”

Warriors persistently have it tough because they are always in the front line fighting for survival.

If Knights loses Honor, then they're weakened.

A fatal weakness of Archers is being seen by their opponent in close range.

Magicians have great offense, but they have lousy defensive stats. They'll die if something simply brushes pass them.

Even if Merchants have the power if they have the money, they don't have the Strength to keep it for themselves.

Mercenaries has the ability to survive under any condition, but as their contractors increasingly increases in difficulty of each request, their equipment are soon to be ready and over with; and eventually, they'll be at the poorhouse.

Adventurers should enjoy the adventures. The spirit of exploration, that something that doesn't give up even after ten days in a labyrinth as you struggle on trying to find a path out, is

required. If it's successful, then you get all fame and money; but if after the end of it you get nothing from the dungeon, then you'll become one of those many cases that collapse from suffering.

Including these professions, all the others have their advantages and disadvantages.

In the Sculptors' case, they can make massive sculptures.

They can bring forth wonders in a region, with Classic and Magnum pieces!

Obviously they have amazing effects, but there are limits to it also.

Usually, they put in massive efforts and not all the sculptures end up as rare pieces. Without the help of others, then the Freya Statue too would be at a standstill for at least a few months.

In order for the sculpture to be successful, you must discard all other interruptions and only concentrate on just sculpting.

Absolutely never lose concentration in any work or else the job will all be for naught.

Weed approach the Freya Statue.

It was in the middle of the night when he reconnect; he could see the Light Tower from afar, marking the village's boundary, as it collect the moonlight to the center of the tower. Numerous rays of light shot into the sky as if they were dancing about.

A choreography of light.

It was a time to appreciate Morata's artistic beauty.

Light that spreads into the night, similar to gradual development of the changing Morata village!

The statue was also topped with Moonlight Chisel, so it was also collecting luminescence in the night. Upon receiving the moonlight, rich light was illuminating all around the statue.

Because of the Light Tower and the Freya Statue, Morata didn't give an impression of a desolate area.

Weed also saw what it had become.

“This is like a night club now.”

A woman holding a torch while dancing under the radiance!

If you don't have Weed's susceptibility, then it's a bit difficult to see.

Anyway, he had something he must do.

Weed sifts his course through the visiting crowd, making his way closer to the statue.

“What the.”

“Doesn’t he see a line of people waiting here?”

Tourists protested crazily; but then, hearing that it was Weed, they became silence.

He was the Sculptor that directly made the statue, as well as the Lord of Morata.

So then, he came closer to the altar below the feet of the statue.

“What’s he doing?”

“Dunno. Appreciating his own work?”

Many onlookers around the statue paid heed to Weed’s behavior.

Weed settled a ripe apple atop the altar.

Offering to the Goddess Freya!

Afterward, he bowed.

“To the Goddess Freya, the Lord of Morata prays to thee.”

Once per changing season where you can pray!

Around the statue, hundreds of auspicious light gathered.

The light now was in a different dimension comparing to those collected through Weed's sculpturing skill.

The Treatment of the Goddess.

All the bad energy of the body is purified.

HP is restored to maximum.

Mana is restored to maximum.

All physical abilities rise for one week.

The level of Luck will rise for one week.

Brief gain in production and involvement of the ability to rule.

Faith increases by 10.

The treatment of the Goddess to undo all negative plight!

While praying, people in this situation was hoping for this additional effect to be granted.

If Weed knew of this beforehand, he would have brought people he was friendly with here; then again, he haven't seen anyone of them making prayers.

Not anybody can make a wish, only a local ruler of the area that have the landmark can make just one wish depending on the season. Only another religious symbol in Sudona Liberty City behaves this way, and even the head of the prestigious guild there can not make the wish. They have only heard of so from the Clergymen and Priests there.

Weed was the first of the users.

“What’s happening?”

“Let’s go closer.”

The users try to approach the statue, but some unseen force pushes them away from the altar that Weed currently was present.

-Master of Morata, speak of your desire.

Behind the statue, a revelation made of light could be identify.

The reincarnation of Goddess Freya!

Weed raises his head to look at the vision.

‘The Goddess must look immensely beautiful.’

The Goddess Freya that was deemed to be of abundance wealth and beauty. A beauty said to be enough to make men go blind.

But despite Weed’s expectation, he could not make out the exact facial features of the Goddess. However, an impression of her seemed to be chubbier than expected.

Weed told her of his desire.

“I would like to know more about the Sculpturing Skill.”

Weed’s wish wasn’t of an abundance harvest, benefits from mining, or a faster pace of development of commerce. Although he very much wanted to achieve such things, he was more desperate about the skill.

“I would like to know about the unaware method of how to carve the unknown existences.”

Due to the disturbances caused by the nearby users, belatedly becoming aware of the appearance of the Goddess Freya, everywhere in Morata, users rushed in like the clouds.

“Hey!”

“Wait!”

“What’s happening right nowww!?”

Only Weed could hear of the Goddess’s answer.

-They...from their beginning, were beings without forms. The people that love sculpture, you need to make your way toward their kingdom, a place of pride of these stubborn and delicate people; that is your destination.

The surrounding area was getting darker.

The sacred light that took place around the statue was disappearing.

When the light was totally gone, the sight of Goddess Freya was no more.

Weed also made his escape from the congregation of people there.

‘The kingdom of these short people, a place where they feel proud.’

Weed needed to get to that destination.

But before he leaves, he had to meet up with the Village Elder.

Morata’s Black Castle!

He approached the only-bearably done maintenance of a lord’s castle.

Dawn had slipped past and now it was a brightly lit day.

The place was always crowded, packed full of users; but now, there was an upset of people watching the statue which made it difficult.

Members of the local watchmen saw Weed and displayed their interest.

“Lord nim, are you returning to the castle?”

“Yes.”

“I’ll let people know of Lord nim's return.”

The crew went to pull on the rope hanging from above in order to strike the bell.

“No need. I don’t want to make them feel uncomfortable in vain since they’re busily working.”

“Yes but it’s Lord nim's return though...”

“Hahaha, it’s ok.”

Weed slowly climbed up the entrance way.

He could feel the euphoria of the increase in power!

He would hate to drop it after having grabbed hold of this power.

“Is there a village-wide feast?”

“Huh?”

“An ox or a pig or so, where everybody can eat as much as they want.”

“.....”

Weed was speechless.

The educational standard of Morata is indeed pathetic!

Not only the watchmen but the formal soldiers also, they weren't disciplined nor did they show loyalty. Even towards Weed, who should have the highest Familiarity with them, but their gestures showed nothing of such.

If their level of education is low, then the technical and commercial development will slow down by a bit. Also, residents will have a harder time becoming Knights and Magicians because of this. As much as the belief in religion is spreading quickly, the deterioration of public security was just the same.

It has been told that residents among those other town would essentially opt out to become renegades or bandits.

Whether it is a village, castle, or metropolitan; all are difficult to develop.

“Keuheum. I'll worry about that in the future. Pigs...not only them, but I'll catch rabbits too.”

“Thank you, Lord nim.”

Weed coughed and went around checking the lord's castle.

When he first came here in the past, the castle was then occupied

by the Jin-Hyeo Vampires led by Torido.

Broken apparatuses, residents made of stones, or even cobwebs that filled the place, all neatly cleaned.

“I came to receive quest.”

“I came to take the transport.”

Having heard of the rumor about the Statue, the Lord’s castle was filled with Merchants and Mercenaries.

Adventurers were preoccupied with reporting their spoils.

Since it had finished with basic maintenance, a surge of residents and adventurers made their way here. Village management, Monsters subjugation, migration, upgrade registration, settling tax rate, reporting spoils and reporting for duty; all were possible.

The Lord’s castle needed more extensive care; but it was a necessity, even at this current state, in order to rule.

Even with just the spoils reported by the adventurers, each of their reports lead to improving the information on the surrounding areas. Local control was also on the rise, as well as affecting other vicinity politically.

Weed toured the castle slowly.

Although there were many users, there weren't any of them on the second floor.

There were many vacancies on the first floor also, but the second floor was closed off altogether. It was the place available only to the Lord.

'Castle's maintenance seems minimal here.'

Weed returned to the first floor, making his way toward receptionist's desk. At this place, he must wait for a while to get the order.

"Aren't you Lord nim?"

Weed cough significantly.

"Keoheom!"

"Currently, the remaining commissions are monsters subjugations, escorting the currently leaving cargo, and commission for mining development. There is the crop protection too, but I don't think it's something for you, Lord nim."

Because the staff at the reception desk was taking care of it, he was totally on wait.

Having privileges of a Lord, he could proceed to take on any commission in Morata.

The easiest one being the cargo transport on the move for a long distance. Because it was much more comfortable sitting in a carriage, reducing the cumbersome of the work.

For the mining development, party had to be formed with other miners.

While being protected, you can go down the tunnels. You'll hit jackpot if you find Jewel, Mithril, Gold, Silver, Iron, Coppers, and the likes!

The profit would be distributed amongst all those participate in the mining development, but it was still a bonanza of a dream.

The role of crop protectors was to prevent Wild Boars, Sparrows, Elks, etc.; it was rather a beginner's quest.

Instead of receiving a referral, Weed asked the receptionist.

“Where is the Elder?”

“The Elder is patrolling the outside walls of the village with the Freya Paladins.”

“Patrolling?”

“Yes, there is a large scale influx of migrants. Lots of smaller towns formed outside of the walls.”

“When is he returning?”

“He said he would come back today seeing it’s finished. Would you like to wait here? I can serve you a bit of food.”

Weed did not mind waiting since he had nothing to do.

He intended to eventually stuff food in his pocket from the castle before returning back to the streets.

*

Weed secretly visited the newly constructed buildings.

The pub!

“Kyaa! Good.”

“After coming to north I did not expect to taste these good drinks.”

“It’s good that I can drink alcohol in Morata freely.”

There were a lot of drinkers among the tourists.

Mercenaries and adventurers also stave off their thirst with simple drinks.

Pristine country maiden of Morata carried drinks and snacks to these guests.

‘Excellent.’

Weed nodded.

The tavern was an essential building to the development of Morata.

The market, trading posts, and travel information windows weren't required buildings. Because of the 60% tax on alcohol, the pub had enormous value for profits and income tax.

Weed used the command only available to the Lord.

“Tavern management window!”

Adventurer's Haven(Tavern)

The only pub located at the Morata Square. It was built soon after the cleaning. Large interior space, more than 500 seats; able

to get alcohol and snacks at a reasonable price.

Selling

All basic munchies

Fermented fruit drinks

Force boiled Barley booze

Beer

Employees

Chef Jenna, Mia and 10 residents

Maintenance and Management Cost

600 Gold

Daily Visits

Average 7200 Guests

Latest Weekly Net Income

2642 Gold 43 Silver 56 Copper

This was the only bar in Morata.

It could possibly be the only pub in the entire Northern part of the continent.

In the port city of the Central continent, they mainly just serve Aquavit, they do not sell alcoholic beverages such as rum, or the more popular drinks such as fermented alcohol, distilled alcohol, nor do they sell beer. Nevertheless, they still enjoy the economic boom due to its exclusivity.

The seats inside the pub weren't enough for the guests who experienced back and forth along with the waits.

Following that, Weed turned to the Inn.

Here also, there were many people coming and leaving.

There was not another village in the North that have a larger Inn than the one in Morata. It was difficult to have one sizable in term of room number, in which this Inn has 300 of.

And the rooms could be sold if one pays the premium.

The room activates to fully recover a sleeping being from Fatigue

and their physical abilities. After a night in the Inn, the recovery rate of Fatigue increases and because of the tastiness of the food, nobody left for another inn.

The weekly net profit of the Inn was more than 4000 Gold.

The figure could possibly due to the food sales.

The foods in the Inn were easier to digest unlike those in the Tavern, and they were things that easily boost Satiety.

“Later on, I’ll make a restaurant. If it’s that, then more money can be earned.”

He seemed to be in acquaintance with the joy of a Lord whenever a new building pops up.

Taking advantages of the residents and users to develop estates, he could cultivate the mighty momentum produced through such means.

Adventures and quests can be call the interesting elements on the Versailles Continent; but as for the Lord, there was a more satisfying feeling.

The pride of ruling a place on the Versailles Continent!

While having direct management of the town and castle, it was

like everything was bending to his will.

Next step, Weed headed toward the Farmhouse and the Granary.

The vicinity of Morata had long cleared its land and was cultivating wheat. In the barn, wheat bags were stacked alongside and among each other, and the farmers were working on the farmlands.

While the crops were harvested by them, the food prices in the village was reliably controlled, while excess food were shipped by Merchants' wagons and carried to other frontier towns in the North and sold at a premium value.

The effectiveness of Faith by the Freya Church bumped the crop yield up for this year.

Grain Warehouse

A warehouse storing harvested grains.

Stockpile of Wheat and Barley are reserved.

Inventory

32000 Ton of Wheat

19000 Ton of Barley

Morata's agricultural space of 197000 Py[1]!

To relieve the food shortages, the policy was passed for an aggressive expansion of farmland.

Since the land that was once covered by the thick ice, fertile soil was created in its stead as the ice melts. While residents and the newly introduced nomads comfortably farm, there was a boom of farmlands.

“For Barley, the number will hit 1000000 fast.”

It was a far cry from being painful.

But that is not without problems.

Immigrating residents to Morata was excessively increasing.

The number of area and houses protected the walls of Morata village was only at 5400 houses!

Currently the number of residents was more than 60000.

Of these, the number of unregistered users was at 100 people.

The pure number of residents was a large number. Excluding the number of those who originally have lived in Morata, the number was 53000.

While they're comfortably farming wheat, they built shabby houses out of straws to live outside of the town.

In which they formed a shantytown in Morata's vast reclamation of land.

“Housing management window.”

Morata Village Housing Distribution

Morata Castle

1

Wooden Houses

960

Poor Thatch Cottages

12953

With the deteriorating hygiene of the Poor Thatch Cottages, there is a great concern of an epidemic.

When the weather becomes cold in the winter, more than half of the people will be dead due to freezing.

Since Morata doesn't have good public security, they are extremely vulnerable to Monsters' attacks.

If there is an emergence of Monsters, then the Freya Paladins will diligently intercept them to ensure the residents' safety. But there is still many unknowns in the North, if there is a major march by the horde of Monsters, they will be extremely vulnerable.

“Regional information window!”

Ding!

Morata Province

A province once belong to the Nippleheim Empire.

In the past, it was a place for the Empress to live to relieve Herself from exhaustion.

Since the fall of the Nippleheim Empire, it was governed by Vampires.

Currently, gathering Mercenaries and adventurers, along with the protection under the Freya Church, residents are working together to revive hope.

Military

22

Economy

260

Culture

570

Technology

190

Religious Influence

83

Local Politic

6

Influence on Neighboring Vicinity

83

Influence of the Nippleheim Empire*

2%

Urban Development

97

Sanitation

36

Security

72%

Recently, there were concerns of the frequent raid of Monsters, however, residents no longer fret due to the completion of the

Freya Statue.

Lack of water facilities and housings for residents to live.

There are many people with memories of the festival that took place a long time ago.

May make the lives of resident happier if they're given multitude of sculptures.

The elegance of the town rose due to the trust and support given to the Artists.

While the residents are proud to have many more artworks than any of the other towns, they hope for a broader range of cultural facilities.

Industrial sewing techniques from the past are progressively transforming.

Techniques in the field of Iron are fairly rudimentary, Blacksmiths creation of weapons or armors are very immature.

The local faith believes in Freya. The faith of the residents is a good thing, and will not be easily sway.

The impact by the Freya Church takes appropriate forms: love is abundance, and characterized the people as hard-workers.

Specialty

Leather and Cloth

Population of the Entire Province

61689

Monthly Income from Tax

27860 Gold

Village Operation Expenditures

Military 2%

Economic Development 34%

Investment in Culture 12%

Commissioned paid for Monster Subjugation 15%

Conservation of the Town 22%

Offering to the Freya Church 15%

*Influence affect area such as Military, Economy, Culture, Technology, Religion, Population, and Commission.

Even though currently, there are few problems, Morata had grown beyond its past self.

‘Investment in Culture? What’s going on here? I’ve never invested in such category.’

Weed was going around the vicinity of the South Entrance in the town, spending time locking himself in wonderment about the reason. In the midst of this, A bandit-like man with great physique and bloated beard approached him.

“Excuse me, are you a Sculptor?”

Weed reflexively scanned the man’s body in his Jeonshin mode.

Mithril Boots!

On the other hand, leather clothing and cloak that weren’t suitable for traveling had layers of debris.

‘In most cases, people dislike trouble so they change their clothing to something non-distinguishable when coming into a

town, in order to hide their high levels.'

Including the Mithril Boots, the man didn't change his overall appearance like the norm. If the Mithril Boots had Movement Speed effects, then the expensive item's base price would be at least 3000000 Won!

After Weed completed his quick scan, he carefully replied.

"That is correct."

There were few things in his mind that would be the causes for alarm. Nevertheless, there was a willingness to answer due to one thing; and that was the man asked of the Sculptor. Since it was a question whether Weed was a Sculptor or not, then most likely, the request of him would somehow be associated with sculpting.

Weed doesn't go a day or two without leeching off on others to survive.

'Maybe it's about when I ripped him off with before? Maybe I gave him a defect? If it's not these, then what other business does he have with me?'

The man who was similar to a bandit breathe a sigh of relief, oblivious to the uneasiness of Weed who was currently filled with several intentions.

"Finally, I found one after searching the entire village. I searched

for you after seeing the video of the sculpting of the Freya Statue. I need to ask a favor of you. If it's true that you're the Sculptor Weed, then I would appreciate it greatly if you carve me a sculpture."

Weed gave an impression of being apologetic and shook his head.

"Thank you for looking me up, but I do not plan to make sculpture at the moment."

Since the other side's rank seems high, Weed can try to extort a few pieces of Gold from him; but at the moment, it was difficult for him to sculpt anything at all so he refused.

And then, the bandit-like man cuffed Weed's wrist in his hands and pleaded to Weed.

"It's a vital request. Please, sculpt my daughter."

"Daughter?"

Weed's eyebrows narrowed.

There were a variety of targets to carve, but requests of doing a family member were the most difficult.

'If it's too pretty then they don't like it; and if uglier than what they are in real life then they'd go crazy.'

When it comes to their cubs, parents won't remain prettily, just like a hedgehog.

Wanting deliciously cooked food for the kid, or nag on and on at tailors to make pretty and comfortable clothing.

“Yes, that is so. My daughter, please carve her for me.”

The man blared out desperately.

“I understand.”

Weed wasn't very enthused, but he supposed he might as well sculpt. He could see the urgency coming from the man; in addition, the Village Elder have not return as of yet.

Also, the by-standing users were clicking their tongue spouting harsh words.

“I feel sorry for that uncle.”

“That Sculptor usually only light up for the money huh...”

“One misstep and that (bandit)man can rip even the clothes off your back.”

There were many among the user base of Morata that has the same mindset as Weed. They too, like him, assumed the man was a high level user from noticing just his boots.

‘I can just ask Alberone to remove the curses anyway.’

Weed cemented his mind and said.

“Then, please bring you daughter here.”

The man shook his head dejectedly.

“That’s impossible.”

"Well, a picture of some kind..."

“There isn’t any.”

“If that’s so, then, you describe what the child is like.”

Weed pulled out a generously thick piece of wood. As he listens to the descriptions, he will try to come up with a concrete image to sculpt.

It was an impossible attempt if you have never taken on several hundreds of sculpture requests inside the village!

Due to the characteristic of sculpturing, he can essentially detailed out rough estimates before going onto the finer aspect of things.

‘I can’t do the eye, nose, and mouth well since I haven't heard anything about it.’

It can be said that is the woe of making a small wooden sculpture.

Going by the man’s description alone will not be enough, and there’ll be a concession of what the man ultimately want to make.

‘He’ll try to make it difficult as possible so there’ll be a lot of things to cover.’

However, instead of describing features, the man who had the appearance of a bandit began a dialog.

“The child’s mother is really beautiful. Her eyes are very clear, kind...a wife that’s...really too good for me.”

“.....”

“It was when she and I have been married for five years. Although it was a bit late, she had our long awaited pregnancy, we had a day set to give birth too, you know. But...”

“But?”

“We went to the hospital to have a screening done, and found out that she had become sick.”

The man began shedding tears.

“We went through the surgery and cure her of her illness, but we had to give up on the child. Due to the shock at the time, her body became unable to carry a child again.”

“.....”

“Please carve her for me. Then she could have had a child. Our daughter, our world most beloved daughter, I would be happy with just a look of my daughter’s appearance...carve her for me. Euheoheoheoheong!”

The man dropped his neck and cried.

The users who were listening nearby in the middle of the street were also moved to tears.

“D, da, damn it!”

“Ima go hunt as much as I can.”

“Damn the Monsters. Ima kill you all.”

Filled with such overwhelming emotion that they wanted to take it all out on the Monsters.

Weed's face paled with tension.

“My sculpture...are you going to keep it for yourself? Or will you show it to your dear wife also?”

“I will show it to her.”

“So she is on Royal Road...”

The man wiped his tears with his sleeves.

“Yes, she's on with me. And I came here hearing of Sculptor nim's reputation. But us...don't worry about us. We are not crazy. Simply, our daughter, we just want to see our most beloved daughter in this game world, because we want to at least share our goodbyes. This way, we can have our peace of mind as well as something unforgettable...our daughter, we want to see her for the first, and the last time. I know, this is foolish and awkward and stupid. I know, but, I..but...”

The bandit-like man assert once again.

“What do you want in return for carving my daughter? I'll give you the amount of your choosing, just please carve our daughter

for us.”

Again, the man shed oodles of tears as he begged.

Weed spoke as he sighs.

“I will not make you a piece right now.”

“Money, is it because I lack money? I will pay you 10, no, 20 times more than other people.”

“That’s not what I mean. For me also, in this case, I’m not ready; and I don’t think a stick of wood is appropriate to carve your daughter.”

“Then...”

Weed once made an ice sculpture. It was of ice: sharp, and pretty, but was still cold. The coldness even penetrate him through his chest.

He realized then that the material of the sculpture influences the atmosphere of the whole composition.

“A lifeless piece of wood is a hardened thing that does not disburse warmth. Even though, even if it’ll be just once, it need to somehow represent family. Then, toward that goal...a piece made out of wood cannot do so.”

Weed continued on decisively.

“Something that's not cold...something that the warmth of life can be felt...not some hardened material. Through that mean, for the two of you, the piece can really be your beloved daughter. So I must prepare. I will do my best, but I cannot promise when it will be completed.”

The man sigh dramatically.

The situation was somewhat different than what he expected, but he could feel that Weed said what he did by no means was to avoid having to do it.

He sincerely intended to sculpt the daughter that was meant to be birthed by the man and his wife.

“Thank you. My wife and I look forward to it in Selchium of the Ritten Kingdom. And my name is Mandol.”

“My name is Weed. Upon the completion of the sculpture of your daughter, I will bring it to Selchium.”

“Even if you don't bring it over, I will not put the blame on you. However, what is the price of the sculpture?”

Mandol asked in a slightly nervous tone.

Weed replied with a soft smile.

“It’s 1 Copper.”

Chapter 7: The Vicious Morata Lord

Tenbain, an unknown dungeon in the North.

Against the breakouts of sickle carrying Ghost-type Monsters, there was a troop advancing to oppose them.

“Complete dismantling of the traps!”

“A horde of Monsters, 30 meters ahead. Approximately 25 of them.”

“Clerics, Blessing. The Warriors equipped with full sets, lead the advance.”

The Champion of Blood, Deimond, leading the Predators of the Land guild.

A force of one of the top 50 guilds in the Central continent.

In possessions of three castles, all with high tax rate set.

Users living there had issued their complaints, but they were all suppressed by the guild’s overwhelming force.

Those that resisted were often punished.

But that's not all. Whether they were users of other guilds or of another kingdom, the Predators of the Land slaughtered them all indiscriminately.

“Kill them. So they can't get a foothold on our land again!”

While growing and lacking of equipment and money, the so-called outlaw guild.

Based on their forces, they were triumphant, but at the end of the attack from the alliances of the guilds, they faced their destruction!

Now, they were forced to become wanderers, away from the Central continent.

They wandered and made their way toward the north.

“Yesh. This, it must be the Boss Monster Death Lord's place.”

Deimond's motivation soared.

Owning castles or towns, that was the easy part. Not needing to mind about maintaining guild alliances with others nor care for the sizeable growth of the guild; all they needed to do for now was to concentrate on only hunting and questing for themselves!

The Predators of the Land's growth of power was continuing in

full swing, without having to care for influencing the fattest of castles or towns, nothing can beat their enjoyment of playing Royal Road.

“Suban, pay full attention. Maban, Attack!”

The Barbarian Warrior Suban fiercely wielded his ax with both hands.

Monsters were flocking to him.

The Thief Maban stuck out of the Monsters’ shadows and attacked them with poisonous daggers.

Predators of the Land, although numbering many more than any of the other guilds, the working relationship between them was excellent.

While leading the combatants of the Predators of the Land, Deimond led them up till the end of Tenbain dungeon, and hunted the Death Lord.

And then, as a reward, they received one statement.

Will instill fear in all - If you want to walk on the Road of Death, then find the temple that has disappeared from mankind’s memories.

Deimond wrack his head and began to investigate.

“Create fear. Lost temple. What the hell is this?”

Though he enjoyed plundering and killing, Deimond was not slow-witted. Even if this was something seemingly trivial, the phrase had somewhat of a presence; thusly, not negligible.

“If we go and check on the history of the Versailles Continent, it aint going to be helpful. It states here...'disappeared from mankind's memories'...”

Suban also showed signs of being intrigued.

“Quite unique, huh. Wherever we will look or ask, there isn't going to be some concrete explanation regarding it.”

“Then it's better to shift our focuses to the missing temple, yea? If not, then we have to collect more clues on it.”

Deimond, together with his colleagues, covertly probed the hidden rooms in the dungeon seeking for information. They casually picked up random unknown written objects and assembled the lot.

Ohhh! This world is shrouded in darkness. The empire's destruction, and it seems like the Versailles Continent may meets its end on this year.

There is nothing at all that can escape from the hands of death.

Their prison of death and their followers are exponentially growing.

They listed the many strange legends from an array of residents from various nearby towns.

“My grandfather’s grandfather, rather, the story have been passed down long since the time before my grandfather’s; for some reason, people could not carelessly talk about the past of the earlier days of the Nippleheim Empire.”

“There are unusually a lot of traces of the destroyed castles that are at the ruins of the Nippleheim Empire. Why are there a lot of traces? If it weren’t for the lot of Monsters invasion, then their fort or castles wouldn’t have fallen.”

They got more and more clues.

In some Grandfather’s home, he showed a booklet that has been handed down.

-Leading the road of death.

It was a time when the human’s desire and greed to have mightier powers went too far.

The spell that shouldn’t have been made, the magic that shouldn’t have been spread; of plague and death, the prohibition of Priests that dominate Monsters!

Trailing those who walks on the road of death, the continent will fall into darkness along their path.

-Empire history XX year XX day.

They are coming.

The town fell into a state of panic.

The lord who took his family and fled returned in a rotten body; his body was infected by some unknown soldier. It was rotting away.

-Empire history XX year XX day.

Food dropped.

Been here for 200 years at the barren bottom of the well that haven't been exposed.

Now crowded with mice.

-Empire history XX year XX day.

Finally, they revealed themselves.

The Soldiers and the Knights tried to fight them from the castle's

walls.

Although there was no prior, this was a final struggle to survive.

Yes. From my point of view, this is a struggle.

Their army...

At this writing, the castle's walls have collapsed.

They shattered it through the use of wicked magic. Piles of crushed Soldiers and screaming Knights begets our continuous dwindling of power.

Ding!

The Priest of Death

Of blood and the reaper, the legend of the Priest that gained the Power of Death.

Find the lost temple from human's memories to unlock the secret of the Priest of Death.

For those with greed, he will be offered the strongest power befitting them.

For those with wisdom and courage, glory and honor awaits them.

If You should choose the path of the obsessed with greed Priests of Death for their power, then You will be subjected to fear and hatred from the Humans and every other species alike.

The map of the vanished temple have been divided among the Monsters who took it.

Quest difficulty

Grade S

compensation

The followers of the Church of Death.

Quest Restriction

No restriction on Reputation or Level. Find the temple before others find it.

“Difficulty Grade S!”

Deimond bursts with ecstasy.

Grade B quests were typical to them, as they have encountered a substantial amount of such.

Difficulty Grade A quests were commissions that gave huge rewards or power, or even affecting the balance of the Versailles Continent.

Therefore, this was not something one can conveniently obtain, because there was the issue of risking the very life of the guild that needed to be addressed.

The reason Jeonshin Weed received a tremendous amount interests from public was due to being the first to solve a Grade A quest, the Legion of Immortality.

The emotion of the Elemental Shaman of the guild, Imperial, was also sparked.

“It’s a difficulty Grade S of a quest, it’s something needed to be unconditionally accepted.”

The Witch Nardo was being cautious.

“Our current power right now has been stretched thin. This isn’t like the Central continent.”

The Predators of the Land guild was currently isolated from the Central continent; but if needed for a fight, the number of support they can gain for cooperation wasn't small.

In example, fighters that fights for their spoils! They could request the help of the Mercenaries or request help from an army.

It was difficult for them to judge the success of the quest if they guild went alone.

“So it’s better for more to accept the quest huh. Since this came from a Monster like a Death Lord, then it means that this is an amazing quest. We will likely receive a huge reward if we solve it on our own.”

“We don’t know how many Boss Monsters will come into play...if the Monster is a Dragon, then we’ll be annihilated.”

“Annihilation? You’re frighten of something like being annihilated?”

“I don’t mean that, but...”

“Since it’s adventurous, let’s not mince words any longer.”

The opinion of the gang was gearing toward embracing the quest.

They may have ran castles and towns, but each and everyone of them have not abandoned the pure joy of a challenge and of a fight.

Deimond’s ambition pulsed.

‘We’re going throw away everything.’

Their castle in the Central continent has been taken, and they can no longer take up the shame-filled flag of the Predators of the Land anymore. They might as well put the times where they had influenced the Versailles Continent and memories of the past behind them.

‘I think my chance has come.’

An opportunity to turn everything around after from returning back to square one!

Through the use of the Priests of Death quest, they can stand again in the midst of everything.

Deimond strongly clenched his fist.

“As for me, I want the power of the Priests of Death. Anybody that will defy me will be swept away, and I want to grasp the Versailles Continent within my hand!”

You have accepted the quest.

*

Only when the rising sun indicates that it was noon, that Weed

could meet up with the Village Elder in the Lord's Castle.

“The old me could have taken on many things, but for you to go play around and only to meet up with the me now, wow.”

As soon as the Village Elder saw Weed, he complained since.

“A sudden advent of people coming into Morata...with the increasing residents, there are mountains of things that needed to be done...”

He was nagging.

Weed's unique secret of how to get along with those who nags in the world!

At times like these, you do not pile it up more with vain excuses.

‘Nothing to say here.’

In one ear and out the other!

Only after the long lecture ended, the Village Elder hurriedly say.

“You must take hold of Morata's affairs and security. Now that the castle became somewhat sustainable; now Lord nim must directly take a stand on what you want of our Morata. The

remaining fund of the Morata province is 39845 Gold.”

Ding!

Do you want to use the Affairs of the Lord Mode?

The mode to enable the Lord to maintain the domestic state of affairs!

Weed accepted.

“Yes.”

The on-screen view will switch to Affairs of the Lord Mode.

From the empty room in the castle where Weed had a conversation with the Elder. Suddenly, things changed.

Now, he had an overview of the region of Morata.

The thing he saw below him, as he remained in the sky, was a view of Morata.

“Well, now what should I do.”

Weed silently looked down on Morata. Everything was apparent to him, from the movement of people on the streets, buildings, even up till the landscape from the castle walls.

If he wanted, he could change his view point and take a closer peek, it was even possible to hear people’s voices.

The Domestic Affair Mode that was only available to the Lord!

Military

22

Economy

260

Culture

570

Technology

190

Urban Development

97

Sanitation

36

Security

72%

Fund

39845 Gold

A message window popped up to inform him the current state of Morata.

From things such as construction, commercial, military, change in taxation; currently, all were in Weed’s command.

“First, I have to take care of the poor residences in Morata, hmm.”

Weed searched up buildings that needed construction.

Then at this time, more than 300 names and shapes of buildings popped up before him.

From things such as maintenance of the Lord's Castle, and a number of building of specific types for residents were coming up.

Weed looked at the top priority of the list, the palace, and read its descriptions.

Palace of the Lord

The peak of luxury and revelry!

The palace made befitting only the Lord, widespread of the Lord's authority and reputation will increase.

While reduces the loyalty of the soldiers and the residents, the threat of creating friction with those affiliated with the kingdom can increase.

Construction Cost

70000 Gold

Morata does not belong to any kingdom.

Though it did said that the land once belonged to the Nippleheim

Empire, ever since the fall of the nation, every village had to survive relying on themselves.

Therefore, there won't be any friction with those who affiliated with the kingdom.

But Weed lightly shook his head.

'I don't need such a thing.'

The state of the village was in its early development, no good conscience of a reason to be building a grand palace for just the Lord. It sounded more like a waste of money, while planted trees on the roadside seems better looking than a palace where the Lord could freeze to death.

While living the simple life as a Lord, he absolutely had no interest in showing off his best.

Golf course only for the Lord

Everything taken care of by the maids while you comfortably golf.

Can boast to other Lords or Nobles.

Need a large area for the course, will increase people's hatred.

Construction Cost

At least 40000 Gold

“The hell..?”

Most of the facilities available for the Lord, Weed immediately turned them off.

Now, on top of the priority list, there were only necessary buildings to be constructed.

*

The Haven for Adventurers.

The only location for liquor in Morata where people were standing in line waiting for vacancies.

Fail, Meiron, Mapan as well as other colleagues too, were waiting so they could eat and drink.

But, they have been waiting for an hour now and still no vacancy.

“Boy, can we even sit down to have a drink by the end of the day?”

“It’s lunchtime too and so it's full of people.”

While complaining, they couldn’t leave their positions.

There was no other place in Morata where they could enjoy alcohol if they leave the Haven for Adventurers!

If there was a hunting party in the North, then the first place they’d come to in Morata once returned was the Tavern.

While drinking coconut, fruit wine, beer and such, they can shoo away their Fatigue and loosen up, as well as catching up with colleagues in many of the other parties.

“About when can I get a spot...”

Jaffe was complaining with a sigh that follows.

He was in a serious predicament since this was the only location where girls didn't mind him placing himself near them to chat them up.

Then, the roof of the bar suddenly gets torn away.

A whole side of the wall disappeared altogether.

“What the?”

“What’s going on?”

The users who were eating food and getting drunk were wholly surprised, as if they were struck by lightning.

A perfectly natural reaction to something so sudden.

Since the completion of dismantling the pub, walls, pillars, and ceiling were recreated in expanded form.

Now it was able to seat as many as 2000 people!

It had converted into a super tavern.

Only then the users understood.

“The Lord.”

“Morata’s Lord is working on domestic affairs!”

Using vacant land, Weed extended the Tavern and the Inn, while also building a large Dining Hall.

In the more compartmentalized lands, hundreds of buildings were still being erected.

Renovation of the Tavern was 12000 Gold, the Inn was 9300 Gold, and the construction of the large Dining Hall was 16000 Gold.

Various windows informing the status of Morata popped up.

With the expansion of the Tavern: Economy +2, Public Security -1%.

With the expansion of the Inn: Economy +1, Hygiene +3.

Along with being able to afford the construction of the Dining Hall: Culture +3, Economy +2. For the next 3 months, the town's Productivity will increase by 1%.

Military

22

Economy

265

Culture

573

Technology

190

Urban Development

97

Sanitation

39

Security

71%

Fund

2545 Gold

As he modifies, he could see the immediate effect taking place.

It was revealed from things such as the current Military, Economy, and Hygiene that accompanied the addition of the new Dining Hall which were all severely low, affects the influx of

people negatively.

When public Security is low, crime rate will increase as well as problems in the development of commerce.

“The next thing...”

Weed’s eyes turned to the Central Square. And with 100 Gold, he opened five stalls.

Stalls that sell simple snacks!

Although they have minor economic impact, they play an important role to enhance the town's income.

Along with the momentum of this act, the Central Square was having a riot.

“Lord, please make a Blade Master Guild!”

“Adventure shop...”

“I hope you build private homes and warehouses.”

“A traveler’s association must be presented in Morata!”

Everyone was talking about their specific needs.

Just like noisy young birds chirping with both limbs raised wanting some food.

Evidently revealed they longed to have many great things.

Even if the Lord doesn't commence the constructions, the residents or the Architects are capable of building the things they need themselves. But on the Versailles Continent, the number of Architects is uncommonly low; because it isn't easy to build stores and houses to put up for sales.

Generally, as for the Lord, if they want to go ahead and build buildings according to the town and castle, it was meant as a development to create a city.

If the Lord of the castle was a Magician, then he would make a lot of Magic Guilds and Magic shops in line with his traits. If it was an Elemental Shaman, then wood and water would be abundant in the dominated castle, along with making it eco-friendly.

Development under the accommodation of the Lord!

While merely listening to the breeze of users, Weed also had to choose.

However, the fund of the village was only 2045 Gold.

Leaving just 100 Gold of his private fund, Weed began investing wholly in Morata.

Until now, the lot of money he used for the construction was Morata's own Fund.

Shacks!

New houses were needed because of the explosive increase of population of Morata.

Hill and mountain trees were simultaneously disintegrated together forming Shacks.

Each Shack was a mere 30 Silvers per household.

“Make it a Shack of dreams as well!”

Weed made an investment of 3000 Gold into 10000 furnishings.

The Morata's users were surprised by the changes made.

“Woah!”

“This crazy Lord!”

“They're just Shacks but they're huge!”

Shacks also appeared in the Central Square.

Shacks that were built near atop the mountain were packed tightly together.

The next thing Weed chose to build was the Commodity Exchange.

This played a similar role to that of the trading posts, but this has the possibility of carrying out large-scale commerce.

Morata has already exported their stuff to other places, and this building can effectively supply to those insufficient towns!

Traders' warehouses and pickup areas were widened.

This was warmly welcomed by the Merchants.

“Morata lord knows whatsup.”

“If you ignore the Merchants then the growth of the city is a no go.”

He also conceived a Union for the Merchants.

Even when there is a large amount of work or procurement

required, they can divide the commission up among the Merchants within the Union!

The building is the cornerstone of the Merchant Guild.

A lot of building arose in the vacant lot near the Morata Central Square.

Weapon shop, Armor shop, Tourist shop, Adventurer shop, Cartography group, Fruit store, and including Grocery store were made.

Rows of buildings were built on the once empty streets of Morata caused the users to cheer.

“Hurrah!”

“It’s going to be much convenient now, huh.”

The other competitive town was of poor quality at a time. Even with the advent of some famous guild dominating the towns, which attained the users’ awareness for a while, the number of users was not something comparable to that of Morata. Being able to purchase items from Morata made them a bit more comfortable; hitherto everybody was delighted.

But this was not the end of Weed’s construction.

Kuuuung!

The land rang out in a thunderous noise while materials were piling up on the vacant lot next to the Smithy.

“What, what is that?”

“What is he trying to make?”

As a place to manufacture weapons and armors, the Smithy boasts a pretty spacious area. A building five times larger than the Smithy was being assembled on the vacant lot.

A large building with a large chimney.

As soon as the building was complete, the Blacksmiths who were unable to overcome the curiosity nimbly navigated towards it.

They went inside then jumped and screamed all around.

“Huge hearth!”

“The hearth can pull out high quality Iron from just Iron Ore!”

If there isn't a large fireplace, then only skilled Blacksmiths were able to extract Iron, and even so, it takes a lot of time. Because of this reason, if they want to fabricate what they want, then they

will have to dissolve a lot of other swords and armors in order to do so.

But now, when they obtain just simple Iron Ores from the hunt, they could come to this large furnace and quickly after, they can extract high purity Iron from them.

If the supply of Iron shoots up, Blacksmiths could potentially make weapons with improved quality, as well as increasing quantity.

This was something the fabricators desperate needed!

Although it took up 50000 Gold, Weed did not hesitate using the money.

Because with more Blacksmiths and Jewelers(Jewelry cutter) flooding in using it, there will be an increase in the production of weapons and armors, needless to say the influx of the tax revenue that comes with them!

To the unaware users, outside of the village of Morata, other construction projects were going on.

The Iron mines, Copper mines, and Silver mines that once belong to the Nippleheim Empire of the past!

Weed was trying to transform the mines that were neglected.

He repaired the tunnel system again; some villagers have moved to the locations while holding pickaxes. Paladins of Freya were also included among those villages in order to hunt Monsters who were currently dwelling in those abandoned old mines.

“He’s been slacking off from Morata, finally he returned with the mindset of its Lord.”

“I guess now we’re having a bit of progress.”

The user base as a whole all wore smiley faces.

But the changes did not stop there.

Kuuuuuung!

This time too, piling materials were appearing at another vacant lot.

The lush weeds grown there were cleaned off with the founding of a guild.

Tailor Guild!

There were a lot of Tailors who were far ahead in the mastery of the skill and could take advantages of Morata’s Advanced Fabric and Leather.

While they were skillfully experienced, several other guilds were built that can could help them out as well.

Farmers Guild and Freya Church's Altar were constructed.

If their offering to the altar exceeds than what was asked for, curses can be lifted in addition to the temporary increase in Luck.

While the Freya Church's Clergymen were well liked; user Clerics, Priests, and Adventurers fervently hope for this building.

“Even the Altar! That's really excellent.”

“Hunting in Morata is good.”

Blade Master Guild was also created.

“The Lord musta used a bit of money.”

Thief Guild was founded.

“This crazy Lord, he's just throwing money from one place to the next.”

The users that were in the village greatly cheered.

It wasn't their village, but a place where they mainly stay while adventuring becoming more developed was making it comfortable for them.

A Warrior Guild emerged as they were blindsided by their chatting.

Bard Guild, Archer Guild, Assassin Guild, Kung-fu Master Guild, Fist Guild.

Guilds of the Magician series were not built because each of the trait was 40000 Gold. However, almost all of the basic combat classes' Guilds were built.

An enormous amount of Weed's hidden asset was invested into the village.

All the material items he earned from Todoom resulted in 340000 Gold attained by utilizing his Tailor and Blacksmith skills.

And the Diamond he received in exchange for making the statue appraised for 145000 Gold.

Together, the sum of Gold was 485000.

While the money obtained from those who he receives for their participation in the creation of the statue along with the sales of porridge exceeded 150000 Gold, the production cost of the statue came out to be 160000 Gold, which bled him.

But still, the money earned from hunting, combined with the money he previously have came out to be more than 500000 Gold.

Ding!

Has triggered the development of a New City in Morata Province.

Morata has distinguished itself in the area of the former Nippleheim Empire!

The softly blooming flower of Culture and is firmly instilled with Faith.

In places which are economically underdeveloped, a lot of money has been invested.

The inhabitants of Morata, with the teachings of the Goddess Freya, will try to enrich their lives.

Productivity will increase by 45% for 2 months.

With Morata's expansion and development, it is heading towards urbanization.

Along with the development, influx of migrants is growing. The number of residents is rapidly increasing, but until they can get jobs, public Security will decline and funds will be spent

supporting them.

There is more need for food due to the increasing residents, but at the same while, the town’s proximity will increase.

Following the improvement of the Lord’s Castle, one will be able to exercise political leadership to other provinces though diplomacy in addition to the town of Morata.

Military

22

Economy

297

Culture

579

Technology

196

Urban Development

Sanitation

42

Security

68%

Fund

79014 Gold

Weed still did not leave the Domestic Affairs Mode.

As there were still many necessary buildings remain.

“There are as much as 12 mine-able mines...”

To bring forth the development of one mine took 50000 Gold.

While Morata does not having the money to develop the 12 mines, but when it does cultivate them, the value of every Ores will most likely to crash and discarded.

Regarding Hygiene, much of its value will decline more so in comparison to when the residents were just farming; and in other areas, work productivity will also drop because of the mining they will do.

Material production, economic strength, and the source of military are all important resources consisted of the residents.

If there was such a thing as a Mithril or Mana Stone mine, they would unconditionally excavate it, but unfortunately, such high grade resources did not exist in Morata or will they ever be found.

But still, it was lucky that they had Ivory.

While he was observing the province of Morata, in a grassland located north-west of its vicinity, Weed found a large herd of Elephants. If they were authorized to hunt these Elephants, then they would be able to obtain high quality Ivory.

Ivory is something that could be called the 'jewel of the living.'

“Gotta catch them sparingly.”

It was now time to nurture the Soldiers.

Morata still have seven months remaining of the received protection from Freya Church, but the Soldiers need much more time than that in order to grow.

“I need to recruit about 100 Soldiers and 10 Knights.”

Recruiting station and training ground were built to recruit Soldiers and to give them basic training.

It was not possible to have a proper training facility for the Knights, so he ordered the hired Knights to venture out.

Weed was done with the army.

Frankly speaking, the head of any guild was the leading user of any group. However, it was different for the Lords of any town or castle. By using the fund to drive the town, he will possess his own army.

*

It was when the users of Morata were bursting with cheers as the town was going through with its development.

Users amidst light appeared in the Central Square.

“Ah!”

“Is this the way how I move the body?”

“This is Royal Road!”

They were complete novices.

Morata had become a place where new users could start out.

“This is the North?”

“Wow! So this is how the villages in the North look like.”

New users accompanied by light were constantly being generated.

This was the only starting point for beginners in the North.

An explosively large amount of new users who saw Morata village chose the place.

“Uwahhhh!”

“Newbies.”

In the midst of the beginners' bustling, the general users who once felt lonesome and forlorn also became more delighted.

Even though they are just beginners, their worth is very large.

While hunting for fox, deer, rabbit and the likes, they can deal with the town with the meat and leather they saves.

This isn't similar to the high level users who hunt meat and leather for production purposes, these were useful materials for the beginners to obtain money and weapon.

Thus they become a force to procure a huge quantity of food, weapon, and armor materials for the town.

Whether it was a chip of Wood, a rolling Ore, or cheap Herb, they serve as a driving force to develop the town as these new users sell what they can.

This also makes it easy for the Merchants and production classes to save time in collecting basic materials, making it great for them to comfortably make the goods and sell the lot.

Although there wasn't a place that the beginners could get help immediately, the normally specific combat job venues became convenient shops to sell out of miscellaneous weapons and armor to the beginners to use.

The novice users felt greatly welcome while the Clerics, Priests, and Knights were able to earn Honor points, Faith, Devotion as they helped out.

*

Kang Jin-Cheol was in great anguish as he scanned Royal Road's board.

“Is this really alright? Is this fine letting it grow?”

On the Versailles Continent, he went by the handle Mapan, and had a bit of commercial success.

But he was feeling severely remorseful at the moment as his conscience beat down on him.

“Even beginners are coming to Morata...”

On the bulletin board, he could see many articles coming up regarding the subject.

-Information on the birth of the frontier of the North village.

-Beginners, start in Morata.

-Basic map of Morata, and information of buildings and basic

quests.

-A rich hunting ground. Please note that although the information has risks, hunting in Morata is an opportunity to have an adventure.

Information about Morata accumulated the board.

Users' reactions were enthusiastic.

-Just starting Royal Road now, is Morata really that good?

-I'm creating a character in Morata. I'm tinkling with a Champion. Looking for people to go together.

-Me!

-What are the traits of the officials of Freya?

-I heard that if you go to Morata, they gives you free porridge...

Questions and answers took place in real-time. Much of the people's core interest was toward Morata.

The town was a hub covering the entire North's trading, hunting, and commissions!

It was still a small town that had little development, though still there were a lot of people wanting to start in this Morata.

Kang Jin-Cheol lamented.

“These poor souls are continuing to migrate.”

The Smithy, Tavern, Trading Post and such that were established by Weed denotes that prices were cheaper.

At the large Smithy, the residential Blacksmiths were regularly employed to produce stuff. If they continue to make increasingly growing luxurious goods, then their skills can climb resulting in better and better goods.

In this way, the Lord who directly built the buildings can earn a share as each location reap in profit.

Prices in the Tavern can hardly be called fair already, while the Inn has its own pulls.

As the town welcomed the poor novice users and gave them a peace of mind, it was a critical juncture to lure them in for them to start in Morata.

But like a sudden storm coming in at any time, so will their future be exposed to exploitation!

“I cannot let them go!”

Kang Jin-Cheol dramatically decided.

It was not a bad thing for him if Morata was becoming more developed. As a Merchant who had invested here and there in Morata, it would only increase his income further.

He wrote, having already prepared himself for this penalty.

Title: Beginners, do not EVER start in Morata.

You all have greatly misunderstood.

Morata is a place that can indeed be called a den of evil.

The boundary of the town is tiny, and if you go out of it, there is a plethora of Monsters; it's too dangerous for the beginners.

The Light Tower or the Goddess Statue?

Do not expect much from these.

If you happen to see the sculptures every single day, then pretty soon you'll have had enough.

And now, although the prices are on the medium or low side, later on, the Lord will raise the taxes significantly; so absolutely, do not come to Morata.

“It’s done now.”

He was anxious with the written article, but pretty soon, malicious comments piled up.

-Other people who are this way don’t concern me, but are you actually trying to have a leisure hunt in Morata?

-This post was written by a person, so it’s apparent that he was slapped with huge tax by the Lord in the Central continent.

-He must be some kind of Lord! Prolly a headman of a small village or something!

-Seems like a complete novice trying to dirty the water to me. Anyone who even know just bit about Royal Road knows how advantageous it is for beginners to start out in Morata.

-Should I inform you? Widespread of sculptures, hunting grounds, high level users, there is nobody who does not get a quest. Take my word for it's worth, Morata is a place of hope and is a haven.

-Get out of here!

“Keuheuk!”

Kang Jin-Cheol grabbed his pounding chest.

Since he was only reading the negative comments coming in real-time in real life, he wasn't hurt externally.

Despite him being slammed, extremely strange things were going on.

Besides Kang Jin-Cheol, different articles from other people trying to discourage the user base from starting in Morata or coming to Morata.

They were posts that weren't possible if they didn't know the little things about Weed!

But as such articles appear, they were heavily struck down by negative comments.

So much so that they deleted the posts since every single one of them were fed up with the accusations; as the authors made out to be antagonists.

“Ahh.”

Realization dawned him.

It wasn't just him that had a conscience, but Fail, Meiron, and the others as well.

They too, tried to be saviors but could not turn the tide.

They were hardly able to change the current.

By means of attacking Morata, they faced a procession of users!

The definitive definition of evil was winning.

The world is dominated by the ill-intent.

And standing in the apex of all the swirling wickedness is Weed!

Chapter 8: Dwarf Kingdom

“...class is over.”

They stood to bow to the leaving professor, and only the students needing to unwind remained.

“Wheww.”

“Barely made it.”

It was a day of a quiz regarding the technology of Virtual Reality. The beaten students who studied for the test the week before slumped and groaned onto their desks.

Lee Hyun still had a good countenance without a hint of fatigue. And as if they had truly know, the others thought to themselves.

‘Must be good knowing the fundamentals.’

They thought he knew of the content at a previous instance and was back learning again, sparing no cost paying for the tuition.

The lessons were on the principles and developmental potential of Virtual Reality; along with the results of dying and living in VR and how they affect the motor nerves in reality. It was fortuitous for him that he could write down the answers without having to

cram as they continued to believe he was repeating the class.

But in comparison to the countless histories of the Versailles Continent, heroes, locations of villages, items, magic, and skills he had already memorized in his mind, he could answer a quiz on this level with his eyes closed.

“The test is over, do you guys want to get on Royal Road?”

The proposal came from Min Sura, who had been wanting to play.

Choe Sang Jun accepts.

“If you’re thinking about the going to the capsule room, I could not agree more. Since there's one here to for rent, let’s go to that place?”

Popularity of the capsule room, a place where people can connect to Royal Road was widespread. There were a lot in the university; from there, they resumed their conversation.

Lee Yu Jeong said.

“Rather, we should do that class assignment, the one about having an adventure in VR.”

“Ugh! We just finish with the test and here I thought it was all

good and well; but there's still this assignment.”

Their assignment was to have an adventure in Virtual Reality, specifically for them, it was to explore an actual dungeon in Royal Road.

An exploration in a team of seven, with the deadline being in two months!

Alternatively, they could opt out and take a midterm instead; but as the team members were scattered around various regions on the Versailles Continent, they were given a generous amount of time to do such project.

Lee Hyun was in group C.

“Anyway, let's go to the capsule room. We'll decide the rest later on.”

At Choe Sang Jun's suggestion, the school buddies grabbed their bags and was getting ready.

“I...have busy work to do...”

Lee Hyun tries to get out of going to such a place, but Min Sura grabbed him and wasn't about to let him leave.

“Oppa is also in the same group with us, and you've never once

went with us to the room...today, come with us.”

“That’s right, if we’re in the same group, we should be comfortably cooperating with each other. Come together with us to the capsule room.”

Lee Hyun did not want to go to the capsule room.

The place was an expensive alternative just to log into Royal Road!

He had trouble understand why people would pay to go to the capsule room when they could access Royal Road anytime at home.

*

It was break time at the university, and the capsule room was crowded with students hanging about.

“Spots, for seven please.”

“You've come today too. Will you be playing Royal Road?”

The part-time student at the counter asked, and Choe Sang Jun gently nodded.

“Yes, is the capsule I always use available?”

“It’s empty. I’ll show you to it.”

“K.”

This was a good indication that he would log into Royal Road whenever the class was over, or sometimes, he’d even skip classes to do so.

Min Sura’s eyes narrowed.

‘His attendance must be bad, his exam score must also be a mess.’

While his friends looked at Choe Sang Jun with pity filled thoughts, Lee Hyun had a different viewpoint.

‘So jealous.’

The capsule room regular!

The hourly rate of the capsule room can be as much as 5000 Won.

Because of the price of the capsule was expensive, the fee calculated of about this much must be correct.

Hence, Lee Hyun could not enumerate the pocket money he must have had to become a regular of the capsule room.

‘I’m not like these deep pocket guys.’

He admired Sang Jun's plentiful boldness and ambition.

In the capsule room, there were capsules with special purposes. The main screen inside the room launched with their individual gameplay.

Choe Sang Jun of the Black Lion Guild confidently disclosed his appearance; thanks to that, the capsule room attracted a lot of strangers.

“Ooooooooo.”

“New armor.”

Along with the footages that came out just as Choe Sang Jun connected, the exclamations could be heard.

“Water Elementalist armor. Just for a level 280, the set costs more than 1.4 million Won.”

The set was recognized as something a lot of top users typically wore.

‘Because we have Sang Jun, we’re going to be able to do the dungeon exploration assignment easily.’

‘Such relief. We can leisurely prepare.’

Lee Yu Jeong was a level 200 Blade Master, but she was uneasy knowing of Min Sura, an Enchanter by trade who could not provide good enough assistance in combat. But now, she was relieved while looking at the reliable Choe Sang Jun.

Lee Hyun also approached the part-timer.

“Will you also get on Royal Road?”

Lee Hyun agonizes while nodding.

“Yes. Please get me a capsule.”

It was like throwing money away, but since he was already present, it was better than acting out a fool.

He decided if he was going to use money, he would raise even more on Royal Road than what he had spent.

His capsule was right next to Lee Yu Jeong and Min Sura.

“Then Oppa, cya later.”

“Have fun.”

Spending money in the capsule room!

Lee Hyun gave a light nod then entered capsule.

*

When Weed connected, peace was absent in those in Morata.

There was multitude of beginners looking for hunting parties consisting of just them; and going on quests together.

“Level 1. All the classless come here.”

At someone's beckoning, dozens of people gathered toward him.

“Looking for people to catch Rabbit.”

Currently, over 100 beginners gathered up.

There was no bothersome distinction to be made.

These people who didn't even dress up in combatant's clothing accumulated and proudly crossed the gate; hitherto, it seems to be the Merchant's dream.

“In order to make camp, we need to build a bonfire...does anybody have a flint?”

“With our power, we'll be fine even with Wolves.”

Even though they were beginners, the number was frightening.

A crew of more than 100 novices!

Without exception, more than 10 parties consisted of nothing but beginners went to the field and hunted in front of the village.

More than a week in real life slipped pass since Weed was in the Domestic Affair Mode of the Lord.

He had intended to make ways toward the Dwarves Kingdom immediately after logging in, but the Soldiers seems to be starting their training a bit late at this time.

“Ven, Stam, Yuple.”

“Yes, My Lord!”

The Soldiers came to Weed and saluted ceremoniously.

“You guys must lead the others well.”

“Understood, My Lord!”

“I will follow the Lord’s command.”

The light in the Soldiers’ eyes were adamant, giving them enough validity.

*

Weed went hunting with these Soldiers four weeks earlier on the Versailles Continent.

Needless to say the hunt wasn't even decent for him. They were just catching Foxes, Rabbits, or Wolves in front of the town, and then traveled together to some easy dungeon.

Basic dungeon that has Kobolds, Rogues, Lions, Skeletons, and Ghouls.

In there, Weed displayed his absolute ability to conduct.

“Do not hesitate to draw your swords for the sake of the innocent residents.”

“Yes!”

“GO! Do not rest your body! You must remember that in order to

make the village safe, you have to hunt a lot of Monsters.”

Weed led the Soldiers and ceaselessly hunted.

There was no need to use the method like he had in the past, where he would bandage and cook in order to gain the trust of the Soldiers.

“Do it this way to cut away the Kobold.”

When Weed used the Sculpturing Blade and sharply cut it at the waist, the Kobold literally turned to gray.

The strength of one hovers above level 300!

“Wow!”

“He is indeed the Lord!”

“He deserves to be an important Knight among the Knighthood with power of that extent.”

In reality, the current level of the conscripted Knights in town wasn't even at 10.

Because of the disposition of the Soldiers, they were loyal to the Lord and respected his powers, and that was enough to gain their

trust.

“Looks like the sword's Durability is nearly gone. Don't you know how to take care of the sword?”

Weed threw in a comment, the Soldiers bowed while they were reprimanded.

“Sorry, Sire.”

“Here, let me see.”

Subsequently, at occasions, he would take their swords to repair, and he would only bandage the Soldiers liberally just before their death.

The eyes of the Soldiers changed.

Twinkle twinkle!

‘There is nothing our Lord can't do.’

‘We need to become Soldiers with good judgment to protect the village.’

Loyalty quickly hit 100%.

Ven, Stam, and Yuple had the fastest growth; their levels were in the 30's and rose to Denarions.

Weed's rapid hunting method.

While the routes taken shortened, breaks were also reduced.

The quickening result was achieved by working in combination with the Spearmen, Swordsmen, the Shield, and Archers.

The second week.

Weed led the Soldiers further into the depth of the dungeon.

When they were camping at night, flock of Monsters attacked.

It won't make a bit of difference to Weed, not even as an after meal snack; but for the Soldiers, they were fighting for their very survival.

“Strike!”

“The Skeleton's too strong!”

“These Monsters are like in a different dimension comparing to those we fought till now.”

While listening to clamors of the Soldiers, Weed was sitting in the back sewing. He was manufacturing clothing as a hobby with fabrics Mapan brought him.

Nevertheless, he was never completely withdrawn from taking care of the Soldiers as he would immediately intervene at any dangerous juncture.

If it was not a time where he would have to draw his sword and jump in, he would just send commands in their direction.

“Swordmen, Spearmen, to the rear. Take a break. Shields, form formation and push back the enemies. Archers, fire the silver plated arrows!”

Weed took care of the Soldiers one by one, trying to keep them from dying. He tried to keep them from taking risks before combat, but still, they were barely able pull it through.

With the effects of the Light Tower and the blessing of the Clergymen of Freya, their growth quickens much faster with each hunt.

“Charge! No time to rest. Fight. Only one minute of rest after you kill all of your enemies.”

Weed used Lion's Roar while pushing forth his Soldiers.

The Soldiers grew stronger with the intensity of the training

along with further increase of Familiarity.

Finally, at the end of four weeks, they became full-fledged Soldiers that lack nothing.

Ven, Stam, and Yuple levels were beyond 60, and became adept with the flow of battle and were able to make judgment for themselves.

They were promoted to Centurions.

“In order to defend Morata, more Soldiers are needed. From now on, you guys are role models for future Soldiers.”

“Yes!”

To conclude the four weeks training, Weed gave them that speech.

The undisciplined Soldiers.

They underwent the hellish training and learn the minute details about battles as Soldiers.

It was an effective measure.

The Authority of an Experienced Instructor.

Having directly trained by His Majesty and under his Leadership, the Soldiers will dedicate unconditional Loyalty to Lord of Morata, Weed.

The effect of Leadership rises by 3% permanently.

“Cherish the lives of your fellow colleagues. Along with them, you are to take care of the village.”

“Yes Sire! We will follow the Lord’s command.”

After them, Weed reeled in an additional thousand Soldiers. Because Morata’s proximity was has widened, they needed to have more Soldiers.

While only actively invested commercially which resulted in the explosive growth of the economy; now it was time to invest in the military.

At this time, the territories of Morata were half of Rosenheim Kingdom, so they needed more Soldiers in comparison to before.

Keeping the peace is also one of the important tasks of the Lord, after all.

Consequentially resulted in a slight reduction of bold investments into technological development, increase housing, improving crops and industrialization.

It was just an eventuality: he was stepping closer day by day towards an evil Lord's dream of future exploitation through the adjustment of the tax rate.

*

Regaining himself after revisiting those past four weeks, Weed moved to a remote hill away from the village of Morata.

“Wah-il, Wah-thul, Wah-sam!”[\[1\]](#)

He called forth the Wyvern sculptures he once infused life into.

Far beyond the mountains of Morata, six dots emerged. Those flecks expanded with huge wings and were approaching at a high velocity.

Along with the group of Wyverns, the glittering golden Geumini[\[2\]](#) was riding atop Wah-il.

Weed was thrilled witnessing their imposing appearances.

“You’re all alright!”

He looked relieved, the look of those who place their money into a safe!

As soon as the Wyverns landed on the ground, they waddled toward him and nudged him using their bodies affectionately.

“Master, good to see you.”

“We missed you too, too much.”

While in Todoom, Weed’s Leadership and Charisma didn’t have a significant growth.

However, for the Wyverns, his existence was that of a parent!

They showed intimacy that was no different than that towards a biological father.

“Hmm guys, I think you’ve gained a little weight.”

“Kkyaruk?”

The Wyverns eyes blinked and shook their heads.

The kind of attitude of pretending not understanding when someone speaks English.

In reality, they got fatter once they became too lazy; and later on it became harder for them to fly. They hunted preys while mainly

staying on the ground.

Due to the retreat of the cold in the North, the Wyverns also felt a sense of crisis with the large scale of Monsters activities.

‘The preys are also serious business.’

‘We have to stay alive here.’

The Wyverns original disposition was that they could take to the sky.

Their inherent specialty was aerial combat, while Geumini was to shoot arrows.

They noticed that the Monsters in the North were stronger, so they fought with the mindset of defending their territory.

The territories of Morata!

They lived everyday while hunting Monsters.

When they were first granted life, their levels were around 323.

They battled against the Legion of Immortality, and with the Northern Expedition, they fought against the Bone Dragon!

While experiencing most of their battles with Weed, their levels also reached the 360's.

Facet accumulated on their lustrous wings and such effects. Their bodies were scarred, giving them an imposing appearance.

“Well, it’s not like you’re severely obese or anything. It must have been hard during the time I wasn’t around.”

Weed carefully applied bandages to cover up the inscribed wounds they received during those time.

“Kkyakkkyakkkyak!”

The Wyverns thanked frivolously as he rub their bodies.

The clothing he made for them to cope with the cold of the North from Wolf Leathers had become tattered.

However, comparing to the Monsters that did not have the armor, the Wolf Leather clothing gave them a considerable effect. They boast significant help in tight victories against other sizable Monsters in their territorial disputes.

Weed spoke faintly while collecting the Wolf Leather clothing that had severely past their expiration date.

“You must have had a lot of troubles. Eat more.”

The happy Wyverns showed extreme elation to the Weed who had returned!

They had thought with his homecoming, so would the abuse and smacking, but this was really a good thing.

‘The owner has become a human now.’

‘I knew that he was not a rude master.’

The affinity of the Wyverns seemed to have risen dramatically.

Wah-sam turned around and extruded his back.

“Master, if you want to ride, ride on my back. Is there a place where you want to go?”

“There is so let’s finish it here.”

Weed immediately got on Wah-sam’s back.

“The goal is southward. It is now time for a trip!”

Whenever the Wyvern flapped his wings, Weed climbed higher and higher into the sky.

Daylight was fading away far behind the sky, and they flew in the night sky among the scattering stars.

Kureungreung-kwagwagwang! Kwangkwang!

They flew into an area where a bunch of clouds suddenly amassed, pouring rain and thunderbolts struck.

In the cold rain, Weed and the Wyverns' bodies were soaked.

The frustratingly rain continued to pour; falling onto some brightly lit nameless villages and castle.

The lush weeds' bodies tilted to the will of the wind, while the rain was stirring on the surface of the river.

The risen river flooded to and fro at a place where fishermen congregated.

Members of hunting parties, as well as individual Adventurers could be seen running through the prairies.

Hanttam. Hanttam.

Weed was sewing while seated on the back of the Wyvern.

He was creating new armor for the Wyverns by recycling the torn

Wolf Leather they were using.

He was hard at work without a care in the romanticism of the splendor of Mother Nature!

Only Weed could understand his sentiment.

‘No need to be hasty, working hard step by step and the number will accumulate making this a joyous trip! The real enjoyment, not like those fake happy glued-on eyes on those dolls for 10 years old. The excitement is similar to the thumping in my chest at this high elevation. In this way, when I work hard, I’m really unaware of the time.’

The endowed innate temperament which was perfected through accumulated experiences; now he was taking pleasure in the steps of laborious tasks!

“Is that the Mubain Castle?”

Weed shot up on the Wyvern’s back.

On the ground, a castle with pointy spires and huge walls could be seen.

The castle that was currently occupied by the Lord Crescendo of the Black Serpent Guild!

It wasn't the capital of a kingdom but many users have gathered in the huge metropolis. The number of users was unparalleled even to those of the Rosenheim Kingdom Seraborg; Mubain was something comparable to that of the Somren Liberty City.

“Master, is that place the destination?”

Wah-sam asked while flapping his wings strenuously.

Weed shook his head.

“Nah. We only have a little more to go till we get there.”

“Alright, Master.”

Wah-sam continued on.

They passed by Mubain, along with several other towns and castles. But Weed did not tell them to descend to those locations.

‘The secret of Sculpturing Skill. If I go by the Goddess Freya’s revelation, I might be right if I just go there without checking Human’s towns.’

He thought it’d be in vain if he stops to investigate, so he wanted to directly go to the location he initially assumes to be correct from the get go.

They flew for three more hours.

About five hours have passed after they flew over Mubain Castle.

“It..it’s hard, Master. Substitute someone else to get there.”

“Just hang on.”

“Ho...how much longer is ther...”

“We’re almost there.”

Wah-sam was flapping with his dying strength.

The tip of his wings were shaking hard, informing him that exhaustion was reaching its max.

This might be the first time that the Wyvern’s wing power was about to give out.

Two more hours passed by and Wah-sam was essentially pleading.

“Master, please, let’s take a break!”

“We’ll be there soon.”

Another hour passed.

“I...I’m really tired...so...can the other sibling switch in for me, Master?”

The other Wyverns were flying at a distance from where they were. From the time when Wah-sam first got tired, they distanced themselves in advance with this specific situation in mind.

The Wyverns’ intelligence when it comes to this, was excellent.

Whether they were horses or Wyverns, their momentary acceleration was extremely fast, but their endurance was rather low. In addition to the duration of the flight, they would be hard pressed to keep afloat while carrying Weed.

“Annoying. If it’s just a bit more, why are you making it such a hassle getting there?”

The tone that relays that affection was running dry!

If Weed wasn’t the parent figure to him, Wah-sam would have betrayed Weed already.

This is the reason why children put up with their parents hypocrisies!

So Wah-sam endured a little more and gently asked again.

“Master, how much longer?”

“Now, we just got a bit more to go.”

“.....”

Weed’s indifferent words cruelly spat out.

If it was just ‘a bit more to go,’ then they would have been done by the time they passed by the proximity of Mubain.

From then, they flew for four more hours.

The mountains and mountainous ranges on the ground were huge.

Dense forest with plenty of trees, tunnels drilled in on the side of the mountains, and Dwarves that had no difficulty crossing said mountain could be seen.

The scenery of the lustrous green mountain that could be seen from the sky was breathtaking, but Wah-sam’s optics had long changed to yellow.

“Whew, just 2 more hours now and we're there.”

“.....”

*

Unlike the other kingdoms that were on the plains or beside a river, the Thor Kingdom was unusually lined throughout three mountainous ranges.

Norn Mountain, Ulta Mountain, Saigorn Mountain.

The kingdom that grew alongside the Dwarves over 600 years.

The kingdom of those with extremely dominating specialization.

Gold, Silver, Platinum, Amber, Sapphire, Jade, Diamond, Malachite, Rose Quartz, Amethyst, Ruby, Opal, and countless other gems. As well as minerals such as Iron, Copper, Bronze, and Mithril.

From these, along with the Dwarves' refinement and carving abilities, they were manufactured into good befitting the Thor Kingdom's notability.

Innately, Dwarves were given the Handicraft skill; and because of the fact that they were abundant in metal, a lot of whom became Blacksmiths that creates swords and armors.

The goods that were made by the Dwarves could sell anywhere at a premium without as much as saying a word, and they even give out additional commerce Experiences.

For that reason, Merchant never cease from visiting the Thor Kingdom.

However, Dwarves of the Thor Kingdom does not feel even the slightest euphoria. Their one and only agonizing fault.

[1] " 와일아, 와둘아, 와삼아!" : Basically, their names are just WAH(colloquially) and a number, in this case 1, 2, 3. The reason I chose to spell out the numbers unlike going with numbered Geomchi is because there's only six Wyverns, whereas there are 505 Geomchis. If I were to spell out Geom-499-chi, it'd be Geom-sahbaekkushipku-chi, rather long winded.I seem to remember that the Wyverns' name has this suffix "ii" to it though, so i may have to change this later.

[2] Geumini(금 인이) : His name in English is Goldman. Opt out going with the romanized Korean since google translate won't translate this either. Personal preference, really.

Chapter 9: The Dwarf Art Hand

There was someone accompanied the Wyverns that flew over the hills of the Thor Kingdom.

The man's identity was none other than Weed!

Weed walked with the carving knife out after he sent the Wyverns into the sky.

“I gotta find me a small rock.”

When he carved the Orc Karichwi, the rock was a sizable one; but it shouldn't necessarily be at that size this time around.

However, it was difficult for him to find a worthy rock.

Due to the lustrous forest dense with trees, the rocks were well hidden by the mountain.

“Ima just go with wood then.”

Weed cut a branch from the tree and cleaved the foliage on the upper part of the branch to make a Log.

He was prepping the material with the Sculpturing Skill.

After that, he used the Carving Knife to give it finer details.

At first, the overall composition of the head and torso were made, from there he pondered about the measurement of the legs.

“If I make it about 30% shorter than normal, it should be right.”

Weed worked while squatting down in order to use it as a comparison.

He carved thick and ample legs, no waist from the hip to the chest; resulted in a thickly built figure.

“I have a feeling the Log’s lacking...”

Despite the thickest wood he obtained nearby as material, he felt it was rather deficient.

Weed reluctantly held the piece with both hands and continued to carve. He made bold short arms, and decided on how to carve the head as the last remaining region.

“Dwarf. I have to match the Dwarves’ properties.”

Dwarves, stubborn and never abdicate.

Possessed by the excitement in a battle against Monsters and never backing down, for the ones who chose their profession as Champions or Warriors.

Naturally, they were the strongest of species, disregarding the standard set with their small stature.

At the same time, with the innate Handicraft Skill, anything placed in Craftsmen's crude hand can be fashioned into something beautiful.

The interpersonal relationship of the Dwarves is not something harmonious.

In many cases, those that have decided their lives to their goal as a craftsman, stay inside their workshops and do not come out.

Because of this, in contrast to their great works, they do not get along well with others unlike the other species.

The Race have said to brighten up with exceptional quality of ores, gems, Mithril and the likes; the Race that said to have an unusual greed for equipment and materials.

The species that loves molten metal and purely adorn nothing.

Weed carved the stocky figure of the Dwarf.

With a wayward mouth and despising saggy eyes even at times with no other to stare at.

Long and full beard that ran down to the chest.

By one strand to another, the hair seems to be given life within the beard.

If the Sculpturing Skill hadn't reach such a cultivated state, such finer detail was not possible.

Similarly, at this point, the short and thick arms and legs were fashioned.

Weed was pleased with the self-made sculpture.

“At this level, it's pretty good for a dwarf I haven't even seen, huh?”

It was not scary to look at night comparing to the Orc Karichwi he made.

“It's not bad at this level. Shape Shifting Sculpture!”

Used Shape Shifting Sculpture.

For having infinite affection toward the Sculpture, the Sculptor

and the Sculpture will resemble one another!

Weed's body changed to assume the divine figure of the sculpture.

His stature was getting shorter, legs thickened. His trunk got thin and his arms also thickened. On the other hand, his head grew larger and his beard was growing longer. And wrinkles formed around his eyes, making his age unknown.

The shape of the body have gotten smaller, many equipment the body is wearing at the moment is impossible to use.

The armor plate or the body armor accidentally slipped to the mouth.

Depending on the form of the race, new necessary equipment are needed.

Due to the impact of the Shape Shifting Sculpture, Endurance, Strength, Luck will increase slightly.

Effectiveness of the Handicraft Skill increases by 5%.

Art stat is rising dramatically.

Shape Shifting Sculpture skill will be effective until it is lifted.

“Keoheoheoheum!”

Weed gave a long cough as a Dwarf.

And he walked toward the direction of the targeted Dwarf village.

Being a short legged Dwarf, the center of gravity that came along with it made it very easy, but with every step taken, he was panting at a lot of spot during the distance traveled.

Nevertheless, Weed diligently moved with each step while being lost in thoughts.

“This time, what should the Dwarf’s name be, hmm?”

In his head, several names flashed by.

Just as Orc karichwi, he needed a name that leaves a strong impression.

“Art Hand. This is a name that can express the delicate world of art.”

*

When Lee Hyun was released from the capsule, his school friends were sitting in the lounge drinking beverages while watching TV.

Heroes of the Versailles Continent.

It was the CTS Media's own information program.

It report news quickly and introduces information of castles or villages of starters; a more in-depth analysis oriented kind of program.

MCed by one with a comedic background, with wits and humor that came along with him, the show had a considerable audience.

“Oppa, you’re done?”

Min Sura asked pleasantly, Lee Hyun nodded his head.

“Yeah.”

“Did you do a lot of hunting?”

“No. I had to go somewhere so I didn’t hunt at all.”

“Where did you go?”

Choe Sang Jun cut in the middle and asked with a sudden interest.

“Thor Kingdom.”

“When you say Thor Kingdom, you mean the Dwarves kingdom?”

Choe Sang Jun asked in wonder.

The other school friends who barraged each other seemed to also be quite interested.

“It’s one of the places I want to go to if it’s that Dwarves kingdom.”

“What does the Thor Kingdom look like?”

However, Lee Hyun didn’t have an apparent answer to that question.

“I’ve only just arrived in the vicinity of the kingdom...I have yet to enter the village so I can’t say.”

“Ah, so that’s it.”

Lee Yu Jeong nodded her head.

The Versailles Continent was really extensive, to move from one kingdom to another logically shouldn’t take just one or two days.

Even if he does ride on a horse or carriage, he’d still have to climb

mountains and take the winding roads, so it will take a long time before reaching the desired location.

Therefore, it was understandable that he had not entered the Thor Kingdom as of yet.

Park Sunjo said with concerns.

“I’ve also went to the Thor Kingdom. But Hyeong, are you some kind of Merchant?”

“Why is that?”

“Those that are of the warrior series occupation doesn’t go well at Thor Kingdom. Magicians and elementalists are also just like that. They are seriously territorial. But if you’re a Merchant that takes the goods of the Thor Kingdom to sell, then you’d be fine as you’re greatly benefiting the south.”

Lee Hyun answered after a bit of hesitation.

“I’m a Sculptor.”

“.....”

“.....”

Just telling his occupation had the power to silence people.

Additionally, they gave him pitiable and apologetic eyes.

It reminded them the first time ever since they've talked to him.

Min Sura strive some courage upward and said.

“Cheer up. Nowadays, there's even a famous person who is a Sculptor. Maybe Oppa also heard of him. Weed.”

“.....”

“Ah, you haven't heard of him? He makes a lot of really amazing sculptures, and he also a user that traveled to the world of Vampires.”

And then, Lee Yu Jeong said while smiling.

“Sura, that Weed was born with the innate ability to sculpt. He's a person that was imposed by art at his very soul. So does it really matter that he chose to be a Sculptor in Royal Road? That person is also the Lord of a province, so it'd be discourteous to compare Oppa to someone like that person.”

“Keuheum.”

Lee Hyun coughed.

For them to talk like that about the person in question was rather embarrassing.

There was even a broadcast about the Weed that came to the land that was occupied by the Vampires, but because his face and equipment were obscured, it was difficult to recognize him.

If his Dark Gamer identity and the said Weed were found out to be synonymous with the Jeonshin Weed, then he'd had to pay the high price of facing numerous challengers and his subsequent adventures would also be impossible to carry out.

Choe Sang Jun spoke as a-matter-of-fact.

“If you're a Sculptor then it'll benefit you a lot by going to the Thor Kingdom huh. There are a lot of mineral there, and there will be a good amount of commissions for you there too. Please try and work hard.”

Choe Sang Jun was implicating that because Lee Hyun was a Sculptor, he wouldn't be any help at exploring dungeons, so he told him to be vigilant.

‘It'll be fine if I just lead the dungeon exploration.’

When Choe Sang Jun put on a contented smile, the broadcast of the Heroes of Versailles Continent resume after the commercial

ads.

Lee Hyun had little interest, but the broadcast with contents related to him was shown.

“Daejin ssi, if we change our conversation to talk about the north, then definitely, we cannot leave out Morata.”

“Yes. It’s exactly as you said, Yu Dambi ssi. Many adventurers went to the north since the melting of the icecaps, but still a vast majority of the comments said it's still premature. The reason being the unknown land made it very difficult to settle.”

“I have heard that the northern region was dangerous because of how active the Monsters are.”

“That’s right. However, with the people gathering at Morata and its rapid development, it was constructed as a foundation where one can settle down to some extent. Someday it will also be able subjugate the Monster grounds; as more and more people emigrate, the era of full-scale development in the north is expected to come.”

“Yes. That’s so, Part 1 we will talk about the north and Morata. Well then, what information will be covered in Part 2?”

In the Part 1 of the broadcast, information about the north were commented.

With emphasis being on Morata, trend of the users and hunting grounds were the usual ingredients.

Lee Hyun thought of this positively.

‘It’d be good if they talk more. If more people come to the north through the broadcast, then so will the income coming to me.’

Lee Hyun figured with the audiences coming to Morata to spend money, so will the growth of his income.

“Well now, here’s a fresh supply of news flash that we’ll show our dear audience. Daejin ssi!”

“Ok, Dambi ssi.”

“This here is the hot new adventure of the Jeonshin Weed that has been disclosed to the public.”

“The record of the historic Palrangka Conflict that has recently climbed the Hall of Fame. We will show a brief clip directly from it.”

The TV screen changed and Weed appeared in the form of a skeleton. Compilation of shots of Weed accepting the request of the Princess, ridden on the white horse as they raced through the battlefield that was clamoring with enemies everywhere appeared.

“Holy cow...”

“Even my heart is pounding.”

Min Sura and Lee Yu Jeong clenched their hands and did not avert their gaze from the broadcast.

They were watching the pretty nifty scenes by Lee Hyun.

KMC Media was the first to air the Palrangka Conflict, and landed first of the weekly viewership rating. Five days later, the original video of the Palrangka Conflict was posted and ranked first in view counts, first on recommended, and first on the number of comments.

Indeed it had the best popularity. And this, spawned exuberant speculations.

“If we look at these footage of the Jeonshin Weed then there are alooot of unascertained points. And I've heard a lot of controversy over these points.”

“Judging from either the national symbol or from the soldiers' cries, it is certain that the underlying place is the Palrangka Conflict. But the point of how was he able to jump into this battle evoked a lot of suspicions.”

“What specific notions are there?”

“That maybe it’s just a quest. Whether this fight was the end of some obvious tier quest or not, after that, then there are many other questions regarding it remains.”

From KMC Media, the information they investigated from the Palrangka Conflict such as the dynamics of each kingdom, Monster groups’ relationship, magic and skill were air on TV.

After the full broadcast that went on beforehand, Lee Hyun was then allowed to show the original source to the public.

Even so, the original footage also began at Palrangka Conflict.

The part of him getting through the Intermediate Training Center up till when he picked up and read the Knight’s book was removed.

If he show this section to the public, then on Royal Road, everybody will be on the same wavelength and kimchi will be known as jimjang instead.[\[1\]](#)

The situation that may arise is that they will claim ownership of the known tower and wages wars over them, they will also devote everything they have to pass the training center.

It was one of those adventures where one will surrender himself to it.

If too much information is disclosed to the public, the situation will become lines of people waiting at each training center; and that would have been the wrong way to enjoy the pleasure of Royal Road.

Because there is a need to keep secrets of the unfinished adventures of Lee Hyun that the broadcasters also reliably kept it a secret.

“I’ve also heard of a lot of inconsistencies about the combat ability of Jeonshin Weed.”

“During the Legion of Immortality war, he demonstrated the ability of an excellent conductor. He dealt with the Orcs and the Dark Elves smoothly. Thanks to the loud Lion's Roar Conducting Skill, we assumed that he has very high Leadership and Charisma. Speculations of his occupation of a Paladin at that time was thrown into the wild.”

“Because the best class to raise the Leadership and Conducting Skill is of the Knight series, huh.”

“It’s the point that's widely accepted, since the time he went to battle with the Jin-Hyeol Vampires, there were circulating rumors of him being a Paladin of Freya. But when he appeared after a break and began battling against the Bone Dragon, he used magic of the Necromancer, and also showed remarkable fighting abilities.”

“But this time around, we know for sure he didn’t use Necromancer magic.”

“And I think because of that, that I feel that this controversy was staged. There must be a reason why he couldn’t use Necromancer magic, or he might deliberately chose not to.”

“That power...he deliberately not shows it to the public?”

Yu Dambi widened her eyes.

How much overflowing confident Weed must have had, fighting with just a bayonet without using any magic.

Dambi had the expression of not knowing how come or for whatever reason why Lee Hyun didn’t use Necromancer magic.

Choe Daejin, who was temporarily distracted from his job when he looked at Yu Dambi who was oh-so pretty, hurriedly said.

“Heumheum. It’s a possibility that we can’t rule out. But now we’re talking about how fierce the battle was...”

“But if it’s Jeonshin Weed then couldn’t it be that it wasn’t deliberate that he didn’t use magic?”

It was unavoidable as Yu Dambi too was a fan of Weed.

While covering Royal Road, there weren't many people that could give her so much excitement and heat her heart.

Not Guild Masters or Ranked Players. If they obtain airtime, then they are too busy showing themselves off.

It goes without saying that they are Castellans or Lords.

They practically use NPC Soldiers to take care of their property whose powers were far beyond the normal users instead of guild members.

It was commonplace that there were many cases where they used tricks, buy, vile blackmailing, backstabs to horde; and beginners and weak users weren't even treated as people.

There were good Lords too, but on the Versailles Continent, there were many more Lords in comparison who only advocate for themselves.

Because of this, she mainly deals with adventurers that has her respect and envy.

Those that continuously searching for challenges such as treasures or fetching a promise!

She had known the God of War since Weed was on the Continent of Magic, but he solved many impossible and herald quests on RR too.

He was the very symbol of adventurers doing commissions that others could not, and a symbol of the hunt itself.

“I’d only be guessing at this moment. His physical ability to fight is a bit superior comparing to the last time. I can’t repress my astonishment seeing things such as his reflexes, instantaneous judgment, resolution, and accuracy while fighting. The footage seen of him being able to keep balance and fight may even be questionable for martial artists to do so in real life. However, some users provided fair and highly credible comments as to that.”

“What is it?”

“When he meets some certain condition, the Jeonshin Weed monster, by that I mean Undead can emerge at that time. Because apparently, his appearances at time of the Bone Dragon and of this time in the Palrangka Conflict had a significant difference; and this ideology spread and gained convictions.”

“I too think there aren’t that much a number of users wandering around in the form of a skeleton.”

“Common sense can’t fit here. If someone comes into the town in a form of a skeleton, then pretty soon rumors about him will spread.”

The Power to Deny Death is a higher ranking skill belonging to the Blood Necromancer vocation.

There were still not many that wanted to become a Necromancer; the Magician's second tier job. In other words, the third job that should be the Blood Necromancer was still only mere conjecture.

At this time, Lee Hyun tried to leisurely stand up from his spot. Unfortunately, the rest of the broadcast was also associated with him.

*

"This time, the news will be on the war between Kallamore Kingdom and Kingdom of Haven on the Versailles Continent. The Knight of Destruction Koldrim. Has he done anything with the ruthless army that he leads?"

"Yes. This time, in the wake of the Kallamore Kingdom's march, the helplessly slaughtered Kingdom of Haven lost its Sustain Fort as it meets its fall."

"The Sustain Fort siege. I'd like to watch this. Do we have footage of this?"

"Of course, we have some newly obtained juicy videos. We will now show the power of Koldrim leading the Kallamore Kingdom's army and the actions of their Knights. Let's watch together with our viewers."

The screen of the broadcast was changed to the siege of Sustain.

Puhihihing!

The horses coarsely exhaled as they shot off.

“Hit! Destroy! Do not leave a single foundation of the Kingdom of Haven unturn and sweep them all!”

“For the glory of the Kallamore Kingdom!”

“Use your sword for honor and victory and for our King!”

Immediately, the greyly lit sky poured down a thick veil of rain.

By the ladders and ropes, the soldiers of Kallamore Kingdom seized the walls of the Sustain Fort.

Siege weapons and battering rams were mobilized to knock down the gate; and from the rear, attacks were hurled from the Archer troops and the Magicians.

The Sustain Fort looked so pathetic among the colossal firepower concentrated there.

Attacks were pouring in with the literal intention of not leaving a brick left undeterred.

“Fight with courage!”

“Die here for the future of the kingdom!”

Although the Kingdom of Haven's Soldier fought hard, it did not look like they were going to win the fight.

The well-trained forces of the Kallamore Kingdom slowly but increasingly breeding their forces, and have already reached 150000 members. Along with making use of slaves made of the Haven Kingdom's residents and surrendered soldiers, who were placed at the forefront of their troops, their number grew.

Condemnation of the slaves and random looting.

Their Knights engaged combat behind the enemies' line, throw them into confusion, guerrilla warfare, melee, as well as sieges.

They were cruel being who would not accept a single surrender when the battle begins.

Knights of Destruction.

The being that was born for war.

These were the evaluations of the commander in chief Koldrim through his won battles.

“Ah! Completely awesome.”

Choe SangJun said as he seemed to admire it.

The Sustain Fort was neutralized before the concerted movements of the Kallamore army.

“How much Leadership points are required to fully handle that many soldiers there?”

Although he did not know how strong the individual soldiers of the Kallamore Kingdom were, he evaluated the commanding ability of Koldrim as excellent.

The battle was composedly carried out.

Koldrim first surrounded the fort as to prevent reinforcements from providing support.

With the forces of the Sustain Fort being just 20000, without reinforcements, it was impossible for them to defend it against an army that was 3~4 times larger in size.

At most, they could at least delay the inevitable until reinforcements come.

Thus, Koldrim first struck around the fort, leaving the road to go to the capital of the Kingdom of Haven wide open. Because of so, it

completely disrupted the army of the Kingdom of Haven from ensuring their fort.

Although the troops of the Kingdom of Haven weren't on the lacking side, they could not prevent it from happening.

Considering in the war, usually the ones attacking were at much of a disadvantage; but for those having been trapped indoors, they will not escape from their enemies.

*

When the Kallamore Kingdom first declared war, users of the Kingdom of Haven were glad.

‘Declaration of war? It’s a good opportunity to raise contribution.’

‘War between countries. This is going to be great. I ought to participate.’

The participating users who were without doubts of being victorious went together to defend the Kingdom of Haven.

However, the Knights of the Kallamore Kingdom.

Before the large assault of the Knight troops, the users of the Kingdom of Haven got goose bumps.

The 9000 horse ridden Knights and cavalries charged with their lances held out. summoning a cloud of dust in their power rush.

Even with steady foots on the ground, the earth shook, and the sound of their battle cries could even tear off eardrums!

“Wha, what the.”

“Let’s avoid this. If I’m going to the front, it’s an unconditional death for me.”

“But, the soldiers...”

“You idiot! If you die, what do you think will happen to the soldiers after that?”

The forces at the forefront consisted of users panicked and escaped the battlefield in embarrassment, making the morale of the troops of the Kingdom of Haven drop further into the abyss.

Centurions, Chiliarch, and even Knights of the Kingdom of Haven excused themselves to the back in the wake of the Kallamore army’s frontal assault.

As they could not see those who would often give command during the struggle, the ranks naturally collapse one after another.

As oppose to the Haven's users, those who mingled themselves among the Kallamore Kingdom's Knights gained further intensity as they watched the spectacle. They poised themselves on the offensive, looking to devastate the already collapsed army.

At this point, they slay their enemies without sparing a single thought.

In the midst of the main force's thorough desecrating assault, Koldrim commanded the Archer troops to fire arrows into the battlefield from afar.

Echelons of the Kingdom of Haven subsequently plunged into further disarray as they were besiege by the storm of arrows while not having a single command issued.

The belief that they could withstand the Kallamore members' assault was an indescribable delusion.

Kallamore Kingdom's army was definitively winning, while the Kingdom of Haven was suffering a heavy defeat.

It wasn't easy for those that tried to defy and escape the Kallamore Knight's pursuit, as they were attacked till the brink of death.

Lastly, Magicians of the Kingdom of Haven burned all their Mana as they resisted until their end, but their impact on this war was rather insignificant.

Koldrim also commanded part of his army to concentrate on breaking through their enemy's camp decisively.

Under the brutal assault by subjects of Koldrim, souls of the users of the Kingdom of Haven simply dissipated from within.

Thereafter, the Kingdom of Haven did not have a single decent attack and was forced to be on the defensive.

The Kallamore Kingdom went on plundering for however long afterward in order to secure materials; as for Koldrim, he was dubbed as the "Reaper of the Battlefield."

And now, during the Sustain Battle, not a single stepping stone has left unturned since the skirmish started.

Choe Sang Jun spoke without removing his sight from the monitor.

"Knights of the Kallamore Kingdom is really strong...I suppose it isn't called the Kingdom of Knights for no reason. And it seems they also have the support of many users also..."

Similarly, Lee Yu Jeong and Min Sura nodded in agreement without removing their gaze.

Seems as though their hearts also wanted to cheer for the

Kallamore Kingdom.

The Kingdom of Haven has an unusually large amount of prestigious guilds. From their claimed exclusive hunting grounds along with their excessive taxation, those that do not receive unjust treatment from them are rare.

So for these guys, they cheered on vicariously within their hearts for Koldrim's pleasurable assault.

For normal users who did not opt to participate in the war, there was nothing for them to lose even if they were users of the Kingdom of Haven.

In fact, those that did give their support to the Haven army contributed little for the situation.

It was hard to remedy the situation even if they tried as videos of Kallamore Kingdom overly dominating the Kingdom of Haven were already spewing out from everywhere.

Also the impact of the current news broadcast was not something that could be ignored.

The underlying truth of the matter was that the tide of the war was ultimately tipped toward Kallamore Kingdom's favor.

Lee Hyun felt satisfied.

‘It was a good thing to release him after all...’

This was the same guy that was revered as the ‘Knight of Destruction’ who was trapped by the Vampires.

Lee Hyun was proud to recall the huge contribution made to Kallamore Kingdom with his release as well as intimacy with Koldrim.

The Sustain Fortress could not halt the Kallamore Kingdom’s army advances and was eventually taken down.

The confined space made their siege weapons hard to be utilized, while their Magicians had to sit through their cooldown.

“Men, march!”

Koldrim chose the simple tactic of piercing through without a moment of hesitation.

Even with the disadvantageous position of being those that are committing the siege, soldiers of the Kallamore Kingdom attack in unison.

“Please leave me be!”

“Gotta get inside.”

Kingdom of Haven members' morale fell further. For their self-interest, they created a tangled mess as they tried to get inside.

At their heels, soldiers of Kallamore Kingdom cemented their victory as they pull closer to the entanglement.

And then, a massive wave of Kallamore Kingdom Knights entered!

They were heavily tired from combat, but it wasn't so hard solidifying their success in an already won battle.

Fervent cheers arise with the descent of the Kingdom of Haven flag and the climb of the Kallamore's.

*

"We should decide on what dungeon to explore and what kind of adventure to have."

After finish watching the broadcast, Lee Yu Jeong spoke in a clear tone.

As a student targeting scholarship, she wanted to successfully complete the challenge as oppose to be taking a midterm.

"So let's get everybody's class and level at this point, yeah? Let

me go first. I'm a Swordsman and of the Dale Kingdom. My level's 237."

Min Sura introduced herself following the lead.

"I'm in the same place as Yu Jeong, Enchanter. Level is at 144... it's higher than the last time."

The lowly level Min Sura shyly extruded her tongue.

She was at 140 at the freshmen seminar when they first introduce themselves, so the level climb was only below average.

"Swordsman 297. I belong to the Black Lion guild. My current position is in our guild's territory, Nehalles Castle."

Choe Sang Jun confidently introduced himself.

His level and guild influence was the source of self-confidence.

Park Sunjo awkwardly spoke.

"I'm a Thief, and at 355. My current place is...King Suna's Tomb."

King Suna's Tomb!

Abundant in traps and is haunted by Ancient Mummies. It was not a place where even high level users could carelessly enter. Due to the scale of the tomb, aside from the grand entrance, the place has not been excavated. This includes the resting place of the King and Queen.

“That tomb huh...”

“Your level is much higher than the last time too.”

“Are you exploring it alone?”

“I’m focusing on the trap dismantling skills and nurturing the profession’s surprise attacking skills. I’m barely able to manage.”

With Park Sunjo attracting the attention, Lee Hyun sneakily introduces himself.

“I’m a Sculptor. My level is...just so. I’m on my way to the Thor Kingdom.”

He didn’t mean to lie.

But as a Dark Gamer, he could not go around publicizing his level, characteristics, and skills.

“Oh, I see.”

Lee Yu Jeong didn't bother dwelling into it.

Originally already knowing that he was just a Sculptor, it was not necessary going after other separate information.

But this struck to the low level Enchanter Min Sura.

“Lee Hyun Oppa?”

“Hmm?”

“I know you keep to yourself on most tasks, but this time please do exactly as required. Though we still need to take on two more people for a total of seven on this challenge, if you do not participate then it'll be hard to get the proper grades.”

“Yea.”

Lee Hyun nodded.

The usual assignments weren't problematic for him to complete, as he was simply aiming for the minimal letter grade for the graduation credits.

For a considerable amount of college students, there weren't much hours in the day for them to even play around or to eat because of school.

‘But it’s a different story for me when it comes to Royal Road.’

Royal Road was his job.

He had to do his best in order to make a living, and also work just as hard with dungeon exploration within the game.

Despite him giving in, Lee Hyun remains a source of worrisome.

Min Sura forehead furrowed.

“But for a thing like exploring a dungeon...our classes aren’t really for this.”

An Enchanter and a Sculptor.

Among the lot with two Swordsmen and a Thief, the level differences were severely high.

While the combination did not seem fitting, they also have to somehow adjust for differences in experience.

“We have to somehow secure two Clerics for the other slots, or at least get a Shaman on hand.”

“Mhm. Otherwise the ordeal is going to be hella hard.”

“The other condition of this is that we need to be exploring some other undisclosed dungeon rather than an already well known one, else we won’t be able to get the credits for this assignment.”

“Difficulty of the dungeon needs to be rather high, so we have to come up with some skill combination or cooperation to increase our collective power.”

“But how many Shamans or Clerics are there that doesn’t have a group yet? And after this assignment, there’s the festival too...”

“What’s the class planning to do anyway?”

“I don’t know the specifics, but the level of preparation has to be a lot to be fitting of a school like this.”

The size and range of recreation activities of the University of Korea’s festival garnered great popularity.

A lot of other school students as well as many of the general public attends, even singers and performers comes to hold small events.

Highlight of the festival being the students’ collective themed events.

Lee Hyun thought.

‘The hassles of the damn college never seem to end!’

Piling upon the class assignments, there was the MT, then this current group project that they have to solve together; and immediately following this is the school festival.

‘This is no different than that of a chain quest in Royal Road.’

Lee Hyun was extremely depressed.

The considered golden time of a festival or that of a school project!

The Korea University is to be envied by other school’s students precisely because of its festivals, dance parties, and concerts where pretty women come.

A place filled with insurmountable flushing vitality of the youth.

But to Lee Hyun, this was just a nuisance.

‘I hope this ends quickly.’

The festival is going to take more than five days, and things such as preparation for the event between now and then was going to keep him real busy for a long while. The seemingly cornered Lee Hyun frantically searched for an exit, but the outlook on escaping seems grim.

[\[1\]](#) Jimjang(짐 장): jimjang what ppl calls kimchi in some region. Basically, this line is saying with common knowledge, it will spread.

Chapter 10: Akryong (Evil Dragon)

Kaybern

Dwarven Village Iron Hand.

Thor Kingdom was famous for having many Dwarven Masters living in their villages, who could mass produce high quality goods from minerals in a nearby mine.

Residential areas had small little houses. Blacksmith shops were sparse in the village, making it prominent to others that artisans made up the village.

The majority of people who were present in the downtown area were Dwarves.

People from other villages frequently visited the central square, and the place of commerce, the marketplace, making it a rare sight to see Traders camping near the village entrance of Iron Hand.

Humans, and Elven species dragged their wagons (and were) sifting through town to solicit with Dwarven Merchants.

“I am one of Roen’s top traders, Mithras. If you have any of the weapons or armor that you created, would you be willing to sell them to me?”

“This completed product has been imported in large quantities. Please take care of it...”

“I will supply any items that you might need in bulk. In Thor Kingdom, iron and copper are expensive, but how about Noid Kingdom’s more affordable 3rd grade iron?”

“The price will skyrocket. How were you able to find out?”

The solicitation of persistent Merchants!

As the day turned into night, these Merchants continued to persevere.

Goods such as weapons and armors that were obtained in the village of Iron Hand were sold at other places in the Versailles Continent for a very high price.

Merchants deliberately came to the village, desperately trying to obtain anything the Dwarves had made.

“Please sell it to me.”

“I’m a Dwarven Warrior...”

Any Dwarves who had finely groomed beards, were having a hard time.

In fact, if you want to look for a Dwarven artisan, you shouldn't come to Iron Hand. The Artisan who lived there had unsophisticated Blacksmithing skills, and would only look for Merchants who did not know of the value of items, and scam them.

Then Weed walked into Iron Hand.

Merchants who swarmed the place only watched and nodded at Weed from afar because compared to his body, he had a relatively large head.

'They are Merchants, and this seems to be the right place, the Dwarven Village.'

Some of the Merchants peddled a long distance from Morata, looking for items to buy and make money. They buy in bulk, and sell in bulk.

Because the Commodity Brokerage collected by Kingdoms for the development of villages did not help improve the trade industry, the Merchants frowned upon it. Similarly, solicitation fees were arbitrarily calculated to cater to guests, therefore the quality of goods sold were meager.

Traders who travelled from afar, saw Dwarven Weed.

'He's my prey.'

'That Dwarf is mine.'

The group of hungry Merchants ran towards Weed.

"Buying or selling goods."

"I'll buy anything."

"Please sell the items you have cheaply. I came from far away. Please!"

"I'll unconditionally offer a higher price than others. If you have something to sell, please sell it."

The successful Dwarves had no way to escape when the traders gathered into a group and started begging.

All the Dwarven craftsmen that came to Ironhand were low-levelled and they were physiologically intimidated by the crowd of people surrounding them.

Weed ran off like the wind.

Taking advantage of his small height, he ran in between the legs of the traders using his excellent sense of direction to evade the hands of the traders.

"Ah!"

“He ran away.”

The traders who worked in vain stood there devastated.

To easily be able to break through a crowd of people.

The career of evil traders left a bad reputation.

*

Real merchants did not budge as they sat at the entrance of the town.

And Weed passed through the village entrance when words were passed/said indirectly.

“You won’t find anybody who will buy for a higher price than me.”

“Out of money...”

Their own business strategies, in accordance with their will, was to differentiate themselves from the other merchants.

Weed then ventured in even further into town, into the village of Iron Hand

*

Dwarven blacksmiths were proficient in creating weapons and armor due to their naturally high dexterity stat.

It's claimed that even Dwarven warriors could create simple things such as a torch or an arrow without difficulty.

Dwarven warriors were renowned for fighting in battles to the death but it was not an exaggeration to say that most Dwarves chose the path of the artisan.

This is because of the characteristics of the Dwarves who were born blessed with art and dexterity needed for production skills.

Those who chose the life of a craftsmen should take into account these benefits when picking their species when starting. This was a race most skilled with dealing with iron.

Being able to make durable goods from the beginning with high productions skills, they were sought for and respected.

Human blacksmiths could make almost any weapon but the expertise was reduced by a lot.

Elf blacksmiths made the best and strongest bows.

But Elves were masters of magic, and were a species proficient in archery.

There weren't many Elf blacksmiths. They created bows from special wood materials but it was not traded frequently enough.

The life of a Dwarf species blacksmith was one that was envied but their lives were nowhere close to being rich.

"Wow, this month the price of iron ore has risen."

"You think so too? Recently i've been thinking that increase in prices are going to kill me."

"Blacksmith skills will increase, but without middle merchants busily striking the prices...This is really hard."

Many dwarves were complaining in the tavern.

Weed sat at a low table, and listened in to their stories while drinking milk.

'Everyone in the world says it's hard to live.'

He continued to complain about the hard life of a dwarf compared to artists, economical hardships were forced on the dwarves, but there were no stories.

“That Akryong Kaybern further raised taxes.”

“But wasn’t it raised just three months ago?”

“That’s why I might want to decorate with rare gold.”

“Ugh! Another hunting quest? His demands are endless. What kind of monster is it this time?”

“What is the matter with you. How does one or two legions under his command make him a monster?”

“It’s not what he’s got or gotten, though.”

“Listen, the Minotaur guards have been useless.”

*

Akryong Kaybern.

Thor Mountain, like other neighbouring mountains, was ruled by a dragon.

The Dragon's desire for treasure was not easily satiated; the dwarves had to constantly pay tribute or face its wrath.

The Human Villages were invaded by monsters, even if that was

not the case, there were attacks from other kingdoms.

Even Morata was not safe from the invasions of monsters

While the Dragons dominated the Dwarf villages, they were safe from monster attacks but it was necessary to offer tributes in return.

It was just unconditionally bad, but it wouldn't be confiscated. Sometimes Dragons managed monsters under their command and gave consideration for the new mines that should be developed. More than half of the mithril and iron ore from these mines as well had to be paid up.

In addition, Dwarf warriors were allowed to hunt in the mountains, and even in this case, the dragons did not punish them.

Dragons view Dwarves as troublesome and taken only for any work, whether it was one or a few, it was viewed as only one worker. The monsters were just worms living in their own area.

There was no reason to interfere or bother.

There were five dragons known to live in the Thor kingdom but it was said White Dragon/Akryong Kaybern had the most treasure.

Thor Kingdom had a phase transition where it repeatedly had earlier development, but even then it was not the top country because of the Dragons.

Thor Kingdom gathered mercenaries and periodically raised the heat in the fight against the Dragons and ended up with no income at all. Currently, even having one mercenary participating in the duty was rare.

Weed left the pub after eating a simple meal of bread and milk

‘Nonetheless, it’s the Dwarves’ life.’

All you’d hear from the dwarves were exaggerated.

When poverty strikes, it was a habit to spend time where there was beer and meat!

In the Dwarf village it was necessary to overcome the high taxes in order to live.

Using the highest quality ore in the continent as foundation to make weapons, there was growth in skills and the famous Dwarf artisans continued their infinite orders.

Dwarves who left Thor Kingdom to make a fortune sold weapons and armor, and even managed to become lords in the kingdom with the money.

Guilds supply goods in order to build a strong network of high level players to expand their forces.

There were a considerable number of blacksmiths with ambition on the Versailles continent.

Weed entered the Sculptors' guild

The Sculptors' guild was generally used by the majority of Thor kingdom's Dwarves.

Understanding how important dexterity was, they learnt sculpting as it was a fast way to raise this stat.

There were many Dwarves in the guild but they did not pay attention to Weed thanks to the perfect sculpture shapeshift.

“Tsk Tsk, you’re still nowhere near perfection, you have much to learn.”

The Dwarf Instructor was consistently dealing with the Dwarves with a prickly attitude.

“You craft weapons with little care for art, didn’t you know doing this will cause you trouble in time? With lack of art you can make strong weapons but they will be far from perfection.”

“Learning about breathing life into weapons by coming to the Sculptors' guild? Looks like the Blacksmith guild taught well. But it’s too early. At least the weapons will be created properly after

coming. The stuff will be full of defects, how would they breathe life into it without having expression.”

“These Dwarves are incompetent”

The words of the Instructor did not budge the Dwarves.

‘How many more of these actions does this navvy mean.’

‘Tired, sick and tired of this. This guy’s way of production is so long.’

Bowing his head respectfully while lamenting, he withdrew.

The higher the blacksmith skill, the better the created goods, and (they are) recognised from around the land.

Even if they had complaints, the Dwarves endured it.

In order have the blacksmith skills to create any kind of weapon, fast improvement of dexterity was essential.

For such dexterity, it was best to familiarise yourself with sculpturing. Sculpturing did help a bit to make and develop/become other items, but it was outright intolerable.

The Dwarf instructor told Weed to await his turn.

“Art Hand is here to create a way of expression. To ask for new instructions in cultivating the way of art.”

“What?”

The Dwarf Instructor listened with an unbelieving look. On the face full of wrinkles, convulsions were taking place. He was stroking his beard and forgot his grumbling attitude.

“What did you just say.”

“I said I came here to learn about new techniques.”

Ungseong-ungseong.

“What did that Dwarf just say?”

“New techniques, what on earth does that mean?”

“What level of sculpting does he have?”

The Dwarves could not believe it. This is because they had yet to see a user who said that..

As sculpting mastery increased, better skills could be learnt!

Until now they had not considered bothering to learn, but at the Sculptors' guild in the Dwarf Village, they oddly decided to come and learn. Compared to the benefits of learning the skills at other Dwarven guilds, it was not even a third of the cost.

The Dwarf Instructor guided Weed towards the Elf Neck sculpture that was on display.

“I'll give you a chance to prove that you have the sufficient qualities of a Sculptor. Then...let me see a display of your craftsmanship.”

“What's the theme?”

“Whatever's good, if the mind is flexible the sculpture will turn out well.”

Weed was already familiar with the Elf's Neck.

‘Sculpture pieces sold in stores were usually made of expensive materials rather than superlative wood.’

Making wooden sculptures were really boring.

One should not try to craft as quickly as possible such that the representation turns out bad.

As trees age, the wood grains start forming patterns, when you

create a sculpture in a certain direction of the flow of the pattern, it is very beautiful.

Masterpiece sculptures from this wood as the material was very expensive and could exceeded dozens of gold.

The Dwarf Instructor presented the superlative wood that the Elf Neck came out of as the test.

“That Elf’s Neck is not easily sharpened. Creating an impromptu wood sculpture, this test is difficult...”

“What if I fail?”

The Dwarves in the Sculptors’ guild stopped their actions and watched Weed.

Weed silently laid the Elf Neck on the chair below. Due to becoming a Dwarf, he had become smaller. So, a chair was required as the key to a smooth sculpturing.

Weed boldly took out Zahab’s carving knife and stuck it in the Elf’s Neck.

Puukg!

Since the test required a sculpture, the onlooking dwarves were trying their best not to look shocked!

The carving knife cut deeply into the Elf's Neck.

In such a state, Weed cut diagonally with the Zahab carving knife and made a division of the Elf's neck and head.

Whenever Weed moved the carving knife, he would undoubtedly cut the outline of the Elf's Neck.

“What does this have to do with carving?”

“To treat a carving knife with the same mastery as a sword, how can this be....”

“Usually I don't use it as a carving knife.”

The tool was surprising, but the decisive workmanship was a greater surprise.

What kind of carving knife could stab, slash, and slice a number of strokes mercilessly on wood without ruining it.

Nevertheless, more of the wood was carved out and surprisingly began to take a form.

It seemed to have been cut at random, but there were no mistakes. Having made things with the hands several times, at this time the skill to work easily without hesitation was achieved.

To use a carving knife, if the master stage wasn't fulfilled, then it would be inferior.

The trust in the strength of the blade is necessary when working on a piece of such difficulty.

The dwarves were not ashamed as they stared in astonishment at Weed while he was performing the test. In Weed's mindset while working on the test was simple.

‘There's no money anyways, so roughly!’

Not many were allowed to take the test, and it was not made clear of the requirements to pass.

‘I have hurry up before the curse returns.’

The spirits of the unknown beings had been whispering in his ear. Any moment now, the curse could kick in. Time was of the essence.

‘If this is successful, I can make golds off of it even if I have to lower the price, every bit of money counts...’

Making pieces was desperate in the days of the novice.

The situation improved now, there was confidence to raise the

degree of grandness of the sculptures made.

The dwarves around town began to stand around to see the test and watch Weed carve, he gave off inspiration.

‘You have to see a life-like structure in your mind’

Weed was worried as to what he should make.

How many seconds it took did not worry him.

This is the Dwarves’ Village

It was decided from the beginning that the sculptures could move the hearts of Dwarves.

“It’s a Dragon.”

“Those wide and flat wings, well-developed hips and thick legs...That’s Akryong Kaybern!”

Due to the limited size of the wood, the sculpture had to be smaller than the real, living thing.

But the overall composition of the sculpture was quickly and finely carved out on the wood once Weed had determined what it was to be.

Greedy mouths were gaping.

For the human vocal cords, if the structure of the upper and lower lip becomes a circle, it is except to say one word.

Money!

Holding up jewels with short arms, eyebrows and beard naturally reached forward.

Recklessly running on land trying to soar on the wings of Akryong Kaybern.

“That’s better than the other dragon I made.”

“For him, even if it wasn’t the Dragon, to eat Salmon would have meant quite a bit.”

The Dwarves that watched the sprouting picture of Akryong Kaybern become annoyed.

Sculpture was the three-dimensional representation of art.

Only hearing the name caused the anger to well up, so that seeing and feeling the target has doubled.

The Dwarf Instructor spoke.

“You’ve passed the test. To make such a sculpture in a short period of time is impressive because you were not overconfident with your skills.”

The Dwarf Instructor saying this could be considered the highest praise.

To be seen as a Sculptor with an ego was a bad thing.

Weed quietly excused himself.

“It was my sincere intention that I did not want a sculpture that was related to the theme.”

“I understand. Since I see that it is a great sculpture that comes with precise workmanship, you are well-qualified. You did not know that in the way of our Dwarven society, Akryong Kaybern sculptures are taboo.”

“I’ve carved a dragon only once before.”

The Dwarf Instructor laughed, satisfied.

“In my heart, he’s a great guy.”

The faces of the dwarves watching went rigid.

Many insulted and cursed him, to become so acquainted with the instructor with so few words!

“A user who managed to befriend the Sculpture Instructor has appeared!”

“Where did you learn such flattery?”

Seeing Weed's technique for the first time, the Dwarves had a desire to get close to him and it was a fact that was worthy of the sky collapsing.

‘We live in such a difficult world’

‘The debt is settled with words, the crafty tongue eats freely in life.’

Anyway, due to the effect of the familiarity with the Instructor, price of teaching Sculpturing was given a discount of 20% .

“Sculpture can move people's' hearts, if you don't close your mind you can understand the sculpture”

Ttiring!

- Acquired Sculpture Communication

“Sculptures are not immortal. Over the years, they are damaged. If the damage is worked on to restore them, they will be happier. If you manage to learn the art of turning back time on sculptures, you can learn a lot about the past. Unfortunately this technique is lost in the past.”

- Acquired Sculpture Restoration

Weed immediately decided to find out the information of the newly-acquired skill.

“Skill info window. Sculpture Communication, Sculpture Restoration!”

- Sculpture Language/Communication 1 (0%) :

It is impervious whether the conversation is with monsters or humans, these two kinds of sculptures can converse. If they are a fine work, their hostility will be alleviated and there will be spells that are favoured. When fame or skill level rises, more species beyond the current limits will be able to converse.

Reaching intermediate Sculpture Communication, adventurers acquire special emotion skills.

Sculpture Restoration 1 (0%) :

Depending on skill level, damaged sculptures can be restored to their original appearance.

Weed already had high fame, and with flattery and divine help, the skill was not necessary. Learning was placed first.

Originally, Weed was here partly to learn.

The presence of the unknown sculptures that were continuously clamouring themselves at him, accepting the words of the oracle of the Goddess Freya to come to the Dwarf Kingdom.

The way he sliced the wood as he crafted bore the scent of doubt.

It was not a common occurrence.

But what the Instructor had to say was unexpected.

“What do you think of the carving? Is this not the dream of a Sculptor?”

Weed, unconflicted, had an easy answer for this moment.

‘Money, fame, power, what more is there to say?’

Grazing the conflict that momentarily came by, whether there

was an answer was not important, and the Instructor continued talking without waiting.

“The Sculptor’s dream is to eagerly aspire for sculptures, creating better sculptures shows the purity of the heart. The Sculptor’s words, isn’t it romantic?”

“....”

“Well.. when it’s time, you as a Sculptor will get to choose which path you wish to follow.”

“My own path?”

“Sculpture is more noble and difficult than other areas in the field of arts.”

Weed realized this.

Sculpture. Money did not come easy if your art was dreadful.

“Devoting life to making sculptures... indeed it is not easy. Reaching great heights of sculpturing, but at that single view level, it is still infinitely feeble.”

Since reaching Advanced Sculpting, the skill proficiency progression was very slow. Not only the reduced skill proficiency increase, sculpture skills associated with swordsmanship, Grant

Life to Sculpture, Sculpture Shapeshift were staying at low levels.

“It’s hard to give it your all when sculpting. Stopping now would be disheartening and after all the trouble so far, there should be a reward.”

“Is it worthwhile?”

“Sculpture Mastery is recognised in the field of arts, and famous nobles are one of those. If you can, visit a noble of the human kingdom.”

Weed was already a count so the advice wasn’t very valuable to him.

“So far, what’s been acquired in sculpture, I could take advantage of in other areas. You may or may not choose the easier one. This actually causes that sort of thing. But I should also be able to see the end of sculpture, in the meantime, for ourselves, should be able to take it easier.”

“....”

“Sculpting is not difficult unless you don’t appreciate art. Take your time and enjoy it, who will blame you? Now that may lessen your burden.”

Ttiring!

- Chosen Sculptor Dwarf Instructor has been waiting for someone like you.

*Sculpture Attributes: When 5 or more sculptures are created daily for more than ten days, after that, the Sculpture skill expertise rating increases faster.

*Sculpture Features: Growth of Art and Attractiveness Stat increases. It would be helpful in the creation of big, beautiful sculptures.

*Versatile Artist: It will be helpful when learning dexterity-based skills. But more than sculptures, learning production skills, including skills that use the hands, there will be 25% increased growth. However, for any other production, there is no artistic skill to master.

*Eternal Sculptor: Sculptor that devotes his soul to the sculptural world/world of sculpture. In addition to the division of Masterpiece, Magnum Opus, Masterwork, other characteristics of the sculpture create spells.

Characteristics of sculptures are enhanced. Historical works, incomprehensible works, treasures of the continent, and spells are created.

Effects related to sculpting skill are increased by 20%. Magnificent artistic quality and skill make the sculpture of a higher grade, and due to the special effects, there are many

rewards.

But when what is created is a failure, the drop/decline is greater.

For a long time, Weed was not conflicted.

‘It’s always been like this.’

Sculptor was selected and several times, there were chances to change careers. Whenever it was time to select one, Weed went the way of the Sculptor.

Basically, the fact that he was warming up more to sculpturing could not be denied.

If a person has superior workmanship skills, then he will always make a great sculpture. However, detailed parts of a sculpture does not impress.

The skills must be insufficient.

Concentric sculptures made by a child. Course workmanship made it feel clumsy, everything felt different than it should be.

Curiously, others are happy with the sculptures made, as joy is delivered and smiles are put on their faces.

Pleasantness, that was what rewarding sculptures were made of. Filled with love for sculptures and being faithful to yourself every time you carve.

‘My sister’s smiling face, grandmother’s loving eyes ... I think those were times when I was most happy.’

Weed was being paid while enjoying his task. It was pure bliss!

Carving Seoyoon smiling.

A murderer, times when she was scared, times when she was happy, all those contributed to the beginning of a real sculpture.

The risk of freezing to death in an icy cold snow storm, it was overcome with the creation of Bingryong.

Sculptures were the only companion that travelled alongside Weed during his adventures.

Having a painful dream.

Unfulfilled dreams become reality through sculptures.

Unfolding life by investing in sculpture and swordsmanship, this was another transformation.

It created a sense that sculpting was not difficult.

Sculptors had to stay close to and be clear of people's feelings, but nevertheless, sculptures had various forms.

The fear of failure was often time-consuming for Sculptors, mainly the large ones, but a good sculpture was the only one that could deny it.

Sculptures made with the heart and soul.

Weed was trying to forget the poetic memories but the dreams for the future of sculpting unfolded to him.

‘Well, terribly cheap, so far the value that was placed so far...What if it can be done even better, but tiresome so just choose what is presented.’

Weed spoke.

“I will go the way of the Eternal Sculptor.”

*

- Oppa, how are you?

- That...

Zephyr was alone in Todeum and was answering Yurin's questions in whisper.

She did not know what answer she should give, though if suddenly connected, even between the whisper, a greeting was shared.

‘I know, at least on the day that Geomchi was killed.’

It was so devastating that when Geomchi was mentioned, the mood and heart was heavy and had to sit down!

However, there was no denying, the answer was kind.

Then while in the car, Yurin suddenly asked him.

- Where is Oppa's home?

- Gangbuk. Pyeongchang.

- Where is Pyeongchang?

- The description is hard... It's north of Bukhansan.

- Oh, Brother's life is difficult. Does water from the tap come out well? Does the bus to town pass there?

-

- Later I will buy for you an energising seaweed rice cake.

Business cards could/were not even be handed out as Pyeongchang was treated as an upstart mountain town.

- What does Oppa intend to do when you graduate from school?

- What?

- Isn't there anything you want to do.

- Because what I want to do...Don't have to think that much. My parents would just have me take over the family business. So far, it's turning out that way with a lot of studying.

- What is your family business?

- It's Sung's

Zephyr was hesitating about whether to tell the truth. This was because he had never told anyone in Royal Road about his family.

- You're from Sung Electronics?

- Huh? Mmm.

The established former five-star world record holder in annual revenue and net income company, Sung's Electronics was the center of a group of affiliated companies.

'It's not wrong to say that Sung Electronics is one of our affiliates.'

- The Sung Electronics that sells everything from computers, cell phones, kitchen appliances and so forth?

- Th-That is true.

- Heh! That's great.

Zephyr had met an extensive number of women, and he noticed that she was on the unusual side.

'That reaction was a little weird though.'

Surprise and admiration, but it was a proper attitude.

He then heard Yurin whisper.

- Tonight could you come to my house? Don't tell my brother Today I'll make my brother a painting.

Yurin suddenly asked in a clear voice.

*

Choi Ji-Hoon was cardioplegic when he saw the suffering, his face was haggard as his car was driving into the neighbourhood Lee Hayan was living in.

“What is happening.”

An invitation to a woman’s home was welcomed, but if the opponent was Lee Hayan, the circumstances would be different.

Conversation and intimacy with their lives at stake, invited to the house at night I must do whatever it takes....

“Life or death. There was no room for excuses.”

Choi Ji Hoon was obsessed with a myriad of delusions and was forced to back off.

The location was not hard to find thanks to the simple directions given by Hayan.

A bit of a distance from the roads and stores was a small house located in a secluded area.

The yard was full of flowers in bloom and in the corner were jars.

“Really.”

Choi Ji Hoon smiled.

“Theres a pleasant atmosphere about the house as if she was raised well.”

But he had not the slightest idea.

Lee Hayan was in the kitchen, working hard to make it clean.

“Kitchen maid and even later, married. Cooking kimchi and side dishes will be continued to be carried with you even as you prepare to die.”

Be that as it may, the dishes and the laundry were not forced completely, but most of it were the tasks in Lee Hyun’s life.

The house was saved.

Years of newspaper delivery had trained a sense of geography. For a long time, the sun was good they found a house in a quiet secluded area and bought it.

Ding dong.

Choi Ji Hoon rang the doorbell and the front door opened.

“Excuse me.”

Seeing as it was the first time visiting a woman’s house, secretly his heart trembled a trifle. His two arms were holding flowers and a fruits basket as a present for whatever was to come.

Bark!

Soon after, the barking dog ran into the yard.

“Heog!”

Choi Ji Hoon faltered and stepped back.

“What is this veal dog.”

The big dog came running up while wagging its tail, licking and desperately rubbing on his body.

An excessive display of intimacy.

He realised its behaviour was because it knew he was a guest.

“Come in.”

Lee Hayan, wearing a white t-shirt came out on the porch modestly dressed. Even then, Choi Ji Hoon was trying to pretend to be friendly.

“Boshin, go ahead and relax.”

As soon as Hayan said this, the tail stopped wagging at once and the dog quickly retreated to its kennel.

Choi Ji Hoon’s spirit was in turmoil, he held out the flowers and fruit basket.

“It was awkward to come empty-handed so I brought something.”

“Yes, thank you.”

Hayan received the fruit basket and led Choi Ji Hoon into the house.

“The flowers?”

“What about the umbrella stands....”

“.....”

Lee Hayan served the meal with side dishes that were food boiled down in soy sauce or other seasonings.

“Bon appetit.”

Impetuously showing up,taking dinner at the table that was already set,Choi Ji Hoon raised the spoon.

“Although it’s not much, have your fill.”

Eating at home was different. Side dishes were carefully pick so they would not put a strain on the stomach.

The immaculate Choi Ji Hoon was struck with the taste of the food.

“Delicious. I enjoyed it.”

His words were not empty, even the rice was great. The dishes were more delicious than eating a full course in a restaurant.

As soon as you ate the rice, you’d feel as if you were on air.

“You prepared the food for me, so I’ll clean up.”

“No thank you. You’re the guest. I’ll clear the dishes so stay in

the room. I'll be back.”

“I-In the room?”

“Yeah. Why don't you go there.”

“.....”

Choi Ji Hoon was intrigued as Hayan pointed to an open door and entered.

Stepping foot into a 20 year old girl's room.

Pink wallpaper, posters of celebrities, photos, was what he expected. Rather it was filled with shelves of books mostly related to science and medicine and in the midst of these, mystery novels.

«The world will be destroyed with 10 technological advances»

«Human Anatomy»

«A serial killer's invitation»

“She's reading really good books.”

Even the written language of the titles, Choi Ji Hoon could not carelessly pass by to read.

“She’ll be here soon... What am I doing?”

Hayan’s room, it bore a haunting and amazing atmosphere that overflowed, causing him to be afraid.

‘But...I can’t settle with this girl. At least other women who come will be similar, in one’s eyes.

There was a refreshing fragrance in Hayan’s room.

Just a while ago she was studying, there were books and notes spread all over the desk.

After a while, she came carrying tools including a screwdriver and hammer.

“Have you rested? The television isn’t working well so please fix it.”

“Yes?”

“You said you were part of Sung’s Electronics. Please fix it.”

“Sung...Electronics, but I’m not sure if I can repair the television. Just because South Korea has cars, does it mean we can make cars?”

Choi Ji Hoon, although puzzled, disassembled the TV with tools and luckily was able to find the parts of the circuit that required fixing.

“Ah! Here comes the screen.”

The nervous Choi Ji Hoon wiped the cold sweat off his forehead.

It was an old vintage television but he hadn't taken one apart before.

‘This experience will be helpful.’

Choi Ji Hoon had a smile plastered on his face.

‘Now all I need to do is to wait for a lovely conversation to happen.’

In that moment, he felt himself reliable as Lee Hayan smiled a bright,innocent and perfectly natural smile.

“Really it's fixed. I'm amazed.”

A little dramatically, Choi Ji Hoon gestured to his pounding heart.

“In the future, if you need any help, please call on me.”

“Can I really do that?”

“Sure.”

“In fact there might be other things broken.”

“....”

“Even imported things? Oh but I don’t think you know how to fix those...”

“No. Bring it.”

Hayan actually brought it.

Gas stove, oven, air purifiers, humidifiers, vacuum cleaners, cell phones, laptops, printers, computers, monitors, cassettes, telephone, fan, rice cooker, a bidet!

“This, is this all?”

“No. There’s more. The refrigerator in the kitchen too.”

“.....”

“You can’t fix it? Do you have to bring it to the depot?”

Choi Ji Hoon vigorously shook his head.

“No. I’ll give it a try.”

He started with the easiest one, the telephone.

Old parts wear out and end up unusable, but generally parts tend to just break.

After the repair period, it looked newly bought because even a small failure could not be detected.

“Where did you get all this stuff?”

“I got it from our original house, some of the things were brought by brother. He found it during his newspaper routes.

“I see.”

Repairing was difficult, but Choi Ji Hoon was comfortable because he was having a conversation with Hayan who was sitting right next to him.

Book 14: Elemental Creation

Chapter 1: Dwarven Village Iron Hand

“Excuse me, what is the level of your sculpting skill? You’ve clearly progressed into the Intermediate level, but is it over Intermediate level 6?”

“If I hand over my prized iron ores to you, would you disclose a little secret about creating a sculpture?”

It was unusual for a Dwarf to beg to another dwarf to the extent of clinging to his legs. The moment Sculptor Weed walked into the Sculptor’s Guild, an astonishing event occurred.

Ttiring!

- You have started on the path of the Eternal Sculptor.

Possible changes in some stat will occur when earnest attitude towards sculptures is displayed. To some extent, magnificent artistry would be helpful to accomplish high skills.

Sculptors have formally stepped back into the world.

Nobles and Royalty will hear of your name through the Sculptor’s Guild, and other Sculptors will have their competitive spirits kindled.

The immeasurable imaginations and variability in expression; if one has the creativity, they are able to pioneer a new techniques to Sculpting.

- Because of passion for sculptures, Art stat has increased by 100.
- Charm has increased by 50.

- The effect of skills related to sculpting has increased by 20%.
- Mana consumption for skills has been permanently reduced by 20%.

He had sacrificed many benefits to pursue the path of a Sculptor.

Weed was already standing at the zenith of the Sculptor profession.

Since the sculpture he created garnered attention, it surprised the entire continent; in which he received abundant fame and glory.

The Dwarf Instructor said.

“Even if you devote your entire life to the boundless world of Sculpting, you will never see the end. While people who are obsessed with hunting and adventuring can’t see the value of sculpting, they say that the venerable Dwarven Sculptor Kendellew thoroughly enjoyed adventures. Have you heard of his tale?”

The Dwarves who gathered around trying to unveil the secret of sculpting, grew silent.

They were closely listening to the Dwarf Instructor, since it seemed like he would provide some information.

‘Dwarven Sculptor Kendellew?’

‘That’s the name of the Dwarf from the quest that no one was able to solve.’

‘However, the prologue is a little different from last time.’

‘Hurry up and say that you haven’t heard of it!’

The dwarves were thinking this, however they were eager to hear the Instructor’s words, so they stayed silent.

Intuitively, Weed’s mouth began to speak words of praise.

“So it’s like that. That is a welcoming task for us Dwarves who love challenges. Us Dwarven Sculptors can walk anywhere using our powerful legs.”

“Ahm. That’s right, if it’s another race with weak constitutions, they have to travel by horse.”

“The romance of traveling lies in walking. It is a given that only by walking can one fully experience things and be inspired.”

“It’s something you should try.”

Weed was getting annoyed with the onlooking Dwarves.

‘How can I have a peaceful conversation with the instructor like

this.'

'All I can hear are tremulous chatter.'

The Dwarf Instructor continued.

"In any case, he was a Dwarf who liked to travel alone, and no one would ever lay a hand on him. One could say that he was one of the rare Dwarves who was extremely respected by even the arrogant Elves."

"He seemed be a very talented Sculptor. He can even tolerate the loathsome Elves."

The characteristics of the Elven race.

They despise using materials such as trees, rocks, and clay to create their sculptures. They despise using parts of nature [to artificially create sculpture, and labelled them negligible.

The Elves hated Sculptors because they take the lives of trees and turn them into wood.

Because of that reason, forests where Elves reside did not have a Sculptor's Guild.

"This story has been passed down from the time of my great-great grandfather. It was said that his sculpting skills have reached

godliness but unfortunately, none of his remaining works can be seen.”

Although most of Zahab’s sculptures in Rosenheim Kingdom were destroyed, there were significant number of collectors who kept his sculptures in storehouses, who now thrive from selling them.

As with the religious shrines and the Tower of Warriors, the Tower of Magicians also preserved the products of the great masters, but the Dwarven Sculptor Kendelleev did not leave any pieces for posterity.

“Due to the situation, only the Dwarves knew of his God-like skills. The haughty Elves would not even talk about our ancestor, who made astounding sculptures in their image...”

“He doesn’t have any family or disciples?”

Even if it was just Kendelleev’s descendants, Weed wanted to meet them somehow.

“They say he didn’t. He liked to travel by himself so much that he didn’t marry and lived all of his life alone. Even the location of his final resting place remains unknown. We Dwarves can only cherish the pieces we make everyday.”

“That’s right.”

The Dwarves were a race who had great pride in their equipment, protective gear, and artwork.

“I can’t believe that he would destroy his life’s work so that no one could see it. Although it’s only conjecture, a place that is difficult to find... I think his work could be contained in a hidden place that only the most outstanding craftsman, even amongst us Dwarves, can enter. If it’s an exceptional Sculptor, he or she might be able to discover it.”

Weed nodded his head.

“That could be possible.”

“Please let me know in the event that you are able to discover traces of that person, because I want to rub it in the noses of arrogant Elves and Humans.”

Ttiring!

– Sculptor Instructor Jorbid’s Request.

An unbelievable story was disclosed in the Dwarven Sculptor’s Guild since antiquity.

The Dwarves claim that there was a Sculptor who could craft fire and water, light and darkness, amongst them. However, others don’t believe this claim.

“While the Dwarves may be a race that can produce an amazing quality of weaponry, no matter how talented they are, their artistic talent is like that of a child’s. Since they’re short, even if they say they know how to sculpt, how can they? Hahaha!”

The Elves’ insulting remarks echoed throughout the forest.

“The Dwarves have still yet to learn about the mystery and beauty of nature.”

Although their words were very degrading, the Dwarven race would not protest.

For Dwarves to regain their pride, one would need to find traces of Dwarven Sculptor Kendelle’s work.

Difficulty: Dwarven Sculptor Race Quest.

Reward: Honour among the Dwarves

Quest Limitations: Only available to Dwarven sculptors.

If the quest should fail, Dwarves will receive the same hostile treatment from Humans as that of Elves.

Bystanding Dwarves who were listening to the story tried to discourage him.

“The Instructor have also tried to give me this quest before.”

“Don’t accept this. This is an inferior quest that they give to any Dwarf who thinks of picking up Sculpting. If you accept it for now,

it's hard to forfeit it later, and it's an impossible to clear quest. I swear.”

“I accepted this quest, but no one knew anything about Kendellev. It's a quest that I gave up on after suffering for two weeks trying to complete it. I suffered a lot to recover from the loss of fame and intimacy.”

The Dwarves were trying to stop a Dwarf they had never seen before, and kept encouraging him to refuse the quest. However, there were also extremely curious.

‘But this time, the explanation and the description of the quest is a little different...’

To be honest, it varied greatly.

But because he and many others were curious about Kendellev, they were forced to accept the quest and investigate him.

It was a racial quest; they accepted it because they thought there would be additional bonuses after succeeding, but there were many Dwarves who regretted accepting it.

However, unlike before, he gave Weed more details and kindly explained. They carefully observed how his fame and intimacy as well as the difference in his sculpting skill changed the dialogue of the Instructor.

And then Weed said.

“I believe it is a fact that we Dwarves, once had a great sculptor among us. I will definitely look for evidence to snub it in the Elves arrogant noses.”

– You have accepted the quest.

“Thank you. I’m hoping you’ll find it.”

As a means to show gratitude, the Instructor presented a carving of an Elf.

“Oh! He already accepted the quest.”

“Even though I begged him not to that much..-nim, please abandon it before it’s too late.”

The Dwarves who were beside him grew impatient.

To be honest, they were anxious.

Even if one considered the failure of the quest they accepted, it had been acknowledged as an insurmountable quest. However, since Weed accepted the quest, the Dwarves had an uneasy feeling that he would succeed.

“Instructor, I also believe in the tales of the Sculptor, Kendellev. I also want to search for his tracks.”

“I will as well...”

“Didn’t you guys already fail earlier? However, it would be good if many Dwarves would participate in this event.”

The vigilant Dwarves left together after receiving the quest from the Instructor because they all suspected that they would be left behind. Weed, making the most of this opportunity, left the Sculptor’s Guild.

*

The Dwarven Village, Iron Hand was built along the rugged mountain peaks.

Blacksmith stores and houses were built on an uneven surfaces, and the village square was made in the form of staircases. There were very few flat terrains to be found, and therefore they were very costly.

There is no place like the village square for people to sell their unwanted goods and recruit teammates.

Weed went to the corner of the square and started sculpting.

Sa-gak-ssa-gak

“I heard that Dwarf has superior sculpting skills, is that true?”

“It remains to be seen. Anyone who accepted and completed Kedellew’s quest would have bragged about it.”

“We’ll, have to wait and see.”

The Dwarves were closely watching Weed. The users who accepted Kendellew’s quest were filled with regret.

Weed was determined to solve the issue with this quest.

Weed was sculpting, showing no intention of relocating.

His marvelous skill allowed him to carve a circular block of wood by spinning it, as if it were an apple!

Even after becoming a Dwarf, the unknown beings whispered in his ear.

I’m sorry I ignored you up until now. Please hurry and sculpt me.

Look at me; look at me and sculpt me, I say. Sculptors have always ignored our existence.

Weak. Pathetic. Don’t you desire power?

It might be because he was transformed as Dwarf using his

sculpting skill, but the beings who muttered with alluring voices became more polite.

They stopped cursing him after he displayed his skills in the Sculpting Guild, because of that, he sculpted with relief.

“No, now! It’s not like I’ll be here day in and day out. I will make you some sculptures. Please stand in a line, a line!”

In this manner, he sold souvenirs to young Dwarves as a side business...

While there weren’t many Dwarves with outstanding skills to choose from, there were many Warriors and Fighters. If a sculpture was smaller, there would be a greater probability of usefulness during a battle.

In that case, he made a living making and selling sculptures, he sold them to the merchants who wanted to buy and sell, and to the tourists.

“Can’t you increase the price by just 1 copper?”

“It’s a sculpture I made with a lot of effort... Please give me 1 more copper. I’ll show you around for cheap.”

“I’m giving special discount. For a short time, all sculptures will be 30% off! It’s first come first serve up to the first 5 people.”

For some Dwarves, sales came in different sum, while others walked away with their confidence crushed.

The Dwarves who were watching got their hopes crushed and left.

Although he started sculpting in order to elude the pursuers, Weed was overflowing with motivation. Compared to carving and selling sculptures in other villages and Kingdoms, the customer responses here were completely different.

“You sculptures differ from what those other Dwarves made. I’ll pay 1 gold.”

“Thank you. It’s very beautiful.”

“Did you make these as souvenirs for those who came to Dwarven Village? Thank you.”

In order to show respect towards the Dwarven master craftsmen, they usually paid the asking price. He received different treatment from human villages.

The Dwarven sculptures humorously transformed into the appearance of the guests, it was so popular, it sold like hot cakes.

And the masterpieces he made prioritizing his inner feelings

above all!

Ttiring!

– A fine piece! Dwarf boy was completed!

A happy Dwarven boy wearing a hat.

Although the sculpture does not have a childlike appearance, his lack of a beard tells you of his young age.

Looking at the sculpture closely, in-depth sculpting artistry can be found.

Artistic Value:

Because it is a work of a qualified Sculptor, 73.

Special options:

Luck stat increase by 7.

The number of completed Fine Piece: 34

– The effect of sculpting skills have increased in experience.

– Fame has increase by 1.

There are a few minor errors but the sculpture still came out as a fine piece.

I think it is very well done for my standard, even beans can grow in the midst of a drought.

But since walking down the path of the Eternal Sculptor, masterpieces are produced fairly frequently.

‘It all thanks to the increased effectiveness of my skill.’

Weed was satisfied with the end result. Not only did the Sculpting skill increase, but even the related skills would increase its effectiveness by 20%.

Sculpting Blade skill increased by 20%, and Sculpture Transformation will become better at expressing racial characteristics.

Weed was able to use the fast paced method he had learned from his illegal part-time job during his teenage years.

With approximately 45 masterpiece sculptures created, he could earn approximately 1,200 gold.

It was petty cash compared to what other classes made, but with all his money invested in Morata even this small amount was precious!

Weed made sculptures all night long.

When morning came, the Dwarven Liberation Corp entered the town square.

“One day of taxes from all travellers!”

All are required to pay taxes for all commercial activity done in the square, if you do not pay the taxes required, you will be

forcibly expelled.

The Dwarven Liberation Corps ruled over all the guilds in Iron Hand!

The Dwarven Liberation Corps increased the village's tax rate by 35%, making it higher than any other villages.

Murderous tax rates!

Most people agreed, that as a whole, the group did not fit their name.

'They should change their name. Dwarves Exploitation Group would be a much more fitting name.'

The Dwarven Liberation Corps ruled Thor Kingdom, including 8 guilds and other small villages.

Every month the guild had to pay tribute to the Akryong (Evil Dragon) Kaybern in the form of goods. Thus the greedy dwarves could not become wealthy.

Dwarves with Beginner Blacksmithing skill did not open their eyes to avoid the high taxes. Those with Intermediate skills tried to bluff their way stating that they were moving to another village. However, the Dwarven Liberation Group still had influence over the village, forcing them to pay the taxes.

Dwarves from the Liberation Group walk towards Weed.

“Art Hand, you have to pay taxed for that.”

“Seniors, earning a day-to-day living is the plight of the poor Dwarves.”

“All other Sculptors also pay taxes. And from what we’ve heard, you’ve been earning quite a lot.”

“I have recently pursued sculpting and it’s the truth that I have a few customers. However, others are jealous of me and are defaming me. How much could a sculptor possibly make?”

“Please accept 15 gold.”

“I can’t shave off 20 gold, if you don’t like it leave the village.”

At the Dwarven Warrior’s threat, Weed had no choice but to pay the 20 gold. However, it was a relatively small price to pay if you compared it to the weapon craftsmans’ taxes of several hundred gold pieces. Gathering all of their income from taxes, the Dwarven Liberation Corps were very profitable.

Inside the protection of the Akryong Kaybern, there was no need to maintain an army because neither monsters nor other Kingdoms dared to invade. There were occasional power struggles

amongst the dwarves, which didn't normally last very long, nor very catastrophic.

The Dwarves were a race that was naturally hard to siege.

The cities and villages were built on harsh terrain of mountains, which gave an overwhelming advantage to the defenders, and, without Magicians or Archers, they did not have the necessary resources to attack.

The Kingdom of the Dwarves was a disappointment.

Although it was their birthplace, those with a certain degree of skill scattered throughout the Versailles continent.

*

“Ah! What a beautiful sculpture, lately I've made most of them without errors.”

“What are you talking about, Pin? The brass statue you made yesterday had more dignity. How good was the “Anxious Dwarven Child” statue?”

“From a woman's perspective, the sculpture you created today is more appealing.”

Weed created a sculpture of two people who couldn't stop

squabbling.

Herman had a profession as a Dwarven Blacksmith. At the sight of Weed making sculptures, he said.

:“You look like a Blacksmith with superior skills.”

Weed could not help but asked.

“How did you know that?”

“If you look closely it’s obvious. You are not a native Dwarf are you?”

“Yes.”

“In this place, the most Dwarves acquaint themselves and live on. Although most other people think all Dwarves look alike, if you look closely, there’s a slight difference.”

The length of the beard, hair color, the shape of the jacket, and even to the size of the head differs according to the taste of the Dwarf. Even if other people have difficulty differentiating them, if one actually became acquainted with a Dwarf, it would be easy to tell them apart.

So Herman said while gently stroking his beard.

“While I think I know, to some extent, most of the Dwarven Sculptors who live in the Kingdom of Thor, there wasn’t one among them that looked like you.”

“It appears you know how to sculpt.”

“It’s a job without anything special involved. Speaking of sculpting, aren’t you skilled with your hands?”

“ ... ”

“Although I trained in order to master sculpting, there was no reason for me learn other skills. While it’s hard to attain greatness, it’s probably easy to become good enough at it.”

“You can see a lot of struggling Dwarves.”

“The Dwarves who worked on Sculpting have usually dreamed those dreams and achieved it. However, the actual number of Dwarves who have done so are very few. They had their hand full with training their Sculpting skill, how can they possibly raise other skills? However, I think a person of your caliber can make it possible.”

“Why is your estimation of me so prominent?”

“Do you know how long you’ve been sitting here sculpting while eating only bread crumbs?”

Weed had not been aware of the time for hours.

“It is already the 22nd hour. Seeing your composure, patience, and remarkable skill in sculpting, I would guess that it would be unthinkable for you not to be honing other skills.”

Particularly among the Dwarven race, there were many older users.

Production, and especially the ranking of the manufacturing fields, was usually thought of as boring and irritating by most energetic youths.

Herman was an elderly user who was in his mid-40s.

Both his son and daughter worked for another kingdom, as a soldier and gardener, respectively, stopping by to visit once every three to four months. Herman lived for the the joy of mending the weapons and armor he'd crafted for them whenever they stopped by.

Besides Herman, there was a female user named Pin.

The girl with the cute name was female of the Elven race!

Unlike the extremely thin fairies, it was a female elf who had similar proportions to an adult human. Even though her job was a

Shaman, when she travelled to the dwarven village, she settled down. To age her specialty; spirit wine.

Offering spirit wine to the Earth in the Thor Kingdom doubled its effects.

In order to properly age spirit wine and progress it past the Intermediate level, she had to pick a good and strong soil, offer it there, and stay put.

Since Weed was in the plaza of the Iron Hand Village and sculpted for consecutive 20 hours, he became intimate with more villagers aside from the two users.

“Art Hand, did you finish the mother-of-pearl cabinet order, yet?”

“Yes. Here’s the finished product.”

Weed handed over the remaining mother-of-pearl cabinet he made beforehand.

Although it was a bit overboard to say they were pure statues, they were only simple products. He was now able to make crafts that took a lot of skill.

Since woodworking, metalworking, various cutting techniques, crafts, and other handiwork were all related to sculpting, it was an extremely exceptional display of practical skill.

The mother-of-pearl cabinet must be detailed and comfortable to use. In that way, it required an artistic side and was not easy to make.

“Great, Art Hand! It must have been a difficult request, but I like it. You completed it meticulously as if you were part of our Dwarven clan.”

The Dwarf paid his dues and left with his mother-of-pearl cabinet.

Weed was satisfied with this transaction.

As expensive as the mother-of-pearl cabinet was, he made it back cost and more.

“Art Hand, what about the scabbard work I requested?”

“Here. I completed everything.”

“Thank you. Let’s do business again.”

Dwarves kept looking him.

“Mister, is the crane statue that I dropped and broke fixed yet? If I get caught by my mom, I’ll be in big trouble.”

“I used a high quality glue to attach the neck portion as good as it new.”

“You can’t see a scratch, right?”

“Of course.”

Weed was wrapping up all of the requests that the villagers had.

While there were also cases of people requesting a special sculpture to be made, most were trivial requests. If the Dwarves had a piece that they coveted, they raced to make it themselves instead of entrusting it on others.

However, the work that the Dwarven villagers requested did not give much rewards, fame, or intimacy.

At his skill level, if he were to focused all of this attention on the production of an occasional irritating piece it would be easily completed!

At that moment, a drunk Dwarf who was wearing a red vest walked down the path while searching for something.

“Where was it? Where can I go to recover it? There isn’t much time left before the arranged time with the man is up.”

Weed found that the eyes of the figure shone brightly.

‘I guess it is time to stop the long wait.’

There were no Dwarves in the village who knew about the Dwarven sculptor Kendellev. There would be no way the citizens of the Thor Kingdom would not conduct a search.

They were... the ones who were here since the beginning and could not settle on a form. You, who loves sculpting, the place you have to go is the Kingdom of the small beings. There will be a place where the hugely stubborn beings will feel a great amount of pride.

However, if for no other reason, this was the place that the Goddess Freya, told Weed to go to.

Weed walked up and spoke to the drunken Dwarf.

“Do you happen to be looking for some good iron ore?”

“That’s right! That’s right! How did you know that? But anyways, that’s not a big deal. But if you happen to have some iron ore on you, will you be willing to sell them to me? I know it’s a hard request. Other dwarves usually don’t ask this boldly. I’m asking since you didn’t refuse the others who are in trouble and need your help.”

– Dwarf Dane Hand’s request.

Because the lazy drunkard Dane Hand doesn’t turn in an iron ore to the forge within the designated time, he is always in trouble.

Since the Dwarves greatly value honor, he will ask you to procure an ore in order to keep his promise, even it's a somewhat unreasonable request.

Difficulty: F

Compensation: Monetary reward

Quest limit: More than 20 Grade 2 Iron ores

As Weed fulfilled the Dwarves' requests, he had receive some ores as a reward. Dwarves generally did not give money, but ores and swords as rewards.

“I'll get you the pieces of iron ore”

“Will you do that for me? Thanks a lot.”

– The quest has been accepted.

“I am short on time. When can I expect you to get some ores? I'm a Dwarf who values keeping promises. That means you should keep your promises and not be late.”

“I am carrying some ores right now. Let me give you the amount you need.”

Weed searched through his bag and pulled out 20 Grade 2 iron ores.

“Th, Thank you so much! With this I can keep my promise to the blacksmith Noble Hand!”

Ttiring!

-Dwarf Dane Hand's quest completed.

Dane Hand can now return the iron ores to the Blacksmith shop.

Quest Reward: Please ask Dane Hand directly.

Dane Hand asked.

“That’s right, how much should I pay you for the iron ores? Does 20 silver above the regular price sound good?”

The average price for a grade 2 iron ore is 1 gold 30 silver.

While merchants might be able to get more than this through the market, it was an acceptable value to Weed.

Weed disagreed with the price and shooked his head excessively.

“I am not a shameless Dwarf who would demand more just to exploit your time crisis. You can give me the going price of 1 gold and 30 silver.”

“Will that be okay? Actually, let’s go to the pub and get some beer, my treat.”

Dane Hand stroked his beard and became elated.

“You, you’re a really likable Dwarf. Since I can see that you’re carrying around 20 iron ores it would appear as though you really like iron. You also didn’t ask for an impossible price and instead asked for a reasonable price; you must be a Dwarf of scruples.”

Weed had received 26 gold for his Iron ores. After that, Dane Hand kindly said.

“Would you like to take a look around Noble Hand’s Smithery?”

Weed asked as if he was a Dwarf that did not know anything.

“A Smithery?”

“Since you usually only let Dwarves who are close to you to enter the forge, and hate letting anyone you’re not close to enter, if it’s not too much to ask, I hope you won’t refuse. I have to go to the tavern and am busy, so I’d like it if you could deliver the ore to the forge.”

Another Rank F question have appeared!

It was a simple request. He had to bring the 20 Grade 2 Iron ores to Noble Hand’s Blacksmith shop.

Weed accepted his request and rose up from his spot.

Herman was playing and telling jokes, and then Pin turned

around and asked.

“Are you heading for Kurueso?”

“Yes.”

“I wish you success.”

Herman shook hands with him.

“Thank you”

“Then I’ll see you next time.”

Weed bow slightly, kept his head down, and moved a step back.

*

“If he leaves, do you think he’ll ever come back here again?”

“His objective here has been accomplished. As well as the Dane Hand’s quest that he’s been waiting for.”

As Pin and Herman watched him walk off in the distance, they looked sadly upon each other.

Herman spoke in a really low and quiet voice so that the other people in the square could not hear him.

“There were eight ways to get to Kurueso. The easiest way is to obtain Dane Hand’s request, but you’ll need a great deal of tenacity to get it.”

“How did he know it was him?”

“He might have received some information. Anyway, we have more reason to stay here.”

Herman and Pin got up from their seats.

The Dwarves in the plaza looked at them briefly and soon averted their eyes.

“Are we going back to Kurueso?”

“Of course. We have work to be done there.”

“I’m sure there will be something interesting or a surprise waiting for us.”

“It appears as though you have fallen for him, young lady.”

“Please don’t tease a lady! Also, I told you it wasn’t like that.”

Pin shook her head and strongly denied.

Whenever she shook her head, purple light unique to the elf became visible from the antennae in her hair.

Herman bursted into laughter.

“Kkeol-kkeol Is this not some kind of strange attraction? It’s his indifferent attitude that appeals and draws you closer to him.”

“That’s right. Truthfully, I am worried about it. This is the first time I’ve felt this way about a male Dwarf. However, I don’t think it’s love, but affection I feel, and...”

“And, what?”

“Also I’ll just say this now, but his hand movements while he sculpts are attractive.”

“Kkeol-kkeol-kkeol!”

Herman started laughing pleasantly.

Chapter 2: Kuruso

The Dwarves had a ranking system in their smithery.

The low ranking Dwarves had to set up their smithy in the lower parts of the village.

Of course, even low ranking Dwarves were more skilled than humans, as well as the other races.

They were able to quickly repair severely damaged armour, weapons, among other things.

The quality of the items they made weren't bad, and traders buy and sell these items all across the continent of Versailles.

Noble Hand's smithery was located at the very top of Iron Hand Village. They are the most respected of Dwarven craftsman.

When Weed went to Noble Hand's smithery, he found the Dwarf sweating while sharpening an axe.

“What's with this little Dwarf!”

“On behalf of Dane Hand, I have brought 20 Grade 2 iron ores.”

“So that little brat was able to keep his promise this time. If you

want to watch me work the bellows, you can watch from the corner.”

After 30 minutes had passed, Weed successfully received a request from Noble Hand.

Because Noble Hand did not have the time to melt the iron ores, he asked Weed to do it for him!

When orders are placed in this prestigious smithery, the customer will only expect items created with high quality refined iron ores.

That is only possible when someone has a Blacksmith skill higher than Beginner level 3.

“It’s urgent I would appreciate it if you would hurry. And also....”

But when Noble Hand looked at the refined ore he was very surprised.

“Who’s the Dwarf that refined that ore?”

“Is there a problem with it?”

“They are all of the same size and weight, and it is refined to the highest quality. If a Blacksmith were to make 100 swords with these ores, they will be able to make high quality swords.”

Noble Hand greatly compliment the iron ores that Weed refined.

In most cases, if a Blacksmith were to create 100 swords, some are bound to be failures.

Because the difference in the materials, and fire temperature, decreases the quality of the sword.

In comparison to wooden sculptures, a small mass of iron would required to be adjusted to its golden ratio, however more details are required for sculpting.

Thanks to his experience with carving wood, it trained his dexterity, hence it wasn't hard to consistently produce high quality iron.

Noble Hand spoke with a serious face.

“But I think it seems to be short of 40 grams. Are you sure you used 20 iron ores to create this iron?”

“ ... ”

“Well, This isn't a big deal as long as you don't take it too far. Is it possible that you want to surprise everyone by creating a large weapon?”

According to the information he read in the Dark Gamer's website, the answer to this question should be 'Yes'.

"I would like to create a weapon that would astonish the entire world. I believe if I were able to create a weapon like that, only then will I be worthy to call myself a Dwarf."

Noble Hand stroked his beard with a satisfied smile.

"Yes. We Dwarves have forsaken water in exchange for the ability to handle our beloved metals. The ability of humans could never match up to our skill."

The pride of the Dwarves is endless!

The Dwarves are reknown for their skill in working with fire, thus their pride is not unfounded.

: "Dwarven weapons... How many weapons do you want to make?"

He didn't have to set a high buying price in order to obtain one, but he would have to state a slightly above average price.

Weed proudly said.

"I want to make 5 billion gold worth in weapons."

Suddenly Noble Hand became irritated and said.

“5 billion gold! Even if all the Dwarves put our money together, it would be impossible. I did not realize you had such an absurd dream. Get out of my forge immediately!”

If this continues, all my suffering will be in vain.

Weed immediately complimented him.

“You say that Dwarven weapons are worth it. I currently have about 20,000 gold.”

But in reality, he didn't even have 2,600 gold.

He was so desperate for money, he even considered selling his japtm or unnecessary equipment!

“Do you have 20,000 gold?”

“Yes.”

“You plan on buying Dwarven weapons with all your money?”

“Splendid.”

“Then I guess I can assist you. All Dwarves appear wealthy, but in

fact it's the opposite. We're always crafting something, repetitive failures and successes is why we're not particularly wealthy. We always struggle with lots of debt because of expensive materials."

There are two things merchants find most profitable in the Dwarven kingdoms.

Raw materials and beer.

Dwarves tend to be liberal with money when acquiring supplies for crafting, the cost really adds up.

However, they almost never buy other luxuries.

This is the reason Dwarves seldom have appropriate accessories to match their appearance.

Imagine Dwarves with pierced noses and wearing bushy earrings.

Without exception, every single Dwarf in the continent was suffering from poverty.

"If you indeed have 20,000 gold, I know some Dwarves that will be willing to help. They can craft genuine items of the highest quality grade possible. Now go east of the village with this written introduction to Nein Hand. You'll need to find the oldest abandoned mine, and then you'll be able to locate where the truly outstanding Dwarves live."

Ttiring!

You have acquired an introduction from the Dwarf, Noble Hand.

What Weed needed was a letter of introduction.

By accessing and searching through the Dark Gamers' Union website, he was finally able obtain the information he needed.

A place where he can learn Advanced Blacksmith skills from some Dwarves with excellent talent.

If you walk to an old abandoned mine without a light, through the lakes, the Underground Dwarven City will appear.

It was a City built out of gold, stone, and iron, where Dwarven Artisans reside.

He will end up there if he met the requirements.

*

Weed did not have any trouble looking for the way to Nein Hand's village. He tracked down the old abandoned mine easily.

Deep inside the abandoned mine, was a passageway connected to

the unground.

Jeo-beok jeo-beok

Whenever the torch flickered, Weed's shadow danced around violently.

Walking down an underground passageway while relying on the light of a single torch instills a primal fear in people.

It took roughly 30 minutes of walking to reach the abandoned mine's entrance. It was surrounded by stalactites with water dripping off of them, breaking the silence and creating a sense of fear.

*

Since Royal Road became popular, less and less people went to see horror movies.

There are many dangerous areas on the Versailles continent, such as monster-filled dungeons, which many have decided to explore. For that reason, a lot of people have lost interest in watching horror movies.

In reality, the main reason why people stop watching horror movies is because the basic elements of the horror movies are outshone by the monsters found in dungeons.

“Zombies!”

“They’re about level 30. You’ll never find monsters with characteristics like these before level 30!”

“You can’t get rid of it with one Holy Blessing.”

These were some of the comments viewers made while watching the hero escaping from Zombies.

*

Weed was not afraid as he descended into the dark cave.

“It would be more interesting if monsters came out for an ambush.”

In fact, even if he knew monsters were waiting in ambush or there were traps laid out, he would not be tense.

There was graffiti all over the walls, written by Dwarves. However, most were insignificant random doodles.

- What can I craft with 5 iron ores and 1 silver ore?
- Take the right path to the Dwarven Village. That... is exactly what I’m trying to do. Do you know the correct path to the

Dwarven Village?

– Don't ever look back. If you look back...

The graffiti was useless provocation intended to instill fear.

Dwarves are very optimistic, but mischievous, they are similar to Smaragus.

They like fire and dislike the darkness, and drew graffiti for their enjoyment.

All the top players would recognize the graffiti as baseless provocation and carry on. However, with so much Dwarven graffiti, no one would blame you for thinking that perhaps there was a great treasure behind it.

Just when he was about to become accustomed to walking in the darkness, it gradually brightened. Finally, he was approaching his destination.

Weed suddenly quickened his pace. And finally, he was able to see the end of the cave.

There was a huge communal area.

All the subterranean streams fed into one canal and then ran into a lake. As the water flowed, it sparkled as if it contained grains of silver. And along the lakefront, an inviting village with earthen structures, completed a charming scene.

The home of Dwarves.

From the lake, water flowed and went to every house.

The Dwarven village was a sight to behold with its waterways like silver veins.

The smitheries were constantly emitting plumes of white smoke.

Some houses were built with precious materials such as silver, gold, and mithril.

The Dwarves, like humans, favored embellishments, but did not like anything too fancy.

Just like houses, the pubs were built using gold and other materials.

The taverns must produce great tasting beer if they can afford the fine stones.

Kuruso definitely looked like the gathering place for Dwarven artisans.

*

The Priest of Death Question.

In the Royal Road forums, Daymond posted the first ever S-Ranked quest acquired in Royal Road.

– We, the Predators of the Land guild, are going to hunt a boss monster in the northern parts.

We accept all professions.

Looking for brave adventurers to take up this challenge.

If the hunt is successful, the loot obtained will be equally divided amongst everyone.

A reward of at least 10000 gold is offered for any information about the boss monster's location.

The users' response was apathetic at best.

“The Predators of the Land guild were already past their prime.”

“They have taken possession over Seongdo village... If you want to hunt the monsters down, go further north.”

“Indeed, it could be successful.”

There weren't many users who will be participating in this hunt.

The North was crawling with so many powerful monsters and evil forces, that it requires an expedition consisting of top level players.

However, despite the risks, a small adventuring expedition was sent to gather information.

“On the eastern shore of the Wailing Swamp is where you'll find the Hydras. The Hydras had an unusually large heads.... I don't know any more details.”

They had received Information on the boss monster.

Daymond's guild members led the way to the lake where the Hydras resided.

They met the informant in a small neighboring frontier village to give him 10,000 gold, and then proceeded to the Wailing Swamp.

The Hydras grew to a height over 6 meters tall. It's heads' movements were slow, but each of the heads could emit a strong venom.

The acid could reduce the durability of shields and armor to zero in a matter of seconds!

The Hydras inhabited a marshy area where their feet would sink deeply, so hunting them was unexpectedly easy.

“Let’s go”

The warrior Daymond, led the way.

After the Hydras were defeated, new information stating that the boss monster has been spotted.

It had 7 heads and each of the cursed heads would continuously spit venom.

The heads could even pick them up and devour the expeditionists.

Barely succeeding in the hunt, more than 25 people in the Predators of the Land guild were injured. And it was clearly displayed in the Hall of Fame.

“It looks like a really tough boss monster.”

“Is this the first encounter with Hydras?”

Just then, more information arrived.

Daymond choose to go to the nearest place from their location.

“This place still had remnants of human civilization. Over there lay large wriggling earthworms... And an expedition who casually entered the place were annihilated.”

The earthworms could not be ignored.

They were a rare type of undead worms which kept struggling and squirming for their life.

Undead earthworms!

“A boss class monster named Lava appeared with its green body and a humanlike head.”

The Predators of the Land guild received heavy damage while trying to hunt Lava.

Nobody knew how many boss monsters existed. The Predators of the Land guild kept attacking the monster recklessly, attracting more and more attention.

*

Kuruso deserves to be a place called the Dwarven Blacksmiths' paradise.

Ttung-ttang-ttung-ttang.

In the distance, it was easy to see a number of Dwarves holding hammers and pounding away at something.

Minerals were scattered everywhere, while finished goods were stacked up.

In comparison to Iron Hand Village, the secluded Dwarf village was sweltering hot and less populated.

“Exper, do you already know how to make a spear?”

“I know. Its base damage isn’t more than 90, now watch this Chain.”

“There are fire spirit and wind spirit gems, if you add these you get a fiery tornado effect.”

“Then how much additional damage would be added?”

“For each attempt, up to 23 additional damage could be added. Needless to say, it is a stunning weapon.”

“This proves your ability, Exper. The kind of weapons that you make must have great durability.”

“So I also tried making a spear. For my first time, I wanted to see if I could make a spear with over 100 attack damage.”

The Dwarves whispered numerous stories of weapon production.

When Weed passed by, they ignored him and continued their discussion.

“Fabio-sunbae, I heard that you’re very familiar with making armors.”

“He is very good at making armors, enough to be called a master of the art. If you have enough money, then he can upgrade your armor, better than any sword.”

“Damn. If I had the money, I wouldn’t be doing this.”

“Don’t even say that. Do you think Fabio-sunbae uses his skills only for making money? He is not picky with the work he choses.”

“Everyone knows that.”

Even Weed’s ears have heard and imprinted the name “Fabio”.

The Dwarf Fabio, Thor’s chosen Blacksmith, was extremely famous among users.

From the time Weed acquired the Death Knight’s armor in City of Heaven, Lavi, Fabio was already widely known.

It was said that the moment Fabio lays a hand on old derelict armor, it would become as good as new.

Fabio is a master with his hands.

The elite guilds, and the so-called “rankers” of the Versailles continent, would gather bags of money to request for his services.

People wanted stronger armor, but refused to have armor reinforced, since it becomes bulkier and somewhat heavier. Also at a higher level, the death penalty increases.

Besides Weed, there are very few people who have the patience to endure the hardship of raising their skill levels.

However, many people preferred to have better armor in comparison to an excellent weapon, therefore they did not spare no money to upgrade their armor.

During that time, Fabio acquired a great fortune.

He had become the first ever accomplished Blacksmith.

When CTS Media broadcasted about Weed, along with 8 other users, Fabio was also one of the chosen players.

After the program, users with intermediate Blacksmith started to

emerge.

With trying to raise their skill levels, more mithril mines were developed and better Blacksmithing materials appeared, which made it easier to raise Blacksmithing.

As time passed, more users have raised their skill enough to reinforce armor and Fabio disappeared from the Versailles continent.

Weed wondered if Fabio was last seen in Kuruso, and whether he has been trying to raise his Blacksmithing skill.

Weed started to slow down his pace.

On the side of the road, Weed spotted many Dwarven Blacksmiths crafting goods, while others were packing up the finished products.

The Dwarves were making their own goods, and didn't care that weed was was watching them.

They were making goods in case someone wanted to make a purchase, but it didn't look like anyone was going to buy anything.

“Is Herman-sunbae busy these days? I haven't seen him in a while.”

“I do not know. Now that humans have returned, maybe he’s crafting some swords?”

“Tsk tsk. Herman-sunbae is cautious to a fault. Blacksmiths don’t follow his style of workmanship anymore.”

“Long ago, around 4 or 5 months ago, I followed the same cautious style. Back then, Herman-sunbae’s skill was superior to the rest of us artisans.”

“Even if you’re stubborn and try to create a sword with all your heart and soul.... at most, it’ll take you 1 week. But if you’re going to take more than a month, no one will want to buy a sword from you.”

“Yeah. That’s right.”

“You can sell it in the auction house for a higher price, but it takes time. And Blacksmithing is all about the money.”

Up until recently, Herman was with Weed.

On the Versailles Continent, it is not unusual for one or two people with the same name to run into each other. However it was unlikely for another Dwarven Blacksmith near Kuruso, with the same profession as Herman.

‘Who knows, I might see them here again.’

Weed did not focus much on his relationship with others.

However, it is a fact that he had spent a lot of time hunting with Pale and his party. And as a Dark Gamer, he is unable to refuse dangerous hunting tasks when he is asked.

Except for sleeping and going to school, he invested all of his free time playing Royal Road, and it would be difficult to do so if he hunted with others.

‘We shall see if this relationship is destined.’

Weed headed towards Kuruso’s administrative agency.

*

Unlike other Dwarven villages in the Kingdom of Thor, the administrative agency held great power and governed over Kuruso.

In other Kingdoms, the King and other nobles govern the land, therefore it was unusual for the administrative agency to making all decisions for the Dwarven Kingdom.

Dwarven Elders are appointed during the first week of every new year. The Elders then agree upon all the decisions and establish policies.

3 Strong Dwarves with excellent swordsmanship, and 7 Elders were chosen to lead the administrative agency, a total of 10 Dwarves are elected. Dwarves who just reached their adulthood are considered too young, and therefore not eligible for election.

However, it is said that the Elder seat is open to anyone, including players.

Each of the Elders will work at the administrative agency alternatively.

“You’re a new Dwarf here in Kuruso. Would you like to register?”

“Yes. I would like to register.”

“What is your profession?”

“I am a Sculptor.”

In Kuruso, you do not have to pay taxes to Akryong Kaybern. You will not be hassled by the Dwarven Liberation Corps for money. Everything was governed in accordance to the Dwarves.

Coming to Kuruso was free!

However, there was a requirement if you want to leave Kuruso.

They must contribute a piece to the great city. The work must be created with devotion, and when completed, must be better than their average product.

For a Sculptor, he would have to create a sculpture.

There is no alternative but to create something good, you cannot create something poor. Thus, to leave Kuruso, you must contribute something decent.

That was the minimum condition in entering Kuruso.

Unlike other places in the Kingdom, there is no taxes because of special restrictions.

The Dwarven Elder ask Weed.

“What is your name?”

“My name is Art Hand.”

“That’s a good name.”

“The registration process is now complete. Before leaving Kuruso, you are required to leave something created by you, in your case, a sculpture.”

Just when Weed was about to leave the administrative agency.

“I have a question for you.”

“Let me ask you. Do you want some information about Kuruso? If you’re not busy, will you listen to my request?”

A Request from the Dwarven Elder!

However the offer didn’t seem appealing to Weed.

Even though Weed had enormous amount of fame, after changing into a Dwarf, the fame he had, had no effect at all.

The Dwarven race’s characteristic adjusted the fame accumulated by works of art created, but there’s a temporary restriction to the fame he gained through his adventures.

Even then, his fame still maintained an enormous amount of prestige. However, Kuruso was different because they do not frequently trade with other Kingdoms.

The fame he had accumulated around the Versailles Continent and the North, was unheard of in Kuruso.

Even with Weed’s high fame, he did not acquire a lot request from outside of those places.

“You don’t need to complete my request in exchange for information. Have you ever heard of the Dwarven Sculptor?”

Weed thought that if he could not find any information the Thor kingdom, he might be able to find it in Kuruso!

Weed nodded at the question the Dwarven Elder had asked him and said.

“He was the best Sculptor amongst all Dwarves. His Sculptures were vibrant and full of mysteries. But I’ve other Dwarves’ story that’s been passed down from their ancestors.”

He was able to obtain information about Kendelleev. At the very least, he had confirmed the existence of the Dwarven Sculptor, Kendelleev.

Weed asked with renewed hope.

“Where can I go to find his disciples, or any of the sculptures he has left behind?”

“Even I don’t know the answer to that. To my knowledge, that person didn’t leave any sculpture behind... I suppose we wouldn’t be able to find his disciples even if they existed. As I seem to recall, there have been a lot of Dwarves asking about Kendelleev.”

“Other than me, have any other Dwarves asked this question?”

“There were many that asked. At least over twenty.”

Just like Weed, more than twenty Dwarves have travelled to Kuruso to gather information about Kendelleev. However, they failed to do so.

‘A clue was said to exist in Kuruso. The reason why this truth spread out as a rumor is because those who gave up did not want to give other Dwarves an opportunity to find him.’

No one could find any traces of Kendelleev by themselves. However, because another Dwarf might discover him, they did not make the information public and kept it to themselves.

Weed asked another question.

“The unknown beings; what do I have to do in order to be able to sculpt the ones who speak to me?”

The Dwarf elder was simply stared blankly at him.

“Did such an event occur?”

“.....”

“If there’s anything that you need in Kuruso, you need to look for it yourself. If you want something, you have to earn it yourself.”

In other words, the Elder was saying that you could not easily obtain the information.

It was possible that the answer Weed was looking for was one that noone could ever tell him.

‘The unknown beings. I don’t know what their forms are, and if someone had already sculpted them, there would be no need for them to pester me to sculpt them.’

Sculpting was an art that anyone could enjoy, but only one could master!

Although he wasn’t in a hurry, he had already guessed that the information he needed wasn’t easy to obtain.

Chapter 3: The Secret Commissioned Statue

Weed left the administrative agency and took a look around Kuruso properly.

The Dwarven Blacksmith and other Artisans were on the streets creating something items ceaselessly. There were also Blacksmith shops such as Fabio's, Bambi's, and Exper's.

The names listed above are probably Blacksmiths who made a lot of money from the sale of distinguished items, that they'd crafted. Once the required contribution has been made to the Kingdom, it's possible to become Knighted, and own a house or villa.

'In Kuruso, people are evaluated based on their Blacksmithing skill.'

Unlike sewing and other crafting skills, Dwarves, by nature loved to gather high quality materials, and use the best of their Blacksmithing expertise, forge something new.

"I am the dwarf, Heins. The deadline is almost up, but is there a person who is willing take up the challenge of making 100 window panes with me? It's a request from the blacksmith's workshop."

Colleagues were appropriated based on necessity, even in Kuruso.

“What an excessive request. We have to make 20 pieces of armor, but the conditions are a bit difficult to meet. We’re looking for experts in smelting with a smithing skill of at least Beginner Level 8. You’ll have to provide your own materials, and the cost will be about 300 Gold. This job is only available to dwarves who are interested in skill growth!”

“Monsters have appeared in 8 tunnels, making it difficult to mine. We need to take back these tunnels and restore peace. The pay is 20 gold per person.”

“Every single protective armor must be well made. It’s the Armor shop owner’s request, but I have to make and deliver shields with over 30 defense. Shall we make them together, Dwarf?”

In every castle or village, there was a place set aside for recruiting companions and buying and selling supplies for quests. And inside this place, they crafted their wares, therefore there were many requests to obtain the necessary materials.

When it comes to commissions, it is better to gather colleagues rather than trying to complete it alone.

Thanks to various commission that were constantly being given out, Dwarves with low skill level were given many chances to improve their skills.

*

Kuruso!

Named after the Ancient Dwarven Kingdom, a glorious city for all Dwarven Craftsmen!

Dwarven houses' entrances were small and narrow, but the ceilings were high enough for a human to enter.

Inside various shops, there were dozens of different weapons and armors on display.

Among the many things, next to a blacksmith's shop, was a pub where Dwarves drank alcohol.

"In my opinion, the weapon I made this time turned out good. It's well suited to strike the heads of the Orcs."

"If you're a blacksmith, you definitely have to live in Kuruso."

"In the entire Versailles continent, we have the highest technology, we should be proud."

Outside the pub, the Dwarven users noisy conversations could be heard.

Many people that entered from the back roads of the abandoned mine like Weed, were humans and Elves.

“Heueeeeng! Why is everything so expensive.”

The beautiful user Elf’s face turned grouchy. She had found the bow with the perfect shape for her. However, the Dwarven seller said uprightly.

“We have no choice but to sell it at an expensive price to Elves. If you don’t want to buy it, scam!”

“Hueng, But I really do want it...”

“Then give me the money for it!”

“What should we do. Don’t you have enough money for it Lumiya?”

“No, I’m about 1500 gold short. I wish they would give us a slight discount. They don’t ever give us discounts.”

Grumpy Dwarves!

Unlike their fellow Elves and humans, Dwarves were not so favourable with them, or other races for that matter.

Although there were five beautiful elves inside the shop the price was not reduced by even 1 gold. Weed approached quietly to the side where the Elves and the Dwarves were bargaining.

However he did not have even the slightest desire to help the Elven women. He was just wondering what kind of quality the bows sold in Kuruso were.

Furthermore, this shop has garnered plenty of interest since it was located in the center of the Kuruso and was known for the high performance of the items it dealt.

Weed pointed at the bow the Elven woman wanted.

“I would like to look at this.”

“I was looking at this product first.”

The Elven women said with a sigh. However, Weed’s expression did not change.

“Is that so?”

“However, I don’t have enough money...”

“Then can I take a look at it?”

“But...”

As the Elven woman nodded, she received sharp glares from her companions.

Weed's eyes shone as if he had captured prey!

The Dwarf owner readily handed him the bow.

“Our shop would be more thankful if a fellow Dwarf would uses this bow.”

Weed took the bow that was handed to him and looked at it carefully.

“Identify!”

The Dwarf Unoban's tribute to combat:

Durability: 40/40.

Damage: 65.

Range: 14.

A bow crafted for hunting by the Bow Craftsman Unoban.

Quick aim, and accurate. A powerful weapon made with a bowstring optimized for speed.

Restrictions:

Level 280.

Dexterity 730.

Archers, or Intermediate Warriors are able to use this item.

Options:

20% speed increase

Improved penetration damage

Rapid fire Accuracy Improves

Steel, Flaming, and Poison arrows may be used.

‘Not bad.’

He received the information from his intermediate identify skills.

Because of his Intermediate Blacksmithing skill, Weed was able to get a more detailed information about the item.

– Weapon Production.

The attributes of the weapon can only be seen in the work of those who have raised their Blacksmith to the Intermediate level.

If you continuously use 45 steel arrows or more, the string will stretch and cause the range and accuracy to drop by 20%.

The damage of arrows increases by 23% on average.

Because this is one of the weapons the Craftsman Unoban made poorly, it's center is not properly calibrated and there may be a deviation of about 15 cm when shooting at a range of 100m.

However, as a product that was made with faith, it can emit a light that guides the arrow on the proper flight path.

If a Blacksmith with more proficiency enhances the bow, there is a chance to slightly increase an arrow's maximum range and damage.

After fidgeting with the bow for a while, Weed returned it.

“How much for this weapon?”

The Dwarf replied.

“15,500 gold.”

“Hmmm”

“Will you be buying it or not?”

Weed retreated a step.

“No, I will not be buying it.”

He was the person who had High Elves' Bow. The reason why he was searching for items was not because he wanted to buy and use it but because he wanted to check the equipment's price. That was the only reason he searched through the Dwarves' equipment!

He had absolutely no desire on purchasing any weapon.

The Dwarf clicked his tongue.

“That's too bad. Come to think of it, we Dwarves, don't need a bow to win any battles.”

It was a weapon that she liked, since Weed said he was not going to buy it, she felt that another opportunity came.

Then Weed said to these people.

“Don’t buy that bow.

“What?”

The Elven women’s eyes were shining.

Although Elves were beautiful by nature, there were better looking people out there.

They had large round eyes, clean skin, and slim bodies. With pointed ears and green hair, it was natural that men would think they are very pretty.

“Its a cheap item.”

“What? What are you...”

“Little Dwarf friend! What do you mean by that!”

It was natural for the shop owner to have an outburst. However, Weed ignored the owner’s outburst and continued speaking.

“It is not a weapon that was made with careful consideration to its quality. Rather than Elves, it was made for non-Dwarves to use. The balance of the weapon is not good, and the average damage

and durability is subpar.”

The weapon was not good enough for Elves to use. The Dwarven shop owner’s face was flaming red and was unable to utter a word.

“Huh?”

“The Dwarves have strong pride. Why did you not get angry?”

Weed continued saying.

“The fire rate is high, which would make it cost more, but this weapon was not properly calibrated in the center and is a complete rip off. If you want, you can get a shooting target and test the bow yourself.”

After he finished saying this, Weed quickly walked away from the store because there was nothing more to say.

He gave the Elf some advice only because she seemed to be his sister’s age.

The Dwarf was blushing bright red with embarrassment.

Dwarves start of with basic handicraft skills which made them excellent craftsmen.

The Dwarf knew that Weed was completely right and could not argue back.

“Elf, are you going to buy this or not?”

The Elf cautiously put down the weapon and nervously asked.

“What is the price for this bow?”

“12,500 gold.”

“But I heard that it’s not balanced...”

“Then don’t buy it.”

The arrogant Dwarf replied back and folded his arms.

The Elven woman understood that Weed helped her and ran after him in a haste in order to not lose him and to register him as a friend.

“Register Friend!”

– Your friend request has been denied.

“?.”

As a female Elf, he was the first one to refuse to register her as a friend.

On the battlefield and on quests, the elven race was always the most popular.

Because of their fast footwork, archers would react to surprisingly fast. And due to the Elven women's pretty faces and slim bodies, men had always taken care of them.

In reality, their appearances were actually plain and they looked like model students who were engrossed with books, but they were popular in Royal Road.

The female Elf threw away her pride and tried again.

“Friend Request!”

– Your friend request has been denied.

“Friend Request!”

– You and Weed-nim have been registered as friends.

After three attempts for a friend request, in the end his name was Weed?

‘The name of that person is Weed?’

At that very moment, the Elf Edel sent a whisper, and just as she expected, the words she first heard were blunt.

– The Dwarves’ skills and devotion...

The whispered words Edel heard was exactly like that.

“It’s not that us Elves are doubting the skills and quality of the Dwarves, but this bow is too expensive for us plain elves to use. I know that the Dwarven Masters can make bows like this easily.”

“12,000 gold.”

An Elf was trying to bargain with the arrogant Dwarven shop owner who was said to be impossible to bargain with. It was a subject worth mentioning.

– Average damage...

Edel was carefully watching the Dwarf’s reaction and said.

“It says that the average damage is not consistent. If a bow’s damage is not consistent, it’s a big problem. I have to hunt the evil Orcs before they get close.”

It was known to all that the Orcs were the Elves' and Dwarves' common nemesis.

One could say that the Dwarves hated the Orcs existence.

“11,000 gold. Thats the lowest I can go.”

“I’ve heard that the durability is bad...”

“10,500 gold.”

If the price was about this amount, Edel could sufficiently buy it with the money she had.

“Wow!”

“I didn’t know Edel had a talent for bargaining.”

Edel’s fellow Elves cheered her on, however Edel decided to press on the matter.

Edel has yet to buy the bow. This was because she was unsure of the price.

Edel asked one more time to confirm the price.

“That is... Is it okay if I shoot a far target and check the results? If it's a weapon that Master Dwarf has made there should be no problems, but I want to see how good the bow is before I decide. However, if the arrow strays even a little bit from the target, you'll give me a discount, right?”

For the first time, the Dwarf's complexion changed and turned pale.

“Give me 9,000 gold for it. Although the bow is somewhat flawed, it's not bad if you bought it for 9,000 gold.”

That was how Edel finalized the purchase price to 9,000 Gold.

There was a slight disadvantage when you use the bow because of the inconsistent damage attack!

However, skills in archery would be more than enough to compensate the shortcomings of the bow.

It was amazing to be able to get a bow that provided a strong base damage as well as rapid fire capabilities at this level and at that price. A Human would find Elves to be amicable, but it was amazing to be able to bargain with the introverted Dwarves.

Edel tried to sending a whisper to Weed with a word of thanks.

– Thank you very much. Because of you I was able to buy the bow...

– The recipient has blocked you.

*

Most of the quest that were commissioned in the Kingdom of Kuruso were for the Dwarven race or Blacksmiths.

Sculpting was as rare as beans sprouting in a drought, and it was a situation where no one could say that they were proficient in it.

“Heolheol, I can’t buy any ale since my money for ale is gone. Although this is really unfortunate, I can’t beg due to a Dwarf’s honor. Luckily the lady who owns the bar said she likes sculptures; won’t you make her one? In return, I’ll give you the pickaxe I’ve been using. You can’t sell it anywhere, but you can use it in a variety of ways.”

Ding!

– Request of a Dwarven Miner

Make a sculpture of a pickaxe.

When completed, you can obtain a pickaxe.

Quest difficulty: F

Reward: Pickaxe

Quest Restrictions: Limited to sculptors.

“I will get started on the sculpture right away.”

– You have accepted the quest.

“You say you’re a Sculptor? A Sculptor... When I was young, I was also able to see some spectacular sculptures. What, you say I don’t seem the type?”

“That’s not it. Dwarves are legendary artists, and they are delicate craftsmen.”

“That’s right. The arrogant Humans say that the Dwarves have no interest in the arts; unlike the Orc bastards, us intelligent Dwarves love beautiful and durable things. Even in our city of Kuruso, we have many Dwarven warriors who don’t know the meaning of backing off. I want to store those memories in my house. Make me a sculpture of a proud Dwarven warrior.”

Ding!

– The Valor of Dwarven warriors.

The Dwarves boast that if they have the armor and weapons they made, they can block even Breath attacks and can cut through anything, they can even capture the evil dragon, Kaybern.

This might be the reason why their Blacksmithing skill was nurtured, but the possibility that this is true is nonexistent!

Even in paintings, as long as their opponent isn’t a dragon, the Dwarves don’t know the meaning of fear and retreat.

Sculpt a courageous Dwarf warrior.

Difficulty: E

Reward: The weapon set that the Dwarf poorly made to relieve his boredom.

Quest Requirement: Must be a Sculptor.

You must make a bronze sculpture.

“I’ll get started right away.”

-You have accepted the quest.

He received this quest without even accepting the Rank F difficulty quest.

One could say that it he was good at getting job quests!

He had hope that there would always be a Sculptor quest anywhere he went.

In this way, he randomly received Sculptor-related requests.

‘Kuruso is a small place.’

There were no more than a thousand Dwarves living here.

There were a lot of empty buildings, and it was quiet for its size.

If there were no Elven or Human adventurers, it would truly become a lonesome place.

‘If I keep doing the sculptor requests, I guess there will be a request to sculpt some unknown thing.’

He thought that he would be able to find a clue at the very least.

However, even though he finished dozens of requests, a special request never appeared. Although the difficulty of the requests rose on average after he mentioned Iron Hand, they never exceeded rank D.

Chain quests were hard to find, and, at best, they introduced him to another Dwarf who needed a sculptor.

The scary thought that flitted through his mind at that moment!

‘This can’t be the limit for sculptor quests, can it?’

If he was a combat-related profession, he could just go adventuring.

There was no need to talk to go on an adventure. He could excavate a ruin, or study the local fauna and flora. He could capture a monster.

The interesting requests were linked together without an end.

Even priests were able to experience special rites that the Church had laid down.

However, he began to think that such quests were nonexistent for the sculptors in the first place.

‘That’s right. Even the quest to make a tomb for the King in the Rosenheim Kingdom was like this.’

It was a rank B difficulty sculptor quest!

If the difficulty was higher than the other commissions then experience and rewards would be greater and it might also give influences throughout the Versailles content.

But what made the tomb of the King so difficult was the physical labor needed to build it.

‘It was a task that could easily be done with simple workers. Furthermore, when sculpting the statue of the Goddess Freya, there were no special challenges.’

Weed was proficient at laboring, and whenever a new job appeared, he accepted it with optimism.

It was true that he was scared of the other difficult sculpting requests in reality.

How troublesome would it be if there was a request to turn some gems worth tens of thousands of gold into a necklace that would be

left behind in the world for centuries?

Weed gladly accepted simple labor, and had created a significant portion of his sculptures that way.

However, it seemed as though, while he was doing that, he had never earnestly thought about the sculptures.

‘It’s possible that the quests I receive through sculpting are stuck at this pitiful level.’

While he did specially make large statues, it could be that those were the limits of the sculpture requests.

It did not fit the image of a Sculptor to do things like search for a party, battle, or go on an adventure!

It might be better to hole up somewhere and create sculptures endlessly.

One could say that Tailors and Blacksmiths were in a similar situation, but whatever the case, he began to hold doubts that, as a Sculptor, he might not be able to go adventuring.

‘No. Damn it. This is reality. There can’t be any Sculptor who goes on adventures, can there?’

Weed fell into despair.

*

Every day, the Predators of the Land Guild and Daymond were gaining more and more attention.

The reason the Humans were concerned about this incident was because it was about time they went to hunt the King Griffin in the Havelin Gorge.

It was considered impossible to kill the King Griffin!

They went on countless adventures to the Land of the North to hunt the Yellow Griffins.

As Griffins could fly in the sky, they had high agility, and were clever, thus they were considered suicidal to hunt.

The Havelin Gorge was a place that lured many adventures to their deaths.

Daymond and the Predators of the Land Guild entered the Havelin Gorge fearlessly.

The clever Griffins lightly greeted the intruders by rolling boulders on them and tossing branches at them while airborne.

However, the Griffins with not use any frontal attack.

‘If you want to come further, then come. There is no way you bastards will be able to survive.’

This terrified them, and with night raids every night they had to watch their surrounding carefully.

They were about the third of the way into the Gorge, which was too far to turn around, the Griffins’ attacks began in earnest.

The Predators of the Land Guild experienced a series of deaths. Words of their failed attempt were up for discussion.

Other guilds laughed at the Predators of the Land guild for their recklessness.

“Unless you’re crazy, you can’t challenge the Havelin Gorge.”

There are other guilds who had larger military strength compared to The Predators of the Land guild. Nevertheless, they would not dare to challenge a dangerous area such as Havelin Gorge.

Especially when defeat was guaranteed.

Because their guild had high prestige, they would be the focus of all players in the Versailles continent. If they were to fail, their reputation would drop significantly.

Additionally, even if they were successful, if many of the core players died, they would suffer great losses.

Although the guilds occasionally exercised their military strength, they were very cautious about it. Therefore the Predators of the Land guild were ridiculed for fearlessly challenging the Havelin Gorge.

“Since they’re leading the guild recklessly, they will fail and end up lost in the North.”

Nevertheless, the Daymond and the Predators of the Land Guild continued to stay strong despite their losses.

However, they were anxious because of the Griffins.

Because Griffins were aerial monsters, only arrows and magic could slay them.

Nonetheless, there was a place of refuge for them.

Griffins’ nest was in the centre of the Havelin Gorge!

In the nest, there were baby Griffins that did not have wings or knew how to fly.

After the Predators of the Land guild, led by Daymond, arrived at

the nest and started a terrible and bloody fight, they obtained an unbelievable victory.

In order to kill the Griffin King, they had to capture 35 little Griffins. The value of successfully capturing and taming one Griffin in an aerial battle, was enormous.

There was a movie in real-time of the battle in Havelin's Gorge posted on the Hall of Fame. Many lost their lives in the battle but the guild fought until the Griffin King had been killed which impressed many of the viewers.

People were completely captivated by the Predators of the Land Guild's recklessness.

*

Weed's concerns about the value of the sculpting request was deepening.

“Though, it can't be helped. They say that learning is theft...”

There was no other way to develop the art of sculpture. He could only accomplish the requests in silence!

“Good work.”

“No, not at all.”

Even though the Dwarf who had entrusted the request to him came, Weed only gave curt responses.

“Oh! It’s a really great piece of artwork.”

“I simply carved it.”

“To think that you could trim the surface so smoothly... And look at the curvature of the surface. To think that we could see the pinnacle of grace in the curvature!”

“Since I made it with a lot of consideration, please stop the cheap talk and give me money.”

The height of exhaustion!

Even if he earned favor, the sculpturing requests did not compensate well. He would only get the amount that was already agreed upon.

Of course, if he made a sculpture that was better than requested, he could get a bit of a raise in compensation. However, the reward would not raise if he simply traded words.

The Dwarves gently laughed at Weed’s haggardness.

“If you’re a Sculptor, you have to have at least this much pride.”

“Ah, well! You could go act like one.”

“A engraver with a wonderful personality. If I have another request, I’ll come again.”

“Please request a commision that pays well next time.”

Even though Weed showed his frustration, the Dwarves took the sculpture and left satisfied.

He even had situations where he received mundane sculpture requests!

He also had a lot of times when he created things like graves or a Goddess in the continent of Versailles. However, there was nothing the Dwarven Artisan city of Kuruso did not have.

There was a lot of monuments, memorials, museums, etc, piled up by extraordinary Dwarf craftsmen, but commissioned sculptures were rare.

“There really is not even a stall.”

Nevertheless, Weed continued to carve sculptures.

– I said to sculpt us.

– Sculptor, why are you following the counterintuitive path?

He was getting used to the murmurings of the unknown presences.

Weed only did business at certain sculpture stores, sculpture materials stores and a certain spot on the side of the road.

However, one day the sculpture store owner held out a sculpture that looked like a bat.

: “Art Hand, take a look at this.”

“Why?”

“Can you give your impression of this work of stone?”

Weed examined the work as he handled it.

“It’s annoying, but you do know that sculptors are naturally not very good at this job?”

“I know, but I wouldn’t ask for no reason. Yes, you won’t be disappointed with the compensation.”

“Then will the sculpture I make be sold for a high price?”

“Just to gain 1 percent more. A popular sculpture will sell for a

very high price, and other sculptures can sell for a high price even if they are not as popular...”

Also according to the transactions the prices of sculptures could rise.

If many merchants came to want the statue then the price will also rise. In reality, the value of the defensive equipment in Thor and Kuruso were expensive due to their popularity.

In order to set the price following the economy of the market, the sculptures couldn't be sold for a particularly high price, even if it was Weed's sculptures. It was a poorly made sculpture, not one made using superior materials and without a lot of consideration.

“Since it's only one impression, I'll try it.”

Weed closely examined the bat sculpture.

“I don't think there is anything special about it...”

Since he made many sculptures, his observational skills had vastly improved.

The bat sculpture that was made using a rock consisting of poor quality clay did not seem to be a piece that was made with great skill.

‘It wasn’t elaborately presented, and there are many crude knife marks. It’s barely average.’

It was a piece that Weed would have regarded as a failure.

It was a rule that the more time you invest in a sculpture, the more the mistakes will be corrected, but this sculpture was filled with mistakes.

“I’ll know more if I take a closer look. Identify!”

It is a Bat Sculpture with an unknown name.

The Bat Sculpture is covering its body with its wings.

Its form resembles the Vampire Bats of the Shaspin Cave.

Artistic Value: 3

Weed was about to pass the sculpture back to the store owner and said.

“It seems to be nothing much. It has no worth and it seems like it was made simply.”

“Is that so? That’s disappointing. I had a lot of expectations for this sculpture, since it was found in the rapids of a lake .”

But it was at that moment.

Weed looked at the eyes of the sculpture.

Thrilling!

The eyes of the Vampire Bat whose eyes were alive with fright!

They say that a bat's eyes were degenerated, but it still had eyeballs. It seemed as though the surprising bright eyes were moving about.

Its eyes were not made of stone, but were made of precious rubies.

Weed swallowed and examined the stone piece again. He touched the rubies with his fingertips, and observed it while shining a light at it.

‘It's a ruby that hasn't been cut and is rough. Since it's a ruby that I can get thousands for if I touch it up a little, I can't see how something like that should be in something like this Bat Sculpture.’

Then he had received a message!

– You have discovered evidence of the Shaspin Vampire Bat in the stone piece.

Weed felt another weird feeling.

“Identify!”

Shaspin Vampire Bat.

The work of the Dwarf Craftsman Gudolph.

It was the last completed work in the Shaspin Cave.

Artistic Value: 245

*

In Kuruso Kingdom, the region behind the lake that was littered with caves.

It was certain that without a guide, one would get lost within the complex anthill-like cave.

Thanks to the Dwarves' innate senses and the ability to read the traces of ore deposits they could never get lost underground. However, since anyone could get lost in a complex cave even with a map, if it wasn't a particularly brave Dwarf, they never ventured in too deep.

The young Dwarf Gudolph cautiously walked into the cave.

‘This time... Have to find courage to go to the gemstone mines.’

Gudolph was highly noted as an artisan, but even more than that, he had a good grasp of the underground ore deposits.

“I ought to give her a pretty brooch as a present.”

He wanted to give a brooch he created with the gems he found to his lover when he proposes.

Gudolph took up a fast pace towards Shaspin cave.

“This is the way that leads to a cluster of ruby viens.”

The Shaspin is a place Dwarfs do not dare to go. Gudolph was blind in love and cautiously went into the depths of the cave.

Dark, and narrow cave!

He passed by stalactites and the vampire bats sleeping on them.

He was willing to risk his life to move further into the cave to mine jewels.

And from the depths of the cave, he discovered traces of light emitted from jewels.

“It’s here!”

Cheered, old Gudolph as he struck his pickaxe into the vein.

He found the mine of high graded red ruby gemstones!

“This will be more than enough to make a brooch for her!”

Gudolph sank into happiness.

However, the sound coming from the pickaxe as he was digging the ruby out woke up all of the Vampire Bats in the Shaspin Cave. The Vampire Bats beat their wings and flew over to sink their teeth into Gudolph.

“S, Stop! Spare this Dwarf!”

Gudolph fled deeper into the cave while having bats hanging off of his body. He did not have the leisure to search his surroundings and recklessly ran away.

The place he arrived at was a zone that had hot lava boiling!

The bats ran away from the heat, but Gudolph had no more strength left. The blood loss left his consciousness hazy, and he did not have the strength to walk out of the cave.

Even if he searched for a way out, it was the Shaspin Cave, where Vampire Bats were waiting for him.

“I don’t have any way to go back...”

Gudolph took out the ruby gemstones he had and fashioned a precious brooch out of it.

It was an item that he wanted to use while proposing to the Dwarf maiden Jena.

He chiseled a small stone into one of the Shaspin Vampire Bats, and inserted the leftover rubies as its eyes.

“I hope someone will discover...”

Gudolph felt that he did not have much longer to live. That’s why he wrapped up the stone sculpture in some of his upper clothes and sent it flowing down a fast stream.

It contained his hope that it would reach Kuruso after flowing and flowing down this waterway...!

The bundled up Bat Sculpture rode the underground stream.

Kuleuleuleu.

Udangtangtang!

There were times when it became as deep as a river, or its speed slowed down, and without leaving time to relax, the blocked off labyrinthian passage became overly turbulent.

The bundle accumulated damage as it collided with the ground or stalactite of the underground. Every time that happened, the

sculpture also received some impact, but because it was bundled in Gudolph's clothes, it remained safe.

And so, as Gudolph had hoped, it made its way all the way to Kuruso's lake.

Although it had already been more than a month, it safely flowed to Kuruso and was discovered by the Dwarves. That was how it came to be at the sculpture store.

*

The moment Weed used his insight, he was able to see the origins of the Vampire Bat of the Shaspin Cave.

Ding!

You learned 'Understanding the Memories of the Sculpture' Skill.
Can witness the sculpture's hidden in the past.

Ding!

Gudolph's Dream.

The Dwarven artisan Gudolph imbued the last of this strength into this sculpture.

Acquire his vengeance on the Vampire Bats, and gift the brooch Gudolph left behind to the maiden Jena.

If you do this, you are able to obtain the Ruby Mine that Gudolph discovered.

Quest Difficulty: B

Reward: Ruby mine of Shaspin cave

Quest limit: Acquire information about the Vampire Bats in Shaspin cave, and Intermediate Sculpting.

Weed felt like he had been struck with a hammer, as he was shocked senseless.

Sculptors have always been ignored and ridiculed by others!

But when he puts a lot of effort and hard work in creating a sculpture, it never betrayed him.

“I am a Sculptor. A Sculptor.”

There was no need to dwell on the opinions of others.

There was no need to beg for low ranked commissioned quests, it was given without asking.

There were hidden quests in Sculptures only available to Sculptors.

With the Sculptor's profession, anything is possible!

That is what it means to be a sculptor.

Chapter 4: Commander Of Tremors

Weed decided to purchase the statue of Shaspin Cave's Vampire Bat.

The shop owner sold it over for next to nothing. However, the price did not even cover the value of the rubies.

"It's only 3 gold, I hope you'll help Gudolph achieve his dreams."

As a result of Weed's spun up tale about the sculpture, the shop owner began to favor him even more.

"I didn't know that your sculptures would be this good. I'll gladly purchase the sculptures you make at double the price, in this shop."

Twice the normal price was extravagant.

If this were to happen, he would still make significant profit, even after deducting the cost of the materials used.

He might be able to live off creating sculptures.

"Are you sure you can afford to buy them at such a price?"

Weed asked courteously.

Gudolph's arrogant attitude quickly disappeared the moment the shop owner offered to pay twice the original amount.

"It's twice as cheap as the average price. Art Hand, if you make cheap works like this, I will not forgive you!"

"I'm not much of a sculptor; I still have many things to learn. Thank you, but you need not praise me."

Weed said with modesty.

Humility is always a virtue. Even if that was the case, the store owner really wanted to stop the conversation, but he would be chastised for at least three days.

"How could I not understand an artist's feelings."

"..."

"Artist have a habit of underestimating themselves. I have the conviction and the pride as a shopkeeper to buy your sculptors at the right price. I appreciate it. You'd be glad to sell your sculptures in my store."

"..."

Weed bought the Shaspin Vampire Bat sculpture. Subsequently,

he received a new quest.

Ding!

The Vampire Bats of Shaspin Cave.

Take revenge on the Vampire Bats who stole the life of the Dwarven master craftsman, Gudolph.

The Dwarven warriors are obliged to participate in the fight.

The Dwarf who received the will of Gudolph must not die.

Quest Difficulty: B

Reward: Dwarven Honor

Quest Limit: Dwarves' participation is mandatory.

Forced Race Quest

Weed was startled by the commission.

At that moment, all the Dwarves present in Kuruso received message window containing information about the quest.

– Please help Dwarf Gudolph's successor fight off Vampire Bats in Shaspin Cave to retrieve Gudolph's sculptures.

You must help, and if you do not wish to participate in the quest you will be deported from Kuruso. Dwarves will be hostile to you.

Dwarves have an enormous amount of pride in their race. In case you do not swear to avenge him, the Dwarves will not treat you as one of their own.

“I want to participate.”

“We will conquer the Vampires Bats of Shapsin cave.”

Dwarven Warriors swore and accepted the quest as quickly as possible. They exclaimed.

“Locate the successor of Gudolph’s sculpture quest!”

“Who is the successor?”

“We are a party of Dwarven Warriors. Please lead the way.”

The Kingdom of Kuruso became restless.

Everyone were scattered, shouting, and looking for Weed.

*

Conquest of Shaspin Cave!

Dwarven Warriors ran amuck trying gather supplies and get things done.

Dwarven blacksmiths lent out their surplus weapons and armour.

“Use it well and return it.”

“May your quest be successful.”

The Dwarves in Kuruso showed a favorable response.

Unlike the other Cities, Kuruso had a lower number of users. Dwarven Blacksmiths or Warriors do not have high regards for another person's work.

“Racial Quests.... Compared to Humans and other species there are many possibilities, it's a marvelous thing, don't you think?”

“A quest for Dwarven Sculptors, what a surprise!”

Herman had also arrived.

He came running while holding a bunch of weapons.

“I made weapons. Most are abominations, but you may borrow as many as you require.”

In his mind they were abominations, but they were actually superior to what the other dwarven craftsmen made.

“Even though we met each other in Kuruso like this again, I guess you don't have some time to spare for me.”

“Nevermind, maybe another time.”

“That sounds good, in any case something great happened. This is a quest from a sculptor.”

Weed met with the other Dwarven Artisans.

Exper and Bambi were regarded as Kuruso’s 5 famous craftsmen. Herman was also one of them.

Through a representative, Fabio also gave away some of the armor he created.

The armour that was brought out was limited to level 200, it was low enough level for Weed to wear and there was no class limitations.

“I will stick to the things I normally use.”

Special protective equipment for battle and was not made purely for defense!

Although the level cap is low and it is possible to wear without high amount of strength, it was extremely heavy and reduces agility. This frustrated him, and it also made him look like a fat hippo.

He believed that strong armour and magic resistance were essential to survive.

Weed shook his head.

“This will not be necessary.”

“Huh?”

“I will not die.”

The truth was, dying would be a huge catastrophe.

Of course, his Sculpture Transformation would be released, and he would be revived through the power to reject death!

At the sight of him, the Dwarven Warriors would be in an uproar.

Because he was none other than Weed.

‘The old Dwarf Gudolph had left things behind.’

But thanks to Gudolph, he had learned the locations and attack patterns of the Vampire Bats in Shaspin caves.

He was not willing to take any risks.

*

“Let’s march.”

Upon entering the cave, Weed walked with long strides as if he were out on a stroll. The Dwarven Warriors were astonished.

“Art Hand, have you gone insane?”

“Did you drink a dozen cups of some high-class beer?”

The Dwarves became concerned.

In order for the commission to succeed, Weed must survive.

Their mission was to fight under the leadership of Weed!

However, since their leader was inexperienced, their confidence wavered.

But Weed knew exactly where the Vampire Bats were located.

Inside the empty cave the Dwarves wondered around.

When he was about 500 meters away from the Vampire Bats’

nest, Weed raised his hand.

“It is here.”

“Huh? What do you mean?”

A Dwarven Warrior named Bindel asked.

Since he had experience in more than four different types of weapons and had mastered various combative skills, he was the best Warrior out of the Dwarves assembled here.

“The battle will take place here.”

“What do you mean. Where are the monsters?”

Weed answered clearly.

“Of course I will be bringing the fight here.”

At that moment, the faces of all the Dwarven Warriors started to frown.

“That’s foolish, we are all battle experts, let me take the lead from here.”

“You can just find a safe place and rest there.”

“You not know anything about the vampire bats fast movement, tsk tsk! Furthermore we Warriors did not bring any bows.”

From then on, the Dwarves did not show any respect to Weed. The trust between him and the Dwarves had been broken.

I'll lure all the monsters back, and we'll see how well all of you will fight!

Hunting Vampire Bats was a lot more difficult than common monsters, therefore the hunt was not simple. It was important to have experience in at least a dozen different kinds of hunting, with various monsters.

However, all the Dwarves tried to ignore Weed.

Weed took out Zahab's Engraving Knife and slashed his arm.

“What are you doing!”

Bindel shouted.

All the Dwarves who had not listened to him thought he was trying to commit suicide!

If Weed were to die, the commission would fail, if the quest were to fail, the Dwarves would experience a great loss for all the

equipments they bought.

The Dwarves were surprised when Weed silently said.

“Dwarven Troops prepare for battle!”

“Huh?”

“You, what are you saying?”

Feeling frustrated, Weed quickly explained.

“The nest of Shaspin Vampire Bats is about 200 meters away. However any blood they smell within 600 meters radius, they perceive it as food.”

“...”

“The cave length varies due to the winding paths, but from here on, it is a straight path to them. They are not able to use their speed because of the low ceiling and stalactites. Dwarven Warriors prepare for battle!”

Weed assertiveness caused the Dwarves to draw their weapons once again and prepare for battle.

‘What the hell are the sounds I just heard?’

‘The Vampire Bats seem to be approaching...’

Chwalalalalag!

A flock of vampires flew through the darkness.

“They really came.”

“It’s the Enemy!”

The Dwarven Warriors who were prepared for battle, violently hit the bats with axes and hammers, while the bats resisted.

However, because of their specialized wings and utilizing the darkness of the cave, the Vampire Bats were able to surprise them. The Vampire Bats that were not deflected, clung to their enemies.

Although the Priest’s holy magic did do some damage, but sadly they did not have the health, strength, or enough defensive equipment to provide much support.

Because Warriors have high physical strength and vitality, together with high defensive armor, they believed that they were safe from the Vampire Bats who attacked in flocks.

Then Weed bursted out yelling.

“Formation change, Five column concept!”

Kwakwakwakwang!

The Lion’s Roar echoed inside the cave!

– Morale has risen by 276.

All confusion has been expunged.

Luck has risen by 6.

Each Dwarven established a party and fought, and at the same time the message appeared.

Morale in a party was important. When morale is low, it affects damages and magical attacks.

Due to morale being doubled, the state of confusion from the bats attack were gone, and their Luck had also increased!

“Five Column Formation!”

Weed was yelling the same words frequently.

Although the effects of the skill did not overlap, it created a tremendous noise.

The same words echoed throughout the narrow cave.

“Five Column Formation!”

“Stand in groups of five, hurry!”

Although they were in the midst of battle, the Dwarves stood together in groups of five.

The reason they followed Weed’s commands was because they did not know what was going to happen.

Experienced Senior Dwarven Warriors were surprised at these developments.

“He is using a skill for commanding a group of Knights, is he not?”

“The effect of that skill... I’ve never heard of a skill that increases the morale of a party.”

While standing in groups of five fighting in the narrow cave, the Dwarven Warriors soon realised.

‘There is big a difference.’

Although it was not easy to form a groups of five in the middle of battle, because they lacked the experience of doing so in battle. However when they rally together, and fight as one, their

attacking prowess, the battle goes by smoothly as opposed to fighting individually

The size of the groups would be changed based on the size of the area they fight in. Sometimes there would be four people, and sometimes there would be six.

Every time they got into their battle formation, Weed would use Lion's Roar.

"Third column lead forward, second column stay in your position!"

The leading column knew that the Vampire Bats were three steps ahead of them. Then the space between the columns emerged.

The Vampire bats targeted the Dwarf furthest from the front of the leading column.

"The second column, cover the leading column!"

The Dwarves from the second column brandished their weapons at the Vampire Bats who came in flocks.

During battles, the highest priorities of Warriors is to assure the safety of their allies!

The commands were easy to follow all thanks to the kinship of

the Dwarves.

“Three people from the leading column, move forward and close the open gaps, second column move forward, and third column maintain your current position!”

The Dwarves soon realised that the situation had a repetitive nature and knew how to deal with it.

It was important to maintain their formation and remain united while fighting the Vampire Bats.

The Dwarves were able to fight properly because of their helpful allies who supported them, and they were able to maintain their formation and remain calm.

Those who were wounded, fled from Vampire Bats to get healed, and once they were healed, they went back to battle.

With the formation Weed came up with, it was easier to fight Vampire Bats.

However, they weren't able to guard against the Vampire Bats who flew above them passed column 6, and defeated column 7.

The darkness of the cave does not have any disadvantages to Vampire Bats, and because of their nature, it allows them to cling on people's body really well. And by doing so, it created anxiety through the remaining Dwarven Warriors.

‘We can win, fight harder.’

‘Fight to win.’

The Dwarves’ eyes shone like lanterns, as they pushed forward with newfound energy.

“Advance Forward. Breakthrough!”

The Dwarves hastily moved their feet.

Ttadadadadag!

The column formation fought the Vampire Bats at a steady speed.

A shiver ran down the spines of the Dwarves.

This was a battle they had never experienced before!

It was common for five or six people to unite as one party. However, it was difficult to form a party while there were over hundreds of Dwarves fighting together in unison.

Taking a collective stand and fighting swarms of Vampire Bats, they felt a huge sense of pride in themselves.

The excitement rose in their bodies, and they found the battles exciting and fun.

Weed gave commands skillfully.

“Hurry up!”

He told them to increase the pace.

Hurry, hurry, hurry!

The Dwarves repeated these words to themselves to keep up their pace while wielding their weapons.

The Vampire Bats who ran into the leading group were defeated, however some flew past them and headed for the third and fifth column, they were lucky that the bats died in one hit. Despite all that they experienced some losses.

Weed used Lion's Roar again to boost the parties' morale, and with the increase in morale, the Dwarves attacked the bats.

“Make haste!”

“Hurry!”

“Hurry!”

“Hurry! Hurry!”

The Dwarves spoke in unison as they ran.

This was the most exciting battle that they’ve ever had!

They did not know they had to fight in a dark and narrow cave. They had never fought like this before.

“From the first to the third column, stick to the left and right side of the cave. Fourth column, ignore everything else and advance. The current leading group, go together with the main force and stick around the rear!”

The Dwarves were initially worried about how their formation will be.

Since they were fighting swarms of Vampire Bats head-on, they experienced a large loss of stamina, and their vitality decreased immensely. However, because they did not want to voice their discomforts, they decided to tough it out as much as they could in order to continue with the exciting battles.

They moved dutifully because the entire battle formation could be destroyed if the front of the column formation were to collapse.

However, as if Weed could read the minds of the Dwarves who

were at the head, replaced their ever building feelings of worry.

The Dwarves who, after fighting in the frontlines, were moved, clinging to the sides of the cave, exchanged glances with the Dwarves who were passing by.

‘Well done.’

‘Good work.’

Their eyes were filled with confidence!

The hearts of all the Dwarves were becoming united as one.

“Power through!”

As the frontline units were changed, so did Weed’s commands.

After that, the Dwarves ran through the swarm of Vampire Bats and wiped them out.

The size of the community of the Vampire Bats of the Shaspin Cave was enormous.

‘If we had fought normally, we would’ve struggled.’

‘Even altering just the battle formation could let us, groups

comprised of only soldiers and warriors, fight like this.'

The truth that the Dwarves had learned came across as shocking.

By the fifth time they had swapped the front line units, they had broken through the swarm of Vampire Bats.

The Dwarves still had more than enough strength.

That was because the Dwarves who were in the frontline still had strength in reserve due to the early swapping.

"Everyone, about face."

The Dwarves turned around without hesitation.

Of course, Weed was currently in complete control.

Since they were able to witness the effects of Weed's commands, their readiness to defend themselves naturally increased.

"Charge!"

Just like before, they charged towards the Vampire Bats slaying every single one.

After the battle, the party would pick up the japtm that dropped

along their way and would repeatedly do so after every battle. Right then, the Dwarf named Bindel asked Weed.

“How should we distribute the japtem?”

Originally, the party who received the most experience would take care of the japtem. However, during the battle, they had to continuously split into different party and get into formation, which made things complicated.

Furthermore, when it comes to the Dwarven race, there are many characteristics that can't be overlooked.

Dwarves were greedy by nature, therefore Weed had to come up with an idea and told them.

“You can pick up japtem on your own. However, in case you pick up more than you can manage yourself and your movement speed slows down or if combat ability suffers, I will take measures to forcefully remove you on the spot.”

“...”

“The battles in this cave will be fought in the same manner as before, and will continue until you are sick of fighting. That's why it is proper for you to loot with moderation so that your combat ability and your movement speed does not suffer.”

With this, the Dwarves nodded their heads.

It was better to loot japtem moderately than be uselessly greedy and become mobbed by your own team. It was because they were going to fight an innumerable amount of battles such as these unceasingly and there would be more opportunities to loot later on.

*

The hunting of the Vampire Bats of the Shaspin Cave!

As the Dwarven Soldiers and Warriors built up more and more combat experience, they became more efficient.

“Faster! Faster! Faster!”

“Forward, charge!”

“Crush them all!”

The Dwarves swept through the inside of the cave with a crazed fervor.

The main habitat of the Vampire Bats!

The dark and narrow caves that, Humans obviously, and even Dwarves would cowered from. There were rampant noises and such coming from the land as if it was a completely different cave.

Until now no one had ever experienced nor imagined such a battle.

Some of the Dwarves openly shared their delight.

“If all of this is put up on the Royal Road forums, there will probably be a lot of excitement.”

“It would probably turn things upside down.”

The highly-skilled Dwarven Soldiers and Warriors of Kuruso; there were some users who were able to get into the Hall of Fame.

Those users were also waiting for their chance to upload the video.

Weed was unconcerned with it.

He could not monopolize the video commission since they were all doing the quest. Furthermore, Weed was in a situation where he could not make his account public.

If he made it known that he was leading these people in a Dwarf form, then the secret of his job and his Sculpture Transformation skill would be leaked to the public!

Weed decided to loot only important items.

“Hm, these Vampire Bat Tears... I think they can be an important reagent for magicians.”

In order to not become encumbered, he only selected and looted lightweight and valuable japtem.

To others, if japtem distribution was a problem, they usually resorted to threats of discarding the items completely.

Weed's words constantly increases his control and authority.

The Dwarves had to be wary of Weed.

However, since he was a Sculptor, he did not have to participate in the battles, and the other Dwarves thought well of him.

‘How much can a Sculptor be able to pick up even if he tries?’

‘He largely distinguished himself in battle, and it's true that we're all on this quest thanks to him... I feel kind of sorry for him since his profit would be too small.’

He even received some sympathy.

Shyashyashyashyashyak!

However, all this this time they didn't know that Weed was stuffing an enormous amount of japtem into his secret pockets; more than the amount that could fit into his backpack!

The difference between Weed's perspective and theirs was enormous.

Watching Dwarves, who usually looted a lot, and gather japtem a few times made it seem like they were extremely greedy.

Meanwhile, Weed barely glanced over all of the japtem.

Ttoleuleug.

While naturally rolling his eyes, he didn't spare another glance at the areas where the cheap japtem were.

While seeming to considerately giving the other Dwarves adequate time to loot, he selected and packed a lot of expensive loot when their concentrations were dull.

Even in that chaos, the speed of the battle did not drop, and, inside, the end of the Shaspin Cave was in sight.

“Here it is!”

A Dwarf who was in the lead shouted after discovering a Dwarven corpse.

Weed found a corpse that was dried up like a mummy after getting drained of its blood by the Vampire Bats, and the last ruby brooch that Gudolph had made.

Ding!

-You have discovered Gudolph's ruby brooch.

Weed turned around and spoke.

“It's complete. Let's return to Kuruso now!”

The Dwarven soldiers and Warriors had successfully completed the mission.

*

They found a Dwarf by the name of Jenna in Kuruso, and gave her the ruby brooch.

Since Weed was the leader responsible for this, other Dwarves gathered around him and watched him.

“This has ended quite unfortunately. Gudolph... He loved you the most, and, at the very end, he left this for you.”

“Heu-heuk!”

The female Dwarf Jenna received the ruby brooch and sobbed.

“Gudolph, to think that you died this way...”

Ding!

Quest Completed: Gudolph's Dream

The Dwarven craftsman Gudolph's greatest dream has been realized.

Since you took vengeance on the Vampire Bat, and delivered the jewel brooch made for the maiden Jenna, he can rest at ease.

- Fame has risen by 120.
- Your Friendship with Dwarves of Kureuso has risen by 10.
- You have become the most favored and trusted of the Dwarf, Jenna.
- You have levelled up.
- You have levelled up.

A window popped up to other Dwarves to let them know of the success of the request. Weed paid it no mind and looked upon Jenna with a regrettable gaze.

‘No one knew how painful it is to the one who's left behind... Until they experience it for themselves.’

The sorrow he experienced after his parents' death.

His parents could not have rested in peace after departing while leaving their children behind.

Jenna got up while wiping her tears.

“I shouldn’t be here like this. Gudolph wouldn’t have wanted me to be simply crying like this.”

“Then?”

“This jewel brooch is the proof that he proposed to me. And for as long as I will live, I will be known as Gudolph’s wife.”

The Dwarven women had a tough side to them.

Jenna spoke with a smile.

“The Ruby Mine of Shaspin Cave that Gudolph discovered was probably meant as a gift to you. I will pray for you to be able to dig up some beautiful rubies while developing the mine.”

– You have acquired the development rights of the Ruby Mine of Shaspin Cave.

He acquired the development rights of the Ruby Mine!

*

Weed registered the mine at the Administrative Office.

Art Hand's Ruby Mine of the Shaspin Cave!

He recruited orphans and soldiers at Kuruso Administrative Office, and planned to start digging up rubies from the Shaspin Cave.

While he had to pay 60% of the rubies' worth to employ mercenaries and to compensate for personal expenses and safety fees, he would still make an enormous profit.

He was slowly starting from establishing public order. He was going to lower the employment of mercenaries, so the net profit would get larger as time went on.

"Good work."

"This will be remembered as the fastest completion of a quest in recent times. If there are any more jobs in the future, call us any time even if the pay is lower."

Amazingly, the Dwarves who took part in the battles were satisfied and dispersed.

Chapter 5: Fight Against Death Hand

Weed was able to start a fire thanks to his sculpture.

The sight of a maiden's tears!

It was a sculpture that was buried at the side of the road.

“Identify!”

Her father made axes everyday.

Her mother sewed everyday.

They would never play with my younger sibling and I.

There wasn't anyone who would play with us.

Quest difficulty of Rank E!

Weed found the Dwarves. However, because the sculpture was made awhile ago, she aged and became a fully grown female Dwarf!

She was in the midst of sewing something.

“Excuse me. Would you mind if I played?”

Weed called out to her. He bought her some of the apple-flavored mead that Dwarven children loved and played with her for about 30 minutes.

“My childhood dreams became fulfilled like this. These are clothes that I made... I will give them to you.”

A handmade Blue Dwarven Blue Robe!

It was a magician's robe with a level requirement of 130, but even with the low level requirement, it was a very important magician's robe.

Magicians are not significantly conscious of their defence. Because they have the most powerful damage, they focus on mana regeneration and attack power.

In fact, no matter how bad or how good a robe is, they did not give any extra health or defense. However, this Dwarven handmade Blue Robe was something every Magician wanted. The robe had options to give fast casting for spells and extra mana, which could be sold for 7,000 gold.

Even though a Magician's staff provides the most magical attack power boosts, Magician robes were rare and therefore sold for more.

This was why the compensation for this statue quest was absurd.

“Sculptures can be compared as the flowers of true art!”

Weed lavishly praised the sculpture.

“Welcome, Art Hand!”

“Hello Esteemed Guards. Would it be okay if I entered the house for a bit?”

“If it’s you, you’re welcome here anytime!”

He even visited the Dwarven Guards’ house.

Weed had an affinity of using flattery which did not cost any money and this way, he was able to get familiar with the Guards. There was a sculpture inside the guardhouse.

There was a big difference between Humans and the taciturn Dwarves.

Because they loved sculptures and other works of art, such as paintings, there were always 1~2 sculptures in every house. There was a small number of sculptures that had no meaning and were made for display, but there were also plenty of sculptures that were requested to be made or symbolises something.

“This seems like an amazing sculpture.”

“Ah. It’s something my ancestors kept a hold of.”

“May I take a look at it close up?”

“If a sculptor as skilled as yourself would look at it, it would bring me great honor”

“Thank you. Identify!”

– There aren’t be a lot of Dwarves who knows the truth about the foul and evil being living in Kuruso.

‘Evil being...’

For some reason the quest seemed like it would get fairly troublesome.

– That evil being shapeshifts and roams around while tempting innocent Dwarves. Since the evil being changes his identity regularly, he cannot be found easily. However, the evil being usually has a form that resembles a sneering Dwarf.

If a capable Dwarf makes a good item, this evil being will approach them. It will always try to pass itself as an unskilled Dwarf, and will produce a better item after inspecting and mastering their skills.

A despicable act to the Dwarves who work hard to raise their skills!

Weed thought this was fairly extreme.

‘I wouldn’t be able to forgive him either’

If, while one is making 1 Gold, their neighbor is making 2 or 3 Gold, it would cause irreparable mental trauma!

– You must take revenge on that evil being.

He had to make sure the evil being would never step foot on Dwarven soil again.

However, because the Dwarves defended the weak and powerless, he couldn't just punish the evil being. If he did that, the pride of the race would not be restored.

It was better for him to identify the evil being and then openly challenge him to a competition of skill and defeat him.

Fortunately, the evil being was not proficient in every field, so there was a definite chance of success.

This time, the difficulty of the quest was rank C!

“I think it will yield a fairly good reward this time.”

Rather than fighting against the evil being and beating it, he had to defeat it in a feat of skill.

Weed immediately identified a Dwarf that was likely to be the evil being.

Whenever a Dwarf player produced an item, there was another Dwarf that was making a superior item next to him.

His name was Death Hand!

“Keulkeulkeul.”

Unlike a Stouthearted Dwarf, he would make noise and then create something.

He was a Dwarf that was famous in Kuruso for requesting random things.

‘If he won’t drink any ale, there won’t be any doubt.’

After following him around for a day, Weed was certain.

A Dwarf that wouldn’t drink any ale was abnormal!

He thought there was no doubt because, even though he stood next to him and drank as if inviting it to drink with him, he showed no interest.

“Geez, you couldn’t even cut a watermelon with this kind of sword.”

“Keueuk...”

There was another frustrated Dwarf in front of Death Hand.

He had spent his whole savings to obtain the highest grade of bone. A sword made from the bone of a monster!

After making a fairly decent sword from the femur of an Ogre, he let out a shout of joy.

“Alright! I finally completed the Ogre Sword!”

Before he could even share this happiness with the other Dwarves, Death Hand walked up.

“Heh, It seems pretty complicated. How did you make a sword out of the bone?”

He tried making a sword out of some Ogre bones he had, and after a few failures, he finally succeeded.

‘No way.’

The Dwarf that made the sword out of Ogre bones became focused entirely on Death Hand.

‘It can’t be. It won’t be like that this time.’

Iron is the easiest material to make a sword out of.

It was easy to change its shape after melting and beating it, and it is easy to complete the sword due to the strength of the materials. The completed sword's durability will also increase after grinding it on a whetstone.

The inferior bone sword would not allow for mistakes during the entire process, and the material itself was especially sensitive.

Even if one was a Dwarf with high level Blacksmithing skill, they could not make the sword if they did not know how to work with the material. Death Hand had produced a few failures, but suddenly he pulled out an Ogre bone.

“That was in the treasury, it's valuable...”

And then, after working on it for a short while, incredibly he made an Ogre Bone Sword!

It was a better sword, it also had an interesting shape.

Death Hand however, threw his sword on the ground and it smashed like pottery.

“Damn it, this is abomination! This sword won't cut a watermelon. It won't cut an apple. And it even won't cut a

banana!”

“Keuheuheuheug!”

Death Hand’s latest victim of the day was crying bitterly.

*

Without warning, Weed proudly walked up to Death Hand.

“Ahem, what should we make? Producing items must be hard for you given your lack of talent.”

His clothes gave off the smell of a novice Sculptor. With a beginner carving knife and skills that could take him over 10 hours to sculpt a squirrel.

Sculpting the tail took 4 hours, the head took 2 hours, even though he crudely made the torso, it still took a long time, and there was still the legs left to be carved.

It was a squirrel, but, without knowing where the cute feet went, it resembled a badger or weasel.

The size was about that of a wild boar and the quality would not be worth mentioning.

– As a result of a failed sculpture fame has decreased by 23.

“Keulkeulkeul.”

When it was completed, Death Hand laughed.

Anyone who saw could see the sculpture of the squirrel was a failure!

Weed once again grabbed his beginner's carving knife with newfound motivation.

“Failure is okay because it is needed to in order to improve!”

This time, he planned on sculpting a cow.

A gentle, meek, and hard working cow.

Although he put forth more effort to sculpt the cow than the squirrel, it still turned out to be so ugly, it wasn't worth a look.

The thickness and the length of the legs were of four different sizes and the tail was 1 cm wide!

Fortunately, the head turned out well even if the rest of the body was horrific.

There was no recognizable proof that it was a cow.

Woodangtang!

Even though it was a complete sculpture, it was destroyed because its meager legs could not support its weight.

It was a gruesome sight.

His sculpting skill was slowly decreasing!

– As a result of a failed sculpture fame has decreased by 39.

“Keulkeul-keulkeul! keu-hi-hi-hi!”

Death Hand was laughing even harder than before.

He liked to see the misery of others and Weed was his favorite victim right now.

“There is probably no need for me to bother if it’s this kind of sculptor, but...”

Regardless of what Death Hand thought, he did not want to stop watching Weed.

“I should destroy him so that he won’t make any more

sculptures!”

*

A sculpting battle between Death Hand and Weed!

In the small town of Kuruso word travelled quickly.

Up until now, Death Hand had made a fool out of every Dwarf with capability. Nevertheless, this was a sculpting battle therefore the outcome was hard to predict.

Inside the tavern while drinking their beers, Weed was the topic of all Dwarves.

“Logically speaking, who do you think will win?”

“Death Hand will.”

“No, I believe Art Hand will get the job done, defeat and crush that arrogant flat nosed Death Hand!”

The Dwarven Warriors who were with Weed in the Shaspin caves were cheering for him.

“Do you think that skills are that easy to obtain? You can put up a good fight in an unfavorable battle, but the skill of your hands

won't lie.”

“But Art Hand might be able to do so.”

“Wanna bet?”

“Alright! The loser will buy the winner alcohol for a hundred days, including today.”

“As you wish. Two casks of ale here!”

You could occasionally see people taking bets while everyone was merrymaking.

*

Death Hand created a sculpture of the Ghost Knight of Balgest.

A vicious monster Knight who goes to battle atop a mountainous horse!

When a Knight of Balgest appears, even monsters trembled in terror. It was a high-ranking monster that held an absolute power.

“Keulkeulkeul.”

Death Hand was completing the Knight of Balgest at an

extremely fast pace. Since it was massive, he gathered plenty of clay to make it.

“Ah, Sculpting is really hard.”

Death Hand was exaggerating.

Weed made noises to show that he was suffering.

Although at first, Weed made the thickness and length different while he was sculpting the legs. However, because he was not contented with it, he made a few repairs. As he was sculpting the legs, he also sculpted the torso and changed it so that the forepaw was raised.

Death Hand’s mouth was twitching viciously.

“I wasn’t even trying to make this... My luck sure is good.”

He left out the delicate muscles a horse had, and it became a splendid Ghost Knight of Balgest.

From the chainmail and the iron mace to the torn clothes worn over it all, the Knight of Balgest was perfectly recreated.

“Phew. To think that I could only make something like this... Is there a sculptor as incompetent as I am? A common sculptor like myself should die. Death is only proper.”

Kkeukkkeuk Death Hand cried sadly.

Masterpiece!

Sculpture of the Elite Knights of Balgest.

The Ghost Knight of the ruined Balgest Kingdom.

It is a sculpture that shows the roaring of war.

It is made of inferior clay, and it was covered with black dye.

Artistic Value: 416

Special Option:

Movement speed in battle increases by 7%

The skills of Knights increases by 1 level.

“My god, I should never make another sculpture again. How can I have the right to make another sculpture with these lowly skills?”

Death Hand was making a suffering sounds in front of him.

Dwarves who came because they were curious clicked their tongues.

“It looks like the appearance of another poor victim.”

“Speaking of which, this time around it was really cruel; it’s hopeless when he even included that kind of horse.”

Death Hand’s marvelous work that took one’s confidence and

ground it into the floor!

“However, since his opponent this time is Art Hand, wouldn’t something be different?”

“He won’t back down without a fight. For sure.”

The Dwarves could not accurately gauge Weed’s skill. However, since he was able to receive a request of B-rank difficulty, no matter how good his luck was, they expected him to at least have substantial basic skills.

However, Weed created another beginner-like sculpture.

“ ... ”

Death Hand and the Dwarves watched his every movement.

However, after lifting his sculpting knife and thinking for a while, Weed put his hand back down.

The outburst of sighs in that moment.

“Hey!”

“Are you really forfeiting?”

The Dwarves were getting impatient.

“I won’t need something like a sculpting knife.”

Weed nonchalantly said this while raising his bare hands.

He did not have a sculpting knife, and worst of all, he did not have materials to sculpt with. He started moving his hands over the air like a crazy person.

And then, a faint light appeared like magic!

Weed quietly repeated the same action.

“This is Moonlight Sculpting, right?”

It was easy and comforting to carve a moonlight sculpture. Childishly forming the light of the sculpture, the artistic value rose.

However, a real Moonlight Sculptor could use the light itself to make a sculpture.

Weed released tendrils of light from his ten fingers, as if they were a skein of thread.

“Whoa! What’s that?”

“That looks like magic... A Dwarf is using magic?”

The Dwarves gathered around.

As if he were a singer performing on stage, Weed, who was using light to sculpt, was the main character.

Even Death Hand, himself, looked at Weed with astonishment.

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The thin tendrils of light emitted a quiet beauty.

It was hard to produce any color with the light, but it contained a profound hue.

Weed's hands were dancing in the air.

‘Gather it. Bind it. Spread it. It's spilling. Expand it. There can't be any... Mistakes and stuff.’

Weed heightened and expanded his concentration.

This was the first time he was properly exhibiting the art of Moonlight Sculpting.

Aside from accidentally gaining the credentials to use it, It was impossible to actually learn it from leisurely sculpting.

It was a sculpture that utilized completely different techniques from stone or wood carving.

It is a sculpture of light.

Every time he moved his fingers a different color appeared, and it consumed a bit of his mana.

The delicate tuning of Moonlight Sculpting.

Even the color of the light was versatile.

If you make each part of the sculpture, a different color then it changes the overall outcome of the finished product.

The sculpture was made of thousands of different colors easily surpassed the scale of the pyramid!

Although it would become an inconceivably spectacular work, it would become crude without refinement.

Over a couple of days, he had to use his highest level of concentration which was not easy thing to do.

The superior skills of a Sculptor, a Moonlight Sculptor!

When the skill is used continuously, it takes up a lot of mana to maintain it, and even more to add or change it to a different color.

‘My skills are not up to par yet.’

Weed was determined to add different colors.

First he added a bright red color.

‘The color red. Very bold and glamorous.’

The sculpture is now limited to colors that matches with red.

Then from Weed’s fingers, flowed the color of yellow.

Similar to the color red, it was a very challenging color.

The greens, oranges, blues, blacks and purples colors were all changing.

Although there were many different colors, they blended in well.

The clear and spectacular colors that drew one’s attention as though they have been possessed!

The color choices came from Weed's childhood memories.

'Crap! Even though I'm looking right at it, I can't determine the right color.'

It was an effect of being able to use only 8 colors of pastel crayons ever since elementary school, due to his poverty!

It was hard to differentiate one color because of the intangible sense of color.

The colors were always changing.

There weren't forty-eight colors, nor were there sixty colors.

The color, hue, and contrast led to the gentle change of tens of thousands of colors.

Weed decided to select the color based on his intuition.

'It won't be the prettiest color, but the color I've chosen.'

There were too many colors, and they were changing quickly.

Whatever color he would pick, he would probably regret it later on, but he would choose the color that touched his heart.

‘It’s done. This is it.’

Finally, Weed chose a mixture of a bright silver color and a noble light blue color.

It was a light that radiated a brilliant silver blue hue.

It was a silver blue that Weed, who only used 8 colors of pastel crayon, could not explain nor comprehend!

It was a much more noble and beautiful color than the light could express.

Paas!

The light that was flowing from Weed and piling up until now faded altogether.

The hundreds of the colored lights that were gathered into a large ball dissipated in a moment, and a silver-blue light glowed from Weed’s hand.

It was the start of Moonlight Sculpting.

‘What should I make?’

Weed's concern faded as soon as he saw the light.

Sculpting was a profession that worked with materials. Depending on the material, some works were restricted.

Since he decided to use Moonlight Sculpting from the beginning, he already had a few ideas in mind.

‘Seoyoon. Although I overused her, if I sculpt her using Moonlight Sculpting, she'd be as beautiful as a Goddess, right?’

However, in truth, it was extremely hard to create a person using light. It was hard to capture the beauty, and it was exceptionally difficult to express skin.

He thought it would be a worthy challenge someday, but it was impossible for now.

‘Bingryong or the Wyverns would be fine.’

It would be a refreshing experience to make a sculpture he already made out of light.

However, after seeing the deep light that was spilling out of his hand, Weed changed his mind.

‘Let's make a sculpture that matches this light.’

Rather than choosing a sculpture that he had already done in the past, he decided to go with a motif that tugged on his heartstrings.

Weed's hands started to thread the air.

As the lights got tangled and wavered, he preserved the pattern.

Rather than stone or wood, light was being used to create a sculpture!

It was a work that needed meticulousness and details.

His 10 fingers moved delicately as if he was playing an instrument.

The thickness of the light changed depending on the power of the intensity and time. Because the thread could change in quality, if one couldn't focus their concentration and feelings to the utmost, then they couldn't even attempt to sculpt.

While working on the light sculpture, Weed had a charismatic aura around him.

Gathering and caressing the light; it was the pinnacle of an Artist who worked with light!

The light sculpture was so captivating that even if lightning were to strike beside it one would not notice.

Finally, a pair of wings that were made from the silver-blue threads of light were completed!

– Please set a name for the statue.

Weed, who was looking at the statue as it emerged, said.

“Wings of Light.”

If the onlookers knew the name that was given to the sculpture at that moment, they would have felt a sadness ripping at their hearts.

Wings made out of fantastic light.

It’s as if the Wings of Light gave its name to itself!

Weed’s lips formed a big warm smile.

‘As expected, my naming sense is the best.’

– Would you like to use the name “Wings of Light”?

“Yes.”

Ding!

Sculpting skills has improved.

Handicraft skill proficiency has increased.

Moonlight Grand Masterpiece!

Wings of Light is a Moonlight Grand Masterpiece!

The Versailles Continent has been waiting for sculptures of light for a very long time!

Only a handful of Master Sculptors and their apprentices know about sculpting with light.

The art of light sculpting that was recorded in the legends of history has been revived, and made into a work of art.

It encompassed the traditional values, and was piece worthy of becoming a testament to the art of sculpting.

It was regrettable that the pair of wings lacked a perfect symmetry.

Artistic value: 17,900.

A work of a person who is walking down the path of an Eternal Sculptor.

Special Options:

Those who gaze upon the Wings of Light sculpture will gain a 15% increase in health and mana regeneration for a day.

All stats rise by 25.

Resistance to Darkness rises by 35%.

Immunity to Blinding magics.

Because of the sculpture, the town or city will receive additional security at night.

3% power suppression of monsters active at night.

Priests of Light will receive 15% increase in their skills and Faith.

Effects do not stack with other sculptures.

Number of Moonlight Grand Masterpiece completed so far: 2

- Understanding Sculpture Skill has increased by 1 level.

- Fame has risen by 332

- Art Stat has risen by 30

- Wisdom has risen by 2

- Charm has risen by 7

- Wings of Light is recorded in the history of light sculptures, any sculptor who sees this will understand sculpting better and create better works.

- As a result of creating a Moonlight Grand Masterpiece Sculpture, all stats will rise by 4 points.

Overwhelming astounding work!

Although he had created a few sculptures using Moonlight Sculpting, this time one could say that it was a true Moonlight Sculpture.

The sculpture had the highest artistic value out of all of Weed's sculptures thanks to the historical value.

The pair of elegant Wings of Light floated in the air while flapping.

Weed lamented while hitting the ground.

“This is a failure, a huge failure.”

“...”

The wings would pierce the mind of any Dwarf who looked at them.

They wanted to insult and criticize Weed.

‘Are you insane, crazy Dwarf!’

‘Calling a work such as this a failure, are you making fun of us!’

A legend was made. In fact none of the Dwarves present, had ever seen a light sculpture. Such a sculpture was made, yet the creator was despairing over it!

“A Sculptor like me who does not have talent deserves to die. Heug-heug. How could I create a lousy sculpture.”

“?.”

“I blame my half-hearted effort. If only I spent more effort making it.”

However, Weed’s Wings of Light sculpture was harder to work on than any sculpture he had made thus far.

He needed maintain a constant sense of his fingers to match the intensity of the colors of light and control them uniformly. He could not hesitate when making it. Any bold moves have to be exact.

Everyone gathered knew where the roughly 4 hours spent on sculpting the Wings of Light.

Cooled sweat soaked Weed's forehead and back.

"Death Hand."

"Huh? Di-Did you call me?"

Death Hand was embarrassed as he looked blankly at the Wings of Light. He was stunned.

Weed had put together an apology.

"I'm Sorry."

"What, What? Why are you apologising to me..."

"You were right. An incompetent sculptor like myself is not worthy of creating art."

“ ... ”

“Using my crude skills to make such a sorry failure, I don’t think I can bear to live with the shame.”

“ ... ”

There were slight flaws in the Wings of Light.

When making a pair of wings, both sides should be identical but if you looked closely you could see that the wings were of different sizes.

There were microscopic defects but it was unnoticeable under the naked eye. But if people were to look at the sculpture closely, they would notice the small microscopic defects.

Given that perfect sculptures are rare and this was the first sculpture of light, this sculpture was closer to perfection rather than a failure. It actually came out to be a one of Weed’s Grand Masterpieces.

“It’s shameful and embarrassing. If there was a mousehole, I would want to crawl into it. An incompetent sculptor, like myself, can only die.”

Weed was mimicking Death Hand’s words and flinging them back at him.

“My sculpture seems to be soiled. Sculptors like me are useless in the future, Death hand, what are your thoughts?”

“Me, I...”

Kuruso’s notorious Death Hand was embarrassed and too lost for words.

The Dwarves who were captivated by the “Wings of Light” regained their senses.

Weed and Death Hand’s sculpture battle!

Weed was victorious.

‘Art Hand had won.’

‘Death Hand was finally defeated!’

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Weed and the other dwarves listened to Death Hand’s words of surrender.

“Previously I was haughtily flaunting my skill, I’m sorry.”

– You have eradicated the Evil Being of Kuruso.

With this the quest from the Guard's statue was completed!

“You are one talented Dwarf. Once I have polished my sculpting skills, I will be back to challenge you again.”

Death Hand pulled out a 15 cm tall sculpture from his bosom and gave it to Weed.

– You have obtained a sculpture from Death Hand.

“I hope that you will treasure this statue until the day we meet again.”

Forlornly, Death Hand turned around and left.

“What, he left after giving me only 1 sculpture?”

“So this is how things come to an end...”

The Dwarves watched with fallen shoulders.

The Knight of Balgest was excellently portrayed in the sculpture, it was a great work. In addition, the sight of the making of the Wings of Light would become an unforgettable memory.

However, with Death Hand's reputation and capability, this was nowhere near the end!

Chapter 6: Continent's Dreams

Unicorn.

It may seem like a name of a monster or a mythical beast, but when most people hear the word, they recall Unicorn Corporation.

The sole company who developed and managed Royal Road!

It was not an overstatement to say they were raking in all the money in the world with the new world they created. The company owned enormous industrial clusters based on capsules and mini computers. Even after the operating cost for Royal Road was deducted, their monthly profit was astronomical.

Apart from these, Unicorn's influence spread to cutting edge communication networks, cartoon character business, image and video culture, tourism, leisure industries and much more.

The company who developed the new world created a rippled effect throughout the world, quickly expanding Unicorn Corporation.

The ever important Royal Road. Royal Road, which almost all of Unicorn's business were based on, focused mostly on maintenance and getting new players.

There was currently an important meeting between the core

leaders in Unicorn's meeting room.

Jang Yoon-soo, the head of the long-term marketing strategy division, was conducting the meeting.

“Department Head Kim, if you want a smooth meeting, we need you to give us some information. What is the growth rate of our current players?”

Department Head Kim Han-seo flipped through the data, produced a handkerchief, and wiped the sweat off of his forehead. With a sharp gaze, he stared at all of the members of the meeting.

“Yes, I am the director in charge of Goddess Versailles.”

Goddess Versailles, the AI that manages the Versailles Continent.

Kim Han-seo had gathered 17 brilliant scientists who worked together with him to develop it, the AI who handled the creation of the Versailles Continent and everything else in it. The real creator of Royal Road and its absolute ruler! Now it could run fine on its own and it was simply a matter of taking a break and watching the AI run the continent. The player reports by Goddess of Versailles could only be seen via Kim Han-seo's system management department.

“You probably already know this but... What I am about to reveal to you all is highly confidential company data, and in under no circumstances to be leaked to the general public. Family members

included. Therefore you can't speak of this even to coworkers and subordinates. From this point on, you must keep quiet."

The members of the meeting had already sworn to to secrecy as they came in. Everyone who was present in the meeting lightly nodded their heads. The topics to be discussed were so important, they could radically change the Versailles Continent. These people were not foolish to be unable to recognize the chaos such information would cause if it were to be leaked.

"Then I will begin. The majority of the top players are slightly below level 430. There are exactly 890 players. It is more or less below our expectations."

The game, Royal Road, was targeted towards players worldwide, not just Korea. The growth the game was favourable; however, the majority of players were from Korea.

In every game, there were players who played to see the end. Because of the involvement of such players, the history of the Versailles Continent had been altered several times. The Public Relations department and Operations department could not afford to not consider the tendencies of such players.

The deputy of Foreign policy, Soo In-hae, who was in attendance, raised her hand.

"I have a question. What level have players reached in countries outside of Korea, namely Japan, America, and China?"

“They are still relatively low. When Royal Road was in its infant stage, they didn’t have much access to the game, and they are growing around the edges of the islands and in the cities.”

America and China were furious about Royal Road. They just could not believe Unicorn Corporation had managed to create a virtual reality.

Even though Unicorn’s theory was meticulous and they had proven the reality of virtual reality, the American and Chinese press focused only on the negative aspects.

- The First Virtual Reality, Still Too Early
- A Korean Enterprise, Found Technologically Impossible
- National Scientists Appraised It Not Worth Attention
- Science Is Not a Fraud

Anyone in the world could play Royal Road, but players from other countries joined late, giving Koreans a good head start.

There were many players from other countries, but because they joined much later, they were quite far behind. These players were often in smaller countries and islands in the middle of the continent, but because of the automatic translation program, their respective countries were often not revealed.

Everyone spoke the same language in Royal Road, so a player's country of origin had no real meaning.

The Executive Director of Management, Son Il-gang chuckled.

“That's a relief. There is not even the slightest chance an Emperor will rise from a player in a foreign country.”

“However you look at it, it seems to be the case.”

A smile played on Jang Yoon-soo's lips.

Royal Road.

The Emperor of the Versailles continent would receive 10% of a month's profit as a prize.

It was the ultimate goal of the entire game, and the person who achieve the dream of becoming Emperor would receive incredible privileges.

The press focused solely on this immense prize money.

However, there was another unique reward besides the money.

5% of Unicorn's shares.

Scientists and researchers worked on the project, along with existing shareholders opposed to the idea. The Systems and Operations strategy department, however, pushed the issue and succeeded in making it the reward.

The one who becomes Emperor was bound to wield incredible power. He would be able to destroy or create anything at will.

Even the company who created an innovative economic system based on Versailles, Unicorn, would not be safe from the Emperor's hands.

Even the Goddess of Versailles would be unable to lawfully lay hands on the ruler.

The emperor of the virtual reality world in which a multitude of players lived.

It was a secret prize which was immeasurably larger than the reward the public knew of.

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A conference was held in the early morning concerning Royal Road's new Public Relations strategy, support for new technologies, and business partners.

Nevertheless, the members of the meeting did not discussed Bardray, other high leveled players, or guild leaders. Instead, they focused earnestly on various other important topics.

“Strategist Yoon Young-sil will elaborate. Recently, NPCs from the Kingdom of the Horde have been popular for their cute appearances. I’ve sent documents about character analysis. Did you get a chance to look at them?”

“Yes. We are rushing the production of popular NPCs.”

“More and more players are utilizing the trochet carriage for their vacations. They’re becoming increasingly renowned and well-regarded because of its price, speed, and safety. What do you all think about installing them on resorts?”

“Transportation in the resorts? Whether for mountain climbing, skiing, or golfing, I think it would work out pretty well. I will consider it.”

It was a meeting with light ideas.

The heads of each department ate sandwiches whilst conversing amongst themselves.

As soon as breakfast ended, the atmosphere around supervisor Jang Yoon-soo changed.

“Well.... the external balance of power on Royal Road needs to be

examined.”

Department Head Son Il-gang stood up and turned on the screen in the middle of the room.

The territory of each Guild, castle and town were displayed on the map.

“The power in Versailles is split up something like this: Central has 66%, the East 10%, West 8%, South 13%, and North 3%.”

Jang Yoon-soo pointed at flags on the screen which were placed in various places.

“The East is unexpectedly big. There’s a guild occupying the village whose members are impressively high in level.”

“Based on the new players, the kingdoms beyond the plains of despair are blooming, but the Orcs are responsible for the noticeable growth.”

It was a grand sight—races merging together with the emergence of the Orcs, changing the balance of power.

“From the traditional kingdom in the South, there are those who enjoy adventuring using their own strength; in the West, there are only a few players, but, due to the escalating conflicts stemmed from the scarce resources, strong warriors are being born. At this time, the place needs to be focused is the center of the continent.”

Department Head Son Il-gang gestured toward the center of the Versailles continent.

The Kallamore Kingdom and Haven Kingdom were traditionally the powerhouse nations concentrated in the central continent.

“Based on their political economy, the area was perceived to be capable of development. However, the area accumulated overwhelming growth, incomparable with other regions. We must watch out for approximately 149 players.”

Jang Yoon-soo asked in a light tone.

“Yes, how did you decide on those players needed attention?”

“It was determined by the players’ influence and player levels.”

“Then that group must contain a lot of Guild leaders, Nobles and Lords.”

Even supervisor Jang Yoon-soo did not receive materials prior to the conference. Of course, when leaving the conference room research materials could not be taken out. So materials would be distributed at the meeting upon request.

“That’s how it is. Although there are some players who stand out even while playing solo, but in general, their influence is limited.

First, take a look at the players in the most prestigious guilds of the continent.”

The members of the meeting took a look at the data of the 149 aforementioned players. Only the rustling of paper could be heard in the silent meeting room.

This information is different from the info spread by the game network. It's been gathered by the Strategy and Systems operation departments, so it's highly reliable.

If one was to take a look at the documents, he would see the diversity in both nationalities and genders.

If one particular guild was notably more powerful than the rest, the 5 or 6 guilds which ranked right below the guild will form an alliance against it. In some cases, 10 or more similar sized guilds fought in a single country.

Because of the large number of players in the Versailles continent, this was only natural.

Whenever the balance gets disrupted, the weaker gets absorbed as the winner becomes a little stronger, but when it happens, the stronger side makes more enemies.

There were great wars which would upset such a tenuous balance, but there has yet to be a war so large, the continent itself would be forever changed.

The chief of the company's development department, Ha Yun-ji, looked doubtful as she read the file and spoke.

"The power of Bardray and the Hermes guild seems to be far higher than I expected. What are you basing this on?"

"You've asked a very good question."

All eyes slowly concentrated towards Son Il-gang.

The meeting, itself, had to be treated with the utmost secrecy. Until now, comprehensive ranking reports of all of the players' activities, like brass trading or quest progression, was shared publicly, even with Unicorn Corporation. However, this special report was only available for a few important, special people to review.

In the report, it is a fact the military, financial, and the productive prowess of the Hermes Guild, as well as their territory and skills, were an overwhelming 5 times greater than the other prestigious guilds of the Haven Kingdom was revealed.

"Bardray is an amazing player. Ever since the beginning of the launch of Royal Road, he has been the best, and has established the Hermes Guild. There was a time he fell behind while founding and managing the guild, but he quickly ascended back to the top position. This is probably the first time all of you have been aware of Bardray's level being 447."

Everyone in the conference room dejectedly nodded their heads.

Bardray's level was a matter of course. But they did not know there were this many 400 level players.

The broadcasting stations and players estimated Bardray's level to be around 410.

However, the truth was he had passed his estimated level, and so had his competitors. While they were not at Bardray's level, it was a disparity which normal players would anguish.

Even the people in the conference room were currently quite shocked at what they saw in the report.

“The players at the apex are quite amazing. Their individual power, not just their levels, but their usage of skills, actual battle senses and their practical ability were way above the grasp of the average player.

The reason the videos of the so-called rankers gained popularity was because they were special. The reason why, during the Joseon era, the warriors emulated those of the Goryeo era was due to their fast and efficient battle system.

In anticipation of the difference in individual skills, they used a new method of hunting monsters.

The sight of them dungeoning or storming a monster fortress was akin to watching a really well-made fantasy action movie.

There was an assassin player who stormed an infamous monster fortress in the Baimar Kingdom alone, and took more than ten lives every night.

After making the monsters feel fear, the player destroyed the castle, and raised his own flag from the highest point in the castle. It was the birth of a new castellan, and, through the video footage, created a large force.

It was not a randomly occurred event, but it was not evident from the video, but it took a lot of preparation beforehand in order to conquer it in one go.

“However their true fears lie elsewhere. While there are players who enjoy going adventuring and fighting alone, most people usually made a guild or occupied a village, and ruled over it. Afterwards, they did not stop at political conspiracies and weakening alliances in order to raise their own influence. Especially in the case of the Hermes Guild, they were open about their methods and means of expanding their power. The Hermes Guild represents half of the competition in the struggle to control the Haven Kingdom. While we learned of this fact due to the inquiry, there are 3~4 guilds who have deep ties with the Hermes Guild among the competitors.”

“ ... ”

It was a guild not based on friendship, but supremacy.

Because of the tremendous value of virtual Versailles Continent, many players were after similar authority.

The directors held their heads in their hands.

“There are a lot of amazing people.”

“It’s enough to give me goosebumps; how were they able to do so much like this?”

Director Kim Han-seo said.

“There is nothing to be too surprised at. We expected this much progress ever since we launched Royal Road.”

“...”

“Didn’t everyone already speculate a virtual reality would create a world which would be reigned with supremacy?”

While they anticipated some of this, the players had bewildered them with their unorthodox behaviors.

On the screen was a battle of the higher tier of players, but it was jaw-dropping. It was so action-packed which seemed as though

they were fighting against monsters in a real fantasy world. It was daring, keen as a blade, and showed unparalleled skills and usage of their respective abilities.

Originally, they thought it would only be a few particularly powerful or focused players, but in reality, there were quite a number of extremely talented ambitious players!

They were lost for words at Royal Road; the world that they created.

“It is a new world. This is how we must now look upon Royal Road. And no matter what the ruler of Versailles is like, or whatever he does, he is invariably interconnected with us, and thus, we must keep a close eye out. This is the goal for our meeting.”

The members of the meeting nodded their heads while listening to Kim Han-seo.

Son Il-gang repeated.

“Bardray and other top level players do not release all the information they have to the broadcasters and media stations. If you look at the publicly released data, they’ve limited it so that players will not feel too unnerved about seemingly unreachable heights.”

Director Jang Yoon-soo groaned.

“I really want to recruit them into Department of Advertisements.”

The public appraisal of Bardray, he was a player who easily the supporting foundation of the guild.

To think, even truths such as these were easily manipulated.

The throats of the people who were gathered in the conference room suddenly went dry.

“I think this has to be brought up: there are about 149 people who control over 10,000 players through their individual strengths. However, among those 149, there are about 13 players who shine above the rest. Like a giant, fiery wave, they are the strongest and most cunning players. In the future, there will be more difficulties and changes, but in the present, out of the 149, we can expect a 70% chance of one of them prevailing as the Emperor.”

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The meeting lasted until late at night

The discussion about the dynamics of the power of guild influence in Versailles continent was endless

Some players' activities were so shocking, the people who

participated in the meeting became uneasy.

The meeting completely ended, and Team Director Jang Yoon-soo and Son Il-gang and Kim Han-seo remained

“Whew! It’s all over. Good work, Section Chief Son.”

“Speak nothing of it. You must have worked hard to keep progressing like this, Team Leader Jang.”

While exchanging pleasantries, they blithely drank some coffee.

During this time, Jang Yoon-soo suddenly recalled something and asked.

“Director Son, a word if I may.”

“Yes?”

“I’m asking this because there is a player whom I have a personal interest in, however, I saw his personal files were not included.”

“There’s no reason for such situation to happen. We have completed all the reports on the players who could become Emperor... What is the player’s name?”

“It’s Weed.”

“If you’re talking about Weed, he’s the player who seized victory in the war against the Immortal Legion.”

Section Chief Son Il-gang had watched the movie with Team Leader Jang Yoon-soo.

There was a time when the story of the Undead’s movements and similar things were spread.

“Weed... Based on his personal level and influence, he was not included as a target of this investigation.”

“As I expected.”

Team Leader Jang Yoon-soo was regretful. However, Director Kim Han-seo laughed and said.

“Even if Weed was to be included in the 149, he would have been the least powerful and influential.”

“Really? How so?”

Kim Han-seo answered with a calm but sharp tone

“Because he has no goal.”

Supervisor Jang Yoon-soo, who just couldn't understand, continued to question Kim Han-seo.

“No goal you say. Weed is doing quests which astounds the whole world. Do you realize the short amount of time he's been playing Royal Road?”

However, Even Son Il-gang was on the same side as Kim Han-seo.

“I as well, do not hold high expectations of Weed.”

“?.”

“The truth is, even we, at the tactical management room, are watching extremely closely. Through investigation, we found he participated in the recent historic Palrangka battle, and it seems as though he's been to Vampire Kingdom and back.”

Kim Han-seo nodded his head.

“I am also interested. I was once a player of the Continent of Magick.”

Every engineer in the Systems Department saw Weed's quest.

Director Son Il-gang continued saying.

“However, there is more. I don’t know if he would do more quests which would impact the world... That is all. If you see the quests he has accomplished, his behavior, skill, and combat abilities at his core, he is similar to Morata’s Lord.”

“Excuse me? Are you saying the Wargod Weed is Morata’s Lord, no, a Sculptor?”

“This data is over 99% trustworthy.”

Team Leader Jang Yoon-soo had received the shock of his life.

Never in his wildest dreams did he ever muse Weed was truly a Sculptor.

As a Sculptor, he rose to Hall of Fame in less than a year’s time, and the fact he completed the Undead Legion quest went against logic and was disputed.

“It is very accurate. The basic defense and magic-related skills he displayed are too feeble to claim he had a battle-related profession. He’s making up for it through his battle senses and battle-related abilities.”

Team Leader Jang Yoon-soo could not believe it at all. However, Director Kim Han-seo, told him the truth while nodding his head. There was no other way, but to accept it.

Because Director Kim Han-seo was a notable figure who had

access to all of the information within Unicorn Corporation.

“I see; it’s because his profession is a Sculptor, you don’t expect much from him.”

“You’ve got it wrong.”

Unexpectedly, Director Kim Han-seo denied that it was because of his profession.

“Even within the Systems Department, there are lots of coworkers who like him. The Wargod Weed, while being a legendary Dark Gamer, took part in impactful quests, as you saw, and also flaunted of his abilities. While I am also looking over him with interest, I am disappointed right now.”

“Why is it so?”

“He’s... Well, one could say he lived a very sheltered life in some aspects.”

“...”

“He’s only hunting and questing with a few people he knows, and hasn’t been a public figure. While eating fruits he could have easily grown in a warm greenhouse, he’s living a life devoid of greed. It’s one of the mistakes that most Dark Gamers make. Why did we give them the freedom to do whatever they wanted to do in the Versailles Continent in the first place?”

Team Leader Jang Yoon-soo answered while recollecting the initial planning stages.

“Is it because the players are residents of the Versailles Continent? Also, because they had to self-impose law and order...”

“That’s correct. We don’t think of our players as a number to represent our gross income. No matter how they go about it, as long as they have ambition, we won’t obstruct people with the drive to rule.”

Royal Road had paved a way for people to become rulers, emperors of a united empire. It gave them the freedom to try the impossible, to really actualize their dreams.

However, many Dark Gamers had a lucrative business of selling items or doing mercenary work to participate in requests. They were happy with their situation and did not look for more.

“He’s probably making money through broadcasts and the Hall of Fame, not just through selling items. He’s probably bringing in quite an amount. You could say he’s quite successful as a Dark Gamer.”

Director Kim Han-seo spoke as if he was familiar with the type.

If all one looked at were records of his hunts, quests, and reputation, then one would be able to estimate he was making

more than the average section head of a large company.

“However, this is a secret... I won’t be able to observe him forever. There’s the fact I wouldn’t be the first one to make him public, and, while the truth is, I want to protect his secret, if the tactical management room managed to find out about this, other people will be able to find out as well.”

In other words, while Weed had hidden himself in a safe house, eventually his identity would be exposed in a not-so-distant future.

Team Leader Jang Yoon-soo spoke defensively.

“Even so, isn’t it surprising he could go this far as a Sculptor?”

Director Kim Han-seo showed his harsh reactions.

“He’s amazing, for a Sculptor. I don’t know if there’s some other meaning behind the question. Do we have to hold sympathies to his enemies?”

“It’s not exactly it, but...”

“I know Morata is currently growing at a tremendous rate. Am I correct?”

“Yes. It is becoming the capital of the North. It is leading the adventures in the North, and lately there have been enormous

investment funds made.”

“When the Church of Freya’s protection ends, and, if the player traffic increases in the North, there will be greedy people gathering there. The enemies who will invade Morata, will they have any interest in whether he’s a Sculptor or not?”

“...”

“His widespread reputation of being the ‘Wargod’. In order to protect a reputation like his, he will have to put in a lot of effort. If he simply basks in the glory of his reputation, then the day will come when he succumbs to it.”

Team Leader Jang Yoon-soo could not say anything in defense; Director Kim Han-seo had hit the nail on the head.

“They see it as ‘while travelling up to the North, I can have my wish granted.’ If they only try to protect the city and challenge him, then they won’t be able to obtain anything. If you don’t have dreams, you will die while being trampled. If not, you’ll end up as an average player...the Versailles Continent won’t open the way for the incompetent.”

It was the first time he had seen Director Kim Han-seo so impassioned.

It was enough to intimidate Team Leader Jang Yoon-soo.

Unicorn's core executive, who was as capable as an engineer, had a superior brain.

Since he was Director Kim Han-seo, whose scholarly voice was heard throughout the entire field, one could trust whatever he said would come to be.

Department head Son Il-gang was careless, and threw a question out to lighten the mood.

“What if... Weed really aimed for the Versailles Continent; what do you think would happen?”

Thoughtlessly, he asked without having any intent behind it.

Director Kim Han-seo closed his eyes and kept silent for awhile.

Due to him staying in the same position for awhile, they began to suspect he has fallen asleep, but he opened his eyes and spoke.

“Then the entire Versailles Continent might fall into his hands...”

“...”

“If he starts to actually dream big, then the situation will be reversed. Bringing his hidden talent to light, and his large reputation spreads, then Wargod Weed's dreams...the Versailles

Continent could be reborn.”

*

While Daymond was hunting the northern boss monsters, he also collected the map pieces which lead them to the Church of Death.

In the process of collecting pieces of the map, Predators of the Land guild took a lot of damage.

“It’s okay if we die. Our last hope is hanging on this quest... Even if we have to spend the last of our saved money, we must succeed!”

Everyone laughed at them for challenging the impossible.

The reason why boss monsters were so dangerous wasn’t only because of their power, but because of the attack patterns were impossible to predict.

Lack of information resulted in massive damage!

For the monsters they failed to hunt over and over again, some guild members died as often as 10 times.

However, the northern players who were driven by the sacrificed members were able to succeed by combining their strength.

“Hooray for Predators of the Land guild!”

“The best hunting guild has been born.”

“A guild of warriors who specializes in hunting boss monsters.”

After defeating 12 boss monsters, the voices of the admirers of the Predators of the Land guild grew louder.

However, without second thoughts or regrets, Daymond and his guild hid themselves.

The seven map pieces they had striven to acquire were assembled.

Although the guild was honored to be the first to slay a boss monster of the North, they were not able to feel any emotion. Because they had lost their lives so many times, they did not regard this act as a great achievement.

Daymond and the Predators of the Land guild went into the guild’s dismal and dark basement.

“Captain.”

“Yes?”

“Why, of all times, are we going to the basement now?”

Daymond answered Nardo’s question with a relaxed attitude.

“Because it’s fitting for us who are planning something sinister.”

“Che! I keep telling you, you go with the flow too much.”

Daymond only grinned and laughed at Nardo’s rebuke. Then, he pulled out the map fragments from his chest.

“Then I’ll try to fit them together now,” he said in a voice clearly filled with tension.

Daymond took the 7 pieces of the guiding fragments, and started to adjust their placement, as if he was solving a puzzle.

Hwa-reu-reu-reuk!

The map suddenly caught on fire.

“Ah!”

And then Daymond’s and his guildmates’ bodies stiffened.

A video composed of a set of pictures was formed in the fire.

After passing a sunken land, and you pass a place where many monsters' bones lie; climbing mountain and field, and you go through a cliff with barely any foothold, you will cross a Forest of Fog. The dried and dead trees will be a landmark.

Once you cross the forest, a Church of the Death will appear. The place was closed for several hundred years. After seeing a set of heavy doors at the place, the pictures ended.

Only burned-up ashes remained of the map, and the rest disappeared.

Daymond raised his flaming eyes at his guildmates.

“Everyone remember what they saw?”

“Yes, we memorized it perfectly.”

“We’re going to go to this place right now.”

Daymond and the Predators of the Land guild immediately set forth. It wasn’t a place too far from Morata.

They rode on fast horses and they went 3 days south and then went west, across the wastelands.

Since the wastelands is mostly composed of dungeons, it was a

place rarely visited by adventurers.

“Deriam Desert; to think we would have to pass this place.”

“This is the place where the boss monster we hunted resides.”

“I do seem to recall a memory of going through a lot of trouble to find the place the bastard was hiding in.”

The Northern expeditions and the adventurers had already searched a considerable amount of places. However, usually they only scratched about in places like the wasteland or the Forest of Fogs.

Because the Versailles continent was so wide, if one did not know their exact location, they could even pass over dungeons.

Although the Wastelands encouraged exploration in the beginning, there were only a few visible dungeons because there was no feasible way to go over the whole thing. In order to find the place shown in the picture, the Predator of the Land guild passed through the Wastelands and the cliffs. They were barely able to find the dried-up, withered trees at the Forest of Fog, and they were able to take a guess at the path.

After passing all the difficulties, they finally reached the shrine of the Church of Death. They had arrived at a shrine exuding a mysteriously evil aura, just as the fragment had depicted.

It was a discovery that would go down in the history of the Versailles Continent.

Daymond had spent long hours and finally saw the thickly dust-coated, unspoiled-magnificence of the shrine.

“What does it say on the door?”

The guild magician interpreted in their stead.

“It says ‘Door of Hell’ in ancient language.”

“It means the door is not meant to be opened.”

For a split second, Daymond struggled immensely.

They did not know what would happen if they opened to door to the stone shrine; they did not know what pure terrors lay ahead.

Even though they did not want to stare at a door which perfectly fit the frame and left no cracks, they had a feeling it should not be opened.

“However we cannot just give up after getting this far.”

Daymond gritted his clenched teeth.

The quest did not end simply by finding the Church of Death.

“No matter what is at the end of this road, I want to see it.”

Daymond opened the iron door widely.

He was then greeted by a fearful number of malignant demons. They were gruesome monsters looking like they came straight out from imaginations.

The boss-level monsters they had hunted in order to arrive there were also there.

“D-Daymond! Be careful.”

Their head warrior, who was known to show no fear, said in a shaky voice.

Nardo observed the malignant demons. “It seems they aren’t attacking.”

“Huh?”

“They’re just watching us calmly.”

Whenever Nardo moved, the eyes of the thousands of demons moved and followed him. They didn’t take an aggressive stance,

but silently guarded their places. The demons were lined up on either side, and there was a passage where a person could fit in between them. They felt they could get eaten as soon as they were a toe out of place, but Nardo did not even hesitate.

“Let’s try this path.”

“Yeah, seems like we should go through this path.”

Daymond and the Predators of the Land Guild walked with heavy steps.

They were unaware of anything when they were trying to gather all of the map pieces for the S-rank difficulty quest. They began to suspect more as they got closer to the Church of Death, but they were overwhelmed by the pressure now.

Daymond squared up his shoulders and walked forward.

‘This life... I’ve already intended to throw it away.’

If there were enough demons, then one’s will to resist would actually rise.

The demons were gathered at the Church of Death. They would be no more than a single meal to these monsters, who were nameless and were shaped in every way possible, draining their courage.

‘Since we’re here now, is there anything left, but to die?’

A realistic sculpture of a village, which was in the spitting image of the village they saw at the entrance, was there, and on the altar were incomprehensible symbols and words written down in ancient times.

– I long for a place where those who died with regrets can live on. The power of resurrection is the eleventh authority of the Embinyu Church.

The more dead there are, the greater the number of brethren of the Embinyu Church.

This is your duty: to kill many people; to save many people.

The written phrases were hard to understand.

Daymond did not think about the written phrases in depth.

“Embinyu Church? This is the first I’ve heard of it, but if it’s a passage we have to know, then we’ll figure it out eventually.”

Since they were at the Embinyu Church, there were many things they wondered about.

The shut rooms, ornaments, and packed items.

As if to say their suffering was at an end, there were many places they could explore. However, Daymond and his guildmates did not get reckless.

“Since we found the Church of Death, it’s the time to learn more about the priest. Let’s go to the rectory first.”

Therefore Daymond and his guild moved in preparation to fight.

– Resurrection Priest’s Rectory

While they came knowing it was the Church of Death, there was the word “resurrection,” completely contrary to their belief.

“Are you sure there aren’t any other rectories?”

“There isn’t. I can’t see any; this is the only place which says ‘Rectory.’”

“Then let’s go into this rectory. Everyone, be on your guard.”

They pushed the door into the cobweb, dust-filled rectory and entered.

There was no living person in the rectory, and there was a dried out and withered mummified corpse. Also, in front of it was a compiled book.

«Scriptures of Resurrection».

The book was decorated with golden embroidery threads.

Daymond stretched out his hand toward the book.

Since he was undertaking the commission from the church of death, the priests would have to dig up the secrets.

While investigating the corpses, the priests were moving various items about as they should; however, they were not able to overcome their greed and laid their hands lustfully on the goods.

“Identify!”

– Spellbook of Resurrection: Durability 58/60The scriptures of the 11th sect of Embinyu Church.

Contains the basic Resurrection, Plague, and Magic of Immortality.

The Resurrection spell is considered as the most evil black magic regarded as a heresy.

If Necromancy is about raising the dead to undead, Resurrection is forcing the dead to come back from hell through a terrible sacrifice.

This is not a complete revival. This is close to an atrocious contract compels monsters from hell, the dead to arise, and controls them. This is a forbidden text which gave rise to the foundations of this field of study differs from Undead Magic!

This book is the foundation of the existence of The Order of Resurrection.

Limit: Available for Resurrection Priest job. Can use only if you are the previous profession.

Whenever you use a magic spell, you must take the life force of a living thing.

Option:

Resistance against All Magic +50

All stats+10

Mana regeneration rate will be increased by 25%

When Immortal Life is active, Health will not decrease.

Will be able to control the resurrected dead.

*Resurrect: Required Life – 20 lives. By taking other players' lives, can resurrect the dead and use them as underlings.

*Plague: Required life-150 lives. With the use of mana, creates a powerful plague on an area. The area of effect is limited to a certain area. The spreading speed will be determined by the medium.

*Immortal Life: Only able to use once. Unable to cancel. Grants limitless life to the player. But when the player is unable to get supplies of sacrificial lives, Immortal Life is disenchanting and the player's life will be forever gone with it.

The Embinyu Church.

The unknown 11th sect of the Embinyu Church. They are the ones who endlessly kill to resurrect and rule over the dead.

In the world, they are better known as the Clan of Death.

Ding!

– You can become The Resurrection Priest. Would you like to change your job right now?

Even after switching the job, your skills and stats will remain constant.

You will be able to use the Spellbook of Resurrection.

The Resurrection Priest have an obligation to fill Versailles with the resurrected creatures they can make.

By the contract with Death, you will be against the provision of nature. Thus, once you die, you will meet a everlasting rest.

He could become a Resurrection Priest.

Once he get the dark monsters and its followers under his control, the Predators of the Land guild's power would become high ranked at once.

The dark monsters promised unquestioning obedience compared to allied guilds and recruited mercenaries.

He could also use the Magic of Resurrection.

However, in return, if Daymond were to die just once, he would face eternal death.

A short-lived, but grand, road.

He was at a standing point. Whether to have all the people playing Royal Road focus their spotlight on Daymond, or to simply continue his quest to unveil the secrets of the priest.

“I would like to be the Prest of Resurrection.”

Daymond chose to change profession.

*

Daymond and his Predators of the Land guild took control of the property and the dark monsters. There weren't piles of treasures, but there were several orbs and items related on curse magic.

The rest of the guild members also gave up their original professions and became Priests of Resurrection.

“This may be our final amusement,” Daymond said while smiling faintly.

The Resurrection Priest; in order to maintain power and strength, one must ceaselessly kill someone. They are able to resurrect the dead based on the sacrificial lambs they slay.

It was clear the Versailles Continent would collapse into utter chaos.

However, there was no turning back now. Suban, who had become a Resurrection Priest, laughed. “Let's just give it all we've got.”

Nardo took off the witch's robe, threw it aside, and fidgeted as if

the Priest robe she was wearing was uncomfortable. “There’s no law which says we have to die early. We will live, no, we must survive and wave our flags.”

Daymond nodded and said, “That’s not a bad idea.”

The quest to unearth the secrets of the Priests of Death was canceled. Instead, a quest to spread the name of the Resurrection Church appeared.

Chapter 7: Water Park For Young Dwarven Children

Death Hand was defeated by Weed's moonlight sculpture!

The reward was just a Statue of Death, but he was not disappointed.

“If I sell this off, it's going to be worth a lot!”

All goods were connected to money. Even if they weren't weapons, armours, or jewels, he was satisfied as long as he could get a high price for them.

By looking at the precision and the black jade material it was shaped out of, he could tell that it was a unique item.

The statue of this horse-resembling a magical beast, brought up the image of death not only because of its name but by its sheer atmosphere.

“Anyway, this isn't what's urgent.”

Late at night when Dwarfs were unlikely to wander about, Weed went to the place where he had sculpted the Wings of Light.

The elegant wings, whose mysterious and enrapturing brilliance fluttered whenever the wind blew. It was a work created by a Moonlight Sculptor.

This caused even the 5 Great Dwarven Blacksmiths to be fired up and motivated. This was the artwork that made the name Art Hand become famous in the Dwarven Kingdom.

Weed extended his hands and lightly touched the Wings of Light. The light covered his hands with a mystical glow, and an amazing sight unfolded before him.

“If I showed this to my little sister, she would have praised its beauty... In any case, I suppose I should collect it. O, my precious sculpture, the work I created with my artful spirit... I have shared my life with you. Now, awaken from the long slumber and join me. Sculpture Life Bestowal!”

He couldn't leave the light sculpture to rot as a decoration for Kuruso. He was going to pour out his life to make it completely his own.

– This sculpture does not have the optimal shape to bestow life. It is unable to act by itself due to its unstable shape, but it is able to parasite off other life forms. Would you like to grant this sculpture life?

“Sculpture Life Bestowal”

– You have granted life to the sculpture.

The power of the sculpture is based on the level of the art stat.

The art stat is currently 1,196, so the sculpture's base level will be 406.

Because this is a Masterpiece, 20% of the level will be added. Level is increased to 487.

However, due to the sculpture being a flying-type, a 10% level handicap will be applied.

The sculpture's life is low, but it has very fast speed.

There are three attributes attached to this lifeform.

The quality and ability of the attributes will differ according to the shape and level of the sculpture.

Light Attribute (100%), Fire Attribute (100%), Holy Attribute (100%).

The fire does not give in to anything. It has an extremely powerful fighting spirit as well as high defense and high magic defense.

It can burn enemies using the power of fire.

It has immunity to all cursed magic. A strong resistance to black magic has been formed. It can use a little bit of Divine Magic.

Because this was once a light sculpture, a special ability is added.

Cursed individuals will be released from the magic, and monsters with evil intentions will have their power weakened.

5,000 mana has been used.

Increases skill efficiency of life-restoring magic by the 20% of the level and stats.

The Art stat has permanently decreased by 6.

The decreased stat can be recovered by creating sculptures or other artistic activities.

The level has dropped by 1.

Due to the decrease of level, the most recently raised stats will decrease by 5. Decreased stat can be raised again when level rises again.

Please care for the sculpture's life. When it loses its life, it can be

revived again.

When destroyed completely, it cannot be revived.

The Wings of Light hopped onto Weed's back and attached itself there. Because it lacked a body, it had to rely on someone else like a parasite.

The wings, which were made out of tens of meters of grand light, rested on Weed's back. Silently, radiant light beamed as the wings spread.

Weed looked like he'd turned into a Warrior of Light with his magnificent wings.

Weed's body suddenly floated in the air.

"Let me down already."

With one word, he broke the mood.

The Wings of Light spread themselves even more. The silvery blue light vastly spread, covering the road in an exquisite glow.

The effort of its will and own strength to make its owner happy!

Weed scrunched his forehead and frowned.

“Turn the light off.”

“ ... ”

“Just go down. I’ve already flown a lot.”

“ ... ”

The Wings of Light became 15 times smaller and lightly let Weed back onto the ground.

“Owner, please choose my name.”

The Wings of Light politely said to Weed.

Different from the chilly voice of Bingryong and the Wyvernes, with their bad personalities, the voice of the Wings of Light was pure and angelic.

“Your name is...”

“Let’s go with Light Wing.”

“ ... ”

If the Wyverns, Geumini, and Bingryong were there, they would have shared its pain and suffering.

*

Weed decided to leave the Statue of Death alone for now.

“I think there’s some kind of a secret hidden behind this sculpture...”

He could effortlessly feel this was the case.

The created quest item linked to Death Hand! There was no doubt that an unimaginable quest was waiting.

“I should put all troublesome things on hold.”

Weed decided to just wait for now.

Kuruso had lots of other sculptures, but the most urgent matter was to find the clues about Kendellev!

– Find the Dwarf sibling who became lost while he was young. For clues, use the statue of his younger appearance.

It was a quest to find a fully grown Dwarf by looking at a statue of his younger appearance. Dwarves never retain their younger

appearance, so this was impossibly difficult commission to complete.

Weed found the Dwarf's younger sibling within Kuruso's cave.

“That's right. My name is Norman. How were you able to recognize me?”

“There aren't many Dwarves that look as stupid as you, you see. You're no different now than when you were young.”

“Ooohhehehhng!”

The Dwarf Norman who burst into tears like a baby!

– It is difficult to identify the minerals used to make this sculpture.

It was a quest to analyse the material of the sculpture and to find the cave where that material could be extracted.

The commission was completed with the mobilization of the Dwarven Blacksmiths and Miners.

Thanks to the development of mines by a Dwarf named Twitter, Weed was able to register his name as the owner. If the ruby mine was developed well, it would yield a lot of revenue in the future!

Although Weed completed 10 quests, he wasn't able to discover a trail leading to Kendellev. Because not all sculptures possessed a unique memory, there were times when he met a dead end. Even after examining every sculpture in Kuruso, Kendellev's trail was nowhere to be found.

“This is not an easy quest after all.”

The Dwarves who had accepted the Sculptor Instructor Jorbid's quest wondered if they had all been idiots.

“There's really nothing I can do properly...”

However, it was too shameful to go back to Iron Hand village and give up on the quest, so he decided to linger in Kuruso for ten more days.

*

“Art Hand, it's clear you've worked really hard.”

Herman was next to Weed.

Herman, along with Pin, had decided to come and watch Weed sculpt from morning to night. Besides Herman and Pin, there were at least 50 other Dwarves watching him.

They were the Dwarves who had grown close to Weed after many

quests. And there were Dwarves who waited in the hopes of watching Weed carve another light sculpture.

However, Weed did not make another light sculpture.

‘My sculpting skills aren’t perfect yet.’

The Wings of Light had miraculously emerged, but his skills were far too underdeveloped to judge himself.

A historical work of art!

The artistic value of works that were extremely unique was massive. However, such incredible works didn’t show up often. Although he always tried to make something great, not everything turned out as fantastic!

While making the Wings of Light, he made countless of small mistakes, and he had the will to do it again..

‘I’m attaching the light, making it out of light, using the properties of light. It won’t do if I don’t understand the character of light well.’

A sculptor’s inherent skill was to identify the material they were using.

Weed used his Moonlight Sculpting skill and played with the

light. Whenever his mana ran out, he would take an ordinary piece of wood and carve it while restoring his mana.

He ate bread crumbs in between projects and made all kinds of sculptures.

“ ... ”

Weed did not respond to Herman.

Even Weed knew it was customary to honor his elders and be polite, but there was a limit to that. He grew tired of Herman's countless of questions and chatter while sticking right next to him.

Not bothered by the fact Weed wasn't replying back to them, Herman and Pin talked among themselves.

“A man with such determination will succeed regardless of what he does. Pin, be sure to meet a steady, hard-working man.”

“Of course. But where can I meet a man as steadfast as he?”

“Is there a reason to search for one far away when there is one so close?”

“Oh my, grandpa, you're too much.”

The stress they were putting on Weed together was building up. Even when Herman left his spot, there were always other Dwarves to take his place and attempt to start a conversation.

The Dwarves from the quest and those in the same professions talked amongst themselves. They gave Weed the weapons and armour they made so could he engrave them.

As a result, Weed looked through almost all the wares the Dwarves of Kuruso had made. There wasn't anyone else who knew about the fierce competition between the Dwarven Blacksmiths over the completion of Blacksmithing Skills better than Weed.

‘The armour Fabio makes has admirable functionality. The other properties of his works aren't unique and aren't quite there yet, but his armours have some great defense stats.’

Fabio's skills were so outstanding, even Weed was jealous.

‘The quality of the materials and reputedly assured skills. He creates works with almost no mistakes.’

He wasn't conservative with his materials and used no petty tricks; he smithed with skill alone.

‘If it's this level... I've think he has Advanced Blacksmithing skills.’

After Weed saw Fabio's greatest work, Rainbow Coloured

Armour, he was absolutely sure.

“Identify!”

– Rainbow Coloured Armour: Durability: 150/150. Defense: 159

The work of the Dwarf who monsters hate the most.

Seven rare materials were combined to make this.

Full plate armour that covers the whole body, (it is at the climax of beauty), so knights of a lower level will be unable to wear it.

As this work was made not too long ago and has not yet been used, it is in a perfect state.

Professions:

Knights, Warriors only

Level 350

Options:

Physical Resistance (30%).

Magic Resistance (20%).

Agility -50.

Satiety +80. Charisma +60.

Leadership skills are strengthened.

There is a strong probability that weak attacks will be deflected.

This huge, respectable defence!

Because the blacksmith lacked Weed's deftness, the durability was low, but there shouldn't be too much of a problem if this had an above average level of durability because one could use it while repairing it every now and then.

"It'd be really good to know what materials were used to make this."

Because Weed's blacksmithing skill was lower than Fabio's, he could not determine the materials used. He knew there was mithril and black iron used, but besides them he didn't know.

Fabio gathered all kinds of luxurious materials and efficiently used them to make armour.

‘After Fabio, Exper and Herman are the main competition.’

They were the two blacksmiths who made spears and swords. Their skills were not too far below Fabio’s.

Because there was so much pride and competition between the blacksmiths, no one disclosed their skill level. However, by looking at their works, it was likely that these two were also at advanced blacksmithing.

‘If these three have raised their blacksmithing level to Advanced, then including those two blacksmiths I haven’t met, there’s a high possibility that there are 5 blacksmiths with Advanced skill.’

Weed had seen Exper as he worked on the finishing touches of his sickle spears and Herman had let Weed take look at one of his swords.

It wasn’t completed yet, but Weed could see the abundant passion invested in the sword. In order to complete one product, the good steel had been forged and reforged again.

Herman had become a blacksmith because he liked swords and wanted to make them.

If Fabio or Exper were competing for the mastery of Blacksmithing Skills, Herman was working towards creating even better swords.

Even amongst the blacksmiths, there was a large difference in terms of their personalities.

‘I think the first blacksmith master... will most likely be Fabio.’

As one of the greatest Blacksmiths in Versailles Continent, he held considerable power. Looking at the armour he supplied, they were on par as the equipments used by the top rankers and he seemed to have connections to them. By befriending high ranking users, he used the materials they gathered and created amors or improvements for them.

Seeing Fabio’s ambition, he would most likely the first to reach Master stage.

‘The other Dwarves, especially Herman, have impressive skill.’

Weed perceived all the Dwarves of Kuruso like this.

Having registered the Warriors, Fighters, and Sculptors, who participated on the quests as friends, they asked many questions as they had nothing to do. The Dwarven Blacksmiths tried to become close with Weed because of his sculpting expertise.

Occasionally, there were Dwarves who brought Weed some rice balls, so he didn’t starve in Kuruso.

Weed spent a lot of time familiarizing himself with Moonlight Sculpting.

His sculpting skill was almost at the next level, and he was getting better at handling the light. As there were a lot of sculptures that he wanted to create and give life to, he immersed himself into sculpting.

If his level and Art stat wouldn't get decreased, he couldn't stop sculpting.

On his last day of creating sculptures, a lot of Dwarves came again as usual.

“I suppose I should make some swords if the sculptor is working hard.”

Motivated by Weed, the other Blacksmith Dwarves started to work hard to increase their Blacksmithing skills.

“It's beautiful.”

Today as well, Pin and Herman were right beside Weed, watching as he sculpted.

Fundamentally, making sculptures took skill.

If you created sculptures for hundreds of days, you'd be lying if there was nothing in your hands.

Due to his skill level in Sculpting and Handicraft, Weed was able to make wooden sculptures without much effort. Wood, his most familiar material, came alive in Weed's hands.

“What do you think of art?”

Weed answered Herman's question frankly.

“It's a useless skill that brings no money.”

“But there are cases of extremely rich artists. Watch the news and you'll see paintings 100 thousand dollar's worth.”

“Well, ordinarily those drawings are sold after their makers are dead. Works that are worth hundreds, maybe thousands—why does it matter if they're sold? You'll already be dead.”

Weed spoke bluntly.

“While drawing the picture, the level of hunger he suffered is only known to the artist. If his family starved along with him, it would really be his fault.”

“But isn't it thanks to those famished experiences that the greatest masterpieces of the world were made?”

“Whether it be paintings or sculptures, neither would be able to fill the table with food to eat.”

As he was thinking his point wasn't getting across, Herman smacked his lips.

“Everyone has their own way of thinking... but, there is value to doing something no one else has done before while living your life.”

“I don't really know.”

“Having lived to this age, I think I can finally understand. Life isn't simply about eating and living, it's about pursuing at least one thing you truly want to do, and if you do it, you'll have succeeded in life...”

And although Herman's words had depth to them, Weed was not moved.

Weed could not be moved because just ten minutes ago, Herman had brought fish paste and had annoyingly asked him to make a tasty stew.

Even if there was something meaningful in Herman's words, Weed couldn't take him seriously because Herman and Pin were both lazing about while contentedly eating fish paste kebabs (odeng). [T/N: It's sold by street vendors]

‘If the ingredients for fish paste were good, then obviously the kebabs would taste good.’

At that moment, Weed’s carving tool suddenly came to a halt.

“Sculpting Master Jorbid’s Quest, Information Check.”

– Sculpting Master Jorbid’s Request

The story that has been passed on for a long time through the Sculpting Guild.

There was once a single Dwarf who could sculpt fire and water, light and dark. However, the Humans did not believe the story.

“We admit the Dwarves are able to make outstanding weapons. But to say they have high skill in the arts, is extremely childish. How can those short Dwarves understand anything there is to know about sculpting? Hahaha!”

The insults of the Elves echoed throughout the forest.

“The Dwarves need to learn about the mysteries and beauty of nature.”

Those were words which humiliated all the Dwarves, but they were unable to retaliate.

In order to save the pride of the Dwarves, find a trace of the Dwarven sculptor Kendellev.

Difficulty: Dwarven race Sculpture quest.

Reward: Honour from Dwarves.

Quest Restrictions: One Dwarven Sculptor.

If you fail, all the Dwarves in the village will regard you in the same way they regard Elves and Humans.

Kendellev, the Sculptor of fire and water, light and darkness!

The answer was hidden in the quest's explanation.

‘Basic sculpting materials. If so, what materials do you need to sculpt with fire and water?’

Of course, fire and water were needed. To sculpt light and darkness, a material must exist.

Weed suddenly stood up and ran to the lakeside.

His short legs and butt twitched as he hurriedly ran. Herman and Pin ran after him without knowing the reason why.

“What’s wrong?”

“I guess we’ll find out if we go as well”

The Dwarves, who thought they might see an interesting sight, dropped whatever they were doing and followed Weed to the lake.

“What happened to him all of a sudden?”

“Did he get tired of making sculptures and become like that?”

At the sight of fish swimming in the lake, Weed looked around and took a deep breath.

‘I don’t know if my guess is right. However, Kendellew was a sculptor. A sculptor who doesn’t make sculptures is preposterous. The sculptures he made are hidden somewhere in Kuruso, yet no one has been able to find them.’

Weed threw himself into the lake.

Splash!

As he caused splashes of water, he dived deep into the lake.

It was an unthinkable act that other Dwarves could not fathom.

“There’s a Dwarf who knows how to swim?”

“How can a Dwarf swim?”

As a result of their body type, the Dwarves sank like stones.

Weed dived all the way to the bottom of the lake and fumbled around himself with his hands.

The bystanding Dwarves could only conclude that Weed, who stood firmly in the clear and transparent lake, was doing something peculiar.

“He doesn’t seem like a Dwarf who is drowning in water.”

“It seems like he’s struggling to find something.”

Every time Weed tried to grope something in the water, an eel or a gray mullet fish would narrowly escape his hands.

If he tried a little harder, he would be able to catch a fish, but he set the thought aside and kept scrabbling around in the lake water.

‘It must be here somewhere. If it’s in Kuruso, I’ll be able to find it.’

He was getting short on breath, but Weed spread out his arms and wildly walked on the floor of the lake. There wasn't a moment that he didn't regret that Dwarves had such short arms and legs.

'I can't breathe.'

Although he had high endurance, he was gradually reaching his limits.

Swish!

Suddenly something was shot into the lake.

An Elf's arrow was imbued with the spirit of air.

The Elf, Edel, who had received advice from Weed when she was trying to buy a new bow, had shot the arrow.

Weed walked towards the arrow and breathed in the air.

"Please hurry and come out!"

Edel yelled out from above the water, but Weed could not hear her. Although he understood what she was trying to say, he shook his head and continued on the bottom of the lake.

Edel shot numerous arrows in order to relay more air.

However, as Weed went deeper and deeper into the lake, the arrows were soon not strong enough to reach him.

‘If this is the place where the sculpture is, it’s probably in the deepest part of the lake.’

Weed did not slow down his diving pace.

Even if there wasn’t a way to go back and get out, with the Power to Deny Death, he’d be reborn underwater as an undead.

If it was truly in Kuruso, and it was a sculpture, he was certain that this was the right place!

In a place where it seemed there was no way of getting out, Weed found what he was looking for.

It wasn’t a solid object, but rather a different flow of water.

– You have found Kendellev’s Water’s Statue.

– You have earned 200 fame.

– Would you like to restore Kendellev’s water’s statue? 20,000 mana is required, and your Art stat must be over 500 to restore this piece.

Weed accepted.

“Glurrg. Rarr. Blergh blergh, blerghhh.”

Although his pronunciation was hampered by the lake water rushing into his mouth every time he opened it, his meaning still got across.

At that moment, the lake's water started moving.

Ignoring gravity, water started to rise into the air.

The star rose up.

Birds flew away as they chattered.

Butterflies spread their wings, and Dwarven children started to dance with their short legs.

The water droplets of the lake adorned Kuruso behind the sculpture.

“Wow!”

“The lake turned into a statue!”

Where Weed stood, a new path of water was formed.

Tons of water streams exploded from below into the sky, then coalesced and roared into rapids, cascading down like a waterfall, and soon gathered again and became as gentle as a stream.

In the water path, a boat made of water was leisurely flowing along.

There was a sailor on the mast, and dolphins that soared out magnificently, and they were all made of water.

It was a majestic and beautiful sight that filled you with happiness.

The work that best expressed the beauty of water!

– While restoring the sculpture made by a Dwarf, your sculpting level has increased.

Charisma, Charm, and Luck stats have increased by 10.

Fame has increased by 50.

– You witness the water play sculpture for Kendelleev's children.

The Dwarf Sculptor Kendelleev's artwork.

The nature of the water reflects the innocence of the Sculptor's young children.

Because of overwhelming emotion, Wisdom has permanently increased by 3.

One must personally use the water park Kendellev made for his young children in order to experience complete and absolute joy.

Weed did not hesitate and threw himself in the water stream.

As the water rose like a powerful geyser, his body was rapidly carried upwards; then, he slid down the stream as if he was on a slide.

After crossing a waterbed, he passed by a water hill.

The playful dolphins leapt up and nosed Weed's face; splashing him with streams of water.

– You are enjoying the water park made for young children.

Your Health, Mana, and Stamina will recover rapidly.

Stamina will rise to maximum level.

If currently raising water magic skills, other related affinities will be enhanced.

“That looks fun!”

“Let’s go too!”

The Dwarves and even the Elves rode on the water slide.

“Wooo hooo!”

“How exciting!”

The water slide completely turned Kuruso upside down.

The Blacksmiths, giving the pretence that they were washing something, snuck over to the square space under the clock tower.

“Hooray!”

“This is so fun!”

The crazed Dwarves of all shapes and sizes shouted and yelled, and everyone had an immense amount of fun.

The refreshing water stream moistened their faces and bodies.

In the torrent, they did flips, performed acrobatic movements as if they were on water skis, and opened their mouths widely in the water as if they were competing with sharks.

The discovered work created a fairytale-like atmosphere beyond imagination.

As they enjoyed the water park, a sweep around it clearly showed a rainbow!

- You have appreciated Kendellev's Miraculous Rainbow.

While mining materials in damp caves or forging steel, the Dwarves did not have many chances to see a rainbow.

During rainy days, it was natural for Dwarves to sit down and drink beer in a neighbourhood pub.

For the Dwarves who did not want to ride and swim in the light water stream, the rainbow was a magical gift.

- Health will increase to the maximum for one day.

- Luck has permanently increased by 6.

- On the day when rain falls, for one month Observation and Sight skills improve.

“Ah, beautiful!”

The rainbow you think your hand will touch but can't quite reach.

They passed through the darkness where they couldn't see nor hear, even with their eyes open.

– You have appreciated Kendellev's Relaxing Afternoon Room.

The sleep-loving sculptor Kendellev!

Out of all the Dwarven sculptors, he was on the lazy side, so he slept in on many mornings, and if he had consumed any alcohol, he would wake up the next day in time for dinner.

For the sake of his much-desired rest, he needed to charge up.

To Kendellev, this was an inexorably honeyed-taste beyond compare.

Health, Mana, and Stamina recovery are boosted by 35% for one day.

If Relaxing Afternoon Room is appreciated for at least three consecutive days, then Recovery Speed increases by 50%.

Spellcasting by Magicians will have shorter activation time and the number of Magical Skills available by the skill Memorise will increase by 40%

The harmony of light and darkness.

The turtle and the snail quickly grazing past each other.

The refreshing sound of water flowing.

It had the form of leisurely floating clouds.

Weed had discovered Kendellev's sculptures.

Chapter 8: Elemental Creation

Daymond and the Predators of the Land guild classified the gathered Demonic Spirits.

There were approximately 50 giga-sized Demonic Spirits! The force also included over a thousand medium-sized Demonic Spirits, and tens of thousands of smaller Demonic Spirits.

“For now, let’s do an experiment.”

Daymond was in favour of Nardo’s opinion.

“We have to find out how much power we have.”

At first glance, the Demonic Spirits appeared to be incredible, but they needed to verify this in a real fight.

They led all the Demonic Spirits, left the Resurrection Church, and conducted an experiment in the wasteland.

An unlucky passing herd of Manticores became their opponents.

The Manticores, bearing resemblance to large lions, were extremely fast and powerful. Even the Predators of the Land guild had to fight to the death. In the past, they could have won while taking damage, but they were weakened while doing the quest and

could not perform spectacularly.

“Attack those bastards.”

At Daymond’s command, the giga-sized Demonic Spirits marched across the wasteland with thundering footsteps.

Every time they went forward, they dug cavities into the ground. The Demonic Spirits used their incredible weight to charge at the Manticores, completely trampling and crushing them.

Several Manticores kicked by the Demonic Spirits’ front feet were suddenly tossed into the air, and the other Demonic Spirits used their horns to strike or impale them from below.

It was quite a sight: the biting and clawing Manticores could hardly do any damage to the Demonic Spirits.

Every time a Manticore died, Daymond and the guild could sense their Resurrection Energy rising.

– By taking the energy of another’s life, 35 Resurrection Energy has been acquired.

– Your loyalty to the Embinyu Church has grown.

Your contribution to the Embinyu Church has increased.

You have earned the status of a Junior Follower.

They were able to receive resurrection energy each time the Demonic Spirits succeeded in hunting. Their loyalty towards the Embinyu Church also increased.

Daymond's army grew each time the resurrection power was used!

Nardo applauded.

“If it's this much power, we should be able to destroy a castle wall.”

There were no comparable siege weapons.

However, if they let the giga-sized Demonic Spirits go first, with their incredible strength, there was nothing they couldn't do.

When they appraised the strength of the Resurrected Army, Daymond and the Predators of the Land guild shuddered.

The abilities of the medium and small-sized Demonic Spirits were outstanding as well.

By using the Power of Resurrection, dead Soldiers and Knights could be revived again. Those who were revived lost their rationality, and fought against their foes atrociously and viciously.

*

“It’s time to decide where we should head to next.”

Daymond spoke while equipping his bone cane and helmet.

The prized items they earned while hunting in the wastelands with the Resurrected Army!

“Let’s get out of this place first.”

Suban disclosed his opinion.

“I think it’s now time for us to conquer the Kingdoms occupied by Humans or Elves.”

The Resurrection Army was growing in numbers, and it was difficult to find a decent hunting site in the wasteland.

Even if they mobilized just the medium-sized Demonic Spirits, the situation was resolved in mere moments, so finding swarms of monsters proved to be difficult.

The Predators of the Land guild originally possessed the battling, plundering, and aggressive nature. The wastelands, where it lacked people, they were bursting with unbearable impatience.

“It is indeed time to make our move.”

Marvin was in agreement.

He thought it would be a crime to not use the strength they possessed.

They possessed a strength greater than that of the Kingdoms in the Versailles Continent.

Although they didn't know if they were going to turn the world into chaos, all those involved couldn't worry or wait because of that.

Nardo asked.

“Where's the closest village?”

“Even in this wasteland, there were a few small frontier villages.”

As they dragged the resurrected army around, they had passed by small-time hunters and small villages that survived off of subsistence agriculture.

“But they're so small that we don't need to look for them ourselves. We can overtake 'em as we pass by. For starters, don't you think Morata is good place? A lot of people have gathered

there.”

Marvin recommended Morata.

It was the closest yet most densely packed town! But Suban had a different idea.

“Morata has a Church of Freya. Also, the adventurers there are of high levels, and if we attack a place like that from the start, we’ll probably acquire a considerable amount of damage.”

“We have to expect some damage. Even if the Demonic Spirits die, we can always revive ‘em.”

“Well, that’s right, but aren’t there many decent Kingdoms or other villages in the area surrounding Morata?”

“That may be so but....”

“After we take over Morata and busy ourselves slicing away in small Northern towns, the Kingdoms in the Central Continent could be preparing for our attack. We must strike the Central Continent when people are yet aware of us and quickly expand our strength.”

Nardo seemed to agree with Suban.

“By going for the small battles that we are sure to win and

dragging on the time, we will be in a disadvantage later on. Wouldn't it be better to go for somewhere that has lots of fighting opportunities, the Central Continent?"

There was a disagreement. There were those who wanted to start working their way up by attacking the surrounding villages, and those that wanted to immediately strike out for Morata.

"We will go to the Central Continent. Getting revenge on the bastards who took our land and slayed our brothers comes first. We have enough strength, so there is no reason to bide our time. We will throw away the name of the Predators of the Land Guild in this place. We will march onwards as the Resurrection Church."

The Priests of the Resurrection Church chose to follow Daymond's decision.

Because they were a fighting guild, if a decision was discarded, no other murmurs could be heard.

Together, the Resurrection Church and the Demonic Spirits moved southwards.

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"The Demonic Spirits are attacking!"

"There's a gruesome number of monsters advancing."

The users who were out hunting, dropped everything and hurried towards the North gate of Isoru Kingdom.

“What’s going on?”

“You say that monsters are attacking?”

In order to find out about the situation, users gathered near the castle wall.

Most monsters were not capable of penetrating thick castle walls and became easy prey for arrows and magic.

“Doesn’t it seem like the hunting party just grazed the monster swarm and ran back to the castle?”

“What kind of monsters would make them so scared that they ran away?”

While people were leisurely chatting and watching, the users who came in through the Northern gates were in a state of panic.

“Everyone, prepare to evacuate!”

“You’ll only survive if you leave Isoru Kingdom, hurry!”

“The Monster Army is advancing!”

After feeling the sense of urgency in their screaming voices, the Warriors who were chatting with Merchants who were doing business and the people chattering in the plaza, stood up.

Rather than running away, in order to find out what was going on, they moved towards the city wall.

“It’s none of my business if you regret it!”

“We definitely warned you to evacuate.”

The users that had come in through the Northern gates immediately left through the Southern gates.

Their friends, as well as some doubtful users, followed them out.

The Knights and Soldiers of Isoru Kingdom assembled and lined up on the castle walls, above the Northern gates. Even the Magicians, who usually didn’t venture out, came with their wands and prepared for battle.

Only then did the users realize how severe the situation was.

While they were agonizing over whether they should flee or not, the horde of Demonic Spirits from the North drew near.

There were giga-sized Demonic Spirits, comparable to the size of a citadel.

The Resurrection Church appeared along with tens of thousands of Demonic Spirit Legions.

After they assembled the Demonic Spirits in an orderly line, beyond the gates, Daymond came forward riding a horse.

“My name is Daymond!”

Daymond yelled loudly towards the castle wall.

He was scores of meters away, but the users could hear him clearly.

“If it’s Daymond, is he a user?”

“I think he’s the famous user who hunted boss monsters in the North...”

“For him to be accompanied by a monster army and appear here, just what kind of quest did he do?”

Doubtful, they waited for Daymond’s next words.

They were expecting him to demand for large fortunes from

Isoru Kingdom, suggest they surrender; especially when he brought a Monster Army with him.

But they couldn't help but be astonished by Daymond's next words.

"I declare war on your Isoru Kingdom. For those who don't want to fight, I will give you 10 minutes of respite. Come out of the castle walls and flee South. Those who do not heed our warning will die."

It was a drastic, incomparable ultimatum!

When they saw the Monster Army Daymond commanded, the users quietly left Isoru Kingdom. However, they did not leave area, instead, they went atop a nearby hill and watched the battle over Isoru Kingdom. Daymond and the Resurrection Church decided to leave the bystanders alone.

"10 minutes have passed. Everyone left in the castle is our enemy."

Daymond and the Resurrection Priests Demonic Spirits began to use their magic, and gray smoke soon enveloped the castle.

As the plague spread rapidly, the faces of Soldiers and Knights were dyed in green.

They became so infirm that they could no longer bear the weight of their armour and collapsed atop the wall.

“Earth Dragons. Charge!”

The enormous Demonic Spirits Nardo called forth detached themselves from the Army with heavy steps.

The giga-sized Demonic Spirits awkwardly waddled step by step. They rapidly accelerated and crashed into the castle walls with a terrifying, unmatched speed.

CRRRAAASH!

Part of the castle walls crumbled.

In succession, the giga-sized Demonic Spirits hit and destroyed the castle walls, while the medium-sized Demonic Spirits attacked the castle; they either jumped up and climbed up the castle walls, or they gained entry by using the giga-sized Demonic Spirits.

The Soldiers of Isoru Kingdom shot arrows and sprinkled magic, but even when the Demonic Spirits were hit squarely, they soon rose again.

The Resurrection Priests were continuously replenishing their lives.

Thanks to the supersized Demonic Spirits, the castle wall was completely crushed; even the interior of the castle were getting

demolished.

It was a terrifying and unforgettable sight to users, who watched the whole castle slanted to one side, cracked, and then fell apart.

Daymond and the Resurrection Church went all out. They did not spare single soul inside the castle.

Isoru Kingdom was swiftly crushed, and the Resurrection Army became increasingly powerful.

The Demonic Spirits were growing through the fighting experience.

Intoxicated with life, ordinary Soldiers and Knights were all resurrected.

This was how Daymond and the Resurrection Army overtook Isoru Kingdom.

An incredible wind of change was brewing in the Versailles Continent.

*

The Dwarves of Kuruso were in a commotion because of the water park.

“Kekeke!”

“The beer we drink while playing in the water is the best.”

Dwarves were enjoying the water park regardless of their age or gender. Before long, it became the trend to drink beer while going down the waterslide.

Herman and Pin addressed Weed.

“Kendellev’s sculpture! Isn’t that the racial quest the Dwarf Sculptor’s guild Instructor gives? To think that someone I know discovered this... It’s truly surprising news.”

“Congratulations. You cracked a request that couldn’t be solved for a long time.”

To the Dwarves, discovering the trail of the enigmatic, legendary Kendellev was an impressive task.

There was also a change in Weed’s quest window—if he went to see the Sculptor’s guild Instructor Jorbid, he could receive his reward.

It was not strange for Dwarves, including Herman, to be jealous.

Weed spoke his own thoughts under the cover of humility.

“Oh, please. I just happened to find it by chance.”

“ ... ”

“Since I looked all over in Kuruso, wasn’t that the only place where it could be?”

“ ... ”

“There’s nothing special or spectacular about what I did, it’s just that the efforts of other Dwarves fell short.”

His way of speaking that greatly lowered their affection towards him!

It was awkward for Weed to take the compliments of others, so he’d done the best he could to pass it off as a joke.

‘It’s definitely no good to receive compliments!’

In those days when he was working as a minor, when he couldn’t do the work well he was always sworn at. Those were the days when he got more curses than food.

But with effort, he was able to overcome his insufficiencies. He mastered the techniques and did as much work as other people.

He lifted and carried more flats of bricks, attached more eyes to dolls, and delivered the newspapers well.

“So you had some talent in this field.”

“You’re an outstanding individual we absolutely need.”

As the compliments from the President increased, the amount of work he had to do also accumulated.

It became worse was when he worked part-time at a pub.

“You’re really outstanding! This perfect taste matches well! From now on I’ll have Hyun Lee do this kind of work.”

With each compliment, his ears were joyful, but Weed knew that soon enough, his whole body would be exhausted.

Even though in this case, that wasn’t Herman intent, Weed had instinctively counteracted.

And he wasn’t deceiving them on purpose either.

By law, all discoveries made after great lengths of effort were seen to be obvious in the end.

“As a Sculptor, it wouldn’t do to just look for the complete

works. No matter what sculpture it is, if you understand the materials used to make it, the place, and its characteristics, what I did is possible.”

“Understand the materials and characteristics... It’s not just about completing the sword, but really immersing yourself in the process?”

They were ordinary words, but Herman thought about them for a long time, as if he’d gotten some kind of hint from them.

Pin hesitated for a long time before carefully asking.

“Now that you’ve succeeded in completing the quest, will you leave Kuruso?”

She, too, was aware he had completed almost all of the Sculptor quests, and he’d even discovered Kendellev’s trail. In reality, Weed had completed many different kinds of commissions.

Requests that had to do with adventures or fighting, sewing and blacksmithing production requests, requests that had to do with creating sculptures off of impressions... He’d done them all!

As a jack of all trades, the requests he could receive expanded.

Usually, when Dwarves saw Weed, they immediately gave him a request.

“The Eastern coal mine is overflowing with lead worms. Won’t you take care of them?”

Lead worms were monsters with levels in the high 300s.

It wasn’t impossible for Weed to hunt them with his level, but because they burrowed through the earth, they were hard monsters to catch without magic. Additionally, if they felt any danger, they spewed a poison that was hard to detoxify.

“A sword that can even pulverize cast iron, and can’t even be blocked by amour, there’s a rumor of a legendary sword that’s hiding somewhere in our Kingdom, can you believe it? I’ll be happy if you can find it.”

A legendary sword quest.

With a difficulty of rank A, it was a specialty quest that no one in Kuruso had been able to solve.

There weren’t very many clues, but there was a strong chance he could only do it by raising his intimacy with the Dwarven residents to the max.

Weed, who could flatter any day, thought it was a worthwhile to challenge quest. However, he had no choice but to give up on it. He lacked the Advanced Blacksmithing skills that were needed in the middle of the quest.

“They say there’s a fruit that can extend the lives of Dwarves which can be found in Kuruso’s Southern swamp, but no one has succeeded in finding it. Would you try it once?”

It was a rank B quest.

If you partied with a Cleric, you could struggle to find the fruit in the dungeon within the swamp.

These kinds of rank A and rank B quests poured out continuously.

It was literally a flood of quests.

Weed answered Pin’s question simply.

“I suppose I’ll have to leave.”

“I thought so...”

“But it’s not time yet. The reason I came here—I think I can achieve it.”

*

He couldn’t be certain, but it didn’t seem like Kendelleev had

master level sculpturing.

‘Since I found his trail, if he’d been a Master Sculptor, he would’ve left a secret about sculptures.’

However, thanks to him, Weed was able to figure out what he had to sculpt.

He guessed Kendelleev had been a sculptor with an impressive affinity towards sculptures. To be able to create a sculpture out of water meant that he must have completely learned the characteristics of water, enough to be able to control it like his own body.

The Sculptor’s secret!

If you raised your affinity with the inanimate matter to the highest degree, it was possible to sculpt anything.

Weed, who was a Moonlight Sculptor, learned to control light. There were special sculptors everywhere. There were those who sculpted because they wanted to. Their love of sculpting became their driving force and motivation.

Now, he gained the confidence to sculpt the mysterious existences that begged him to sculpt them.

– You incompetent sculptor, use your dull head and hands to sculpt me.

– What is the reason why you won't sculpt me. I'll listen to everything so make me!

‘I have to understand them. I have to make them with the feelings they exude.’

The reason why a water droplet shimmered so beautifully was because it brought all the best characteristics to life. Wind expressed freedom, and rainbows were fantastical.

The faintly visible characteristics of a rainbow you see as if you're in a dream were alive in Kendellev's sculpture. The ample emotion that forced adults to fall back into childhood innocence!

Weed held the sculpting knives in both of his hands.

‘I will become them. I will absorb the feelings they are giving me. I will sculpt them as my heart leads me.’

– Sculptor, will you make me?

The cordial and dignified voice, the warmly encouraging yet not impolite voice—Weed decided

to preserve that sensation inside his being.

Human, monster, or however it looked, putting a name on it was

difficult. To classify it, he must focus on the voice.

The voice held a lot of information.

Its current emotions and personality, the matching body, and the overall inclination that remained intact, could be felt.

‘Eyes that are alight with warmth, hands that are at least average in size, wide and healthy shoulders and body. I can’t omit the gallant feeling and the warmth.’

Instead of agonizing on what to make beforehand, he created the sculpture by following the flow of emotion.

The legs were long, as were the arms. Everything was a little longer than they were on humans. But it was not hideous like a monster, and was a sculpture that gave off the feeling of a tenderly benevolent gentleman.

“This is the sculpture I have made for you.”

Ding!

– You have learned the art of Elemental Spirit Sculpture Creation.

– Elemental Sculpture Creation: A Sculpture which can now create bodies for new Elemental Spirits.

There are innumerable Spirits existing on the Versailles Continent. However, out of those, only a few have corporeal bodies or have been named.

If you make bodies for Spirits, those Spirits will then be able to wander around Versailles Continent with that body.

If you can give it a name, you will become the Spirit's father and will be able to mobilize it during battles.

If the amount of mana consumed of the Spirit is small, you can summon Intermediate level Spirits from the beginning.

The spirit's completed body must be satisfactory in order to summon prized Spirits or the King of Spirits.

The quality of the Spirits you can summon in the future are determined by the level of the sculpturing skill and intimacy.

If you master the sculpting skill, you can learn the skill of 'Race Creation'.

Restriction: Can only be used with Advanced Sculpting.

Skill requirement: 200 Art stats (Permanent Consumption)

Precaution: Spirits learn the most on the first day they are born.

The personality of the Spirit depends on the Sculptor who created their form.

If Elemental Spirits of opposites are summoned at the same time, they will fight each other.

If many Demonic Spirits are created, infamy may rise .

If a Spirit with a completed body loses its King of Spirits, all spirits will become weaker until a new King of Spirits is created.

If skill mastery is achieved, humanoid monsters can be created, but All stats will be decreased by 20 points.

- You have created a new spirit.

160 Art stat has been consumed.

- Your Advanced Sculpting skill has risen to level 6. Sculptures will become extraordinarily delicate and detailed.

- Your Handicraft skill has increased.

- Fame has risen by 260

- Charm has risen by 60.

Sculpting Blade, Sculpture Life Bestowal, Sculpture Transformation... And now he had acquired a new sculpting secret art.

The skill of Spirit Creation.

It was a Sculptor's secret art, which granted existing Spirits in the world corporeality and a physical form!

The sculpture Weed had carved with wood was next to him, and the dirt on the ground rose up and became exactly the same form.

The lump of dirt respectfully parted its lips.

"Sculptor, since you have created my body, please choose my name."

Weed replied after a brief deliberation.

"Let's go with Dirtman."

"Alright."

No matter how you looked at it, the spirit seemed to be affiliated with Earth, so the name that had come to mind was Earth-man. However, if he chose that, then it'd be too easy to see through its intentions, so he used his head and picked out Dirtman.

‘As expected, there’s no one who can top my naming sense.’

Weed asked.

“Do you like your body?”

“I think it will be uncomfortable to move, but it is to my liking.”

Since it could be a new type of sculpture, just to be sure, Weed tried to identify it.

“Identify.”

– Dirtman

Earth Spirit.

It was born due to the Sculptor’s talent.

It has a gentle and reliable personality. However, because it has an ill-matched body, it can only display 35% of its abilities.

Able to advance into an Intermediate spirit.

Through the Spirit summoning skill, the spirit can demonstrate their different supreme abilities.

Specialties: Earthquake, Dig, Bury, Finding Sap, Accelerate Growth of Crops.

Because this was the first attempt, the Spirit's features could not be brought to life and was made with adequate skill.

– You filthy sculptor! How dare you make another bastard before me! I'm getting angry. I'm going to burn everything down.

Weed saw his failure reflected in the angry voice and raised his sculpting knife.

‘It's a spirit. It doesn't even need to be similar to a human.’

He made a blazing fire. He made the fire's body with elongated legs and arms.

– You have created a new spirit.

160 art stats were consumed.

– Sculpture Identification skill has increased.

– Handicraft skill has improved.

– Fame has risen by 260

– Charm has risen by 60.

Weed's sculpture caught fire. All that was left of the wood was debris, and soon everything was burned away. In its place was an identical, blazing form.

“I like it, this body. I'm very pleased with it. Sculptor, speak my name!”

The spirit of fire was enjoying itself.

“How about Fiery Pebble.”

“To say it's Fiery Pebble! It's a name I really like.”

“Identify!”

– Fiery Pebble.

A blazing Fire Spirit.

Created by a Sculptor on the new frontier of a sculpting skill that's being expanded.

Has an impatient and violent personality.

Although it lacks charm, because it has a body that suits it, it can

favorably display its abilities.

It can use 62% of its strength.

Able to advance into an Advanced spirit.

Through the Spirit summoning skill, the spirit can demonstrate their different supreme abilities.

Specialties: Fire Spear, Fireproof, Incinerate.

“Summon Dirtman, summon Fiery Pebble!”

As Weed’s eyes sparkled, his mana flowed out like an ebbing tide. The earth shuddered and rose. A wild, blazing fire arose. And so, Dirtmen and Fiery Pebbles were summoned in the hundreds.

Intermediate Elemental Spirits, Advanced Elemental Spirits. This was the power shown by the Advanced Sculpting skill!

Although he didn’t summon all the common Elemental Spirits he was capable of, he wasn’t disappointed over five or six Elemental Spirits. If the number of Elemental Spirits rose, it was difficult to control them.

“Ah, to be able to come out into the world! Are you saying that this dream is really true?”

“Look here. These are our bodies. They have substance, and we can move them as we please.”

For the Elemental Spirits who had been created not long ago, that in itself was a miracle. When they saw their bodies, they exclaimed in wonder and rolled their feet on the ground.

Every time the Dirtmen did that, the earth shook a little, and in the case of the Fiery Pebbles, the flames blazed even more intensely.

Though they were happily preoccupied with the miracle of creation, they soon noticed Weed. They instinctually knew the owner who had created them and held a deep intimacy with him.

Weed’s charisma and leadership was triggered. And Lion’s Roar!

“Ahem! I am the owner who made you all. Since I gave you life, fulfill your duty to me.”

The original Dirtman and Fiery Pebble, who were made first, had special egos.

They were the representatives of their fellow spirits.

However, the other ordinary spirits bowed and recited.

“We will follow our owner and pull forth the power of the earth.”

“We will raze down everything that poses a threat to you.”

The pledge of loyalty from the lined up spirits!

As if he were a leader of a cult, Weed raised both his arms.

“Believe in me and follow!”

“Yes, Master!”

“Believe! Believe in me, and blessings will come your way.”

“Who am I!”

“The Almighty, the Master who created us.”

“You’re sculptor that works till the end, a heroic sculptor who turns the impossible into the possible.”

As if they were in a competition, the Dirtmen and Fiery Pebbles flattered him. Perhaps because Weed had created them, they learned bad things first.

“What about my intelligence?”

“The smartest throughout the continent.”

“You are a genius.”

“When I was one year old, I toddled 100 meters in 0.1 seconds. At two years of age, I used my wings to fly around in the air.”

“Ohhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!”

From behind Weed’s mantle, the Wings of Light spread wide.

Brilliant. Such brilliant luster! Used for the purpose of lying, such was the life of a moonlight sculpture that was granted life!

Seeing the absolute loyalty of the spirits, Weed’s heart was warmed.

“My face is the most handsome in the world. There is no human who is more good looking than me in the world! When girls see my smiling face, they can’t help but tumble towards me.”

“ ... ”

“ ... ”

The Dirtmen looked like they had bitten into a tart grapefruit.

“T-Thats a little...”

Weed reflexively looked at the Fiery Pebble. It was burning down some perfectly healthy grass nonchalantly.

“We let him have his way and listened to him, but he really doesn’t know when to stop.”

“Yeah. Do we really have kiss his ass and suffer to get a body?”

“I don’t think it would’ve been bad to just exist as a spirit...”

The Fiery Pebbles quietly murmured amongst themselves.

Weed loudly cleared his throat.

“AHEM! This is a regrettable incident. For the Elemental Spirits I made with such difficulty to not be satisfied with this world... Should I just use my Sculpture Destruction skill to just crush everything and make it so that this never happened? ”

The Dirtmen and Fiery Pebbles felt the threat on their lives and quickly raised their arms.

“Hooray for Master Weed!”

“Long live the Master!”

Their happiness was short-lived, and while their arms were raised, the bodies of the Dirtmen and Fiery Pebbles blurred and started to disappear. Weed's mana had been completely used up and he couldn't sustain them any longer.

“Please call us anytime, Master!”

“Please don't forget me.”

As the Dirtmen and Fiery Pebbles disappeared, the sounds of their exclamations were left ringing faintly in the air.

After all of the Dirtmen and Fiery Pebbles had been recalled, Weed contemplated briefly and restored his mana.

The sculpture skill of Spirit Creation.

The memories of the effort he had invested into discovering this sculpting secret flashed through his mind.

The past times when he'd been cursed for sculpting!

With his mana completely filled up, Weed stood up from his spot again.

“Summon Dirtmen. Summon Fiery Pebble!”

As the earth and fire rose, Dirtmen and Fiery Pebble were summoned again!

Weed raised his two hands straight up in the air.

“Hurray, Master Weed!”

“Hurray!”

The exhaustive brainwashing work went on all day.

The brainwashing that forced them to harbor only respect for him!

“Who am I!”

“The absolute immortal creator who took pity on our trifling selves and made our bodies.”

“What are my words?”

“They are absolute commands we must obey even if we become extinct in this land.”

“There will be no greater honour than for this trifling body to cease to exist whilst fulfilling your command.”

The next day, the place the Dirtmen were ambitiously mobilized to was Weed's ruby mine.

"Mine them carefully. Don't get even a single scratch on them!"

If a Spirit Creator treats the spirits as his friends, they will respect him...

Usually, one would have adventures in the Versailles Continent while being friendly to the cute and adorable spirits.

However, it was something that didn't apply to Weed.

Like day laborers, the spirits were being called to mine rubies.

Chapter 9: Dark Gamers' Conversation

Lee Hyun connected to the Dark Gamers' chat room. Information disclosure, questions, sales, and grade advancement were the main topics of the chat room.

In normal chat rooms, there were people who were there just to waste time, but Dark Gamers were different. Information about the activities of Kingdoms, professions, quest information, and other necessary info were exchanged in real time.

These conversations weren't open to everyone. The rooms were available through the forums, which could only be accessed if their rank permitted it, so only a small fraction of Dark Gamers were allowed to share the information.

It was a basic skill to use chatting to uncover the secrets of other gamers.

– Huni: Hurry, hurry, come in. Hyun-nim.

– Hyun: We meet again.

– Huni: Yes, nice to see you.

– Wicked Me: This is my first time meeting you, Hyun-nim.

There were about 7 users in the chat room.

Aside from the people who were lurking beneath the surface, in actuality only Huni and Wicked Me were chatting.

– Huni: Hyun-nim, you've been coming here only for a little bit late at night. What have you been doing lately?

– Hyun: I've just... I've been learning my profession's skills.

– Huni: Profession skills are very important. Normally, you access the chat room and don't say anything, but you also check the market prices of items, right?

– Hyun: Yes.

– Wicked Me: I also often do that too.

– Huni: All Dark Gamers are probably like that. It's because there's no job as busy as ours.

It was crucial for Dark Gamers to regularly check on the item market prices, commissions, and hunting grounds. For the sake of earning money, not only effort, but information in itself was crucial.

Only Dark Gamers who went beyond other players, could purely enjoy their meetings.

– Huni: I have been a Dark Gamer for 7 years. How long have you two sirs been Dark Gamers?

– Wicked Me: I've been one for three years. Well, two years actually.

– Huni: Then I suppose I'm your senior, though that doesn't mean much. If it's 2 years, then did you start Dark Gamer activities since the release of Royal Road?

– Wicked Me: That's right. I started the same time Royal Road was released. Since I progressed faster than others, I was able to collect some money from the start.

– Huni: I envy you. What about you, Hyun-nim?

– Hyun: I've been a Dark Gamer in earnest for about one year.

– Huni: That's incredible!

– Wicked Me: Is that true? If you can enter this rank's chat room, you're probably not on an ordinary level... And it's not just level, but the quality of the information shared and your responses are important in determining your rank.

– Huni: One year is really surprising. Can you please tell me your secret?

– Hyun: I just worked really hard. And I started making money as a Dark Gamer way before then; it's just that I registered a year ago.

– Wicked Me: As I thought, that's how. It's hard to be a Dark Gamer in Royal Road.

– Small Dragon: Nice to meet you. I see you've been having an interesting conversation while I was lurking. I've been a Dark Gamer for 6 years.

The users who had been lurking joined the conversation and the chat room soon became hectic.

As they exchanged greetings and conversations started, the old text ascended quickly. In spite of that, the frenzy didn't even last 10 minutes before calming down.

Users left to look for information they needed, or were taking a break while keeping the chat room open.

Lee Hyun also briefly went to look at different information and returned to find Huni and Wicked Me having a conversation.

– Huni: Hyun-nim. Are you there?

– Hyun: Yes.

– Huni: Actually, this time there's a quest I want to accomplish.... I'd like to consult the two of you.

– Wicked Me: What quest is that?

– Huni: First of all, please be understanding of me when I say that I won't disclose details about the quest's contents.

– Wicked Me: Of course.

– Hyun: I understand.

– Huni: Thank you for understanding. To be honest, I've been doing a quest that's a little special.

– Wicked Me: Is it a dangerous quest?

– Huni: You could say that. It also has a high degree of difficulty... The quest prevents you from ever reviving again.

– Wicked Me: I don't understand what you said about not reviving. What does that mean?

– Hyun: The character would completely die in Royal Road, right?

– Huni: Yes. That's right.

The complete death of a character.

It was something that could happen if you learned a forbidden magic, or if gave your soul for some reason or another. It was standard for Dark Gamers to refuse these kinds of requests. Curses that were difficult to cure could somehow be resolved after a time, but if your character disappeared, you have to start again from the very beginning.

After his profession was changed to Legendary Moonlight Sculptor, he had initially been very dissatisfied, but the reason he gave up on raising another profession was because it was hard to start over.

– Hyun: How did you come about that quest?

– Huni: I was with the guild I manage, it was a quest we got as a guild.

– Wicked Me: If you're managing a guild, you must have quite an exceptional character; that's quite regretful.

– Huni: Yes. Now I'm feeling a little regretful. I wonder if I started something too excessive because of my friends and guild mates, but the rewards that can be obtained through the quest are considerable.

– Wicked Me: As a Dark Gamer, is it worth starting over?

– Huni: I'll have to see how the quest progresses, but right now I think it's worth challenging. Even if we aren't able to clear the quest, we accepted it because we can hope for such a huge reward.

-Wicked Me: If it were me, I'd worry first. Even so, to raise another character is going to be tough.

– Huni: In my 7 years of being a Dark Gamer, I think this is the biggest opportunity and challenge yet. Since there's some money I've earned, even if I die I'll probably be able to start over.

If you read in between the lines, you could feel that the Dark Gamer Huni was trying to force himself to be positive about his situation.

For a Dark Gamer, losing their character was the same as becoming unemployed!

To be unable to expect employment insurance and unemployment pension, if you considered such disaster, you would only become anxious. If Lee Hyun was also in a situation where his character Weed might be permanently deleted, his anxiety would be too great to express in words.

‘I haven't made enough money yet!’

Perhaps because the all work he had done would have been a waste, so he didn't think he would be able to accept a quest like

that.

He'd have no choice but to suffer from an extremely severe apprehension. In real life, Grandma's hospital bills and their living expenses would be threatened by this approaching menace. Though Huni might have saved up a little spare money, that alone would not assure him, for this was something that could very possibly ruin a Dark Gamer's life.

If you died while hunting, your level and skill proficiency would drop, and if such an incident were to occur again and again, it would be an unfathomably devastating blow to a Dark Gamer.

– Wicked Me: I hope you receive a lot of items. The items are what's left.

– Huni: Of course. All the items we obtained on the quest are gathered separately, and are being sold. However, when I imagine the character I raised and very attached to, completely disappearing... It's not something that will happen right away, but my chest really hurts thinking about it.

– Hyun: You must worry a lot.

– Huni: There's nothing I can do but to move forward.

– Hyun: Since you have experience, you'll be able to grow again, and the quest...

Lee Hyun's hand, which had been clacking on the keyboard, suddenly came to a halt.

Though it was just a speculation, even if those kinds of quests were to be successful, because of the ridiculous chance for a character to be deleted, there was no one who would be willing to accept such quests.

But the Dark Gamer Huni was even considering death.

‘It seems like he has received a truly difficult quest.’

He guessed it would be much harder to succeed in this quest than to find a needle in a haystack.

– Hyun: I pray for your success. Those words are all I can offer.

– Huni: Thank you. I'll do my best. I needed some reassurance.

– Wicked Me: It's really heartwarming to see you two talk.

– Huni: Wicked Me-nim, Hyun-nim. Shall we be friends? Although I don't know how old you are or where you live, I don't think it'll be bad to get along as friends in the Dark Gamer chatting room.

– Hyun: I'd like that as well.

- Huni: I will introduce myself first. I’m twenty-eight years old.
- Hyun: I’m twenty-three years old.
- Huni: Hyun is like my younger sibling then.
- Hyun: Yes, elder brother. Please speak informally.
- Huni: Do you mind? Then Wicked Me-nim, how old are you?
- Wicked Me: Elder brothers! I am 15 years old. I’m the youngest. My two elder brothers, please take care of your cute brother.
- Huni: ...
- Hyun: ...
- Huni: Hey Me.
- Wicked Me: Yep!
- Huni: It’s already 11. You’d better go to bed.
- Wicked Me: Ah! Is that the time already. It’s nearly time for my mom to come home soon... I guess I’ll pretend to study and go to sleep. Goodbye.

– Hyun: ...

-Huni: ...

*

Lee Hyun's school life went by busily. Even if he barely passed the tests, the assignments kept coming.

Tests and challenges concerning Royal Road.

Because of those, Choe Sang Jun and Park Soon Jo were to gather information about the dungeons, and the preparations were quickly underway.

“Hyung, just come when you can, and all you need to do is show us your sculptures.”

Choe Sang Jun said generously.

In any case, because it was a team assignment, Lee Hyun had to participate too, but not much was expected from a Sculptor. Hyun would show them his sculptures, and if Choe Sang Jun and his team mates acted as if they were deeply moved, he calculated that the professor would give them points.

‘If a team that includes a Sculptor is able to explore a difficult

dungeon, that can be seen as a huge success.'

Choe Sang Jun was determined to use the dungeon exploration as a way to stand out. His brother, who was a high ranking player in the Black Lion Guild, lent him an item and was helping him raise his level.

But the one who worried him most was Park Soon Jo, the Thief!

'Thieves aren't as useful in dungeons as you'd think. Although it's not bad to have 1 Thief to help me out. That's right, I should be happy about it.'

Even if a Thief were to help out, all they could do were dismantle traps and opening doors, anyway.

For the sake of the dungeon exploration, the team held meetings at lunch without Lee Hyun.

While eating her sandwich in the school cafeteria, Min Sora asked a question.

"But you guys, who are the other 2 people going to be for our team? Everyone's excited and it's getting hectic, but we have to decide and get ready in advance."

There were currently 5 people in their team C !

It was time to recruit the 2 people required.

Choe Sang Jun was also extremely interested in the new team members.

For him to stand out the most, the other team member can't be too outstanding. However, he wanted to bring in a team member who could be at least somewhat useful.

‘It'd be good to have a Cleric or a Shaman... Who still hasn't decided on a team yet? Do we have to pull out a guy from another team?’

It happened as he was making up his mind. Ju Eun Hee and Hong Sun Ye, who had been in his MT (Membership Training) team, were approaching him.

“Hey, we haven't decided on our group yet either, can we do it together?”

Choe Sang Jun rejoiced and asked.

“What's your class and level?”

“Elemental Magician. Level 266. Current position is in Dale Kingdom.”

“I'm a Ranger. Level 285. I'm at Nekan Castle. I'm hunting with

Eun Hee.”

A Magician associated with elements and a Ranger.

It was far from the Cleric and Shaman Choe Sang Jun had wanted.

“Let’s do it together!”

Despite that, Choe Sang Jun kept a smile on his face.

Women were always welcome. Particularly Ju Eun Hee and Hong Sun Ye, whose pretty faces and bodies caught the eyes of many guys in their department.

‘Eun Hee is really very pretty.’

Choe Sang Jun had no reason to refuse the ideal Eun-hee.

Ju Eun Hee beamed so brightly her dimples came out.

“Really? I’m grateful, Choe Sang Jun.”

“Yeah.”

With a pitiful look, Lee Yoo Jung spoke to Choe Sang Jun after watching him.

“If you’re in Dale Kingdom... We’re also in Dale Kingdom right now. Nekan Castle is only a day away.”

“Yoo Jung, what’s your level?”

“Swordsman, 237. Sora, here, is an Enchanter. She’s 144.”

“I-is that so?”

Ju Eun Hee and Hong Sun Ye’s discontented expressions were obvious.

It was because the Swordsman’s level was too low, and Enchanters weren’t very useful in dungeons.

Perhaps because she sensed their discomfort, Min Sora asked.

“Is it really okay to be in the same group as us?”

“Yeah. Well, it’ll be okay. But you know...”

Hong Sun Ye asked while blushing slightly.

“Why isn’t Lee Hyun oppa here? Isn’t Lee Hyun oppa in your group?”

“Oppa doesn’t participate in the meetings.”

“Why?”

“He said he’s busy. And ‘cause he’s a sculptor, we don’t need him for the exploration.”

“....”

“You two. You really decided to join our group, right?”

“You’re, you’re right.”

Somehow, they had gotten into a situation where they couldn’t refuse and ended up joining. However, once they learned the levels and professions of the other players, everyone could feel their reluctance.

‘This is the worst...’

‘For me to be in a group like this...’

‘I messed up.’

‘I’ll retake it later.’

*

At lunchtime, Lee Hyun went to the grass plaza to eat his packed lunch.

‘It’s here today as well.’

A girl’s red lunch box.

Since about ten days ago, there was a red lunch box at the place where Lee Hyun regularly ate. Of course he did not touch the lunch box.

‘It’s someone else’s lunch.’

He thought that the owner might come looking for it, so he didn’t open the lunch box.

The next day, the lunch box was placed in the same position. However, this time, there was a yellow lunch box wrapped in a white handkerchief. There was even a note left on top.

– Please eat me.

Sophisticated and beautiful handwriting.

Lee Hyun muttered while looking at the lunch box.

‘I don’t know who it’s for, but I envy them.’

The lunch box can be called the flower of love!

‘Traditionally, there’s nothing better to eat than that. How happy must that guy be, to have such a girlfriend. He’s even getting free food.’

Lee Hyun laughed lonesomely and ate the lunch he’d brought himself.

He thought for sure that some guy other than himself would come and eat that lunch box.

He, who had never dated before, would never have believed that lunch box was for him.

The next day.

– Lee Hyun, please eat this packed lunch.

The message, which was a little longer and more detailed, was written beautifully.

Perhaps because the sender was tense, the text was firmly indented in the paper, but Lee Hyun didn’t notice this.

“It was my lunch!”

He knelt to open the lunch box.

It was packed to the brim with sushi rolls!

“Korean sushi rolls, of all things.”

Lee Hyun complained.

The food he always packed for school was sushi rolls. He brought them because they were simple and not very time-consuming to make, but that didn't mean he didn't want to eat something different.

“Well, even sushi rolls are okay as long as they taste good.”

Lee Hyun tried 1 of the sushi rolls.

There was a harmony of evocative flavors bursting in his mouth.

A taste that could not be described by words!

The radish, imitation crab, and spinach she'd used were already in a different dimension from regular ingredients.

The faint sheen from the side of the rolls was from sturgeon eggs

and plump lobster leg meat!

Lee Hyun was knowledgeable in cooking, but he had never seen these ingredients.

“The pollack eggs are fresh. And what in the world is this imitation crab that tastes so good?”

They were the best luxury sushi rolls!

After Lee Hyun ate the delicious sushi rolls, he left a note in the empty lunch box.

– This time as well...

He had left the note while harbouring a faint hope.

The next day when he went to the grassy area, there was another lunch box.

– Thank you for enjoying it. Please eat some today too.

Lee Hyun opened the lunch box lid.

They were korean sushi rolls today too, but today's fillings were shark fin, eel, and salmon. There was even fresh fruit salad for dessert.

“It’s delicious.”

From that day on, Lee Hyun went to school without packing his lunch. Even if he didn’t pack a lunch, there was always food waiting for him.

As Lee Hyun ate, Seoyoon watched from a distance.

Every time he ate happily, she felt full, even if she hadn’t eaten.

‘Friends...’

Her precious friend, the only one she had in the world.

Seoyoon was thankful for him just eating it.

Due to her lack of cooking skills, her first batch of Korean sushi rolls had torn sides and their fillings protruded out. To pack delicious sushi rolls, she learned from five-star hotel chefs.

As Seoyoon watched Lee Hyun eat joyfully, she blushed. It was the sight of a goddess being shy.

*

In order to restore the art stats that had been consumed, Weed

began working in Kuruso.

‘The fastest way to get art stats is through making handicrafts.’

A successful sculpture could earn him a lot of art stats.

Though it was a simple method in theory, the probability of success was low.

Since there was a limit to the techniques Weed could express with imagination, continuously making a successful sculpture was difficult.

Comparatively, jewelry handicrafts raised the art stat by 1 or 2 points, so it was good for replenishing. Although it took 10 works to raise the stat once, he had the perfect aptitude for doing these kinds of depressing jobs.

“The law is that grinding doesn’t lie. There’s nothing I’m more thankful to than grinding.”

In addition, videos of Kendelle’s Water Park for Children were being uploaded in Royal Road forums. Dwarven users had competitively put up their videos as quickly as they could.

Until then, Kuruso had existed so secretly that even amongst the Dwarves, there were only a few people who knew of it. However, after images of Dwarves enjoying the water park were published, the veil of secrecy was torn off.

As the number of interested people grew, the path to Kuruso was published and done with.

“We’re here!”

“WOW! This is the Dwarven Kingdom.”

More Humans and Elves came and found it, and the number of users in Kuruso increased by over 5-fold.

The sculptures of the newcomer Dwarves!

The sculptures they had acquired from above ground through one quest or another found their way to Weed.

“Art Hand-nim, I heard you can evaluate sculptures.”

“Yeah. Although I don’t do this for just any object... But since I have some time, I’ll appraise it for you.”

“Thank you!”

Even in Kuruso, where the best craftsmen had gathered, Art Hand was the most outstanding Sculptor.

The Battle in Shaspin Cave, and the victory against Death Hand!

There were Dwarven Soldiers and Warriors who gabbered in the taverns about the sculpting quests that had occurred in Kuruso, and Art Hand's legend reached the ears of the newcomers through their gossip.

Weed, who was passing himself off as Art Hand, was gathering sculptures.

“Identify.”

– The Repentant Bird

A clay pigeon meditating on one leg.

Made by a nameless, obscure sculptor.

Although this is sculpture made with a remarkably polished skill and is a superior depiction, the meaning intended for this sculpture cannot be discerned.

Artistic Value: 30

– You have appreciated this work and your Art stat has risen by 1.

To gain Art stats through identification!

Whether they were drawings, famous swords, or even legendary armor dressers, they earned him a little Art stat.

‘The Art stat seems to be different from the other stats.’

Whenever he made a living sculpture or used a skill, the Art stat was consumed. However, when he was raising it again, there was a force of restoration, that gave him the feeling that the stat was a little easier to raise than others.

Albeit challenging to regain the Art stat by identifying sculptures alone, his Art stats rose twice as fast after he activated Eternal Sculpture.

[T/N: Weed is talking about the title he’s using.]

Even just by sewing with good material, his Art stat would rise. When he made anything from Blacksmithing, Art stats also increased.

‘Still, it’s not a method I can use often.’

As indicated by its name, restoring force really recovered stats quickly!

If he only consumed the Art stat and didn’t rebuild it, he wouldn’t be able to reach a higher level.

In order to restore his Art stat, Weed met with a lot of Dwarves in Kuruso.

“Art Hand, would you like a beer? I’m buying.”

“Have you perhaps joined a guild?”

There were guilds that approached him to recruit a sculptor.

Weed refused them each time.

One day, Herman who was watching the scene, said in a courteous tone.

“It would be nice if you joined our guild. Production class, eh! Though you aren’t in a production profession. Anyway, for people like us, who have crafting professions, it’s comfortable to be in a guild.”

“I know that too.”

“Then is there a special reason why you are not in a guild?”

He was caught with remorse over the fact that he was a Dark Gamer. Even when he was playing the Continent of Magic, he had always acted alone, so getting fenced in by a guild was a burden for him.

Herman's eyes twinkled as he laughed.

“You seem to have circumstances you can't talk about. But just because you're in a guild doesn't mean everyone is going to want to know your life story.”

“...”

“You don't have to say anything you don't want others to know, just act comfortably. And if you don't like the guild, can't you just leave it?”

“That may be so, but...”

“When you're my age, the biggest regret is not having tried many different things in your youth. Can't you regret it after you've tried? It's not healthy to worry too much when you're young.”

Weed decided.

‘If there's a guild I can move comfortably in, then I suppose it wouldn't be bad to try joining.’

In many ways, he might become the odd man out, but he found no reason to avoid the concept of guilds.

Even the Elder SwordNoobs didn't make a guild and act within in it, though they were getting so famous in Rosenheim Kingdom that

they might be forced to do so.

‘Though I shouldn’t need to join the Instructor’s guild.’

He was on close terms with the Elder SwordNoobs, and he also saw their faces every day. They were also registered as his friends, so he spoke with them often. There was no need to join a guild made by the SwordNoobs.

As if sensing Weed’s indecisiveness, Herman spoke up.

“Have you heard about the Travelers of the Wilderness Guild, by any chance?”

“I haven’t heard of it.”

“It’s the guild I’m in. Quite often, we hunt without speaking, and there are also those who only go on adventures.... It’s a guild made of willful people.”

“How many people are in it?”

“About twenty-five? The activity rate is on the high side. As for the age group.... There are old people like me, and there are many in their 20s, 30s, and 40s. We are not affiliated with any Kingdom, and there aren’t any initiation rites, so it’ll be easy to join. Why don’t you join our guild?”

“And if it becomes uncomfortable for me?”

“Then you can just leave.”

Weed felt that Herman’s proposal was acceptable.

‘They won’t bother me about this and that for being a Sculptor.’

Most of the guilds that tried to recruit Weed approached him knowing that he was a sculptor.

A sculpture for their guild.

That was their motivation for inviting him to a guild. It seemed that nothing of that sort would happen in Herman’s guild.

“Alright. How do I join?”

“I can invite you. It’s a privilege given to all members who has been part of the guild for over a year.”

Ding!

– Herman has invited you to the Travelers of the Wilderness guild.

Information about Travelers of the Wilderness guild

Members

25

Guild Leader

Vacant

Alignment

Good

Hostile Guilds

None

Hostile Kingdom

None

Only after a certain amount of time since becoming a member will you see detailed information on the guild.

Do you want to accept this invitation?

Guilds that are at war or are hostile with other guilds make players reluctant to join, but if the guild is neutral, there is nothing to lose.

“I’ll join.”

Ding!

– You have joined the Travelers of the Wilderness guild.

Just then, the new guild popped up in Weed’s message window.

– Sabrina: Welcome to the guild, new member!

– Pin: Welcome.

– Edwin: It’s a pleasure to meet you.

A guild that welcomed its new member!

Looking at the guild member list, there were 24 people on out of 26, including Weed.

Though you could say the activity was on an extreme level, since there were only 3 people who welcomed him.

– Weed: Hello, I’m Weed. To all the guild members, nice to meet

you.

– Herman: It seems that other people are busy hunting or doing quests. In our guild, there are a lot of people who completely turn off their guild messages. So if there's something you need, you'll need to register them personally as friends and talk to them that way.

– Weed: I understand.

– Pin: But Herman grandpa, didn't you say Art Hand-nim was joining too?

– Herman: What are you saying? The one who joined just now is Art Hand.

– Pin: No way. The one who joined is Weed. Please check it, grandpa.

– Herman: There's no way I'm wrong. I invited Art Hand when I was personally raising my hand towards him..... Huh, how did this happen? As Pin said, the one who joined is really Weed.

As soon as Weed joined, he immediately set his level and profession to hidden.

He didn't want to be too friendly with this guild yet. He was reluctant to expose himself to a guild whose members he didn't know.

However, his name was seen as is.

– Weed: I am that Art Hand.

– Herman: Are you really that Dwarven sculptor Art Hand?

– Weed: Yes. But I'm not a Dwarf.

– Herman: You're not a Dwarf?

– Weed: Due to circumstances, as of now I'm pretending to be a Dwarf.

– Pin: Art Hand, it's good to see you, but what do you mean, you're not a Dwarf? You're a perfectly short Dwarf... Ack! I'm really sorry for saying Dwarves are short. Anyways, are you not the same race as Herman grandpa?

– Weed: I'm not.

– Pin: Then what is your original race?

– Weed: Human.

Herman, who was blankly standing next to Weed, suddenly realized something.

The incredible sculptures Weed made and the sight of him doing the Sculptor quests, and the time when he made the Wings of Light.

There was a thought glancing through Herman's mind.

– Herman: A Human as well as the sculptor Weed.... No way, the Lord of Morata?

– Weed: That's me.

Chapter 10: Travelers Of The Wilderness

Once it was known that Weed was the Lord of Morata, the guild chat window became very active for a brief period.

There were even 2~3 people who were lurking came out to greet him. Pin and Herman were shocked, saying they really hadn't known.

“After all, there probably aren't many people with your level of sculpting”.

Herman said this with a smile.

In retrospect, it was strange that an outstanding Dwarven sculptor had suddenly appeared. The world of Dwarf craftsmen was small, so it would be known if any skilled Dwarves came along.

In that regard, Herman was also incredibly famous figure. He was a Blacksmith, the likes of which could be counted with just ten fingers, in not just Kuruso, but in the entire the Versailles Continent!

Although he hadn't produced many goods, it's because he poured his soul into making just one sword, his name was still widely spread. He was so famous that he didn't pale in comparison with Weed.

“Did you change your face and appearance at a Dwarf shrine?”

“As a result, I am roughly similar.”

It was possible to receive a temporary blessing from the shrine and adopt a Dwarf’s appearance.

However, that particular method costs a lot of money, and he would have to make a special donation to the Priests. On top of that, it was a special type of blessing which could not be received if the player’s contribution to the shrine was too low.

“Anyway, how amusing.”

With a laugh, Herman passed over the matter.

People in the Travelers of the Wilderness guild did not probe and prod for details. Rather than asking a question for their curiosity, they decided to just cover up the secret.

Although the guild was mainly engaged in personal chatter, this time it was Weed’s turn to be surprised.

– Sabrina: Edwin.

– Edwin: Yes, Ma’am.

- Sabrina: Have you ever hunted Claude by yourself?
- Edwin: Many times. Their sap can be used to produce a healing agent.

Claude is a monster around level 380.

Medicine made from the sap of a Claude could help one recover from a severe injury if they applied it and rested. While it pales in comparison to a Priest's healing magic, it was still traded in minute quantities at high prices every day.

In case the Priest died or suffered a really large injury during a battle, it was a good idea to pack backup medicine, just in case.

- Sabrina: Do you think I can kill one?
- Edwin: Yeah, pretty easily. It has low Health so you can defeat it right away. Where are you hunting right now?
- Sabrina: Cave of Echo.
- Edwin: Getting to where Claude is, is the only troublesome part, hunting them isn't that hard, you just have to go straight through.
- Sabrina: Thank you.

Though this was obvious just by looking at Herman, the level of this guild's members wasn't normal. There weren't any trivial questions normally asked by beginners.

Even after the truth about Weed being Morata's Lord was revealed, there was merely a brief conversation out of surprise that soon faded out.

‘This doesn't seem like an average guild.’

*

Lee Hyun accessed the Dark Gamer union's guild information forums. Then, after a moment of hesitation, he went into the thread for the Travelers of the Wilderness.

“It's always safer to be on the safe side. I might as well be well informed about it.”

He was a Dark Gamer, and he could not simply relax and have fun. That was why he looked up information on the Travellers of the Wilderness.

– Travelers of the Wilderness Guild

A guild founded in the Armen Kingdom during the initial stages of Royal Road. It is known that they did not secure a special base in any Kingdom after establishment. As it is a guild made up of only a few people, the identity of its members and its exact numbers have

not been confirmed.

This guild has not engaged in any wars, and have not shown any particularly notable activities.

Through occasional guild hunts, they have been seen defeating very strong boss monsters; this is a powerful guild that cannot be disregarded.

Reference detail: Though they are classified as having a friendly disposition, the guild members' standard is very high.- Reliability: Superior.

– Financial power: Estimated to be above average. Their fixed revenue has not been confirmed.

Seeing as there wasn't any detailed information registered in even the Dark Gamer Union, it wasn't a guild that had a lot of activities.

“Even so, it's a relief that there isn't any bad talk about it.”

Lee Hyun also entered the Dark Gamer request forum. Escort and hunting requests, as well as requests for fighting in active guild wars overflowed in the forum.

Although recruiting a Dark Gamer as a mercenary was extremely pricy, there was a considerable variety of advertisements.

Usually, he only came to understand the situation in the Versailles continent, or to look up information on a request, but today was special.

He'd come to make a request!

‘Do I really have to go this far for this...’

After being briefly conflicted, he started to write.

– Title: Submission of a Request for the Investigation of a Particular Person-Required Mercenary Grade: B

– Professions: Assassins, Trackers, Thieves.

Information concerning Mandol and his wife in the city of Selchium in Ritten Kingdom is requested. Take more than three days to observe the appearance and nature of the target as well as information about the residence required.

– Payment is 5,000 gold.

Since I am also a Dark Gamer, I request this with a 20% discounted price.

Food expenses are not included!

For a mercenary of grade B with a profession that could use concealment skills, the official request fee was 5,000 gold. At the last moment, he remembered to request the discount.

“Since it’s not a dangerous request, someone’ll probably take it if they can.”

He put up the mercenary rank and made the request impossible to read unless you were a Dark Gamer with the applicable profession.

Though this was something that would have cost them at least 4,000 gold, he wanted to do his best to sculpt Mandol and his wife’s daughter.

Although money is extremely important, it can be saved up again. So if he didn’t act honorably in this matter, he wouldn’t be able to do anything sincerely.

“I would rather go to the free sample corner to fill my belly, than to dine and dash at someone else’s restaurant.”

A lion does not deign to eat grass, no matter how hungry it is — Lee Hyun was of the same logic!

*

The Church of Resurrection that seized the Isoru Kingdom.

They set up a large scale construction in the Kingdom, and began to build temples for the Church of Resurrection.

The power of Resurrection and the strength of Daymond and his priests grew accordingly with each temple. The Demonic Spirits began to increase in vitality and vigor. And soon after the Resurrection Army became more and more powerful.

From that point on, every Church in the Versailles Continent was offered the same commission.

– Existences that drenched this land's Northern region in blood have appeared. Stop them in their tracks.

In order to complete the simultaneously thrown down mission, Paladins and Priests united in the newly born Isoru Expeditionary Force!

“I will save my brethrens from Isoru Kingdom. It is my responsibility to do so.”

“It is a honor for a Knight to fight such a battle.”

The forces and guilds that dominated every castle joined in, with ulterior motives. They raised their armies, machinating to seize the abandoned, defenseless Isoru Kingdom, as soon as the Church of Resurrection was eradicated.

The number of troops willing to participate in the liberation of Isoru Kingdom was a whopping 90,000!

They invaded the Isoru Kingdom with high spirits, but a massive fortress that didn't exist in the past blocked their way.

It was the fortress which Daymond forced the residents of Isoru Kingdom to make!

Reaching 30 meters in height, there were Archers arranged on the fort walls. The fortress was blessed by nature, as it was blocked by a penetrating gorge in the center of a mountainous terrain.

“Let's bypass the fort.”

“No. If we bypass it and go around, it'd take too long.”

“There's no reason to avoid it since we're dragging along this many troops.”

Although the users that participated as mercenaries wanted to avoid it, the nobles and lords had different thoughts.

‘There is no way that an improvised fort has sturdy defences.’

‘They were probably scared of us. So for their own defense, they built such a big fortress.’

Generally, building a fortress required immense amounts of labor and money. That was because, even if it became the key point of fierce siege warfare, repairing the walls or maintaining the fortifications was difficult.

‘So that they built a large fortress is evidence that they are frightened of us?’

If Daymond’s army was confident of victory, they wouldn’t have even thought to create a fortress. The troops could only think along the lines of common sense.

“We must go in through the front.”

“For our righteous Expeditionary Force’s march, God will bless us.”

It was the General Assembly Chairman of the Expeditionary Force.

The Priests and representatives of every church, who were the army’s lead participating users, spoke what was obvious in their minds.

Truthfully, even the Expeditionary Forces behind them were quickly organizing themselves to follow. Since many had taken their armies from areas far away from the Isoru Kingdom to join the Expeditionary Force, they wanted to hurry. In consideration of

the opinions of the lords and nobles, they decided to wage siege warfare on the fortress.

“Make a path.”

“Stock up on enough arrows and prepare to install a ladder. How far are you digging the underground tunnel?”

The Expeditionary Force set up their positions, and they made thorough preparations to wage siege warfare. Though they didn't doubt victory, their wariness of the Resurrection army that had seized Isoru Kingdom hadn't disappeared either.

They were a valuable force that lead NPC soldiers as well. They didn't want to lose soldiers they had laboriously trained through military exercises in this place. The stone fortress was very tall and looked thick, and it didn't seem like it would be easy to penetrate it with normal methods.

As the Magicians buffed them and they made orderly war preparations. Time flew by until it night came, the dawn of the last day of the month, when the monsters became the most powerful!

The Resurrection Army that Daymond led made a surprise attack on the Expeditionary Force.

The giga-Demonic Spirits burst out, destroying the fortress gates.

Stomp — Stomp — Stomp!

Each step the Demonic Spirits took created a great quake.

The forces that were resting in the barracks immediately rose to their feet.

“It’s the enemy!”

“I never thought that they would launch a surprise attack!”

Perplexed looks were on the faces of lords who came leading many soldiers.

The sieges they’d experienced commonly started in the morning and ended in the evening. Late-night surprise attacks that would occur in real wars did not happen often.

Since it was favorable to simply keep watch inside the fortress. There was absolutely no reason to overexert themselves. Even if they tried to attack at night, since they knew it was dangerous, the fault of the users who weren’t there to participate in the charge was big.

Though they knew there was an extremely high chance that they might die, they didn’t want to organize a charge.

Though night raids on the supply carts occurred frequently in the war between Kallamore Kingdom and Haven Kingdom, in other

areas there weren't still were many people who had experienced a real war.

“Everyone get up and block them!”

“It's a fight! Prepare to fight!”

Users ran out of the barracks.

When they got rest, the Soldiers played poker or drank alcohol, and were in a state where it was difficult to prepare for battle.

It would be difficult to drink alcohol in the war to come, so for the last time they could they drank too much, and thanks to that it looked like they would receive more damage.

‘Before we came here we passed an Isoru Kingdom village warehouse that cached many bottles of wine. Was it all for this?’

It was too childish to call it a strategy. Nevertheless, they accepted it because it was a surprising tactic that found the enemy's weak spot.

The alcohol the Expeditionary Force had discovered while on the move was branded as supplies, and everyone drank aggressively before that alcohol completely ran out.

They had guzzled away with the motive of getting drunk.

“Damn it, to think they’d resort to petty tricks!”

Even as the inebriated users stumbled, they pulled out their swords and raised them.

In any case half of the Expeditionary Force was made up of Paladins and Priests. Since it was out of the question for them to have partake in the alcohol, the drunken users intended to leave the fight to them and hide; there was no need to stand in the front and fight the enemy.

But strangely enough, their swords felt much heavier than usual.

– You have caught a disease. Health and Mana is reduced.

Breathing is more difficult and coughs occur. If you do not receive appropriate treatment soon the disease may be aggravated.

The epidemic had spread to the camp.

A crossing rat swarm had suddenly appeared around the barracks.

“Cleric, Priest sirs! Where are you?”

“Please cure this disease!”

The users sought the Clerics and Priests first.

But the Priests who were capable of treating them were in a place that was already being attacked by a horde of flying Demonic Spirits.

This was the advance of the Resurrection Army. It wasn't a simple night attack, but an all or nothing attack done by amassing all of the Demonic Spirits.

ROAAAAR!

“Ahhhhh!”

“Fight with the enemy. Where did everyone go!”

“Run away!”

“Fight, don't run away!”

The surprise attack of the last night of the month drove the Expeditionary Forces to near extinction.

The Resurrection Army gathered the lives of those who were barely alive, and gained more Demonic Spirits and comrades.

Every time they occupied castles and towns, they emerged victorious against other churches and destroyed their temples, their strength and authority rose!

Daymond, who gathered the forces, left after defending Isoru Kingdom, and once again resolved to go South. It was to take over the land once ruled by the Predators of the Land.

Another Expeditionary Force was raised, and the castle lords in the Resurrection Army's attack route gathered the best forces in their territories.

Places where the Resurrection Army passed through became paradise for Demonic Spirits.

*

Through Weed's hard work, he managed to recover 100 art stats.

"It's quite a chore to raise the Arts stats that were consumed."

Although the stat was restored at a relatively fast pace, it wasn't an easy task. But thanks to that, the Sculpting Skill proficiency went up a little and reached 70%, and his Handicraft skill was also raised to Advanced level 6.

It could be said that the Handicraft skill was a memento of the stat grinding!

Weed crafted earrings with complete care.

– Art stat has risen by 1.- Sculpting skill proficiency has increased slightly.

– Handicraft skill proficiency has increased slightly.

– Accessories Crafting skill has been acquired.- Accessory Crafting: The skill to craft necklaces, earrings, and rings. With a higher level of skill, it is possible to craft beautiful accessories with high Charm.

Now it was 101!

Weed's cheeks trembled.

He'd even acquired an exclusive skill of Crafters, Accessory Crafting.

Weed sighed.

“There's no impossibility in reconstruction.”

He was worried sick that he might even pick up a magic spell like this.

“Anyways, now there’s not much left ‘til Master.”

While his guild members in the party chat window were chatting, Weed concentrated on making accessories.

‘There’s really a lot of sculptures I’ve got to make.’

The sculptures that came to mind would have to wait until all his Art stats were restored. It was a waste to make those sculptures just for stat restoration.

If he didn’t arm himself with the spirit of reconstruction down to the marrow of his bones, it’d be impossible not to turn back. Lee Hyun learned this kind of perseverance from the company manager, who had him carry bricks up 25 flights of stairs because it was a waste of electricity to use the elevator. Then, he got a whisper from Hwaryeong.

– Weed-nim. What are you doing?

– I’m making handicrafts in Kuruso.

– Handicrafts?

– Yes. I learned the skill for making accessories now.

– Though I knew crafting was possible with sculpting, can you acquire even exclusive skills?

– It happened after I made about 1,000 of them. The work of the sculptor profession basically isn't that different compared to other crafting professions.

– Oh my! You went through so much for me. Accessories are like the life of a Dancer... Thank you so much.

– ...

Ever since Weed created the Statue of Goddess Hwaryeong had been growing increasingly interested in his sculptures.

From the way she was talking, it seemed like she'd misunderstood and thought that Weed had undoubtedly learned the accessories skill for her sake.

Weed spoke frankly.

– I'm making some pieces for Hwaryeong too.

Of course successful accessories were saved for Hwaryeong.

He intended to sell them to the rich Hwaryeong.

– Thank you. I want to see you soon.

It was when he was was whispering with Hwaryeong and making crafts.

The Blacksmiths of Kuruso heard disturbing rumors.

“Apparently Daymond’s army seized the Nopunem Plains.”

“So one twentieth of the the Versailles continent is their territory?”

“It’s not wrong to say they’ve currently prepared the greatest power. After conquering Isoru Kingdom, new Demonic Spirits have continuously been born, so the size of their army kept getting bigger as they go.”

“It’s really scary.”

Weed overheard this as he was creating accessories.

As a matter of fact, the selling price of items had sky-rocketed. As the Resurrection Church wholeheartedly attacked, the Knights of the Versailles Continent did not spare any money in order to protect themselves.

However, on the level of the Union there were worries.

The logic of holding the increasingly powerful Resurrection Army in check was gradually gathering strength. However, the

war between every power hadn't yet ceased, and on the basis of the increasing prices, only the Dark Gamers were enjoying the special occasion.

‘The Resurrection Army. Tch, what should be done.’

Weed had also seen the images of the Resurrection Army through the broadcasts.

The army of Demonic Spirits that couldn't just be expressed as “incredible”!

The Resurrection army had grown strong enough to trample the whole might of a Kingdom.

Daymond guaranteed the safety of undefiant, ordinary users and tourists who happened to be enjoying a break. Thanks to that, they were able to receive broadcasted images of the areas seized by the Resurrection Army.

The temple resembled a Demonic Spirit holding a sickle, while riding a horse! That was the massive temple the Resurrection Army was making.

The problem was that the shape of this temple was very familiar to Weed.

‘The sculpture Death Hand left behind was like that...’

He began to doubt that it was possibly a chain quest.

It could be an item necessary for Daymond's quest, or on the flip side it could be a quest to stop them. No matter which side it was, there was no doubt that it was related.

‘The problem is... Should I receive this quest, or not.’

If we accepted the quest, there could be another incredibly difficult fight.

So Weed debated on this as he made crafts.

‘Should I just sell this off and be done with it.’

Even though he wanted to sell the sculpture, if the sculpting skill wasn't high enough, or even a little lacking, it was an item that couldn't be used, so the problem was that he wouldn't be able to find a buyer.

Chapter 11: Dain's Wait

Director Kim Han Seo was looking at Yoo Byung Jun — his teacher, the genuine genius scientist who was sent by the heavens.

The whitish centered lines on his head, red bloodshot eyes, and thick eyeglasses.

Though that was the stressed-looking Yoo Byung Jun, his brains were at a level where he could be called a genius.

‘Though the world knows that Royal Road was made together by me and 17 other scientists...’

Director Kim Han Seo lightly shook his head.

There was many differences to the truth than what the public knew.

‘In truth, the concept came from teacher, and he also developed the core technology. The other scientists and I did nothing more than simply flesh out the framework that teacher made.’

For Director Kim Han Seo and the other scientists, it was daunting just to do the parts they were responsible for.

There were many times when the reputedly impossible perfect

Virtual Reality System was considered a fantasy. There had been dozens of times when he'd gotten up from bed in the morning after having a nightmare about failure.

Every time they were stopped at their tracks, Yoo Byung Jun stepped in to help them, and the person who understood the whole system was also him.

Although the other scientists including Director Kim Han Seo were able to generally manage Versailles for the sake of their tasks, their powers were limited.

Being careful to stifle his footsteps, Director Kim Han Seo stopped in front of Yoo Byung Jun.

“I have returned.”

“Yes, good job. What were the kids at the office saying?”

“Yes. They were being very concerned about the Resurrection Army.”

“Keke. I supposed so.”

“In particular, the Strategy Management's Department Head Son Il Kang was complaining that he has to work overtime every day.”

“Kekeke.”

Yoo Byung Jun just laughed like as if he had already expected it.

“The user named Daymond, what do you think of him, teacher?”

“Let’s see. Well, he’s not bad.”

Byung Yoo Jun responded dissatisfactory.

“The Resurrection Army quest... Well, an incredible amount of power can be gained from that commission.”

The scientists who handled the main console in the System Management Department cocked their ears to listen in on this particular conversation.

Yoo Byung Jun was a scientist who transcended intelligence itself and secluded himself without revealing himself to the world.

It was just that the outside world didn’t know, but in reality, Yoo Byung Jun had taken on the role of leading everyone.

But what truly shocked the scientists and raised goosebumps, was the might of the Versailles’ Goddess. Without any defects, they didn’t even need to intervene with things modified by artificial interventions.

It was the super AI that perfectly regulated Royal Road since its

release, a fearsome system that could even be called a true Goddess.

And it wasn't just Royal Road; it even controlled related executive affairs of the Unicorn Corporation. Even at that extent, the Versailles' Goddess was only using 20% of its administrative resources.

For the scientists, it was a feat that was undisputedly extraordinary.

If someone was told that this system had been developed by just 1 scientist, they would never have believed it. This was the judgment of the scientists who knew Yoo Byung Jun.

— A scientist that cannot be replaced by ten million of mankind.

— He is a scientist who would have been able to advance the world's technology by 30 years, had he produced anything besides Royal Road.

He was a person that the scientists could only respect and regard as marvelous, to the point that even being a contemporary of Yoo Byung Jun was a source of pride for them.

“Greed ruined their work. Although they've been on a roll since they're using petty tricks... Later on they'll make more enemies.”

There were no scientists who doubted Yoo Byung Jun's words.

The words of the genius of the century have never been wrong. If

he said that was so, then at some point it would become like that. And for the scientists who knew about the prearranged quest and the hidden dangers throughout the Versailles's Goddess, they did not feel that the Resurrection Army was truly a crisis.

Royal Road was a great Virtual Reality.

As complicated as the applied technology, there were stories hidden throughout the continent, and the histories were innumerable.

The scientists knew the adventurers who were hiding and raising their strength, what the level of the warriors were, what quests were in progress, and they found no reason to be tense.

With a continent that was too wide, and an incredibly large number of users that could be called the virtual social integration of humanity, the scientists put beaming smiles on their faces.

Although they had participated in the development, Royal Road was a truly fun virtual reality. After the release of Royal Road, there was even a report that humanity's happiness had gone up by at least 40%.

With the pride that they had opened the doors to a new world, the scientists returned to their own duties.

Yoo Byung Jun muttered to himself.

“People in this world delude themselves too easily.”

On the screen he was watching, he could see the activities of the adventurers on the Versailles Continent.

A user who raised strength while hunting in a jungle no one else would seek out.

A user who trained their basic Stamina while climbing the most perilous mountain in the continent.

A user who was growing stronger as they tested their own limitations on a deserted island filled with monsters.

Yoo Byung Jun felt happy whenever he saw these users.

With endless tests on their limitations, they were experiencing extreme situations that could not be undergone on earth.

“To say that Royal Road is a game...”

After the creation of Royal Road and its release, the public media had gone wild over the technology.

The cutting-edge technology that realized the most realistic virtual reality!

Royal Road's rapidly burgeoning user-base marked the ruin of existing games.

A new world had opened up for the users.

This caused even people in the general populace who were unfamiliar with games to become fascinated, and articles claiming that Royal Road had calmed the entertainment industry came out one after another.

Corporate managers and directors in the real world found great joy in selling fruit within the medieval castle walls, or even setting off on adventures, armed with a sword strapped to their waists.

As they scraped up enormous funds, they received praise as the stars of the game industry's next generation.

Yoo Byung Jun smirked every time he saw those articles.

"Soft and lazy humans. They don't even know their future is hanging here."

It was something so pathetic that Yoo Byung Jun couldn't stand it. .

He had dedicated his life to Royal Road. It was a monumental work of art that he had devoted his energy and life to, created as if it were his own child.

If it was just for the sake of making one game, he would have already given up long ago.

*

After chasing the Glowing Skeletons for a long seven days, they discovered the grand prize near the cemetery at last, and they were able to purify and defeat it with the Cleric's holy magic.

"It's a success!"

"Great job, everyone"

The Cleric and the Pikeman were especially happy.

"Dain-nim was especially helpful. Thank you."

Chasing a Glowing Skeleton was difficult even with a skilled hunter. That was because it would go into a mountain with a lot of monsters, or find dungeons and hide inside. As they stopped to fight while chasing after the Glowing Skeleton, it would escape somewhere else before they even realized it.

If they didn't have a Shaman's magic to increase movement speed, catching the Glowing Skeleton would have been much harder.

Dain's teeth slightly showed as she smiled.

“It was nothing. I wasn't even very helpful in the fights.”

“That's not true. Even though you're a Shaman, the power of your treatment and all sorts of beneficial skills... If Dain-nim hadn't been here, it would have truly difficult to successfully accomplish this request.”

“Dain-unni is a true shaman.”

Dain had firmly won the trust of her party members.

“Unni, stay with us.”

“Will you do the next request with us?”

“Yes, I will.”

For a few months, Dain freely enjoyed adventures together with the party members.

Her fame improved day by day as well. When there weren't many users in Morata who did not know who Shaman Dain was, she left for an adventure in the Land of the Black Curse.

It was an expedition that over twenty of Morata's most seasoned

adventurers participated in!

After experiencing new monsters and a new dungeon, she returned to Morata.

*

“Whew! I’m back in Morata again.”

Dain grinned broadly.

The Morata she had returned to after a long time... She hadn’t known how much she would miss it.

It was because having savored enough solitude in the sky city of Lavias, she had secured a new position in the North and had made friends in Morata.

“But I have to get the curse resolved...”

Dain made a worried face.

The entire expedition had received a curse in the Land of the Black Curse.

Their skin turned dark like a Dark Elves’, and primitive tribe-like patterns had appeared.

A curse that reduced the effects of magic and skills by half!

It was a curse that could not be removed even by the holy magic of a Shaman or Cleric.

‘I’ll go meet with the Priest first.’

Although the Priests in the expedition were also helpless, they could only believe in their Priests.

Dain went into the Church of Freya.

Similarly to the expedition that just came, there was a crowd waiting for a blessing.

After waiting for a long time for her turn, she met a Priest of the Freya Church.

“I would like to have the curse on me cured.”

“You have received a curse of an ancient evil.”

“Yes.”

“This is because you went into a place where you should not have gone. It’s a curse that formed as you explored a land that does not

welcome intruders. To lift the curse, you'll need Kelpie Wood, Platinum Powder, Carrot, and a White Rabbit's Blood. If you daub these ingredients on your body, then blend them and drink, you can be freed from the curse."

Beside the Kelpie Wood, though it might take a little time, they weren't hard goods to gather.

Dain smiled as she did not expect the cure to be so simple.

"Thank you very much."

"It was my pleasure. All harmony is in accordance to the Goddess' will."

*

"Buying and selling loot!"

"Tell me if there is anything you need."

The raised voices came from merchants lined up in the square outside the church of Freya. The competition of merchants is a sight to be seen anywhere in the Versailles Continent.

After selling off all the loot she had gathered, Dain calmly milled about the square.

‘This time I’ll relax and wait.’

Meeting Weed was the whole reason for coming to Morata.

However, Weed did not return to Morata, and she got tired of waiting and left for an adventure.

When she left, the Statue of the Goddess Freya was built, as well as other numerous sculptures and the castle had evolved as well.

A rumor that Weed, the Count of Morata, had returned circulated. However, he seemed to be away on another adventure, so it was said that meeting him would be difficult.

‘What were the chances of him coming back while she was away anyway?’

As Dain looked at a building that hadn’t been there before on Morata’s newly developed street, she walked around lonesomely.

‘The Statue of the Goddess Freya, huh...’

As she looked at the glamorous Statue of the Goddess Freya, she felt slightly jealous. For her, who was only slightly prettier than an average girl even when she viewed herself positively, she really did feel a little irritated.

She wanted to return to the location of the Lavias cave sculptures

in her memories, but if she did that it would be even harder to meet Weed.

It was when Dain was looking around the square.

“Excuse me.”

She looked back at the voice that had called out to her.

Short and slim, it was a lady with eyes that looked extremely virtuous. From the white robe she was dressed in, she must have the profession of a Cleric or a Priest.

“Did you call me?”

“Yes

“What can I help you with?”

“Oh, I’m sorry for asking this after just meeting you... You’re the Shaman known as Dain, right?”

“That’s right.”

“Whew! I finally found you. My name is Irene.”

Starting the conversation had made Irene feel awkward and very

uncomfortable, but she could not hide the joyous expression when she found Dain.

“My party is trying to do a quest right now. But it’s far away, and we thought it’d be good to have someone with a lot of adventuring magic, so we’ve been trying to recruit a Shaman.”

The name of the quest that Pale had discovered was, ‘The Secret of Manufacturing Ancient Breastplate.’

It was said that the book recording the method of manufacture was buried somewhere in the North, so they wanted recruit an Adventurer and a Shaman, and leave. Then they heard that the famous Shaman named Dain had returned just then and had found her.

Irene explained again with a nervous look.

“The difficulty is C. If you don’t mind, would you like to adventure with us?”

Dain slowly studied Irene’s face.

‘She looks like a nice person. She also seems to be around my age...’

But she was unwilling to leave on a quest. She was in the position of waiting for someone.

She couldn't always just wait for Weed to return to Morata, but since she had just come after completing an adventure, she wanted to take a rest for now.

“I'm sorry. Right now I'm going to rest...”

Just as Dain was saying this, a lady wearing a fancy dress embedded with jewels walked toward them from the direction of a store.

Every time she lightly stepped forward, she was followed by the eyes of the users in the square. Simply watching her walk could deliver the feelings of vigor and pleasure.

‘She's a Dancer.’

However, the only professions that could go on adventures or hunt while wearing dresses were Minstrels and Dancers. She also wore bracelets, necklaces, earrings, and short heels that were comfortable to dance in.

Since she wasn't holding an instrument, Dain concluded that she was a Dancer.

“Hwaryeong-unni, where were you?”

“I was eating at a restaurant. But who's this?”

“This is Dain-nim. She’s a famous Shaman...”

“Ah, that person!”

Hwaryeong looked at Dain’s face as if she was seeing it anew.

Since she was a Shaman with black, jewel-like skin, she was extremely distinctive.

“Did you ask if she was going to come with us for the request?”

“Yes. But unfortunately it doesn’t seem like she’ll be able to do it with us.”

Dain, who had been standing by and listening to Hwaryeong and Irene’s conversation, suddenly interrupted.

“Hey there, I’ve changed my mind.”

“What?”

“The adventure you were talking about just now, I’d also like to do it together.”

“Really? That’s great! Thank you.”

“Yes. Thanks for having me.”

Dain accepted Irene’s offer.

The Statue of the Goddess Freya that Morata’s Lord Weed had sculpted!

It was because the statue’s face and Hwaryeong’s were miraculously similar.

*

Lee Hyun trained his body daily at Ahn Hyun Do’s dojo.

Lee Hyun’s distinctly divided, toned muscles that lacked excess fat, his physical strength, and endurance grew stronger every day. While experiencing the training from hell from 4 different training instructors for 30 minutes each, Lee Hyun’s body was becoming a weapon.

“Even a sharp sword is completely useless in the hands of a dull person. If you don’t even have complete control over your body, then you can forget about holding a sword. Though the training is rough, it’s a process that’s required to wield the blade.”

Lee Hyun faithfully followed Jung Il Hun’s harsh lecture. He endured the hell training without a single complaint.

It was to the point that the instructors consulted amongst themselves.

“Isn’t the training intensity too strong?”

“If we keep going like this, will he not say that he’ll quit?”

“Even I don’t know. Since Master told us to do it, he must have something in mind.”

“That’s probably true, right?”

“Though occasionally he really doesn’t have any ideas...”

“...”

As Lee Hyun tamed his body, he perceived the feeling that his true skills were being strengthened.

If his body was solidified, then his mental strength would be boosted.

The willpower that formed if he passed the arduous training!

When he completed a session of hell training with the instructors, he would take a break while drinking the tea Ahn Hyun Do gave him.

“It’s ginseng tea.”

“Thank you, Master.”

Lee Hyun gulped down the ginseng tea.

He was thirsty, but it was so that he could drink another cup of the healthy tea!

Ahn Hyun Do spoke after pouring him another cup of the ginseng tea.

“Is the training not hard?”

“It’s doable.”

“Yes. That’s praiseworthy. With that attitude, you should be able to progress further. How is the rest of your life?”

“My life?”

“I’m talking about your own life. I’m talking about how your life is.”

After a moment of thought, Lee Hyun nodded.

“It is good.”

“Good? What’s good?”

“Grandmother is receiving her treatment well, and my little sister is going to school well. As am I...”

Lee Hyun briefly hesitated and spoke.

“There are no big grievances in my life.”

In the difficult days, eating and living had been the biggest worry.

Although there were times when he wasn’t able to get treatment when he was sick, now he was even able to save a fair amount of money. As he played Royal Road he was able to buy the things they needed, so there weren’t many elements that grieved him.

Ahn Hyung Do shook his head.

“Is that not literally your everyday life?”

“ ... ”

“Are you satisfied with your current life?”

“Yes.”

Lee Hyun answered easily.

The school studies were a little tiresome and bothersome, but apart from that he was getting the things he wanted, so he was living contentedly.

“It’s perfect right now. I’m even going to university, my little sister is studying well too, and Grandmother is recovering her health...”

Ahn Hyun Do asked abruptly.

“Then what is the work you want to do.”

“...The work I want to do?”

“Whether it’s a goal you had since you were young, or there must have been some work that you wanted to do.”

Lee Hyun was momentarily silent.

He had lived these days for his sister’s sake.

As he slept at night, there were times when he’d feared the day to come. The years when he worried while he ate, things such as

what he would do after the hunger disappeared.

Without hope, he had lived while despairing.

If there had been no responsibility to support his family, he might have been able to throw down an extreme decision sooner.

Now his little sister was grown up, and she was even going to school on the scholarship she'd received. Grandmother's big surgery was over and she was waiting to recover as well.

His life's goal was to live for his family. In the event that he would no longer have to take care of his family, what he would do afterwards was something he had never thought about.

After heaving a sigh, Lee Hyun spoke.

"I have no dream."

*

The SwordNoobs passed the Plains of Despair and arrived at the Orc village in the Yuroki Mountains.

The place was teeming with pig-faced Orc users, and because they had such great reproductive rates there were even whole families gathered there.

After a female or males decided their mates, even if they ate just one meal together, baby Orcs would bounce out of somewhere.

SwordNoob5 held his head in his hands.

“We’re ruined. To say they’re married Orcs...”

SwordNoob3 patted his shoulder.

“It is okay, sahyung, it’s simply that a man and a woman are sharing one meal together. We have to understand that this is how Orcs naturally are.”

SwordNoob4 also interrupted.

“Sahyung, manly broad-mindedness is what wins the game.”

Of course, real sex was possible in Royal Road.

Humans or Elves could also strive to obtain a house, and there were many cases where a loving couple did so to spend a cozy time together.

However, Orcs were a special case — if they ate just one evening meal with their spouses, or someone they were close to, baby Orcs would come out.

At first, of course that was too impractical, and there were many forlorn male Orcs who said the progression was too easy. It was the Orc's racial characteristic, the vigorous reproduction feature. There had been wicked intentions to take advantage of this disposition, and many who wanted very much to satisfy themselves.

However, soon they realized the reason why Orcs needed to be able to make baby Orcs simply by eating one meal.

‘It looks like 4 fingers will fit into the nostril of the partner Orc female.’

‘The partner is an Orc male! If he opens his mouth and yawns, a whole watermelon might fit in there.’

‘Just look at the plump side fat and belly, on a sober mind it's hard to go together with him.’

‘What a relief.’

They were very satisfied that all they had to do was eat food together, and the Orcs repeated the propagation.

The Orc villages on the Yuroki Mountains were expanding.

Adult Orcs would take along young baby Orcs and have them grow up. Whole families of Orc tribes developed, and Orcs controlling the families appeared.

Since Seechwi was an Orc Commander, after she arrived at the Yuroki Mountains she emitted the light of talent.

“You Orcs, chwi-chwi-chwik!! We must eat more. Must have more food. Let’s fight. Chwik!”

There were no reasonable explanations or reasons or the like. She made the Orcs satisfied with the simple eat and fight logic, and created subordinates.

In the vicinity of the Orc villages, there were many tourists who had come to sightsee to satisfy their curiosity.

“Orcs really look unique.”

“Individual Orcs are weak, but their reproductive rate is something to be feared. They don’t recruit mercenaries, the baby Orcs can come out so easily and endlessly offer their loyalty... I think the Orcs will be able to grow really quickly.”

“Will it be okay even though they say Orcs are on really bad terms with the Dark Elves?”

“Since users can now choose Dark Elves too, sharp conflicts between them will probably happen.”

“A war with Humans could happen in the future too.”

“A racial war between the Orcs and Humans? There’s probably a possibility of that. If the number of individual Orcs grows and they come to the Central Continent, then there’s no doubt they’ll bump into each other.”

“Isn’t right now the opportunity to strike when the Orcs are weak?”

“There’s nothing we can gain by fighting the Orcs. And it’s too far to come for Human armies to cross the Plains of Despair. If a fight with the Orcs occurs, then that itself could become a quest, so there are probably many people who are waiting for it to happen.”

The tourists did not go inside the village and were observing from outside. That was because the relationship between Orcs and Humans wasn’t all that great so it was dangerous to get close.

However the SwordNoobs entered the Orc’s village without any reservations, and upon seeing the SwordNoobs do quests together with a female Orc, the tourists were very shocked.

“How can a Human act like that? The Orcs don’t even care about them.”

“It must be part of a quest.”

“I think it could be a characteristic of their profession. I heard there are professions that have high intimacy with other races.”

When the tourists were pitting their opinions against each other, a convincing answer appeared.

“Just look at their appearance. Is there a difference between them and a male Orc?”

“...”

A closer look revealed that the explanation was plausible.

Though there was no doubt that they were Human, their wide shoulders and their physiques outclassed the Orcs.

Just by seeing those bodies, the simple Orcs had easily become friendly toward them.

*

“Hyaa!”

SwordNoob violently swung the two-handed sword.

The Ogre. In terms of physical strength alone, the monster was an opponent second to none.

The SwordNoob who was at the apex of his class, doctrine, and

sword arts was not able to suppress his piled up rage.

The movement of the sword was rapid and intense.

Kuoooooooo!

The Ogre swung its ax with extreme fury, and although the wind grazed his face as the ax passed, the Ogre was unable to follow the natural movements of the SwordNoob.

“Tak!”

The SwordNoob’s swung sword frayed the Ogre’s side. Even with his outstanding attack power, the Ogre did not die easily.

Since he didn’t use any skills, he had a lot of mana left. He purposely did not aim for the fatal vital spot and hacked away at the Ogre’s whole body.

The words of his most brilliant pupil, who had come to him late, would not leave his mind.

“To have no dream...”

The SwordNoob’s memories of his youth came to mind.

‘There was only fighting for me.’

He had chased strength and advanced towards the fighting that made his blood race.

There were many times when he'd had to put his life on the line, and he'd even struggled with gruesome wounds in deadly situations. Although he had very briefly felt satisfied after defeating a strong opponent, it just led anew to the process of looking for more powerful men to challenge.

After only fighting and training as if possessed by something, his youthful days had passed.

Then, one day when he regained consciousness and looked around, he had risen to the position of the top swordsman.

The glory of the admiration and scars he received every time he beat a strong opponent. He was the ground-breaking, risen SwordNoob whom no one could surpass with a sword.

Although there were many people in the general populace who did not know who he was, martial artists and the people of the backstreet world were all in awe of him, and feared him.

Despite that, one part of SwordNoob's heart was empty. After he'd achieved his goal, he did not have a lifelong partner, and his whole family thought that he had died.

“I didn't have a family.”

The emptiness and despondency that resulted from the goal that he had achieved over his life!

“Although I have become the best with the sword, there was no one around me.”

Before SwordNoob returned to the ordinary life of going back to Korea, finding his family, and raising his disciples, he had spent a lot of time alone.

There was no reason for his disciples to follow in his footsteps.

That was because the burden of family was heavily weighing down on his shoulders. Since it was something that could be done together with family, friends, and fellow brothers, there was no reason to feel alone.

Weed had strong will and judgement, and possessed the ability to take action immediately and put his skills into practice. If there was anything he needed to do, he did not hesitate. Although he occasionally showed a tendency for timidity, he was a man.

In his current state he was like a child searching for his lifelong goal and dream.

“I envy that kid.”

The SwordNoob's honest feelings understood his best pupil one hundred percent. If he had also had a little sister as beautiful and cute as Lee Hye Yeon, he would have never left his family.

“And how are his friends again.”

He even had pleasant and beautiful ladies like Hwaryeong, Irene, and Romuna by his side.

SwordNoob looked back at his memories.

How had his youthful days really been?

“There were only unlucky-looking men! I had to get stronger if only to trample down those arrogant bastards.”

If he had been in enviable circumstances like Weed, why would he have only fought in his youth!

“This loathsome, unmarried life.”

SwordNoob grumbled and hardened his resolve.

“I've left him alone in the hands of the other instructors for too long. It's time to teach him now.”

He would show Weed what true hell training was.

He was resolved to teach Weed the real sword.

*

With the festival approaching, the number of students staying late in Korea University was increasing.

Each department was preparing plays and musicals, and a stage for performing music was installed. Expectations of a music festival, magic show, and even the neighboring university's sport meet spread through rumors.

Lee Hyun could not possibly understand this.

“Why must we do something that can be seen on television?”

With his utterly meager sensitivity, merely not having to attend the festive school for a few days was gratifying. To Lee Hyun, the festival of the Korea University that matched the regional culture matched well and was sought out by many famous celebrities was simply an inconvenience.

However, his department seniors came out and threatened them.

“We cannot be outstripped by other departments in this festival. We can't let them make light of us just because we're a new department. Does everyone understand?”

“Yes!”

The new students answered with smiling faces.

Lee Hyun held his tongue.

“What useless competitive mentality. Why can’t we be looked down upon? A life lived while passing unnoticed is quite comfortable. Stopping the school’s antagonism and prejudice? What nonsense.”

He had considerable complaints, but since he did not want to get involved in something troublesome, so he stayed silent.

‘Even if I don’t say it, someone else probably will.’

There wasn’t a rule that said everyone had to participate in the festival, so all he had to do was wait for it to pass.

As the day of the festival came closer and closer, the virtual reality department had not made definite plans on what to do.

“What about dressing up as our Royal Road characters and doing a parade?”

“We should make a large dinosaur. We could make a Tyrannosaurus hologram, and if we had it roam around the

festival, it could be the highlight of the festival.”

“How about the incomparably vicious Velociraptor? If we have hundreds of them running around and hunting humans...”

Only absurd and grandiose opinions emerged and a reasonable plan did not form.

It was when there were only two weeks left until the festival.

The student body executives held a meeting with the whole department.

“We must do something as well.”

This was the united view of the executive seniors, including the president.

However, there were neither preparations nor plans.

“It’s tiresome to prepare something for every festival, and there’s already no time so can’t we just pass it?”

Choi Sang Jun cautiously presented his opinion. Then the returning senior spoke with an impartial tone.

“The professors are currently wondering whether or not they

should do another department membership training (MT) before the break.”

“....”

“Specifically, it’s a considerable Silmido, a 6 night, 7 day course...”

“I definitely want to participate in the festival!”

The previously uninterested seniors and new students offered their opinions.

“The problem is what could we do...? Of course we have to do the sports meet in the name of our department. Since there are a lot of girls in our department it’d be good if a lot of them came out and participated. Anyone opposed to it?”

“...”

“I see there’s none. Then let’s just have everyone attend.”

The President’s words were absolute.

Suffering a little in the festival was a hundred times better than going to Silmido.

“After that I think we urgently need to go out on at least the music festival, because the professors never fail to come and watch.”

“For the music festival, have about five teams practice and send them up.”

They were quickly coming to an agreement. Though it was a festival that the students should enjoy, they would do anything to impress the professors.

Even for the students, just attending was bothersome, but since Korea University’s festivals were famous and there were a lot of things to watch, they were waiting for the festival.

“And I think we’ll have to open a bar too, because we have to earn event funds from the bar. Who wants to participate in the bar?”

If it was a bar, they would have to cook until late at night, and there were a lot of chores to do. All things considered, though it was a tiresome job, Lee Hyun willingly raised his hand.

“You’re Lee Hyun, right? Okay, thanks. Anyone else?”

By the mood it seemed like all the freshmen and seniors had to participate in at least one task.

He had judged that it was better to work in the relatively

comfortable bar.

‘The play or whatever is preparing all week, so just suffering during the festival time is probably better.’

Since the bar opened during the day, he might even be able to set aside some time. However, excluding Lee Hyun, there were no students who voluntarily raised their hands. In many ways, working the bar would make it difficult to sightsee and they regarded it as a pain, so no one wanted to participate.

Then, 1 female student raised her hand and broke everyone’s expectations.

It was an honor that she simply came to the same school as them. Though they saw her at school every day, it was she who was so beautiful that they wondered if it was a dream, reality, or heaven.

Seo Yoon was raising her hand.

Even the President was so taken aback that he spoke formally.

[T/N: In Korean, formal and informal speeches are very distinct.]

“Surely you do not plan to participate in the bar?”

Seo Yoon nodded slightly.

Then the other male students simultaneously raised their hands.

“President, me too! I would also like to try working in the bar.”

“I raised my hand first. Please just let me do it.”

“Sunbae. No, hyung-nim! It’s me, Dong Hun! You’ll squeeze me in, right? Right?”

“Sang Hyuk, I’ll buy you booze until we graduate so I’ll just request that you give me the bar job. I’ll enshrine you as my life’s savior!”

The other students’ eyes shone brightly as they shouted that they would participate, and the bar staff list quickly filled up.

To be continued...

Book 15: The Pure-White Beauty

Chapter 1: Dwarf's Gift

“I think I’d better go now.”

When Weed said he would leave Kuruso, the Dwarves were disappointed. They had become friendly through quests and sculptures.

“Do you really have to go?”

Herman asked with a sad voice, “Can’t you just continue making sculptures here in Kuruso.”

Blacksmiths did not often leave after settling in Kuruso. It had all the facilities and materials for blacksmithing, so there was no need.

Weed shook his head.

“I am a Sculptor. It’s difficult if a Sculptor does not travel the wide world and gather experience. Now that I’ve done what I wanted to do in Kuruso, I shall leave.”

He had acquired the secret skill of sculpting!

Although he was unable to find the wooden sculpture that the Sculpting Master had hidden somewhere, he had perceived the

secret skill of sculpting on his own.

He had used over 300 Art stat to create the spirits, but at the end of his grinding he had recovered them all.

In the end, all he would leave behind were memories of gruesome grinding in the Dwarven City of Kuruso. Although of course, there were thrilling memories of when he restored Kendellev's water sculptures hidden deep within the lake.

Herman spoke bitterly.

“In the end, you appear to be leaving.”

“Yes. I'm sorry.”

“Then we will have a Dwarven farewell party.”

“There's no need to go that far.”

“It is a tradition here in Kuruso.”

Though it was a tradition, Weed was uncomfortable and tried to refuse. Herman saw right through Weed's thoughts and began to speak.

“It's an event where all the Dwarves who settled in Kuruso comes

out to drink and have fun. Because Blacksmiths spend most of their time polish their skills, they don't come out often. However, all the Blacksmiths will attend the farewell party, and each one will give a present to the departing Dwarf."

"It seems that we definitely have to have a farewell party."

The word present changed Weed's mind. It would be a joyful thing to leave with his belly amply stocked and his hands full of gifts.

Herman added, "Your Dwarven farewell party will probably be the last."

"What? Why?"

"Because the sculptures you restored made the headlines, the number of Dwarves coming to Kuruso has really increased by a lot. Also, there aren't any Dwarves who are as friendly with both the combat-related and crafting-related Dwarves."

The rivalry between the craftsmen meant they felt extreme jealousy towards craftsmen who were more outstanding than themselves. However, Sculptors are not craftsmen and therefore were not regarded as competition, so everyone was comfortable with them. This was also a big part of the reason why Weed was able to become friends with Kuruso's 5 Great Craftsmen, including Herman.

“Since this might be the last farewell party, we’ll have to make it magnificent. I’ll tell the Dwarves I know to be sure to bring out the goods they’ve been saving.”

“Thank you.”

“A Dwarf that’s leaving for a journey will need many things, so take this opportunity to get them, hahaha.”

“Hahaha, I sure will.”

Weed laughed happily.

Unlike birthday presents that he had to give back sometime later, he could simply and happily receive the presents from the farewell party.”

He could just receive them and give heartfelt thanks for them.

Weed thought the Dwarves were an unexpectedly romantic race.

‘I thought they’d just be a small and stubborn race, but they have a nice tradition.’

When Weed left for the lake to plan a new sculpture, Pin asked Herman.

“Grandpa.”

“Hmm?”

“There’s one thing you didn’t tell him about the farewell party.”

“What is it?”

“The drinking tab.”

Herman just grinned.

“Would he have said yes if he had known?”

“Still, that’s...”

“If we’re to throw an enjoyable farewell party, it’s better that he doesn’t know. Even if us Dwarves eat and drink, how much could it possibly amount to?”

Herman did not lie.

He just didn’t say one thing.

That it’s customary for the leaving Dwarf to pay the drinking tab for the farewell party.

*

“Congratulations.”

“Go to the wide continent and unfurl the Dwarf’s dream to your heart’s content. Cheers!”

“Cheers!”

“To you!”

Over 1,000 of Kuruso’s Dwarves gathered in the plaza next to the lakefront and drank beer.

“Kyaa, so good.”

“This is the taste!”

On the lake, there were duck sculptures made of water making ripples on the surface as they leisurely moved about. From beneath the water enormous whale sculptures were splashing up and about, creating rainbows.

The fantasy-like scenery that Kendelle’s sculptures showed, and the beer drunk in the Underground Kingdom!

The Dwarves were busy drinking beer from the barrel.

“If someone asks why Kuruso’s the best place, you can’t leave out the taste of the beer.”

“I dun think I can leave Kuruso just ‘cus of the taste of this beer.”

Although their mood probably played a part too, Kuruso really did have incredible tasting beer.

Beer Artisan!

They were an existence in Kuruso that the Dwarves could only respect; they boasted that the beer made by Kuruso’s Beer Artisans had the best taste.

Dwarves find joy in drinking beer and happily getting drunk. They have the racial characteristic of liking beer. Their concentration, as well as several stats and skills, increases when they drink beer. If they fully rest for a day after getting completely drunk, they are back to their best condition by the next day and are able to make goods.

Every time they slammed empty iron cups to the table and saw the positive changes that occurred, the Dwarves felt rewarded.

“Art Hand, get over here!”

“Here, you oughta drink a cup here too.”

Weed moved from place to place and was busy drinking the offered alcohol. Since he was to some extent the main character of the farewell party, he had to participate.

“The quest that time was truly incredible.”

“You created a strategy for Dwarves to fight in caves, didn’t you.”

The Soldiers and Warriors praised Weed.

The way the drunken Dwarves said the same thing over and over again was the most awkward part of it all! Since Weed had to move from place to place, he heard similar words, but he endured it all.

‘If it’s for the sake of a free present, this level of boredom... I can endure it whenever.’”

The Dwarves gave him shortswords, leather rucksacks, and things like bait food as presents.

The bait food not only emitted an incredibly good smell, it also had the effect of putting monsters to sleep. It only applied to monsters of life, and it had the drawback that monsters with a lot of suspicion didn’t often eat it. Monsters with big frames had to eat a huge amount of the bait for an effect to appear, and there were cases where monsters gathered because of the bait.

However, even taking into account the drawbacks, its considerable effects made it a type of dish that sold for high prices. Talented chefs had to make it with excellent ingredients, so the amount produced was low.

“It’d be good if this bait could save your life. The continent truly has many dangers so always be careful. And only go where there are a lot of Dwarves.”

“I’ll use it well.”

“Ya Dwarf, Art Hand isn’t even a beginner so there’s no need to say something like that. Art Hand... go. This Kuruso has really become a nice place to live, thanks to you. There are the even sculptures of water...”

In the warm atmosphere, Weed received and stowed away gifts. But Dwarves who were giving him their well-wishes suddenly tilted their heads.

“But the wings you made in the victory against Death Hand aren’t there anymore. Where did they suddenly go?”

“ ... ”

“They were really magical wings but they suddenly disappeared. What happened to those wings?”

The Dwarves were wondering about the Wings of Light that Weed had granted life and stored away separately.

Weed explained in an evasive way.

“It’s made of light, isn’t it? What happens when you keep a candle lit for a long time?”

“It turns off.”

“That’s how it is.”

“Ah! So that’s how it was.”

“I thought it was something else. Haha!”

As they drank their beer the Dwarves smiled brightly, their doubts relieved.

The evasion went well because the Dwarves had drunk alcohol.

– Intoxication level is going up.

As Weed received and drank the offered beer, he became rather pleasantly tipsy.

“Art Hand, you’ve gotta drink the beer we’re givin’ too!”

“Come here, here!”

Though it was to the point where he had an unsteady gait, Weed walked over and received a glass topped to the brim with beer.

“Drink it aaaaalll at once.”

The Dwarves were a race that didn’t like to drink it sip by sip.

Weed superbly drank it all down in one shot.

“Kyaah!”

“You’re a man after all, now, have a drumstick appetizer too.”

As Weed ate some appetizers and walked around, he even got to drink alcohol with Exper.

He was one of the 5 Great Craftsmen, and when Weed had first come to Kuruso his had been the first name he’d heard — the artisan who had songs made in his honor.

For Weed’s farewell party, all 5 Great Craftsmen had come here.

“Art Hand.”

“Yes, elder.”

“One day I will definitely make a spear that can catch a Dragon. Hic.”

“I’m certain that if it’s elder, you will definitely make it.”

Though he was drunk, he made an effort to match Exper’s mood.

“Hiccup. I’m drunk. Anyways, I made this spear for you, so take it with you.”

-You have acquired the Spear of the Fire Lance that was made by Artisan Exper.

With a furtive check, he found it to be an incredibly excellent spear with over 78 attack power.

“Since it’s a spear with my name on it, don’t give it to anyone else. Haha.”

“Yes. Then have one more glass.”

“Now, pour it!”

Weed drank three glasses with Exper and moved elsewhere. When he was gathering plenty of presents again, Kuruso’s farewell

party distinctly came to a climax.

“Drink, drink up!”

“Let’s drink it by the casket. That’ll show ‘em our most Dwarfliness* side.”

[T/N: Like manliness... but Dwarfliness.]

“Wild Boar Roast, where’d ya go! Chef, bring us 5 Wild Boar Roasts!”

The Dwarves were boisterously making a clamor.

As Herman and Pin also drank beer with some Dwarves, they became extremely worried.

“Grandpa, is this gonna be okay?”

“Well... even I didn’t know that this many Dwarves were going to come. Oh man.”

“The drink tab is going to be enormous.”

“Since they don’t consider drinking moderately and going back, it looks like this is gonna become the best farewell party. These Dwarves really didn’t have anything to do. Or did Weed become

this famous somewhere along the line?”

To the point where Herman clicked his tongue, almost every Dwarf in Kuruso was participating in the farewell party.

The Dwarves could feel that this might be the last farewell party, and there were many Dwarves who were only slightly related to Weed. Towards the Weed who might become the best Sculptor, there were many Dwarves who came because they wanted to build a personal connection with him.

Even though it was past midnight, the farewell party showed no signs of ending.

Weed even received a glass of beer from Fabio, one of the 5 Greats.

Fabio was in his mid-forties, had broad shoulders, and keen eyes.

Though it was Weed's first time meeting him in person, through broadcasts and films, his was a face Weed had seen many times.

The most famous artisan Dwarf, who was believed to have enormous wealth and had outstanding Blacksmithing skills.

“Take it.”

“Yes, thank you.”

Weed was one step away from being totally drunk.

– Intoxication level has severely risen.

All stats are temporarily reduced.

As a result of the drinking he was getting dizzy, and his hand was trembling, but he endured with willpower.

‘Cannot be beaten by this degree of alcohol.’

Compared to the mental training he’d learned from SwordNoob, he could tolerate this degree of alcohol.

By strength of his will, Weed straightened his posture, and though his hand trembled, he did not spill a single drop of alcohol and received it.

The look in Fabio’s eyes deepened.

“I heard this story from my daughter. You refused the armor I gave out of goodwill when you were doing the quest.”

“ ... ”

“I felt that you were a presumptuous kid. I thought you would

fail because it was a perilous quest, but you proudly succeeded. And for a while this story about you became the hot topic in Kuruso.”

“I am flattered.”

“As long as you have ability, it’s fine to be arrogant. I saw you had engraved even the armors I entrusted fairly excellently.”

As Fabio downed his beer, Weed also followed and drank. 2 beer mugs were emptied. Both of them filled each other’s mugs.

“Seems you’re not a normal Dwarf.”

At Fabio’s words, Weed raised his gaze.

Their eyes met resolutely.

The whites of Weed’s eyes were red and bloodshot as a result of his intoxication, but they were deep and strong.

“I watched you drink alcohol as you moved around earlier. If you were a normal Dwarf, it’d be difficult to maintain a clear mind after drinking that much alcohol. Since I’m a Dwarf too, I know.”

“I’m on the side of holding liquor well.”

“Is that so. However, the way I see it, at the very least you’re not a normal Sculptor.”

Fabio’s eyes became more intense.

They were not eyes meant to investigate Weed.

As a person aged, insight formed and their temperaments strengthened. Following their impression from even their first meeting, it was possible for them to approximate what kind of person they were, what kind of nature they had.

Fabio’s temperament was like rough and thick steel. It was strong, and did not break easily.

Ordinary users were intimidated from simply meeting Fabio. But Weed didn’t appear even a little daunted.

Weed was handling and using steel; he was walking the path of the sword. He would treat the sword as an extension of his body and endlessly devote himself to it.

Even the steel-like aura of Fabio subsided in front of Weed like a torch before a typhoon.

Fabio was feeling that.

‘He has a personality that is stronger than mine. And though I

don't know what work he does, he's a guy who has less fear than me.'

Fabio threw away the judgement that he was dealing with a Sculptor, and acknowledged Weed as one of the few men who had frankly surprised him after he'd met them in person as he played Royal Road.

"Say what you want as a gift."

He also decided to give him the option of choosing his gift.

The majority of the armor he made was engraved by Weed's hands. Since Fabio already knew that, he was telling Weed to choose what he needed!

'Through this, I'll be able to see what kind of stat distribution he has!'

Though Fabio made the armor, he believed that the person was the most important in the end.

Weed's eyes lit up.

"Please give me the Pauldrons of the Iron Wheel."

"The Pauldrons of the Iron Wheel? Even among armor, that's an severe item with an offensive build... No, besides that, isn't it

impossible for you to use it because of the level and profession requirements?”

In the middle of asking the question, Fabio looked like he himself had just found the answer.

“No. Seems like you can use it.”

“That’s so.”

“Alright. I’ll give it to you.”

Fabio changed the evaluation he’d made of Weed. He noted that Weed’s Blacksmithing skill was considerable and that he was an extremely high-level user.

‘Since he dared to ask for that, he’s a guy with ample boldness. No shame either. I shouldn’t have asked him to choose anything.’

As he mentally grumbled, he swore quite a bit too. That was because even out of the armor he had made, the Pauldrons of the Iron Wheel was at the peak of his works.

*

As Weed collected presents, he reached Herman as well. His body staggered and he was unable to steady himself.

“You’re very drunk.”

“I am not.”

“Will you receive my beer too.”

“Anytime.”

Weed guzzled down the beer. Then, Herman took out a pair of earrings.

“Maryong’s Earrings. It’s an item that has the effect of amplifying Mana.”

As an advanced accessory, effects of attacks that used Mana were amplified, so this was an extremely valuable item for not only Magicians, but everyone.

At the very least, it was an item worth 30 thousand gold.

“Thank you.”

“No. More importantly, there’s something I want to ask...”

Weed’s head dropped down, then, as if he’d suddenly come to, quickly raised it.

“W-What is it?”

This was a slack appearance of Weed that wouldn't ordinarily be seen.

Weed's efforts to stay in control by sheer force were obvious to the eye.

A smile formed on Herman's lips.

“I'm not trying to say something all that important, but what do you think about the mission of the Sculptor?”

“The mission?”

“I have a certain mission as a Blacksmith. Because of that, I'm making an effort to make one specific sword, but it's not easy. You probably have some kind of mission as a Sculptor as well... hey!”

In the middle of talking, Herman tched. It was because Weed's head had been falling down inch by inch and then completely folded forward.

“Look here!”

“Mmm-yeah.”

Weed must've fallen into a deep sleep, because he could not come to.

Herman looked over the area and found Dwarves tipsily drinking beer, same as ever. He saw many Dwarves who were so drunk that they'd spread-eagled their short two arms and legs and fallen asleep.

'Well, it figures that he's down after drinking one glass each from all those Dwarves.'

Herman shook his head back and forth.

"Pin, will you help me a bit? Grab that side a little."

"Yes."

"Now, let's move him."

Then together with Pin, they laid Weed in a corner.

The drinking party looked like it would be going all through the night, and there were many Dwarves holding a glass of alcohol who came looking for him, so Herman was deeply immersed in conversation.

And then at some point, when he turned around he felt something was missing.

Weed, who had collapsed and fallen asleep because of his intoxication, had disappeared like magic!

“Oh, where’d this guy go?”

Herman hurried and searched.

“Is there any Dwarf who saw Art Hand?”

One dwarf pointed towards the exit leading above ground with his finger.

“He left that way earlier.”

“That-!”

Herman’s tipsiness completely flew away. Then he hurriedly whispered Weed.

– Look here!

– ...

– Look here!

After calling him several times, Weed's reply came through.

– Yes, Grandpa Herman.

– Humhum! Have you sobered up?

– No, not yet. I think I'm gonna die from nausea.

– It must be tough after drinking that much. Alright, when are you planning to come back.

– I was going to go aboveground to get some fresh outside air.

Even as Weed was replying, he was running toward the coal mine and was quickly making his escape.

He'd completely seen through it — he'd seen that the Dwarves had no inclination to pay as they drank the beer.

‘Then it was arranged to have me pay this money.’

He didn't let his guard down even as he drank.

And the escape that utilized exquisite timing!

– Look here, how can you just leave like this?

- Why not. I thought the farewell party was pretty much over.
- That... You have to pay for the drinking tab.
- What did you say? Was I supposed to pay for that?

Weed sent the whisper with a tone that said that was ridiculous. It was a bewildering moment for Herman. Weed spoke again.

– You should have told me sooner, sir. If you had done so I would have paid before I left.

– Ahem. How about returning even now and paying. The drinking tab... let's see, it should be a little over 3,500 gold.

For them to have drunk over 3,000 gold of beer, it was something impossible if not for the Dwarves' stupidly enormous drinking ability.

– I have already left for the road, so how can I return.

– Even so...

– How about we do it like this. Please pay for it for now, Grandpa Herman. Next time I'll repay you.

– Sh-should we do that.

– Yes.

– Looks like we'll have to do that then. Alright. Later on you have to repay me for sure.

– Don't worry. Who am I? Hahaha!

– Ha, haha.

*

Weed came out of Kuruso Kingdom and arrived at Iron Hand Village to turn in the quest.

As a Sculptor, when he left the kingdom he was required to offer 1 sculpture, so he took out the parrot sculpture that he usually carved and had kept with him.

Compared to the Sculptor Weed's fame, it was a truly small item!

Although the sculpture would stay in Kuruso as something Weed had made, he had no interest in that kind of honor.

“Did you hear? The Resurrection Church has finally captured even the Phenomph Region.”

“Huh. That’s really terrible.”

“Who can stop them? If this keeps up, even capturing the Versailles Continent is not far in the future.”

Weed also heard the conversation of the Dwarves in Iron Hand Village.

The powerful Resurrection Army that Daymond led was menacing the Versailles Continent.

Earlier they had avoided a monster swarm invasion, drought, and a flood, but Daymond’s invasion this time was becoming the greatest crisis of the Versailles Continent.

The Dwarves whispered.

“They say that the kingdoms have decided to make their move.”

“They’re going to form a league and block the Resurrection Army.”

“They must be fretting ‘cause the Army is gonna cross over to their land too.”

“There’s no need for other words, ‘cause they’ve hung a 60 thousand gold bounty on Day’s head.”

This talk was a topic in the Dark Gamer guild too.

60 thousand gold was an enormous sum. It was enough to get people aiming for a quick fortune and encouraged Daymond's assassination.

However, it was difficult to sneak through by routing the Demonic Spirits' attention, and there was also a lot of talk about waiting because of predictions that Daymond's bounty would increasingly rise.

‘To get a somewhat stable income, chaos that's too drastic isn't good...’

Weed entered the Sculpting Guild.

No matter what crisis troubled the continent, the Sculptor Guild was still the same.

“What a waste of materials. How many times do I have to say that this isn't how you carve for you to understand!”

“You're the shame of the Dwarves, the shame!”

The Dwarves who were sorrowfully learning the Sculpting Skill while being scolded by the instructor!

They recognized Weed's face as he opened the door and came inside.

“He's the Dwarf who left after taking the request that time.”

“Are you talking about the request to find the trail of Kendellev?”

“He's the Dwarf who boldly accepted the request that no one could solve and left.”

“Tsk tsk. Looks like that Dwarf also finally came back to give up after trying and trying.”

The Dwarves were secretly gleeful.

When Weed received the request they had worried that he might possibly succeed, but at the sight of him returning covered with dust and without any energy like that, they figured that he had failed.

Although the discovery of Kendellev's sculptures had already circulated through Royal Road broadcasts, by the look of it these Dwarves were completely in the dark.

Weed walked towards the Instructor.

“I have come to report the result of the quest.”

Sculpting Instructor Jorbid politely asked.

“You went through a lot. Was our Dwarf Sculptor’s legend the truth?”

“It was. There was a Sculptor in the Dwarf race, and his sculptures were beautiful.”

“Indeed! I believed that it was true. Can you show me Kendellev’s trail?”

“Of course.”

Weed opened his rucksack and stuck in his hands. After rummaging through the items in the rucksack, he grabbed something. Then, he pulled out something enclosed in his two hands.

“Here, this is Kendellev’s sculpture.”

As Weed parted his two hands, a confined bird made of water flew out.

The bird sang out with a bright voice as it went around and around the Sculptor Guild.

“Ah! This is the sculpture that our ancestor made!”

The Sculpting Instructor Jorbid could not hold back his deep emotion.

The comical sculpture in the shape of a sparrow flew in between the Dwarves.

The Dwarves had on a shocked expression that looked like they had seen a new world. Their jaws didn't drop this much even when they were guzzling down beer.

“To say this is a sculpture! How is this a sculpture?”

“Isn't this an item made by a genie or magic!”

“Sculptures have to be carved to be made, this is a fraud.”

Meanwhile, it was difficult for the Dwarves to accept this new sculpture.

From the stereotypes they possessed, they could not be convinced that the bird made of water that was flying around was a sculpture!

Weed shook his head.

‘It'll be difficult for them to achieve lifelong Sculpting Skills with thoughts like those.’

Sculpting was a three-dimensional art.

If it was something a Sculptor made, and was visible or if the idea could be grasped, anything could become a new attempt.

‘I don’t know why they think they just have to carve only wood or stone.’

As if Weed couldn’t remember himself looking down on the Sculpting profession until not too long ago, he maintained a dignified expression.

The Dwarf instructor grabbed his hand.

“Thank you. Now, no matter what race, they won’t be able to look down on us Dwarves when it comes to Sculpting.”

Ding!

– You have completed Sculpting Instructor Jorbid’s request.

The legendary Dwarf Sculptor Kendellev’s sculptures were in Kuruso.

After finding out about his sculptures, Humans and Elves that are wise craftsmen will no longer be able to criticize the Dwarven Artists.

- Fame has gone up by 130.
- Evaluation of you in the Sculptor Guild has improved.
- In racial prestige, respect toward Dwarves has increased by 3.
- Friendship with Thor Kingdom Dwarves has increased by 82.

Dwarves will throw aside the pickaxes to help you in your work.

- Level has gone up.
- Level has gone up.

The Sculpting instructor held out a pair of black gloves.

Honestly, Weed was more expectant of the reward item than the levels or fame.

‘That’s the reason why Thor Kingdom quests are good.’

Through quests from the Elves, for the most part friendship or affinity with spirits increased. In the case of the Humans, you could obtain fame, a reward, or a special status or profession.

With the Dwarves, especially Thor Kingdom’s case, through quests they gave you good items; it matched Weed’s tastes

perfectly.

“This is a glove I’d like you to use. Though it’s not Kendellev-nim, the Dwarf who wore this glove was extremely outstanding.”

“Thank you very much.”

– You have acquired the reward item from the request.

Gloves that delicately gleamed with a black luster.

“Identify!”

Skilled Producer’s Glove:

Durability 45/45. Defense 13.

Gloves that were personally made and used by Thor Kingdom’s Seventh Blacksmith, Spindal.

Even while doing Blacksmith work he had adventures, so in order to make the gloves perfectly comfortable while catching Orcs, he made them through a lot of trial and error.

Although they were produced for Blacksmiths to use, they can be utilized in a wide variety of uses.

Requirement: Intermediate Handicraft and over. Level 150.

Option: When equipped, Blacksmithing skill +1.

Sculpting skill +1.

Effect of Handicraft skill +5%.

Attack increased by 7%.

When using long-range weapons, casting speed is improved.

As he'd expected, it was a high-class item.

Though the level requirement was low, with the Intermediate Handicraft limit it was an item that not just anyone could use.

The Sculpting instructor added, "I believe that Kendellev-nim's trail is left somewhere in our Thor Kingdom. Will you do more searching for that trail?"

Ding!

Kendellev's Hidden Sculptures

The very talented Dwarf Sculptor's artifacts are still suspected to be left somewhere.

Find and restore the additional sculptures that Kendelleve left in Thor Kingdom.

Difficulty: Dwarf race Sculptor quest.

Reward: Honor of the Dwarves.

Quest requirement: Limited to Dwarf, Sculptor.

The still unfinished Kendelleve's quest!

However, Weed shook his head.

"I must leave for the path of adventure. Since the Humans and Elves have been sufficiently informed of greatness of the Dwarves, I want to entrust this to a different Dwarf in my stead."

There were things Weed had to do, and he wanted to end the sculpture searching with this.

The Sculpting instructor nodded morosely.

"Alright. Even if it's not you, ordinary Dwarves should now be able to do this work."

– You have refused the quest.

Your intimacy with Sculpting Instructor Jorbid has slightly fallen.

Although intimacy had dropped a little, the Sculpting instructor liked Weed all the same.

“It is an honor for me to have seen an excellent Sculptor like you. What will you do from here?”

“Even I do not know that. Only that I may have to go to Dale Kingdom to meet my colleagues.”

“May the sculptures made by you be blessed. Come back sometime and make a sculpture for Iron Hand Village.”

“The many things I’ve seen in the places where I have walked, if I return to this place, I will definitely make them for you.”

Chapter 2: Undiscovered Dungeon

Ahn Hyun Do cleaned his sword with a clean cloth.

The famed sword that the craftsman had completed with his soul and by smelting even the purest part of iron. As famous swordsmen used it generation after generation, the sword's value had grown.

“Through the sword, what makes a human capable of rising to the sky... is the sword.”

Ahn Hyun Do possessed many famed swords, but he never carelessly took out the Radiant Sword. Only when a big decision was ahead did he meditate over the resolve of his time of youth while cleaning the Radiant Sword.

“The years when there was nothing scary in the world. The years when I was so bent on just fighting that I didn't have time to look around. I received my undeserved Radiant Sword at that time. This is the sword that let me realize that the days of the sword had no meaning, that in the end people were more important.”

Ahn Hyun Do gazed at the Radiant Sword that he had cleaned to a mirror-like shine.

The azure sky and the clouds drifting away that shone through the office room's window were also reflected on the blade. The sunlight made him squint his eyes.

“Swordsmanship is learning the way to use the sword. If the motive of fencing is merely strong swordsmanship, what worth is there in learning it?”

The sword that nurtured a person.

Like the flourished weed of the rough wilderness, in the end, a human also had to pass through training. There was a need to learn not just in the small dojo, but the vast world.

“True fear, the drive for life... and also one’s self can be learned through the sword.”

Ahn Hyun Do slid the sword into its sheath and left the office.

“Yul Min.”

The one who took care of the secretarial jobs in the Dojo was named Yul Min.

“Yes, Uncle.”

“It seems like it is time to teach the youngest disciple the way of the sword.”

“So it has already come to this. Then I will book two tickets. On about what date should I reserve the departure?”

“Since he has to go to school right now... Around summer should be fine.”

“Though it appears he’s not ready yet... Might you be rushing it too much?”

“If he’s lacking, he should be able to earn something greater from his insufficiencies.”

Anyone can learn swordsmanship.

For a sword faster than anyone else’s, repetitive effort and studying are necessary. However, simply possessing such a fast sword doesn’t equate to winning matches. A heavier sword or developing muscular strength didn’t mean winning in matches either.

The reason for learning the sword was to see one’s self clearly.

In Ahn Hyun Do’s opinion, young people these days were weak.

“When they go to school and study, prepare for employment... If they spend ten or so years like that they’ll end up running into the world without knowing what they like or what they want to do.”

Once they are out in the workforce, there wouldn’t be a chance to change one’s self. At their workplace, after working in the store

and earning money, they would see that the precious times had completely passed and were gone.

Time doesn't ever come back. It would be great if you could cheat time, but that was an impossibility that only happened in movies.

You would discover yourself through the sword.

Here, there was also the reason of victory by the sword. Observation of yourself and your opponent!

As you compared each other's might, you would crave for greater heights. Seeing themselves clearly, swordsmen fought with the appetite for advancement.

“A truly powerful sword. Why you must learn the sword, what a true swordsman is... I should be able to show him what those are through travels.”

*

As the Korean University's festival approached, with less than one week left, Lee Hyun's school life became really busy.

“Those of you who are preparing for the bar; since we've gotta win the snack contest, you must absolutely not do it carelessly!”

To make the snacks for the bar, they were abruptly thrown into

culinary processes!

Though Lee Hyun didn't need to learn because he was quite well-versed in cooking, there was no time to rest because he had to teach the other students.

“Lee Hyun-oppa, how do you break an egg?”

“It's okay to clean the apples with the sponge. Right?”

“When you wash the dishes can't you use facial soap instead of Dawn™?”

Every time a question was asked, Lee Hyun sighed heavily.

These days, instant and delivery foods were set up too well. There were many cases where kids who had been conditioned to only study never even once made their own meal until they enrolled to university.

“But who's gonna make the rice?”

“The Cuckoo makes the rice.”

[T/N: A Cuckoo is a popular brand of rice-cooker in Korea.]

“ ... ”

These kinds of conversation!

Lee Hyun controlled his frustration and endured as he taught the students the basics of cooking.

“When you fry an egg, you have to spread vegetable oil in the pan first. It’s probably better if you use olive oil instead of vegetable oil.”

“Peel the skin of the apple first so it’s easier to cut. Don’t slice pineapple with a fruit knife!”

“You don’t cut the bananas, if you just peel it...”

Truthfully, the students were enjoying watching Lee Hyun get upset and explain, so they purposefully asked about even things they knew.

“But can’t you make rice with flour?”

“I heard that originally, stew is boiled as ramen soup by putting this and that in...”

Lee Hyun’s patience hit rock bottom.

Nevertheless, Seo Yoon was on the side of learning cooking quickly. Although she burnt the vegetable pancake (buchimgae) as

black as coal, once he taught her the trick of it, her next attempt was beautifully fried.

With her chopsticks, Seo Yoon held out a bite of the kimchi pancake she had fried to Lee Hyun.

“You want me to try it?”

When Lee Hyun asked anxiously, Seo Yoon nodded with a similarly anxious face. As he stared at the kimchi pancake, Lee Hyun’s eyes became as sharp as knives.

‘Ingredients, flour, kimchi, kimchi liquid, egg, scallion, octopus, some others. There are no problems based on the ingredients.’

It was a kimchi pancake fried using normal ingredients.

‘Seeing as it’s been well grilled to a reddish color, there shouldn’t be any particular problems with the cooking process...’

After resolving his doubts, he received and ate the kimchi pancake Seo Yoon was giving him.

The kimchi pancake went into his mouth, and the rich aroma of kimchi fully diffused throughout!

‘It’s fragrant. It’s the taste of local kimchi after all. The cabbage grown in neighborhood gardens with the pickled fish and red

pepper powder mixed in well... And its fitting rebirth as a pancake, good! It's a well-made kimchi pancake.'

Although his evaluation of the kimchi pancake ended quickly, Lee Hyun's mouth was as hot as a fire.

There was no way it wouldn't be hot since she had given it to him fresh off the pan.

'I'll have to be more suspicious after all.'

Lee Hyun's eyes became more sharp.

Eyes with a look that could kill!

Even as he glared, he raised his thumb for the taste.

"It's tasty. Keep making them like this."

"..."

Although there was no reply, Seo Yoon's eyes looked like they were laughing, if only a little.

'Did she know how to laugh too?'

It was an expression that flickered past too fleetingly. However,

the beauty she had shown for just a short moment's instant was the smile he had imagined when he had made the first Goddess of Freya.

Seo Yoon made the fruit salad well too, and the skill with which she arranged it in the platter was also excellent.

The cooking practice they did in the Department of Food and Nutrition's classroom that they had borrowed ended like that, and they did the planning for the opening of the bar separately.

10 men and 7 women made up the personnel for the bar.

“Make it a tent bar. Doing that will reduce the expense, too. Looks like about 5 tents in an array will do, so what do you think.”

At Hong Sun Ye's words, the guys nodded in unison. The festival wasn't going to end in a day, so they also had to prepare for rain.

“Then 5 tents. We'll be able to set them up before the festival starts, right?”

Hong Sun Ye looked at Lee Hyun.

She had seen the construction ability that used all sorts of materials at the MT as well, so she thought that at that level, a tent or the like would be nothing.

“It’s definitely doable.”

“But where should we get the tents?”

“There should be a specific place that rents them out.”

“Then the tents are fine...”

Hong Sun Ye swiftly drew the blueprint. She actualized the place where they would set up the bar and the tent size as she drew the blueprint on the spot.

“I think 20 tables will go in.”

“Then about 100 chairs should do. Is that too much?”

“We have to prepare for cases when customers come all at once, too. Since there are really a lot of students from other schools and people who are coming, many customers will gather. We can borrow the chairs from the classrooms so let’s get plenty of them.”

“In the morning before the festival, we’ll have to set up the tents, tables, and even the chairs.”

“The materials for the gas stove and cooking...”

“If we make an order at a supply house, they’ll send it to us by

truck.”

As Hong Sun Ye and Lee Hyun conversed, all the jobs progressed like lightning. The guys merely occupied space; in truth, the female students and Lee Hyun took on the bar preparation.

“But what should we choose as our bar’s concept?” Hong Sun Ye went around asking everyone.

All the bars in Korea University progressed with their own concepts. To attract amiable customers, it was vital that they dressed up and put out their individualized bar.

“Should we do a club atmosphere?”

“How about a schoolgirl atmosphere. I still have my uniform...”

“I have my uniform too. But I put on a few pounds...”

Every time the female students chatted, the male students were speechless.

The short skirt, clothing that exposes her bare shoulders and back that Seo Yoon would wear in a club.

Seo Yoon dressed as a pure, innocent schoolgirl.

‘This is the jackpot.’

‘This is the jackpot.’

‘This is the jackpot.’

‘This is the jackpot.’

“ ... ”

The male student’s fantasies were taking flight.

“What concept should we use?”

It was the female student’s greatest worry. If only to win in the pride competition with the other school bars, they needed to plan out a concept that stood out.

“For now, guys should come dressed comfortably. The girls will think about the concept more and try to choose.”

At the female students’ words, the male students answered earnestly.

“Alright. Hope you choose a worthy concept.”

“Don’t think about it too seriously, the ones you talked about

earlier were also very good.”

“Ahh. If it was the festival today...”

“...”

The female students gathered separately and debated.

Club girl, schoolgirl, office uniform. Although they had initially chosen concepts that were enough to excite the guys, all of them were cancelled.

“We can’t just become eye candy for the guys!”

They were also considering Seo Yoon’s position, as she was obviously troubled about the exposure of the clothing.

“What concept should we use? As we serve, a lot of people will see us, so isn’t there something that’s elegant yet alluring, that can bring femininity to life but never prods our conscience to wear?”

“Since it’s a festival of May, how about a bride?”

[T/N: May is known as the month of weddings in Korea.]

“Bride! That’s pretty good. Bride of May. With student brides in wedding dresses and even bridal veils, I think it’s gonna have a

lively feel.”

“I approve too!”

“The idea’s good, but is there a place where we can borrow the dresses?”

“We would buy fabric or material and make them ourselves. Can’t we just look at a fashion magazine and make it roughly similar?”

The female students came to a mutual understanding.

Didn’t they say the clothing that made women the most beautiful was the wedding dress?

It would also be an opportunity for them to wear a wedding dress once before they married.

“Seo Yoon-sunbae, is senior okay with this too?”

“ ... ”

Seo Yoon hesitated for a moment before nodding.

*

The dungeon exploration for the school assignment!

Because they had to complete the exploration before the festival started, they were really pressed for time.

“Please come here quickly.”

“I’m saying that the rest of us were all here.”

As soon as the group members gathered in the capsule room after finishing their morning studies, their complaints flowed out.

However, Lee Hyun also had an excuse.

“The traffic was severe.”

“Lies. You walked here.”

The group members weren’t deceived.

“It takes 3 minutes to walk here from the school, so why would you come here by car.”

“It’s more than one stop by bus so if you get on it takes longer.”

Lee Hyun’s eyes became mellow and moist.

Choi Ji Hoon, who uses the in game name Zephyr had taught the elder brothers this; Lee Hyun tried to use the method to pacify girls.

Lee Hyun wagged his finger, and spoke with his most sweet voice.

“These sly deer... Are you doubting my words right now?”

“...”

At that moment the female students’ expressions indicated that something from within their stomachs was urgently coming up.

‘Ah, the breast milk I drank when I was a baby...’

The queasy and greasy feeling!

Even if you mixed peanut butter and cheese and made ramen, it wouldn’t be this bad.

“Ah, we get it. For now let’s just hurry and start.”

Hong Sun Ye, who saw Lee Hyun a lot doing this and that these days, took his side for him. Though he was even harder to deal with than her hair-splitting cousins that her uncle left from morning to evening, she demonstrated patience.

“Oppa.”

Lee Yoo Jung addressed him before she went into the capsule,

“Hm?”

“You’re near Dale Kingdom, right? We’re already all gathered, and we also did a lot of exploration practice.”

Lee Hyun answered as if there wasn’t a problem.

“Of course. I’m almost all the way there.”

“Yes, then that’s a relief. We’ll go in first and wait. Please come quickly.”

“Just wait a little. I’ll be there soon.”

Lee Hyun went into the capsule, and as the sensors mounted he thought, ‘I guess I should leave soon.’

*

He had been busy selling the accessories and sculptures he had made in Kuruso Kingdom to merchants, so he was still at Nest Kingdom’s Herom Castle.

Even by riding a horse, Dale Kingdom's Nekan Castle was over five days away.

'In Korean terms, I'm almost all the way there. Since "soon" means "still gonna take a long time" now, they'll probably be understanding even if I'm late.'

Herom Castle!

As the Kingdom had a position in the borderland, it was a castle bustling with Merchants dealing in entrepot trade. As a result of the users who were buying had wagons and goods. It was so disorderly it reminded him of the marketplace at dawn.

There were users who struck out at the prices as they bargained, and Merchants who weren't going to cut down even a single penny were even having a fierce fight.

"Why, no matter how money-grubbing a Merchant ya are, how can ya do this? How can ya buy the wares that are like my own children that I created at the end of so much suffering with that price?"

"Look, elder. Please calm down for now and listen to my explanation. The current market prices of wares..."

"Market prices! What did ya say the wares I made were like? Is there even a wee scratch somewhere? Or are ya saying the quality

of this ruby is low?”

A small Dwarf was in hysterics. Of course, the Dwarf’s true identity was Weed!

He became an obstinate Dwarf to the novice Merchants and was striking up the prices.

He sold crafted jewel ware accessories and sculptures, and even the Dwarves’ gifts. To be honest, when he sold the gifts he had received at the farewell ceremony, he felt a small prick of his conscience.

‘Even so, the market nowadays has changed. For the gifts I don’t need, I can just think of them as receiving a gift certificate.’

Gifts from the heart!

He had received the hearts of the gift-givers and thought that was good enough, and was selling them with overcharged prices to his heart’s content.

Since they were goods being sold by a Dwarf the credibility was high and the quality was good too, but because he insisted on the high prices, transactions weren’t made quickly.

*

“Ugh, when is he coming.”

“It’s getting too late... Should we just give up and go by ourselves?”

“We can’t. ‘Cause if there’s even 1 person missing from the group we won’t get points.”

Beneath the old tree by Nekan Castle, a party of people were waiting for someone.

A party composed of two Swordsmen, a Thief, Enchanter, Elemental Magician, and Ranger!

Hegel set the shield he had cleaned to a sparkling shine on the ground.

“It’s getting late. Though I pulled out Kudram’s Shield for a change.”

Kudram’s Shield.

A kite shield that could cover the whole body, it had a defense of over 70, and had the effect of blocking charges with its ponderous weight. Choe Sang Jun had borrowed the armor and shield from his older brother, who was a member of the Black Lions’ Guild.

When Enchanter Rumi saw the shield, she said with a curious

face, “Sang Jun, no Hegel, who enchanted that shield for you?”

“The best magic user in Haven Kingdom, Perrier-nim did it. He’s the Enchanter of Black Lions’ Guild.”

“Ah, that famous person did...”

The party members’ gazes were bent toward Kudram’s Shield.

Even inside Nekan Castle, the attention was focused on Hegel, who was attired in outstanding equipment.

In the Versailles Continent, generally it was possible to show a person’s might with equipment. A Swordsman’s attack power could become the strength to support the whole party, and they could also be the root of enemy pulverization.

If you looked at the outstanding Swordsman, being envious was a given.

“Must be nice, Hegel.”

“It’s really enviable equipment. The armor isn’t a normal item either, right?”

“You guys wouldn’t know ‘bout it even if I told you, ‘cause it’s the Snake’s Bantis Armor Set. The boots and pauldrons, and helmet are a set item.”

“I’ve never heard about the Bantis Armor.”

“Of course not, though it’s not a famous item, no! It’s an armor that’s so rare that only the people who know use it, so it’s less well known. However its performance is more outstanding than Norman’s weapons.”

“It’s better than Norman’s weapons?”

“The comparison in itself is impossible.”

When Hegel was boasting about the equipment, the Elemental Magician Selsia’s eyes gleamed.

“With equipment like that, there’s really no need to wait.”

“Hm?”

“Won’t I be doing most of the hunting anyways? Then let’s just go between us.”

“But if hyung doesn’t come, we won’t be able to get a proper grade...”

“We can go first and start exploring first, can’t we meet up later?”

“Should we?”

Hegel had a tempted expression. He was also eager to hurry and try out the equipment he'd borrowed from his older brother.

Swordsman Bella also opened her mouth.

“There's not much a Sculptor can do in an exploration anyways. So even if he isn't there in the beginning, it shouldn't stand out too much.”

With even Bella's approval, Hegel made up his mind.

“Alright. Then let's go between us.”

“But what's the dungeon you decided to explore?”

The ones who had researched the information about dungeons and had made the choice were Hegel and Nide.

Nide gave the answer to that question.

“It's not far. If you pass Plain's Red Territory, a forest of dried up trees comes up; the entrance is there.”

“Is it a famous dungeon?”

“No, the only people to have discovered it is probably us.”

“Really?”

Hegel widely broadened his shoulders.

“Yep. It’s a location that Nide and I found by investigating the booklets of the Kingdom’s library. Though of course, Nide was the one who discovered the booklet.”

“Do you mean it’s a dungeon that hasn’t been opened before yet?”

“We’ll prolly be the first.”

If they discovered a hidden dungeon, not only fame would rise, but they would receive 2 times the experience.

“Even if there’s a trap, Nide can deactivate it, and I can take responsibility for the fighting.”

Enchanter Rumi looked worried at the talk of the hidden dungeon.

“What about Weed oppa? If it’s a hidden dungeon, shouldn’t we wait and go together?”

“Will that be necessary? We can just hide the booklet with the dungeon info in this old tree and go. Let’s just have him look at the booklet and approximately find his way to the area ‘round the entrance.”

“But since he can’t fight, he might not be able to come.”

“He shouldn’t be that bad. Then he wouldn’t have been able to travel all the way to Thor Kingdom. Then let’s hurry and go.”

Hegel dug in the ground and hid the book.

– You have thrown away Gildras’ Strange Story Booklet.

They finished their preparations at a simple supply stand and left for the Plain’s Red Territory.

*

With the sale of the wares in Herom Castle, penny pincher Weed had made 35,000 gold!

“The stagecoach leaving for Dale Kingdom departs the day after.”

“What’s the travel fee?”

“7 Gold.”

Although he had planned to ride there by transport stagecoach, not only did he have to wait, but the price was expensive too.

‘This won’t do.’

Weed left Herom Castle and went into the rarely visited forest.

The beginner’s forest where small animals like birds and squirrels lived!

Chik chik.

The squirrels, which had been picking up and eating acorns, gathered in the area around Weed. Though they were close, they didn’t think of coming down from atop the neighboring trees.

If he was a Human, they wouldn’t even have come near. Because Dwarves had the attribute of not enjoying killing, they had come this close.

If he was an Elf, they might have even come and rubbed their faces on him. It was because the Elves, who had an affinity with nature’s beings, were a race that were welcome anywhere.

It was then.

While standing motionlessly, Weed’s mantle fluttered and

beamed with a brilliant light. The Wings of Light on his back had widely unfurled, displaying majestic allure.

The piled leaves on the ground were swept up into the air, and the squirrels covered their eyes at the bright light. Weed spread the wings in the forest and soared up.

The Verona River that flowed grandly next to Herom Castle looked like a stream. Herom Castle, which had been so crowded when he had been selling his wares, now looked as small as a sesame seed.

A Dwarf flying in the air; this was something unheard of.

“Light Wing, let’s go!”

The Wings of Light flapped gracefully.

Since he hadn’t thought to make it a body, the Wings of Light could only survive by existing parasitically off another body.

As soon as the Wings spread out in earnest, he moved at a fast speed. Before he could even catch his balance, he shot away like a bullet.

The acceleration was so incredible that it could be expressed as instantaneous movement!

– You are flying in the sky.

Wings of Light can give 26% of the maximum speed.

Due to a Dwarven racial characteristic, you might experience severe dizziness.

The Dwarven trait of not being able to ride neither a horse nor stagecoach well!

Since he was flying in the sky, that Dwarf race's penalty was undoubtedly in effect. Like when he had guzzled beer and become smashed, his dizziness became severe.

Weed knew the most simple way to solve this problem. He just had to cancel the Art of Sculpture Transformation!

However, Weed was still enamored with the body of a Dwarf. Stamina was good, and an additional effect was granted to Handicraft, so he didn't want to cancel it just yet.

“It should be fine if I can somehow bear with it.”

As he flapped the Wings of Light like an angel, Weed positioned himself southwest and dizzily flew forth.

Whether they were mountains or hills, he flashed past them like that in the sky that was above everything.

Occasionally he'd be heading towards a precipice or a mountain peak, so there were times when he'd come perilously close. They

were emergencies caused by flying with dizziness and motion sickness!

It was a flight so overwhelmingly fast that he had to adjust his path to avoid eagles he would collide into.

*

The Hegel party passed the land of the red sand and went past the Forest of Dead Trees. Without a single leaf, a forest with an eerie feel.

It was a forest in which there would be nothing strange if a ghost came out at any moment.

The Thief Nide, who had a lot of experience traveling round the Versailles Continent, spoke.

“You can’t wander around here at night. When it becomes night, though only every so often, fierce Grollers come out and root around the forest.”

At that, Rumi put on a fearful expression. Simply imagining the Grollers plunging out from within the forest and raising an axe or bamboo spear in her direction just terrified her.

“If we meet ‘em, we probably can’t even escape?”

“Yeah. If we meet Grollers at night, we’ll have no choice but to give up our lives.’

They were able to find the dungeon after struggling amongst the trees for a long time. The entrance was covered with dirt and stones, and was buried together with animal bones.

“Let’s go inside.”

As Hegel went in the entrance first, the rest of the briefly hesitant party followed him inside.

Chapter 3: The Strange Booklet Of Gildras

Korea University's Student Council was tied up with festival preparations.

Each department secured a venue, and minor help was given for preparations. The cultural festival and events for the local residents were being prepared at the same time. They even busied themselves with stage preparations, and organising singers for the events.

“But who should we cast to MC the event?”

“How about Yu Jae Dol?”

[T/N: Spoof of Yoo Jae Suk]

The highly praised one, who was born for hosting, MC Yu Jae Dol. He doesn't know when to stop when he starts chattering. He was praised as the national MC because of his kind and considerate nature.

“I tried contacting him, but they said his schedule doesn't work out 'cus of the We Must Challenge filming.”

“Then did you try contacting Kang Ho Eun? He hosted our school

festival last year, too.”

[T/N: Referring to Kang Ho Dong, an MC who was just as wildly popular as Yoo Jae Suk when this LN was published. Before his years as a comedian and host, he was a champion ssireum wrestler, the traditional Korean national sport, which is often compared to sumo.]

The former wrestling athlete Kang Ho Eun! Although he had a body as big as a house, he pulled programs along with his naivety at times, and his charisma at others. With ample strength and passion, he was an MC who was like a big brother.

“That person went on a 3 night 4 day vacation. He said he was really sorry he can’t attend this time.”

“Dang it... Then who should we cast?”

Plays, musicals, performances, and concerts would all progress together at the Korea University’s festival.

It was a given that it would let the students worn out from studying enjoy the energy and university culture, and since it was a party for the local residents, they couldn’t be negligent. In the end, they couldn’t find just the right person, and it was decided that they’d go back to the idol Park Min Su, the eternal number 2, as the host of the main show.

Jung Hyo Rin moved her fingers fluidly on the piano keyboard.

A pure, lyrical melody.

She was in the midst of personally writing a song to put in a new album.

“The song has a really good feeling... but how will you choose the lyrics? Do you want to try hiring a famous lyricist? Teacher Kim Tae Hwan who you worked with last time was saying he wanted to work together again.”

When the manager asked her in the practice room, Jung Hyo Rin shook her head.

“No. I want to write it myself.”

“Is that so? Since Hyo Rin-ssi has a talent for writing lyrics too... you’ll make an excellent song.”

Jung Hyo Rin was actually in a state where she couldn’t make up her mind on what kind of feeling to use for the lyrics.

‘I’m going to write the lyrics for the song I want to sing.’

It didn’t seem like it would be easy to make the song.

Since the release date of the new album and the song's live debut was still a ways off, she tried to write the song so she wouldn't have any regrets.

Jung Hyo Rin, who had been playing the piano, raised her head.

“Manager, could you freed up my schedule in 3 days, right?”

“I cleared it up as Hyo Rin-ssi asked, but is there something going on?”

“It's a matter of personal privacy.”

The manager was relieved because Jung Hyo Rin had never stirred up problems in her private life. However, he couldn't help but ask of her destination.

“Where are you going to go?”

“Korea University. A person I know is a student there. I'm going to go together with my friends.”

*

You have become the first discoverers of the Kramado Dungeon!

Reward:

Fame has increased by 230.

Experience and drop rates have doubled for a week.

The first monster hunted will drop some its the best items it has.

“Yay!”

“We’re really the first. Just look at the fame that went up.”

The party members who entered the dungeon shouted out cheers of joy.

“With this, we’ve accomplished this assignment as a success.”

“Yeah. We’re probably the only ones who found an undiscovered dungeon.”

Swordsman Bella spoke with confidence.

As they had come through relatively safe hunting grounds, an adventure like this was enjoyable.

Even the other groups would have difficulty discovering a new dungeon for their assignment.

“Nide, well done.”

“I’ll treat you if we get a good grade.”

Like an expression from real life, Nide blushed as if he were embarrassed to receive praise.

“It’s nothing. It’s just that somehow my luck was good.”

Hegel patted Nide’s shoulder as if in encouragement.

“Nice work.”

“It’s nothing, We all did it together.”

The discovery of a new dungeon was an impressive opportunity to gain experience and items.

Hegel drew his sword.

“Then everyone get ready to battle!”

Their opponents were monsters that looked like white lizards crawling around inside the dungeon.

“Shield Bash! I’ll push them away altogether!”

While Hegel was holding the Kudram’s Shield in his left hand, he charged/rushed toward the monsters.

The greatest strength of a swordsman is their damage.

Attack power was maximized with the Twin Sword Skill and Great Sword Skill, so they could deal more damage than any other similar combat Profession.

“Shake. Ignite. Crumble!”

“Triple-Sword Strike!”

“Strengthen metal, Blessing of Flame!”

Elemental Magician Selsia, Swordsman Bella, and Enchanter Rumi had their share in the battle as well.

Enchanters can permanently grant an item a unique strength. The effectiveness of fortification spells that were applied to people was less than that of a Priest or a Shaman, but they could temporarily pull out the strength of a weapon many times over.

The Kramanoims that were attacked by the Shield Charge were wounded, pushed here or there, or flipped over. In that situation, as they suffered attacks from the Elemental Magician or the Swordsman, they weakly turned into grey light.

The thief Nide approached the Karmanoim with his stealth skill activated.

“Creature Identification!”

It was a profession skill only available to thieves, scouts, assassins, and adventurers. It was a skill to enable you to see detailed information of your opponents.

The information thief Nide found on Kramanoim was shared with the party.

Ding!

Monster Name: Young Kramanoim

Level: 234

A monster that dwells in old dungeons.

It has lived only inside a dungeon for a very long time.

Eyesight has degenerated to the point of being almost blind.

They detect enemies through sound or ground vibrations and they enjoy eating meat.

They can crawl very quickly through use of their 4 legs and from the mouth they can vomit out a weak paralysing venom.

Not only did it provide information on the Kramanoim, it highlighted its weak point, its neck emitted a bluish glow. The areas where you can get fatal strikes!

From Hegel's fierce attack and Bella and Selsia's united efforts, the Kramanoims lethargically changed to grey light.

In about 3 hours of fighting, they were able to clean out the monsters on the basement 1st floor.

Enchanter Rumi and Bella had their level increased by 1, and the dropped items were considerable as well. Thanks to the doubled experience, even Selsia looked pleased.

“It’s the best.”

“It’s a really good dungeon. For our assignment this time, an A will be no problem.”

*

By the time Weed arrived in Dale Kingdom, it had already gotten dark.

“The old tree....was it near here?”

He found a booklet in the place where there were traces of dug up brown soil on the ground.

Gildras’ Strange Story Booklet.

Weed read the book.

I, the cheerful wanderer Gildras, had a date with my new wife in the Dolne Village yesterday. The daughter of a farmer, she was overflowing with health... At night, the windmill was extremely cozy and the atmosphere was good.

The next day, I left Dolne Village and walked somewhere, but I wasn't able to find the direction. For a traveler like me, who has wandered so much the soles of my shoes have worn off. to get lost, something impossible had happened.

Here, the trees were sucked dry of moisture, and when I look back on it, I think I also passed by red dirt.

What kind of scary event had happened here in the past?

However, these old trees didn't seem harmful to humans. That's because even a traveler like me was able to pass them safely. Ha. Ha. Ha.

While I was lost and struggling, I saw an entrance leading to somewhere. Although it seemed fairly well hidden between the trees, it couldn't escape my sharp eyes.

Still, I didn't try going inside. That was because I was searching for the village first.

Oh my God. Why in the world am I so good at finding dangerous places like these, when I can't even find a village I've been to?

I want to find even a hunter's lodging quickly. It would be nice if there was a lady overflowing with health in that place too...

It was the travel log of the traveler named Gildras, who wandered the Versailles Continent.

There were truly a lot of stories like these that bards would circulate around the Versailles Continent. In fact, even if you stayed in a tavern for just 1 hour, you could hear stories like these three or four times!

Nide had gathered information like that and had found the dungeon.

Gildras' Strange Story Booklet was divided into 8 chapters.

The Hot Night with the Childhood Friend After Leaving Home

The Single Night Spent in the Windmill with the Farmer's Daughter

The Stimulating Night with the Mermaid on the East Coast

The Short Night Within the Traveling Carriage

The Night with the Dream-like Woman Beneath a Region with a Prosperous Trail

Captured by a Slave Merchant, the Thrilling Night with the Slave Beast

The Night I Felt I Overcame my Stamina in the Barbarian's Village

After Wandering Everywhere in Versailles Continent, the Affectionate Night with my Childhood Friend Again

Each chapter was named with titles that seemed like they were mostly profanity.

Moreover, there was something written clearly in red letters on the bottom of the cover.

Not suitable for minors!

*

Hegal and Nide took out and started eating the bread and fruit from their backpacks.

“It tastes really bad.”

“Even so, everyone eat up. It’s so you can keep up your stamina.”

“How far do you think this dungeon goes to?”

The party members turned their attention to Hegal and Nide, but they too just shook their heads.

“After entering a dungeon, no one can know if there’s something at the end of it.”

“Me too... as a Thief, though I’m on the side of having explored a lot of dungeons, predicting beforehand is impossible. Sorry.”

Rumi asked, “Then how many basement levels do dungeons usually have?”

“There’s no way to tell. Normally, there’s 2 or 3 basement floors. We can define it like this, but it’s not a certain thing. In severe cases, I’ve even seen dungeons with up to 12 basement floors.”

“There’s dungeons that deep?”

“Defining a floor in a basement dungeon is ambiguous. Though there’s times when you definitely go down a floor through stairs, in the case of dungeons that are gradually connected the basement, you’ve just gotta define a floor when the level of the monsters goes

up or the atmosphere changes.”

“Then I guess you could even die when you’re exploring a dungeon?”

“It’s possible.”

After listening to Rumi and Nide’s conversation, Hegel grinned toothily.

“However, if it’s monsters of this level, there’s prolly no reason for me to die.”

Hegel personally held great belief regarding the armor. With materials that couldn’t be made without superior Handicraft skills, it was armor that couldn’t even be imagined by Blacksmiths of low caliber.

A work of art that could supplement a swordsman’s slightly lacking defenses because of the focus on attack!

A properly made Bantis Armor Set was over 5 thousand gold for one set. Although it was heavy, it had more than 5 or 6 times the defense of normal armor. Meaning he wouldn’t die, even from considerable damage.

Armor at a level where tolerable arrows or swords would just bounce off!

What swordsmen could call their dream was full plate armor. The armor Hegel had equipped was an item of first class, that had even been rigged with magic resistance. The handicraft or ornaments, even the form could be called a work of art without shame– it was that beautiful.

The best product that neared perfection!

Not only did the durability barely drop, for swordsmen, there was no better item than this.

On the 2nd basement floor, adult Kramanoims appeared.

However, it was just that their bodies were a little bigger. Their actual attack power was similar. A monster that had no development despite growing up!

Except, the dose of poison the monsters spat out had built up by quite a lot; for a party that didn't have a Priest, it couldn't be anything but hard work.

“Shit.”

Hegel was covered in revolting paralysis saliva. He couldn't help but have a bad mood from fighting while getting hit by yellow spit.

Since Swordsman Bella was weak, if she got paralyzed by the

adult Kramanoims, she could only die shortly.

Since his other party members didn't consider themselves combat-related, there was no helping it — Hegel had to take on the role of the meat shield.

“Damn it. Why are these dirty monsters appearing.”

Hegel's mail and shield were covered in saliva. Of course his equipment was getting dirty, but even a disgusting smell was coming off. Since he was equipping accessories that had outstanding magic and poison resistance, he was still able to move his body vigorously, but if it were someone else, they would have lost their ability to fight.

“Barrage!”

Twitter shot forth arrows like a shower, and the others were pouring attacks as far as the bounds of their mana would allow. The Thief Nide lured the Kramanoims as he walked with an elaborate step and landed. If not for the extremely Thief-like quick movements that drew their attention, the Kramanoims would have charged the other party members.

Even so, Hegel was surrounded by Kramanoims with no place to run.

“Damn it. I didn't want to use my top skills in a place like this...”

Hegel snuck a quick glance at the other party members, then put the Longsword he'd been using in its sheath and pulled out a ponderous Mace.

Generally, the Mace was a weapon with an incredibly powerful striking power. Although Swordsmen mastered the Sword as their Profession, they acquired weapon skills of the Spear and Blunt Weapons separately at the same time. That was because the defense of the armor that Swordsmen used in fights was so impressive, it became efficient to use a Spear with a pointy tip or a Blunt Weapon.

Rupture's Mace!

It was a weapon worth 680 thousand Won (~\$680) in the cash trading market.

As an Option, it could spread a violent shock, even if it was blocked by a shield the destructive force penetrated through armor unhindered, so it could blow people away with strength alone.

Granted, it was hard to handle because it was short and heavy, but it was the best method when fighting monsters that had high Health and didn't die easily.

“Hyaa!”

As he changed his weapon and raised it, an powerful, imposing aura surged out of Hegel's body. Perhaps it was a characteristic of

the Mace itself, but his Fighting Spirit was enhanced and the monsters were intimidated.

Hegel didn't miss the opportunity to take advantage of the Kramanoims' dulled movements.

“Earth Wave!”

With great strength Hegel smashed the ground using the Mace, the earth rumbled and trembled.

The bodies of the Kramanoims within the 7 meter radius turned to grey light due of the shockwaves.

The area of effect skill demonstrated by a Swordsman of over level 300 by overdoing it, that destructive power!

“Flash of Fighting Spirit!”

The Hegel who broke through the blockade hunted the Kramanoims as if he was slaughtering a flock of sheep.

Although he also had the help of the other group members, he was the leading player who hunted the most monsters.

Even so, Hegel didn't seem like he was satisfied.

“Damn it. If the Earth Wave’s skill proficiency was even a little higher, it would have made at least half of them unable to fight in one hit...”

Even with the lacking skill proficiency, it was good enough to transfix Bella or Rumi.

“A level 300 Swordsman sure is strong.”

“I only saw ‘em on broadcast all the time, but I’ve never seen one myself. But just as they say, it’s like they were born to fight—they’re incredible.”

A Swordsman’s attack power was to the point of inducing awe.

After they finished taking a short break, they headed to the 3rd floor basement.

“Haha. If old Kramanoims show up, this’ll be a really good dungeon.”

Hegel lead them with confidence.

However, starting from the 3rd floor basement was not as they had expected. A damnable labyrinth blocked the way in front, and there was no end to the traps.

Something charming like arrows flying from walls! They stepped

on the ground and had their feet sink right in, and were ambushed by venomous snakes. Thief Nide dismantled the traps and hunted the snakes, but they were delayed by a lot of time.

And then, in a moment while they were advancing like that!

Rumble!

A big boulder was rolling towards them from an alley they had passed.

It filled up the entire passage. The boulder that rolled forward without even a corner to escape out of.

“Run!”

The party that had seen the big boulder that was rolling forth behind them ran for their lives into the dungeon.

“We don’t know what might be in front!”

“Better than being crushed and killed by the rock.”

“The passage was getting narrower!”

Rumble!

The passage became narrower and narrower, so the big boulder was wedged in between the walls. The walls were considerably ravaged, and although it was a boulder that had rolled all the way here, it finally stopped..

“What a relief.”

“Are we saved by this?”

There wasn't any time to nonchalantly express happiness. Thief Nide knew from experience that in cases like this, even greater crises would come find them.

Nide hurriedly opened his mouth.

“Hey, guys.”

“Hm?”

“There's three things of bad news... there's really bad news and less bad news. And there's also one piece of unlucky news.”

Selsia beamed a smile. After repeatedly doing only boring hunting every day, experiencing this kind of dungeon exploration was very exciting for her.

“Tell us the less bad news first.”

“Ok. That’s that our way back is blocked. And the really bad news is, that we don’t know what kind of traps there are in the place where we’re standing.”

“Traps, you say?”

“Just now, I tried using my Trap Seeking Skill... this entire place is lit up by traps, blue light, so by the way, I think it’ll be better to stay put.”

“Dismantling the traps is impossible?”

“Yeah. This whole passage is marked with traps... this place is probably not originally a normal path, so it’s a passage connected separately. By the look of it, it seems like we chose the wrong direction ever since the boulder came rolling.”

“...”

Rumi’s skin turned pale. Still, before she gave up she asked hopefully, “Then what’s the unlucky news? Isn’t there nothing worse than this?”

“Yeah. Right now that the one who is coming to where we are, that the sole person who can help us... is Weed hyung.”

“...”

The party members who sank into despair, hopelessness, frustration, and dejection!

They could easily feel Nide's drooping meaning from his tone.

'It ends here.'

It seemed like they'd somehow be going back with the dungeon exploration assignment as a failure. The points for finding an undiscovered dungeon would probably be high, but if they all died in the middle of it, it would become a total failure in the end.

The assignment in itself was regretful, but the level or skill proficiency they would lose from dying could be nothing but extremely upsetting.

Then Hegel strode in with a detached step. After resting quietly, his exhausted stamina had been restored.

"What're you all doing. Are you just going to sit here quietly and die?"

"Hegel! It might be dangerous."

"We don't have the freedom of choice anyways. Then we'll press on. And it's a dungeon where weak monsters like Kramanoims come out... even if you say it's dangerous, it's probably not that bad."

Hegel's remark was strangely persuasive.

Even if were still standing here, they would move forward. If they were going to die all the same, be it this way or that, they would not die standing still.

Although it was a Swordsman-like action, it was before he had even taken just a few steps.

“Hegel!”

“What?”

Hegel didn't turn around to look and was only walking forward.

The party members could see the spiders clinging to Hegel's back and shoulders. They were spiders the size of fists that furtively crawled over the walls, floor, and ceiling. Because of the armor he had equipped, only the person involved couldn't feel them.

“Umm, you're in danger right now.”

“What is it.”

“On your armour.....”

“Is something there?”

By the time Hegel turned around to look, the spiders had already spewed silk and had tightly encased his whole body in it.

His body was completely wrapped up so he couldn't even swing his weapon.

The so-called airtight seal!

Every time he squirmed, trying to escape, the spider silk didn't break and became more and more tight instead.

“Ah!”

A scream burst out of Hegel's mouth. His Health didn't fall by a lot because he was wearing good armor, but no matter how much strength he used, he couldn't move an inch in the spider silk.

All the other party members were also tightly tied up by the spider silk that fell from the ceiling, wall, floor, and behind them.

The entire passage was filled with spiders, so there wasn't even a place to escape to.

Even though Ranger Twitter's arrows got in the way of the spiders' approach, it wasn't that much of a help, and even Thief Nide's dagger only managed to cut a few spider silk strands.

“Kruuung!.”

A Demonic Spirit that resembled a huge spider appeared from the wall of the passage.

Elfin Queen Spider.

The boss level Demonic Spirit leisurely watched over the dying party members.

“Oh no. Looks like we’re dying just like this.”

“It was still a fun exploration.”

It was a point of comfort that at least they could still have a conversation since only their mouths weren’t covered by spider silk.

*

Weed was wandering the forest of dried up trees and was searching for the dungeon’s entrance.

The darkness had fallen deeply, and the forest gave off a gloomy spirit.

“Where the heck is the entrance supposed to be.”

If he were a Thief or an Adventurer, he could follow them just by looking at the preceding party’s footsteps. However, it wasn’t just that Weed didn’t have those kinds of tracking skills, but because he had flown in with the outstretched Wings of Light to the middle of the forest of dried trees, he was struggling even more.

Hunnng hunng.

He heard the rough sound of breathing from a living thing somewhere, and the chirping of grasshoppers died away.

The desolate and lifeless forest!

Something was thudding, charging towards him from between the trees.

“D-I-E, IN-TRU-DER!”

Growlers!

Monsters holding axes came rushing at him.

A group of a hundred. It was the advent of a Growler charge.

Instead of running away, Weed drew and raised his sword.

“These experience points and items! Come quickly!”

It was just that he welcomed the appearance of an enemy because he hadn't hunted in awhile.

“Call Death Knight!”

With smoke, even Death Knight Van Hawk appeared.

“Master!”

Van Hawk quickly recognized the sight of Weed. Even though he was in the form of a Dwarf, he had seen Weed as an Orc in the past, so he wasn't surprised. They weren't simply in a relationship of training together for one or two days, either.

“They're enemies. Fight.”

“I understand. Master!”

Van Hawk turned round and swung his sword. The earth was turned over, and Growlers were pushed and fell over.

When Van Hawk was fighting with group of savage Growlers, the rest of them made a detour and made Weed their target.

“Moonlight Sculpting Blade.”

From within the forest of dried up trees, Weed scattered beams of light as he ran forward. He grazed past the trees at a rapid speed.

The dried up trees became obstacles, so the number of opportunities the Growlers chasing after him had to attack were limited.

“Intruder!”

“I’ll chew and eat you alive.”

Two Growlers leapt forward as if to intercept him.

The axe strike overflowing with energy! It was a reckless act to take the attack charged with all the Growler’s weight head on.

“Seven Celestial Footsteps!”

Weed’s body left an afterimage as it moved brilliantly.

A skill that could perfectly ignore the law of inertia! A skill that could move you in a completely different direction even at full pelt!

When he took the first step, his whole body faced backwards. In

the next step, he moved to the right. After completely evading the Growler's attack, he swung the sword as if to cut the enemy entirely.

It had been a really long time since he'd fought, but that much wasn't a problem.

Pow pow pow!

The rampaging cut that pursued the intercepting Growlers!

When he had hunted two of the Growlers, Van Hawk had already cleared away at least five enemies. Van Hawk stood in place and was mowing down Growlers that rushed at him like moths to a flame.

“Seven Celestial Footsteps!”

Weed activated the skill without reserve. Quick skill use to attack the Growler's openings, a useful skill even in the moments when he was picking up japtem. Since his Mana and Stamina were unparalleled, there was no hesitation in skill use.

At that moment, a whisper from Rumi was relayed to him.

– Weed-oppa.

– Yeah, what is it?

The calm voice even while crazily hunting and collecting japtem!

It was illegal to speak on the phone while driving. That was because it diverted attention and increased the probability of an accident.

Since whispering while fighting was incomparably dangerous in Royal Road as well, most people knew to restrain themselves.

However, Weed's concentration was terrifying.

‘Experience point, skill proficiency, item!’

He was so blindly bent on these three that even if something totally unexpected occurred, he would not be shaken.

– Have you entered the dungeon yet?

– No, not yet.

– Don't enter. We fell into a trap. We are all only awaiting for our deaths to come.

– ...

– You shouldn't come inside and die needlessly, so stay in town

and rest.

Skiid!

Weed halted on the spot.

Then, he surveyed the forest of dried up trees with dimmed and lowered eyes.

At some point, Van Hawk followed suit and stopped.

‘What kind of trouble is that master with a dirty personality going to raise...’

Since he had accompanied Weed from the time since Weed had only barely come out of the beginner stage, Van Hawk knew Weed well. That while hunting, there was absolutely no hesitation or wavering.

The truth that that kind of Weed had stopped was couldn't be anything but horrifying for Van Hawk.

The Growlers that had lost their fighting spirit peered at Weed with fearful eyes.

If Van Hawk was based on an explosive attack power, Weed was on a totally different level. Movement that couldn't possibly be chased.

Nimble, phantasm-like movements that rendered them helpless.

Users had to personally go through the process of fighting in Royal Road. Because of that, despite having the same level and skill, the gap between fighting level was enormous.

A character that had learned even Advanced Sword Skill that was controlled by a young child, and a character controlled by a real swordsman was the difference between heaven and earth.

Since Weed used the skills in the right places at the right times, it wasn't possible for him to miss the place of even a single downy hair.

The concentration he showed in the fight, the skill he displayed while engrossed was giving of an awe-inspiring feeling.

Not only would normal users be shocked by those remarkable body movements, but monsters were also feeling it and were afraid.

His Leadership, Charisma stats made the effect even greater, for monsters lacking intellect, it easily made them fall into horror.

That Weed stopped during combat.

“You guys have really good luck. Something urgent happened, so

it seems I've gotta go now."

The Growlers expelled breaths of relief.

Could there be anything more joyful than this!

But Weed hadn't finished speaking.

"Van Hawk."

"Your command, Master."

"Don't let any of them get away and hunt down every one of them. Don't forget to pick up all the japtems as well."

"Okay. Master."

Weed was not one to neglect and leave monsters.

After handing the duty off to Van Hawk, he searched for the dungeon entrance once again.

Fortunately, he was able to find the entrance in a place not too far from the place where he had fought with the Growlers.

Weed went into the entrance without even a moment of hesitation.

Chapter 4: The Ability He Shows

– You have entered the undiscovered dungeon of Kramador.

Bonus: Extra experience for one week, 2x Item drop. (6 days and 11 hours remaining.)

Weed did not receive the Kramador Dungeon's first explorer message because he came after Hegel's party, who discovered it first.

However, time had passed by and the monsters inside the Kramador dungeon had already respawned.

Slimy creatures similar to White Lizards were crawling about.

“Nide must have gone through a lot of trouble to discover this dungeon.”

Even for Dark Gamers who made money in Royal Road by tracking and investigating clues, it wasn't easy to discover a new dungeon especially in the Central Continent.

He could imagine Nide suffering terribly in a dim, dark place.

Gildras' Book of Strange Stories!

If it wasn't for that book, it would have been difficult to find this dungeon.

The Forest of Dried Trees wasn't a good hunting ground, and Growlers rampaged aimlessly at night.

"You've gotta read a variety of books after all."

There was literary fiction, historical books, biographies, and economic textbooks. These kinds of book were not the only valuable works of literature. In particular, Weed couldn't understand the common notion that famous foreign books were the only valuable ones.

Porn!

There were a lot of things you could learn from reading porn books, which ignited fires in the chests of all men. Is there any other book that makes one concentrate as well as porn does?

Of course there isn't!

While reading a book, as the words flowed into the head, those situations were drawn intact.

Moreover, it was an impressive story that had been filled with the infamous seven passions of mankind!

However, even porn books have their varieties. There are a lot of things to learn from the protagonist's agony, their inner conflict, and the development of their faithfulness to their desires. Gildras was a man who received his domestic education from erotic fiction!

Hasn't everyone experience bitterness after finding out there were only a few pages left to read when they were young? There probably wouldn't be any students who would be sad at not having many pages left to read on their textbooks. So from porn, you can learn the mindset of cherishing books.

“Books are truly precious.”

Weed felt pleased when he saw Gildras' Book of Stories. These types of books were classified as miscellania, and were traded even by the Dark Gamer Union. Unexpectedly, these books were sold for a greater price than encyclopedias, and he couldn't just ignore the book's value.

Underneath Weed's mantle, Wings of Light unfurled magnificently.

Although the wings were spread inside a narrow cave, the wings were not meant for flying in the sky, but for flying at a breakneck speed.

“Moonlight Sculpting Blade.”

Weed swung his sword as he flew inside the dungeon.

In an extremely brief moment as he flew past the monsters, he slashed at their weak points.

Because he was flying way too fast, by the time he saw the monsters, they were already in front of his nose. He swung his sword continuously to cut down the monsters.

Completely disregarding the fact that Knights wouldn't dare ride their horses inside a narrow cave, flying with outspread wings at a breakneck speed was reckless enough to call him crazy. At a speed where it was impossible to dodge, in a blink of an eye, he would receive serious damage if he were to collide into a wall.

Even with complete concentration, one had to be insane to fly in a fast pace inside a narrow place.

However, Weed was not someone who would reasonably consider something others knew as common sense.

There was no established method for hunting. Monsters had to be slayed by any means possible! Any method as long as it was quick and effective.

Even so, flying at a rapid speed with spreaded wings inside a narrow passage of a dungeon, while slashing away monsters, was a method Weed hadn't considered before.

Although he didn't have Wings of Light before, and though the monsters inside Kramador dungeon were relatively weak, it was not an idea someone would usually think of. Even if their reflexes and instinct were honed to a superhuman state, it wasn't something a person would dare to attempt unless they had complete confidence in their control over their body and sword!

Even though this was the first time Weed had thought of this method and put it to practice, he found it fun.

If he muddled up at any moment, he could die.

Since the passages weren't just in a straight line, there was a terror that made his heart plummet every time he had to change direction.

If he collided into a wall, it was possible that he might just turn into minced fish paste!

However, whenever he accomplished the impossible, his blood boiled with excitement.

And Weed was considering this kind of act with natural nonchalance.

"I'm starting to feel really dizzy. It must be because of my Dwarven body. It's definitely not a good idea to fly rapidly while drunk!"

He was flying while drunk, even near-death situations couldn't get him to sober up. Speed driving!

In an instant, he found his way to the second floor of Kramador dungeon by cutting through waves of monsters.

Weed sent an urgent whisper to Rumi.

– Are you okay? Are you still alive?

– Yeah. But well, we're slowly dying.

– How much Health have you lost?

– About 55%. I think we'll be completely dead in about 30 minutes or so.

– Really?

Instead of proceeding to the second floor basement, he turned around.

Back to where all the monsters had been annihilated!

“Then I have a few moments to spare.”

Weed unfurled his wings and flew faster than before, tumbling

through the path he had traveled through not long ago.

He flew at mach speed to collect the loot! Weed wasn't someone who would walk away even from trivial japtem.

*

Most of the monsters on the second floor basement weren't any different from those on the first floor.

In fact, since the passage had become more wide, his flying speed became even faster.

Swooooosh!

By the time he saw a halo-shaped light discerning the exit of the passage, he had already flown through it.

Before the monsters could counteract by opening their jaws wide to spew spit, his sword had already pierced through them.

– You have delivered a critical hit.

– Your speed gave 382% additional damage.

Speed!

If it could kill with one blow to the fatal weak spot of any monster, it was a useful technique.

However, it could get problematic if the monster endured the attack. The attack was a method which could only be used with high level of skill and concentration. A narrow passage was enough to impede counteraction.

Weed grumbled as he flew.

“I truly am nothing but a mediocre Sculptor. If I had sculpted these wings a little sooner, I could have hunted in dungeons so much faster!”

However, this method wasn't something that could be used all the time, as dungeons have different structures. In spacious dungeons, even though he would be free to fly, the danger would be greater.

Ranged monsters could attack him if he unknowingly flew past them. His speed would only urge him into their rain of arrows, and Weed would die because of his speed and suffer disastrous injuries!

In addition, for monsters who survived the first blow, it wasn't easy to attack them again with his sword while trying to brush past them.

It was an idea that spontaneously popped into his head when he saw the monsters gathered within the dungeon of Kramador.

Although it was a smashing success, Weed still berated himself for incompetence!

After he had cleared the second floor, he descended to the third floor.

Naturally, he made sure he did not overlook any of the japtens.

Since he was flying in midair, he was able to avoid many of the traps, even for traps that were activated magically. Before they even triggered Weed had already passed by and was long gone.

Ruuuumble!

From behind him, the boulder trap that had made Hegel fear for his life had been triggered.

Even though the boulder was rolling forward, Weed's speed was much greater. He was flying at least five times faster than the boulder.

Weed waited for the boulder and allowed it to come close enough.

“Fortunately, that boulder will help me find my way through this complex labyrinth.”

He had heard from Rumi beforehand, how the others had fallen

into a trap. While they spoke, he heard an interesting tale, all the while, he had been looking for a way to save them.

Within moments, he saw a passageway where a large boulder had destroyed part of the passage and was stuck.

“Rumi is probably on the other side of that boulder.”

Weed took a deep breath as he flapped his wings.

No matter how he looked at it, the boulder which looked to be about 10 meters in height, was impossible to destroy.

Even if he flew to build up his speed then crashed into it, though his destructive powers would greatly increase, it was obvious the boulder in front of him would not break, and he would only turn into a piece of beef jerky. And if he survived thanks to his Resilience and Perseverance, if he was crushed underneath the other boulder that was rolling towards him from behind, the pressure would spell his definite death!

“That’s no good.”

Weed reached into his pockets and pulled out a sculpture. It was one of the Fine pieces he crafted and kept when he was making sculptures in Thor Kingdom.

It was a sculpture of a young female adventurer laughing happily.

Weed mercilessly twisted the neck of the sculpture.

“Sculptural Destruction! Add additional stats into Strength!”

– You have used Sculptural Destruction.

The pain of destroying a Fine sculpture! The grief!

5 Art stats have been permanently lost. Fame has been decreased by 100.

For a day, Art stats have been converted to Strength in a ratio of 1:4.

His Fame and Art stat were consumed and converted into Strength!

The muscles in Weed’s stubby legs and arms began to inflate like balloons. His chest became muscular and his thighs bulkier.

His Dwarven body was unusually muscular, it surpassed the body of a Barbarian. In fact, the only strange factor of his physique was his extremely short appearance.

“Let’s go.”

Weed unfurl his Wings of Light and flapped it slightly.

Since the boulder behind him was rolling closer and closer, he didn't have time to hesitate.

Weed flew rapidly towards the boulder and struck it with his sword.

The spectacle looked liked a shooting star was penetrating through the passage.

Claaaaang!

In a single strike, half the boulder was destroyed. However, because it wasn't completely destroyed, Weed's body was hit with the recoil impact.

The recoil impact was not the end of his troubles. His body collided with the remaining boulder.

“Dammit! Nothing ever goes right for me.”

His Health was reduced by two-thirds.

If it wasn't for his Resilience and Perseverance, as well as the Dwarven racial characteristics, he would have experienced death for sure!

As he flew as fast as a shooting star, Weed had faltered.

After all, he was still Human.

‘Do I really need to crash into it at such a fast speed? Wouldn’t it be fine if it was a little weaker?’

His fleeting hesitation reduced his speed, and as a result, Weed fractured his body instead of destroying the rest of the boulder.

If Weed was able to cast magic, he would have been able to destroy the boulder more effectively, but since he couldn’t, his body was forced to suffer for his attempt.

With his battered body, he spread his wings once again. Since the Wings of Light did not receive any damage, he was able to extract his buried body in an instant.

“Let’s try this one more time.”

The boulder behind him had rolled much closer, so he didn’t have time to do anything half-heartedly. Nevertheless, in that short space of time, he accelerated 30% times faster than he had before.

“Whatever happens, happens. If I die, so be it, but I will take down this damn boulder with me!”

Death was something all Dark Gamers feared most.

The agony of losing experience points and skill proficiency.

Weed felt the same way, however the current situation was ‘all-or-nothing’.

In order to completely destroy the boulder, Weed flew towards it at full power, reassured by the fact that he will get resurrected by ‘Power to Reject Death’ even if he loses his life.

In addition, Weed focused all his strength and speed at the point of his sword. The point of his sword started to quiver, and because of his Moonlight Sculpting skill, the sword was enveloped with beams of light.

Claaang!

Then the other half of the boulder was destroyed in a single slash.

*

“Hey Rumi, how much Health do you have left?”

“About 350.”

“We’re gonna die soon. After all dungeon exploration is dangerous. Looks like we’re gonna die without another squirm.”

“Damn. If we were in a wide plain instead of this narrow passage, there would’ve been no way we would’ve gotten caught in this spider web crap.”

Hegel and the rest of his party were tightly wrapped up in spider webs like mummies, with only their mouths free!

As they were awaiting their deaths, they heard an extremely loud noise — as if a thunderbolt had crashed down before them. Without delay, a shockwave swept past them and shook the entire pathway.

“Wh-what’s going on?”

“I don’t know. Could it be that Weed-oppa has arrived?”

“Rumi, how could Weed-oppa know where this is and find us?”

“Because I told him.”

“That means he has fallen into the same trap as we did? Wasn’t the sound earlier was of a boulder crashing? It seemed like the sound came from the same direction where the boulder was...”

“No way. How could the likes of a low-level Sculptor come into

this dungeon.”

“I’ll try to send him another whisper.”

“That’s a waste of time.”

Rumi sent another whisper to Weed, but she did not receive any response. At that time, Weed was preparing to unleash all of his strength.

“Maybe not after all.”

“Probably not.”

Then they heard another sound. An explosion so loud, it felt like their eardrums were going to burst!

The fragments of the boulder that had shattered flew everywhere as the passage shook. Their bodies which were bound in spiderwebs and suspended in the air, bounced from side to side.

The lump of rock that had blocked the entrance as a result of the trap had been destroyed.

They suddenly heard a voice.

“So I found you properly.”

“Weed-oppa?”

“Just stay still. I’ll free you soon.”

With a swing of his sword, Weed severed the spider webs that had immobilized the bodies of the party members in midair.

Although they had been lowered to the ground, there wasn’t a chance for them to regain their senses.

Weed continually swung his sword and cut away the heaps of spider webs that clung to their bodies. He was removing the thin silk on people’s bodies by swinging his sword.

Although it was hard to believe, it really happened.

As even the silk covering their faces was peeled away, they could see a dignified Dwarf of muscular stature standing before them. It was a Dwarf holding a sword that looked longer than his body.

Every time the Dwarf swung the sword, the silk on his colleagues was peeled away.

It could only be described as sword skill that verged on the miraculous.

Hegel asked with a hint of disbelief in his voice, “Is it really

Weed-hyung?”

His mind was still muddled and his thoughts were in a disarray. Even so, since Weed had appeared and saved them while they were totally helpless, he felt grateful.

But just then, a huge lump of rock came rolling into the passage entrance.

It destroyed part of the passage, and once again blocked their escape.

“Weed-hyung, what about that rock?”

“Seems like it’s the trap I triggered.”

“We’re screwed! What did you come in here to do. Hyung.”

There was no time to even be relieved at receiving salvation.

The spiders that had withdrawn swarmed and crawled out of small holes in the ceiling and walls. Simultaneously, spider silk descended upon them like a curtain and completely enveloped the whole area.

A unique attack that rendered the body completely immobile like a mummy had begun.

Weed extended both arms.

“Thread winding!”

An Intermediate Sewing skill.

The technique for acquiring additional materials!

A technique that wound the spiders’ freshly spewed silk and made skeins.

The silk extracted from the spiders was wound into a sphere, sealed with cloth, and was being loaded into Weed’s backpack.

Hiss hiss hissssss!

Since their silk didn’t have any effect, the spiders made threatening noises and crawled down on their silk. However, Weed didn’t bat an eyelid.

A lot of strength was loaded into the Dwarf’s short and thick thighs. Right before his calves were about to burst!

The spiders chose the wrong time.

He was covered in wounds from breaking the boulder and his clothes were also considerably crumpled, but that was no problem.

“Sword Dance!”

The fourth of the Imperial Formless Sword Technique.

Weed’s movements became like flowing water. Sword Dance was a skill that added explosive power to the truly dance-like movements.

All the spiders that touched his sword was blown away. Each and every one, without end.

As the sword flowed on without stopping, the power of the skill was reaching its peak..

The sword that weaved forcefully and lithely between the spiders!

Although the sight of him stepping forward with short legs and swinging his long sword was amusing, it was impossible to laugh while watching his great power.

Weed was effortlessly swinging his sword as he leapt between the spider webs. The sticky and elastic spider webs were cut away like rotten string.

“Move. I don’t have time to waste on the likes of you!”

With the exception of the paralysis and spider webs, the small spiders weren't threatening.

The Sculpting Blade that demolished the enemy's defensive abilities. Thanks to the Blade's special characteristic, the spider webs couldn't do him much harm, and thanks to his Tailoring skill, he was even collecting spider thread at the same time.

Weed, who broke through the small spider swarm, faced off with the Elfin Queen Spider.

A powerful monster with a level in the late 380s!

Big hairs were heavily forested on its twelve legs, and the head portion was incomparably terrifying and grotesque.

It was this monster that forced Nide to give up resisting and left him to despair after confirming its stats.

However, Weed's bounding steps became even faster.

"Don't block me. I've gotta recover my expenses!"

He had increased his strength with Sculptural Destruction, and a Fine piece at that.

It was the Weed who even ordinarily despised piffling around while hunting, so in a time like this, he had to go completely crazy

with hunting. If only for the sake of extracting the expense of the lost Fame and Art stat, there was no time to delay.

Then, the Elfin Queen Spider turned around and began to hastily scurry away.

Scuttle scuttle scuuttles. (Sound of Spider Queen running away)

It wasn't that it was funny just because it was a spider, but its fleeing speed was terrifyingly fast.

The spider, which took to fear especially well, characteristically chose to run away rather than fight. Even if a prey other than Weed were to appear, it would initially flee if the prey tried to resist. Facing the prey after waiting until the prey had completely drained of strength was the Elfin Queen Spider's method.

Even as it did so, it moved towards the opposite side of the passage as it spewed forth spider silk that was thicker than a forearm.

“Kaiser Sword!”

Weed used the mana he had left to fall back on his most powerful attack.

He swiftly pierced the vital point of the Elfin Queen Spider, the rear point where the spider thread came out.

– You have delivered a critical hit.

The Kaiser Sword that had its power maximized through Sculptural Destruction!

The horrible destructive power that equaled the ultimate attack skill of the Magicians, Mana Burn.

The Elfin Queen Spider's huge body trembled.

Claaaaang!

An explosion, flash, and tremor even greater than when he broke through the boulder that was blocking the passage burst out.

The best that Hegel and the group members could do was to crouch down and block their ears. However, the explosions and light didn't stop with that.

“Kaiser Sword, Kaiser Sword, Kaiser Sword!”

The final form of the Imperial Formless Sword Technique that he used even by consuming his own Health and Stamina after his Mana had run out completely!

He was hunting the Elfin Queen Spider relentlessly through the barrage of Kaiser Sword.

– You have delivered a critical hit.

29% additional damage.

– You have delivered a critical hit.

47% additional damage.

– You have delivered a critical hit.

82% additional damage.

– You have delivered a critical hit.

114% additional damage.

This was the reappearance of the single point attack technique—all those attacks were bombarded on a single point!

He was attacking a precise point through the invocation of an extremely difficult skill while mindlessly chasing the rapidly fleeing Elfin Queen Spider.

Although Hegel and the others weren't able to see it because they had their heads ducked down, the attack technique that Weed was currently demonstrating could be called the strongest attack.

The damage that increased through Kaiser Sword with Sculptural Destruction and his Sword Grinding skill. All of this attack power was applied to the single point attack technique.

With its exponentially decreasing Health and increasing injuries, the Elfin Queen Spider's movement speed was markedly diminished.

It might have tried resisting if it had the strength since escape had become impossible, but in the face of such incredible damage, it staggered a few steps forward and then died.

The Elfin Queen Spider's body turned to grey light, and from it poured out sapphires the size of duck eggs and a waist-high pile of relics and gold coins.

Weed collected the loot with lightning speed.

“Wahhh, although he said he was a Sculptor...” Hegel moaned as he clutched his head.

It was as if his mind had gone dumb; Hegel couldn't think. Though he said he was a Sculptor, what the hell did it mean that he could collect spider silk as Sewing materials.

“And those athletic movements... it wasn't skill, but real sword technique.”

The majority of users fought while relying on in-game skill. However, special fighters used their own power and were able to optimize their fighting even with skills. In a case like this, the difference they could show in their fighting was incredible.

While holding the same sword, a normal human and a trained swordsman fight. The result would already be decided. Even if their bodies and equipment were on par with one another, with the practiced person's judgment, sense, and experience, they could only show a world of difference.

Even in Royal Road, if an expert of fighting in reality and a normal person hunted monsters, of course the difference would be apparent.

Maintaining the optimal distance, making minimal evasive movement, and using an attack method that let them draw out their maximum strength! The mindset with which they hunted would be different, and fundamentally, just the way they moved was extremely and completely different.

The majority of people weren't up at that kind of level.

From their days as a beginner, they would become used to the character and become experts at skill use as they developed more and more. As they hunted repeatedly, the method with which they fought with monsters would become increasingly proficient.

That you could catch a monster that you had hunted hundreds of times before much more easily than a type of monster you were

fighting for the first time was this kind of logic!

However, Weed or the SwordNoobs didn't need that process.

“All you've gotta do is knock it down.”

There wasn't a speck of sympathy in those who ignorantly knocked down the monster.

*

“He must've succeeded in the hunt.”

“Let's go and see.”

After about 20 seconds had passed, Selsia picked her body up. Following her, the other party members walked to where Weed was.

They felt something like awe.

The fact that they were feeling intimidated because of this mere Dwarf was laughable, but it was the truth.

If it was someone they didn't know, they wouldn't have even dared to approach him.

When they had neared him, Weed was wrapping a bandage around his body. He was using the technique of holding a bandage in both hands and winding it around his torso, arm, leg, neck, and back. He rubbed herbs on thickly and was deep in meditation with his eyes closed.

Skill mastery of Bandaging!

The skill that brought even competent Warriors esteem if they raised it to Intermediate — Weed had mastered it through his combat labors.

His Health and Mana were being steadily restored.

Although they'd approached Weed, upon seeing how he was so heavily wounded, Selsia couldn't dare disturb him.

"What should we do... It looks like he got really hurt from fighting with the Elfin Queen Spider."

"We can't even treat him cause we don't have a Cleric..."

It happened when they were fretting helplessly.

After he'd recovered just 8% of his Health, Weed opened his eyes.

They were narrow and sidelong, slitted eyes. Weed's eyes weren't originally like this; his eyes normally appeared bright and gave off

a clear image. Now, his eyes were changed because of the Art of Sculpture Transformation.

The life in the narrow and slitted eyes was bleary.

“I don’t have time to play around like this. I’ve gotta recover my expenses!”

After taking a long, deep breath, he staggered as he walked to the passage where the Elfin Queen Spider had emerged.

His ankle must’ve broken in the thick of battle, as it was dragging on the ground. If not for his Perseverance and Resilience, it was an injury that would have already rendered fighting, even moving, impossible.

“Something like a broken ankle will probably reattach itself with time.”

Weed plowed on as he used his sword like a cane.

Since he had experienced a broken ankle or wrist over a hundred times, he knew the state of his body better than anyone. Therefore, he was going to continue fighting.

*

Choi Ji Hoon was having a date with Lee Hyun’s little sister, Lee

Hye Yeon.

He fixed her electric appliances, and had become friends with her as he taught her the things she didn't know in Royal Road. Although they weren't on couple terms yet, their relationship was very close.

While drinking strawberry milk, Lee Hye Yeon asked, "Oppa, should I show you my personal talent?"

"Personal talent?"

"Yeah. I wanna show you my imitations, like what comedians often do."

Choi Ji Hoon couldn't control his considerable expectations.

"You're really going to do it for me?"

"Yeah. First I'll express the sound of a person walking from far away through imitation."

Lee Hye Yeon spoke after slightly licking her plum-colored lips.

"Clap. Clap."

"..."

“Next is the sound of a car starting up. Vrooom!”

“ ... ”

“This is the sound of an airplane taking off. Swooosshh!”

The click of a picture being taken, the riing of a phone call, the boom boom boom sound of a drum being played, the bark sound of a dog cry, the meow of a cat cry!

Choi Ji Hoon laughed himself to tears.

The imitations weren't at all similar, but seeing a girl of such innocent and youthful appearance earnestly doing the gag was delightful.

‘This child, she has charm.’

Although he had met plenty of girls, the feeling of being sucked in like when he was with Lee Hye Yeon was a first. It seemed like he would have no regrets even if they lived their whole lives together.

‘I would be happy every morning when I open my eyes, hear the chirping sound of the birds, and be able to see the fully bloomed flowers.’

The figure of a man who was completely immersed in his fantasy!

It was to the point that he was worried that he might just be a normal oppa here by Lee Hye Yeon's side.

Choi Ji Hoon asked casually, as if it wasn't a big deal, "What's your ideal man?"

If she couldn't reply properly, he was prepared to ask her what she thought of him.

Lee Hye Yeon answered without hesitation.

"Height about 187 (6'1") and weight 78 kilograms (172 lbs), it'd be good if his attire suited him well. His ankles have to be thin, slightly slim body and muscles. For hobbies, cooking and cleaning. Annual income around 200 million won (\$190k), financial businessman. Will an age of about twenty-eight do?"

"..."

"I'm joking. I like a family man. Everything else is fine as long as he's to my liking. If need be, I can work and feed the family."

"A family man?"

"Yeah. A man who'll only look at me and love me."

Choi Ji Hoon was speechless.

In terms of eligibility, he had more than anyone. He had confidence in his appearance as well, and had the charisma to charm any woman.

However, those kinds of conditions held no meaning for Lee Hye Yeon.

‘Apart from the things I’ve had since birth... I’m really a worthless person.’

This had become an opportunity for Choi Ji Hoon to turn himself around.

Just then, he met a familiar face over Lee Hye Yeon’s shoulder. From the time he’d known, spent, and met with Lee Hye Yeon, this was the primary person he feared to even meet in his dreams!

It was the first among the SwordNoobs, Jung Il Hoon.

Jung Il Hoon, who’d come to the city to buy a present to give to Cha Eun Hee, had caught him red-handed.

“Oppa, what’re you thinking about?”

“Huh? Mmyeah.”

“Your face went really blue, are you okay?”

“I-it must be the lighting.”

“There aren’t any blue lights here... anyways, I’m going home now.”

“You’re going already?”

“Yeah. Because my oppa gets worried if it gets too late.”

“Should I take you home?”

Choi Ji Hoon spoke as if he considered that a novel idea he’d thought of himself.

‘No matter what, I have to leave this place.’

An instinctive struggle to survive!

Lee Hye Yeon got her bag and stood up.

“You don’t have to do that. From here, it’s only five stops on the bus. I don’t even have to transfer.”

“I’ll see you home on a taxi.”

“Save your money. Why would you waste money on something you don’t need? You would go back on taxi after dropping me off, right?”

Choi Ji Hoon couldn’t lie and say that wasn’t true.

Even if he tried to ride the bus, he’d never done so in his life, so he didn’t even know what the fare was.

In his preschool, elementary school, and middle school years, a chauffeur had dropped him off in a limousine.

In high school, he’d ridden his motorcycle. Although it was a dangerous ride with a high chance of an accident, his bodyguards and an escort of police cars were behind him.

The most frugal means of transportation he’d used was a taxi.

His imported cars at home were taking a long break in the garage.

Somehow, he’d become the inheriting son of a business franchise CEO. He couldn’t tell her the truth because he was afraid that she might become prejudiced or hostile towards him.

Although he didn’t dislike the time he spent comfortably on these modest dates, he’d never felt a painful regret like this before.

“I’m going first. Go home safely.”

“H-Hye Yeon.”

Just when Choi Ji Hoon stood awkwardly to take her home anyways, he saw Jung Il Hoon wagging his finger and stopped.

He was even saying something. The blatant words his lips conveyed were clear.

‘If you run, you’ll die.’

*

After he’d seen Lee Hye Yeon off, Choi Ji Hoon approached Jung Il Hoon, his shoulders cringing and his eyes trembling. Without a doubt, he was the picture of a prisoner.

“It’s hot. Let’s walk a little.”

“Yes, hyung.”

They headed towards a nearby park.

For Choi Ji Hoon, it was an incredible relief that they didn’t ascend into the back mountains.

‘At the very least, it’s better that I was caught by Jung Il Hoon and not someone else.’

He was the first instructor and had a strong sense of responsibility. Since he himself was courting someone, he was unusually considerate.

Fish were swimming peacefully in the clear, park lake.

‘I’m jealous of you guys.’

At this moment, even Choi Ji Hoon was jealous of the fish.

Jung Il Hoon moaned loudly with a drawn face, “Do you... like Hye Yeon?”

“Yes, that’s right.”

Choi Ji Hoon didn’t make any excuses.

They might not be in a dating relationship, but he was certain that the feeling of love had blossomed in his heart.

“So that’s how it is.”

Jang Il Hoon didn’t speak for a long time.

Choi Ji Hoon's body, which had been trembling like a leaf, gradually relaxed.

‘I survived.’

He hadn't been thoughtlessly beaten. So with the optimistic hope that he would make it to the other side safely, he tried carefully moving forward.

After a moment of silence, Choi Ji Hoon gallantly straightened his chest.

“As long as Hye Yeon likes me, I want to try being in a honest, serious relationship with her.”

“In the end, you...”

“I'm sorry. Hyung-nim.”

“It's fine. What reason is there to be sorry to me. Love is a matter for those involved. And if it doesn't come to dating?”

“I'm in love with her.”

Choi Ji Hoon explained how some expressions of Lee Hye Yeon were so beautiful to him.

It was an explanation that spanned a long 10 minutes. He even spoke honestly of the empty feelings he'd felt while meeting other girls.

“I’m still young, but I think she’s a girl who’d be hard to find again in my whole life. More than anything... Even now, it’s like I can still hear her voice. I think of her when I sleep, too.”

Choi Ji Hoon realized something as he spoke.

Lee Hye Yeon was different from other girls. He realized that if he lost her, she was a precious person he would never be able to meet again, and also just how enthralled he was with her.

Jung Il Hoon clapped his shoulder with a thickset hand.

“Alright. It’s fine if you’re that determined. A man doesn’t have to talk pathetically about this and that.”

“Are you giving me your permission?”

“What do you mean, permission. I told you that love is fine if those involved like each other.”

“Thank you very much. Hyung-nim!”

“Ah, but you know...”

Jung Il Hoon spoke genially, “Come to the dojo starting from tomorrow.”

“What?”

“If you’re a man, you should pay a little attention to your muscle fitness too. Do you think a flaccid body will do.”

“It’s not flaccid...”

It was a body trained with basketball, soccer, swimming and all sorts of sports.

Jung Il Hoon shouted sharply, “It’s weak! With that level of fitness, could you win against about 3,000 thugs if they lunged at you while in the middle of a date?”

“3... 3,000 of them?”

“No matter the situation, you have to be able to protect your girlfriend. Even if a war broke out, a drought struck, a flood happened, earthquake, even if a tsunami were to rise, you have to save your girlfriend. Are you prepared for that much?”

“N-not yet.”

“I shall raise that kind of strength and courage in you. It’s too bad all I can do for you is this kind of small help.”

“Thank you very much.”

“If if they find out the truth that you like Hye Yeon, then even the students will diligently come to help you like it’s their own business. You’ll have no lack of sparring opponents, so come early at dawn. That way, you can receive the teachings from at least one more person.”

Sparring with the instructors and their 500 trainees!

Choi Ji Hoon’s face drained of color.

He thought he might understand the meaning of what it was to come to the dojo.

“Surely your feelings of liking Hye Yeon isn’t fake, right?”

“It’s real.”

“It’s fine if you want to run away. You can run away. That means you don’t have to come out to the dojo.”

“Really?”

“Yeah. Since we can just go catch you.”

“ ”
...

Chapter 5: The Pure-White Beauty

Kramado Dungeon.

Intermediate monsters called Kramanoims appeared on the 1st and 2nd floors.

That alone was enough to call it more than a beginner dungeon; a veteran's hunting ground. However, dangerous traps and even monsters in the late 300s came out from the 3rd floor onwards.

They wouldn't have met the Elfin Queen Spider if they'd taken a normal path, but it was still an asphyxiatingly dangerous dungeon.

If it was just up to Hegel and the others, they would choose the path that would take them back out!

“Huff huff.”

“Please slow down a little!”

However, they were now advancing even deeper into the dungeon.

Granted, the way in front of them was perfectly cleaned out by Weed. It was destruction that didn't leave even 1 tiny baby spider alive. As for the monsters, they couldn't even sightsee them, and

the traps were completely destroyed.

That was because Weed had given Nide a separate task.

“Nide.”

“Yes. Hyung!”

“As you go forward, dismantle the traps.”

“What about the fighting?”

“I’ll take care of it. Just keep moving on ahead and dismantle the traps. Leave all the monsters alone.”

“Yes, hyung. Please leave it to me.”

For Nide, a Thief who explored dungeons and labyrinths as a profession, something like dismantling a trap was child’s play!

He had also experienced a near-death crisis with the Elfin Spider Queen, however it was merely because Thieves had characteristically low attack power. If he had created an opportunity for an ambush after hiding his body behind pillars of obstacles to fight, he wouldn’t have been able to win, he wouldn’t have lost either. Even when the boulder was chasing them, if not for his teammates, he could have somehow squeezed himself into a small crack in the wall and escaped, though there would’ve been

no reason for him to get caught in the trap in the first place.

The Thief, Nide, was entrusted with a task appropriate for his specialties, and worked to disable or destroy the traps as he passed by.

Weed was assigned to the remaining monsters.

– Weed-hyung, there are a considerable number of level 300 Morron Chasers ahead.

Nide also performed the task of scouting.

– How many are there?

– There are around 65 of them. With this many of them, it's going to be immensely dangerous...

– 3 minutes.

– What?

– I'll finish up within 3 minutes, so find me another monster mob.

– I understand.

Short and sweet!

When he was whispering someone, he made it short and straight to the point, however the time he was in battle was far more briefer than that.

Run up, fight, hunt and kill, collect the japtem!

There was nothing more frustrating than grilling and eating meat at a restaurant than having the meat suddenly stop coming in the middle of it. For Weed, the most stressful problem was running out of monsters while fighting.

[This refers to Korean BBQ places where you grill your own meat, there's nothing more annoying than running out of meat.]

In other battlefields, monsters didn't come out like they did in this dungeon. Since he didn't have to fight sparingly, it was something to be welcomed!

A week hadn't passed since the dungeon discovery, so double the item drop rate and experience were applied. The first discoverers got to obtain discovery fame and the very best items from the monsters, but as long as you came in within a week, the experience and item drop rate applied to everyone.

You could say that it was the gift the monsters that had grown with warm and full bellies inside the dungeon gave to outsiders.

“65 of them...”

Weed could take on that many Kramanoims easily. With that many it would take a significant amount of time to dispose of all of them.

“Summon Dirtman, Fiery Pebble!”

Weed summoned the Spirits he’d personally created.

Since he had max intimacy with them, as long as his Mana held out, there was no limit to what the Spirits could do. It was a privilege only the Spirits’ creator could have!

The Dirtmen were mostly low-class Spirits, and many of the Fiery Pebble Spirits came as intermediate Spirits.

A part of the ceiling collapsed and the dungeon became a sea of fire.

Chaos!

The Dirtmen rode on the Morron Chasers’ backs.

“Get off!”

Although the Morron Chasers swung their spears, the Dirtmen

didn't budge. That was because the Spirits of earth had nearly infinite Health. They squashed the Morron Chasers with their weight and slowed them.

The Fiery Pebbles went into the Morron Chasers' mouths. Searing flames spewed out every time they opened their mouths!

Every time Weed ran in, only the flames were left behind. He cut down the flame-engulfed Morron Chasers without using any skills and just his basic swordplay. That was because he needed to pool his Mana and use it for calling Spirits in this large-scale battle.

Dwarves had faster regeneration than humans, so thanks to their quick regeneration he could fight with basic swordplay and occasionally use Sculpting Blade.

When he was finishing the Morron Chaser group, Hegel, Selsia, Rumi, Bella, and Twitter ran into the nearby vicinity. The distance between them and Weed had shortened although they ran without stopping.

Thanks to being in the same party as Weed, they also received experience.

- Your level has risen.
- For being together with the party member who slayed a Morron Chaser with one blow, your Fame has risen by 1.
- Your level has risen.
- Your level has risen.

A low grade boss monster, Morron General, has been massacred by your group.

Their experience was rising so quickly that they were terrified to check their information windows.

With the exception of Hegel, the level 200ers were electrified and couldn't believe whether it was a dream or reality.

By the time they'd caught up to him, Weed was already running off again.

Running as he wrapped bandages, with eyes closed for meditation, and using the defense skill Close Eyes Tightly, he managed to save a little Health even in the middle of battle!

As long as you weren't blind, it was normal to always keep your eyes open if you weren't sleeping. Since he was raising the efficiency of his fighting as he forcibly closed his eyes, it was absolutely ridiculous.

If you carefully examined Weed's fighting method, it makes you wonder if it was made for humans to imitate!

"He doesn't rest."

"He's probably not human."

"He's a Dwarf."

Hegel became irritated listening to Rumi, Bella, and Twitter's admiration.

“What the hell.”

He really couldn't wrap his head around how the situation had become like this.

Common sense!

Although he'd grown up since youth hearing often that he had no consideration, at the very least he had common sense.

Whenever he tried to use his common sense, his head just got muddled up.

“Though he said his profession was Sculptor...”

Hegel suddenly remembered something he'd said to the Black Lion guild members just 8 hours ago. It had been on the chat channel of the Black Lion Guild!

*

While they were resting after hunting Kramanoims on the 1st floor, Hegel had chatted with some people he knew.

Provence: Hegel, where are you now?

Hegel: Ah, yes. I spoke to you about this before. I have to explore a dungeon with friends from my school...

Provence: Oh, that was today?

Hegel: Yes. I've come to a dungeon in the Plains region of Dale Kingdom. Do not be surprised, hyungnims, but I was the first to find an undiscovered dungeon.

Provence: Really?

Ject: That's a bit surprising, Hegel.

Shen: Have you already grown this much?

As large as the Black Lion Guild was, there were many people who recognized Hegel.

Finding an undiscovered dungeon was a rare and glorious deed.

Shen: Approximately what level of dungeon is it?

Hegel: It's a low-level dungeon. Although I had expectations, jeez. It's about perfect for level 200s to come play. Whatever.

Hegel whispered quietly so his nearby group members couldn't hear him.

Ject: Don't disregard low-levelers. Even low-levelers get big quickly. You were also below level 200 not so long ago.

Hegel: I'm not disregarding them, I just mean it's a dungeon for low-levels to play in.

Provence: You must be getting the appetite for exploring an undiscovered dungeon. You also get tense from not knowing what'll come out...

Hegel: Ah, it's fine. It's a low-level dungeon anyways, so what would there be? I want to finish the dungeon exploration quickly and also return to the guild hunting ground.

When he was chatting like this, he heard a dignified tone through the chatting room.

Bindel: Are your friends strong?

It was the Dwarven Warrior Bindel, who ranked within the top 3 in the Black Lion Guild.

Hegel: No. They're weak. There's one Thief who has a higher level than me, but besides him they're nothing special.

Bindel: Isn't your level over 300 right now? A Thief that's higher than level 300...that's amazing.

Thieves were a tough job to raise.

If they joined a party, they could use close-combat, but they often died because of their weak defense. The risk of exploring alone could not be compared to hunting with a party.

Bindel: What kind of build of Thief is he? And what is his level?

Hegel: He's just a little over 300. His build is probably just mainly party hunting.

Hegel cut his words short since he didn't want to flatter Nide.

The Swordsman who shone as the battle's flower.

He had some contempt towards other professions, and although he himself knew Nide wasn't normal, he didn't want to acknowledge it.

Bindel: At least with a Thief it will be easy to explore the dungeon. Since you said something about not having a Priest.

Hegel: Well, it's just meh. Since I'm almost entirely handling the battle. And there's still 1 Dwarf who hasn't arrived yet.

Bindel: Oho, a Dwarf.

Bindel seemed to be quite interested since it was a Dwarf.

Bindel: Is he a Soldier or a Warrior?

Hegel. No, he's a Sculptor.

Bindel: Sculptor?

Hegel: Yes. He's a hyung I know, but he happened to be a Sculptor, so... he probably won't be much help in the dungeon exploration, but I squeezed him in for the sake of the school assignment. You know, I wish I could just breeze through and defeat just enough monster. After I'm just about done with my work here, I want to quickly go hunting with you, hyungs.

Bindel: Is that Sculptor's level high?

Hegel: It's...I don't know. I never asked. Wasn't really interested. Why are you asking?

Bindel: Because I worked with an impressive Dwarven Sculptor some time ago.

Hegel: So he made an awesome sculpture?

Bindel: Though that's true too... he was a Sculptor with an abnormal Charisma and ability to command troops. I also was following his orders mindlessly and before I knew it, we'd blasted through the dungeon in an instant. Not just me, but dozens of Dwarves were pulled in by his control.

Hegel: I'm surprised there's a Sculptor like that.

Bindel: That wasn't all. His cooking skills were also outstanding. If you just ate the food he made, the fighting became even more ridiculous. The miscellaneous ingredients that went through his hands became an invigorating meal that made you feel strength was surging into your body.

Hegel: For a Sculptor to have that level of cooking...

Bindel: It was really comfortable because he also repaired weapons and armors that were in bad shape. If that Dwarf repaired it for you, items that were damaged beyond its durability limits were also restored.

Hegel: What? Durability limits can be restored? What are you talking about... is there such a thing?

Hegel didn't know that items past their durability limits could even be restored.

Provence: Bindel hyungnim, does that mean durability limits can

be restored?

Ject: So you can return completely ruined weapons or armors back to perfect condition?

The majority of the Black Lion guild members didn't know this. Although the Black Lion Guild had a considerable number of high level users like a prestigious guild, they didn't know much about repairing the durability limit.

In the first place, there were hardly any cases where the durability limit of weapons or armors lowered by a lot while hunting. On top of that, they had never met a Blacksmith who could repair durability limits.

In order to repair the durability limit, you had to raise the skill level to at least intermediate mastery. For a craftsman with that level of skill, they could earn a fairly large sum of money simply by making and selling weapons or armor. There had been no cases where someone was willing to repair the durability limit, which wasn't much help in making money and was just cumbersome.

Bindel: Anyways, there was such a Dwarven Sculptor.

Hegel: Surely not, hyungnim! Versailles Continent is wide, so there can only be one Dwarf like that. But the hyung I know probably isn't a Dwarf like that.

He had boasted to his guild members like this just 8 hours ago!

Hegel was devastated.

“This is far worse than the case Bindel-hyung talked about!”

He was simply resentful that this kind of thing would happen to him, of all people.

*

They hunted a variety of monsters as they roamed about in the expansive third floor underground labyrinth. Once they entered the heart of the dungeon, there were dangerous traps, and boss-grade monsters were crouching in each place like that.

Weed and Nide deliberately fell into those traps and massacred the boss-grade monsters there.

It was a hunting method of complete monster annihilation.

If even 1 monster was left, it was somewhat galling, stifling. Like when you wash your face but don't wash your forehead, you can't feel refreshed.

Besides, there was a double experience bonus applied!

Weed was getting a large amount of experience and items from the boss monsters.

Thanks to Nide destroying the traps, they gained additional fame, skill, and experience as they safely cleaned out the dungeon.

Those who were following were also able to gain experience, fame, and the japtem that hadn't been completely picked up.

In this fashion, the Thief Nide completed the dungeon 3rd floor map.

– The Kramado Dungeon's third floor basement has been mapped for the first time.

Fame has increased by 75.

Mapping skill proficiency has improved.

Experience has been increased.

That means they have gone through every single passage there was. They had completed the perfect occupation of the Kramado Dungeon.

“Huff huff.”

“Thi-this exploration is now finally over with!”

Hegel sank to the ground.

A dungeon exploration spanning five days!

Even considering the time difference that was four times faster than reality, almost a whole day had steadily passed since they'd come into the capsule room at noon. It was midday in reality, when the sun was hovering in the middle of the sky outside.

“It was a really long day.”

Everyone could sympathize with Nide's words.

They had never felt that hunting was this scary and gruesome before. They had also formed belief and confidence in themselves. Instead of always hunting safely with their Health bars filled up, they had chased down monsters like their tails were on fire.

Although they did it with Weed taking the majority of the fighting, when the others had enough Mana and Stamina, they had also participated in the fight.

‘Hunting is fun.’

‘Will I be able to try this kind of hunting again.’

Even though it was scary, the thrilling pleasure could not be denied.

Hegel's legs were knocking together.

“Good job everyone.”

Twitter smiled as her dimples showed.

“Yeah, you too. Since the dungeon exploration is over too, I think I’m going to go home and rest up.”

They planned on catching up on the sleep they’d lost. However, Weed raised his sword silently and was walking away somewhere.

“Oppa, where are you going?”

“I have to hunt.”

“Bu-but the dungeon exploration is over.”

“The double experience time hasn’t ended yet.”

“But it’s already noon.”

“There’s no school on Saturday.”

“...”

Bella butted into the peculiarly flowing atmosphere.

“But oppa, if you keep going like this, you’ll ruin your body.”

“Body?”

“Since we’ve stayed up the whole night, you got to go home and at least have a nap. You also have to eat.”

“I ate earlier. And slept too.”

“When?”

“At dawn. I went home, made food for my little sister, slept for 2 hours, and came back.”

“...”

That meant when the group was taking a break and resting during the dungeon exploration, Weed had returned after eating and even sleeping!

In order to play Royal Road for a long time, body maintenance was essential.

*

“Come to the masquerade the Law Department is hosting! Freshmen can enter at a 30% discounted price.”

“There is Slavery Blind Dating in the Microbiology Department, which has lots of pretty older sisters. Only those younger than the older sisters can participate.”

[Slavery Blind Date is an event where one student ‘buys’ another and makes them do whatever they want as their ‘slave’, all in good fun.]

“The Social Physical Education Department is having a super strength show in the Recreation Club Crew.”

“Look here! An opportunity doesn’t come day in and day out! Bare-handed fish catching that you can do during the festival period!”

It was the day of the Korea University’s festival.

This could not be a more unpleasant moment for Lee Hyun.

‘In the end, this day has come.’

After finishing school, he usually had free time right afterwards. He would play Royal Road as much as he wanted. With sleep adjustments, he invested about 12 hours a day into Royal Road. Since he couldn’t help but play for less time than other Dark Gamers, it was essential that he spend his time sparingly. He even raised his level to level 358.

But to think that he was helplessly forced to stay at school for the

festival duration!

It felt like a prison to Lee Hyun.

“Examination hell is no big deal. If a man is indeed ceaselessly imprisoned, then does that mean he is an existence that cannot help but live?”

A question about existence!

Lee Hyun was having a philosophical thought for the first time in his life.

Other little kids raised their sensitivity as they played with the neighborhood puppies. When they saw the napping dogs, they were also dipped into speculation about the routines of animals.

However, Lee Hyun had not lived a life like that.

The law of the jungle!

If he saw a dog, and it was an easy target, the first thing he thought of was doenjang.

[Doenjang, fermented soybean paste, is a brown, thick paste. Depending on how it is prepared, it can be savory, sweet, or spicy.

Japtem does not endorse the eating of dogs.

Remember the cultural difference — although the majority of new-generation Koreans frown on eating dogs, there are still a significant number of older Koreans who do eat dog meat.]

Dog and doenjang. Like the relationship of ramen and egg, it was a naturally occurring process of association.

The ten year old Lee Hyun who gazed with pleasure at the dogs that approached with their tails wagging if you threw them a few bones!

‘That puppy looks like its meat broth will brew well.’

Although it was a festival everyone was enjoying, Lee Hyun just waited for it to end quickly.

“Dishwashing squad, mobilize!”

Lee Hyun was in charge of managing the bar.

His responsibility had grown because he was older than his teammates and had shown ability since the bar preparation.

“Alright!”

Students used rubber gloves washed the cups and bowls. The bowls in the store were rented so they had to thoroughly wash them before use.

“When should we start receiving customers?”

“The girls will be ready in 10 minutes!”

Business would begin as soon as the female students, who were entrusted with serving, arrived. Even as they were making the appetizers, they heard music and the sound of firecrackers outside. Many people were coming and going past the outside of the tent bar. There were far more students from other schools and outsiders than students from their school.

Finally, the female students, who had changed in the dressing room and had put on light makeup, appeared.

The college girls appeared wearing a white veil and a wedding dress!

The college girls each walked toward their close friends.

“Don’t just stand there blankly. Take off my veil!”

For some reason, the male students felt their hearts thump as they took off the veils.

The female students had instructed them in advance.

“It doesn’t really mean anything. It’s just because the man is supposed to take it off to get that feeling.”

“I know!”

The male students threw back the veils.

“You look different when I look at you like this.”

“Well tomboy, you look elegant when I look at you like this.”

“Wanna die?”

The group members also exchanged jokes without reserve.

Since the female students’ wedding dresses had been personally handmade, they weren’t that pretty or the designs weren’t really impressive. Even so, they were similar imitations and gave off slight impressions of a young bride.

All the female students came out, and Seo Yoon, who had gone in last, hadn’t come out.

“ ... ”

The conversations in the bar stopped. Even the students preparing appetizers in the kitchen and the students cleaning the tables with rags were speechless.

It was because very many eyes were drawn to the dressing room as they waited for something.

Click.

Seoyoon carefully opened the door to the dressing room and walked out.

In that moment, the men were captivated.

She was the woman of every man's dream.

The beautiful skin that looked like it could only be maintained by drinking dewdrops that were purified by about 8 filters!

Seoyoon had light makeup on her face.

This was a common misconception men make; they think that makeup is plastic surgery.

Makeup adds expression and color to the face. The light makeup on Seo Yoon made her own beauty seem all the more beautiful.

The face that was extremely beautiful even in its normal, bare state, was now difficult to stare at for a long time.

Although her eyes, nose and lips were far too beautiful, they merged together and manifested in complete harmony. She was a beauty who made them wonder what the peak of natural radiance was. Their breathing stopped, and they felt like they wouldn't have any regrets even if they died like this simply by looking at her face.

In addition, the thin fabric of the wedding dress evoked a stunning figure from the shape of her body.

It felt like a dream every time Seoyoon walked forward. Even if you knew that she was pretty even when she went plainly, after getting dressed up, her beauty was enough to make you lose your senses.

The men's mouths went dry.

They were enormously moved, like a person who discovered water after not drinking for a decade, and not just water, but honey water!

The miracle of the century was here.

The line of the dress from the thin fabric that swept from the legs to the waist, chest, and collar bone was perfect.

With the enchanting beauty Seoyoon possessed, her forearms alone could be considered sexy!

The most beautiful face wearing the veil was flushed pinkly with bashfulness.

Every time Seo Yoon walked forward, the dress made a swish, swish sound. She walked forward towards Lee Hyun with her head bowed.

“It’s a goddess.”

“She’s a goddess.”

Sounds of admiration came from around the room.

The female students murmured their envy.

“That dress, the works of a world-renowned designer Marie-Ange Chloe.”

“Ugh... It’s really too pretty a dress.”

The boys were deeply sympathetic.

“A world-renowned designer!”

“Impressive. Impressive!”

Then, just as enormous respect for the designer was forming!

Seoyoon went to Lee Hyun and raised her head a little. The clear light of her eyes were visible.

Anyone could see that it meant she was asking him to take off her veil.

Chapter 6: Slave Date

As soon as Lee Hyun took off the veil, the customers rushed into the tent bar.

“It’s time to start business, right?”

“The bar is open, yeah?”

They asked the customers who were waiting in line to wait for 10 minutes. Since there was no news after waiting 15 minutes, the customers started to push their way in.

“Whoa!”

“It’s Seo-Seoyoon.”

Seoyoon was a celebrity that no one in Korea University did not know.

“Your order, please.”

The female students in charge of serving were running around in dresses.

“Customer, please order!”

“Are you not going to order?”

Even after being pressed to order food, the customers were only captivated by Seoyoon and were just staring.

The visual shock from the stunning beauty!

When the female students brought the menus to them and urged them to order, they were once again surprised by what they saw.

“Live Sea Eel, Wild Sea Bass, Steamed Crab, Roasted Eel, Seafood Black Bean Noodles... Is this a real menu? It says spicy stew will be added when Sea Bass is ordered...”

“Yes. Today’s menu is primarily centered on seafood. The main menu changes daily throughout the festival. However, items like fruit appetizers, Korean omelette rolls, and vegetable pancakes can be ordered at any time.”

[T/N: Korean omelette roll is basically the Korean equivalent of tamagoyaki, the Japanese rolled omelette.]

“For now, please give us 3 servings of Live Sea Eel.”

“3 servings of Live Sea Eel here!”

A burner and grill were quickly set on the customer’s table.

Then, the live sea eels were cooked along with seasoning. Every time the eels squirmed, they mixed with the seasoning. Once they were cooked, the nutritious and perfect sea eels were eaten piece by piece.

If they were going to do a bar, Lee Hyun wanted to make profit and bring out the quality of the food.

“Even though it’s a festival bar, it can’t be done half-heartedly!”

It was food customers would pay money to eat.

It couldn’t be made artlessly. It was a job that could only be done if he took responsibility for ensuring taste and nutrition.

Since no one but Lee Hyun could carve the sushi off the sea bass, he was the busiest one.

He was slicing things on the cutting board so artistically!

The sea bass that had its meat deboned flickered its eyes, still alive. It was skillfully cut so as to avoid damaging the nerves.

Today, the wild sea bass, snow crabs, and sea eels were delivered from market merchants with whom he was normally acquainted with. The freshness of the ingredients was guaranteed, and he could obtain reliable wares at a bargain price.

“You were really a college student?”

“Anyway, advertise us to the students. I mean, tell them to buy products from the market.”

Thanks to their generosity, he could use quality ingredients. But since it was a school bar, the prices couldn't be expensive.

In Royal Road, everyone could make money by hunting, so it didn't matter much even if you ripped people off. However, asking students to pay expensive prices was a problem of conscience.

In the end, he reduced the servings moderately and adjusted the prices so they weren't too high.

Nevertheless, the customers were satisfied.

“Here you go.”

“Please go and take their order at table 9.”

Seoyoon also went around taking orders in her dress.

The force of a Goddess gushed out, even when she was simply walking around!

There were many cases where customers spilled their food while

staring blankly. It was a frequent occurrence for them to just stare at Seoyoon for several minutes as they drank their alcohol.

Every time Seoyoon walked by, she left behind a sweet lemon scent.

She only applied a light toner and some lotion for makeup. Nevertheless, she was still overwhelming with just a bare face, but today, she had especially sprayed on some perfume.

Seoyoon held out the menu for the customers.

“ ... ”

She stood still and waited for their order.

She was embarrassed by the gazes of the customers surrounding her, but she endured.

“Please give us a fruit appetizer.”

“ ... ”

Seoyoon lightly nodded and turned around.

Even customers who had a considerable amount of appetizers on their table were scrambling to make a new order. It was attributed

to their greed to try to speak to Seoyoon once.

“The customers have been waiting for 30 minutes.”

“Chef, when will the steamed crab be ready?”

“It will be out shortly!”

Only Lee Hyun was being worked to the point of death. Because of the other students whose cooking speeds were so slow, he had to do 2 times, no 3 times the work.

On the first day of the festival, he couldn't sightsee the fireworks or the student's songs, and wasn't even been able leave the bar at all.

On the next day, even more customers pressed in early on.

“Please take our order!”

“We're ready to order here!”

Although the kitchen and tables were still busy, they had more time to spare compared to the first day.

The cooking had already been finished ahead of time, and plenty of side dishes had also been prepared. The alcohol was stacked up

by the box and the tent had also been expanded.

Since the department sent around 10 people as reinforcements to do jobs like washing the dishes and cleaning the tables, the workload had decreased.

Lee Hyun felt the work's worth through the fun of making money.

‘The first day's profit amounted to 700 thousand won (~\$700). Even after deducting the rental fees of the bowls, etc., for five days, this much is left.’

The business right now was all experience for the future!

He knew plenty about how to treat customers and cook from his part-time jobs, but self-employment wasn't something to be taken lightly.

‘If I can't make a crazy success in special situations such as this, I won't be able to consider any sort of career in business from on!’

On the day of the festival when everyone else was enjoying themselves and playing, he took responsibility of the bar with resolute determination.

They made a large profit on the second day as well, and, from the third day, at no time was a seat at a table empty. Even on the fourth day of the festival, it was impossible for Lee Hyun to

sightsee the festival.

The sight of him must've been pitiful because his seniors grabbed the kitchen knife in his stead.

“Lee Hyun, we'll take care of this place so you should also go have some fun.”

“But I have been entrusted with this place.”

“Is this the Silla Dynasty or what, that you're displaying such a ‘show no retreat’ mindset? The festival isn't some kind of battleground either, so go have fun. The other kids are playing like they've lost their senses, so you should also enjoy the festival.”

Lee Hyun took off the apron and straightened his back.

‘The festival... there's probably a need to see what kinds of business the other departments are doing. Even restaurants need a lot of know-hows. The more diverse the information I have, the better.’

“Then I will leave briefly and return.”

“Just rest up today. It's already 6 in the evening. Since the bar is only set to go until 10 o'clock, we'll try and do the rest on our own.”

In order to avoid straining the festival's energy too much, the bars closed at 10 o'clock.

"Alright."

Lee Hyun looked around the tent bar.

The tables were full of customers, and the students were hectically taking orders.

For the last three days, Seoyoon's popularity was definitely at its peak.

All the customers wanted to order from her. Due to that, the hardworking Seoyoon had received a break today and didn't come out to the bar.

"Even if I'm not there, I'm sure it'll run well on its own."

As soon as Lee Hyun left the tent bar, he was swept along in the festival's crowd— people who came with their families, students from other schools, and Korean University students who dressed up and were wandering around.

The campus that had been quiet was now clamorous. It was a place where the excitement of youth could be felt!

As if to breathe in that excitement, Lee Hyun took in a deep

breath.

“Ah, how nice. The air is filled with the scent of money!”

A stage had been set up in the grass plaza where he had always unpacked his lunch, and bands were performing there.

Multiple teams from the Virtual Reality Department participated in the athletic meet, song festival, and play.

The results were disastrous!

They were eliminated in the preliminaries in the athletic meet, it was impossible for them to sing high notes in their performance for the song festival, and they said an audience of only a few elementary school kids had come for the play.

“Seems like those noonas didn’t practice.”

[T/N: Noona is a friendly, casual term for ‘older sister.’ Like hyung and oppa, it can be used for a non-family member.]

An elementary school kid wearing glasses with a sharp gaze even said something like this. “How sloppy.”

It was a play criticized by even elementary school kids!

That was the conclusive trigger that sent all the Virtual Reality Department's support towards the bar.

*

It appeared that the other departments had done a lot of preparation in advance, as they were hosting a variety of events.

The Department of Veterinary Medicine brought the characteristics of their department to life and were selling beef.

In the Department of Social Welfare, the students were pushing the wheelchairs of the disabled and elderly as they guided them. It was said that the department accommodated them in a nearby hotel or in their own houses as they personally gave them a bath and performed a meaningful deed that gave the people a gift.

In the Clothing Design Department, clothes they had made themselves were sold cheaply.

The music students were on the side of always having high popularity. Since the pretty female students were performing, there was a swarm of male spectators and they were a big hit.

Stages were set up here and there, and even the small events were unceasing.

Even a flea market that sold off unused products was lively.

It was when Lee Hyun's steps took him towards the flea market behind the main stage, someone beside him grabbed his arm and dragged him.

“Look, it seems like 1 more volunteer has appeared.”

An announcer was in the middle of conducting Slave Dating on the stage.

The event crew had been choosing Slave Dating participants from the audience, but Lee Hyun had pushed through the crowd and barged in.

A total of 30 male students were participating in the Slave Dating!

The announcer pulled the mic close and shouted.

“It's time for them to show off their respective honed skills in the talent show. Your master can change depending on how cool a talent you show, so slaves, you should do your very best! Then let's start with participant number 1.”

Lee Hyun received number 23.

He tried to resist and not go up on the stage, but because of the crowd's jeers, he inevitably went up.

‘A fricking talent show, my luck today is the worst.’

What the hell was there that he was good at!

Well, the only thing he knew how to do was martial arts.

Lee Hyun’s face hardened more and more whenever the other participants showed off their singing, dancing, playing musical instruments, magic shows, or comedy skits.

He was scared of the frosty look in the audience’s eyes!

He wasn’t a person with an extroverted personality, and he didn’t have any individual skill, so his anxiety increased even more.

Stage fright. Since students from the same school were watching, it was more repulsive.

‘Let’s dance. Should I do the national gymnastics, at least?’

Participant number 6 did the national gymnastics first.

“Boooo!”

“Boring! Throw him off!”

Lee Hyun was relieved.

‘It’s lucky I didn’t do the national gymnastics. Then should I sing a song? Seems like the classic < I will love you until the end > would be good.’

Participant number 14 sang that song first.

I could not even laugh~

I remembered your laugh each time, so I couldn’t even cry~

Since if I’m sad, you might be pained~

Although Lee Hyun thought the participant had an outstanding singing ability, he wasn’t able to get a high score.

Now the problem wasn’t getting a good score. He just needed to pass this situation somehow.

“Now we’ll watch participant number 23’s talent show.”

Suddenly it was time for Lee Hyun’s turn. Since it was a short talent show, there wasn’t time for him to think leisurely.

“Get me a knife...”

“What?”

“I will show you apple peeling.”

“An apple. Is there an apple prepared? Yes, they’re saying they can get one with a knife prepared for you shortly. Participant number 23’s talent show is apple peeling. Everyone, please enjoy.”

The nicely ripening apple and fruit knife the event crew gave him!

Lee Hyun rubbed the apple as he turned it around and around. Then, in a single moment—

Sliiiceeeee.

In a single breath the knife cut the apple and the peel slipped off.

When the blade grazed by, the apple peel fell, as if taking off its skin. There was no break in between or any residue left behind.

“Did you peel it already?”

“Yes.”

“You peeled it really quickly. In any case, we’ve seen a nice

trick!”

The announcer praised him to drum up the amusement. It was because of the thought of seeing a new trick after only watching commonplace talent shows of songs or dance.

The audience also applauded moderately.

‘Phew. Looks like I was able to pass.’

7 more people did their talent shows after Lee Hyun, and then it was time to set the prices of the slaves.

The announcer lined up the slaves.

“Good looking people in the back! For those of you who think they look ordinary, please stand in the front!”

In accordance to the announcer’s words, Lee Hyun moved to stand in the front.

‘It’s probably better to be sold first.’

But other slaves had bounded up first, filling up the front.

A slave could be purchased by only one person from the audience!

The people with friends to purchase them already had prearranged the selection, so they went to stand in the front.

The people who'd come on their own were only Lee Hyun and a few others.

“Sold for 30 thousand won (~\$30) .”

“Sold for 15 thousand won (~\$15) .”

“The slave this time is quite valuable. 48,000 won (~\$48)! As for words for the purchaser, today you can really work them and get your money's worth!”

Lee Hyun's turn rolled around.

The announcer looked over Lee Hyun and sighed deeply as if depressed. Then he said into the microphone.

“If I were to tell you able the slave this time... It looks like he has good strength. I give up on a price. We'll start from 10 won (~1 cent).”

A slave priced at 10 won!

Although the other slaves had started at a few hundred or even thousands of won, at least... Even though he knew it was a joke, Lee Hyun felt miserable.

But even at 10 won, no one was raising their hand.

“Here. 20 won!”

A middle aged woman with a child on her back within the audience must’ve felt sorry for him, because she raised her hand.

Then a hand from another side went up.

“I’ve got 20 won and another 10 won more!”

When he looked at the place where the shout had come from, it was his little sister Lee Hye Yeon.

To call out 30 won with such emotion, all for the sake of family!

The announcer shouted, “Now, it is up to 30 won. Does anyone want to go for 40 won?”

“40 won!”

“55 won!”

“80 won!”

Since it was cheap, more people started calling out prices.

“175 won.”

“199 won!”

“390 won!”

“390 won! If there isn’t anyone who’ll bid more than 390 won, then the winning bid will be awarded as it is. I’ll count from nine. Nine. Eight... Seven...”

A miserable price of 390 won!

As no one who would call out a higher price appeared, the announcer was going to award the winning bid.

It was when the countdown had gone down to two—

A girl in jeans, baseball jacket, and a hat jammed on, raised her hand.

“2 million won (~\$2,000)!”

“2 million won! I heard 2 million won. Did I really hear someone say 2 million won?” The announcer shouted excitedly.

The crowd's eyes also moved as one towards that girl. They thought it was really definitely a joke.

However, when that girl took off the baseball jacket and sunglasses, sounds of wonder emerged.

“It's Jung Hyo Rin!”

“Jung Hyo Rin came to our school festival.”

She, who sang on world-renowned stages and was called a fairy, Jung Hyo Rin, had called 2 million won in the Slave Dating. Lee Hyun was sold to Jung Hyo Rin like that.

*

“Slave, your arm!”

“Yes.”

Lee Hyun hurriedly locked arms with Jung Hyo Rin.

They were so close that he could smell an alluring fragrance. They locked arms and cleared the crowd as they headed toward another location

There were constantly people trying to ogle at Jung Hyo Rin, and

the attention was focused on them.

Jung Hyo Rin couldn't stop smiling.

“Hey, you'll show me through the festival, right?”

“But I don't know it well either...”

“It's fine. The fun part is trying this and that while wandering around together. Although I'm a college student too, I haven't been able to come to school much. You see, it's my first time sightseeing a festival, though there have been many times when I sang at a festival.”

“Why don't you just go around with someone else. Since I'm a busy person...”

“Slave, shall I return you?”

“...”

An explicit threat to return him!

For the slave, there was no freedom of choice. He couldn't get onto the stage again or return the 2 million won, either.

“I'll show you around the festival.”

“You should have said that earlier.”

Jung Hyo Rin understood Lee Hyun well and had gotten used to the way to handle him.

‘A threat is the most effective!’

Jung Hyo Rin clung onto Lee Hyun’s arm tightly. Lee Hyun could feel her body every time he walked. Her body which possessed not a shred of fat and her cushiony chest kept bumping into his arm.

“Hey, Master. Is it alright to do this, even though you’re a celebrity?”

“Do what?”

“If we go around holding arms, it could create a misunderstanding.”

“What kind of misunderstanding?”

“In general, if you see a guy and a girl and attached like this...”

He heard people’s voices.

“Jung Hyo Rin-ssi, she’s really nice.”

“They say she donated 2 million won to the charity event Slave Dating.”

All the proceeds from the Slave Dating were to be used as charity donations.

“Just look at them holding arms.”

“Shhh! It’s fanservice. Fanservice.”

“Since it’s the kind Jung Hyo Rin, she’s treating him well like a boyfriend even though it’s a guy like him.”

“A newb slave that wasn’t even getting sold has completely grabbed a golden chance, jeez.”

Although there were reporters at the Korea University festival, they passed by them easily.

“We thought she had nothing to do with university festivals ever since she debuted and soared up from her first album, but for Jung Hyo Rin-ssi to be in a place like this... it’s surprising.”

“The fairy known worldwide is truly kind.”

She radiated plenty of dazzling charm.

Lee Hyun, who had left after working at the bar, didn't just not suit her, but he really didn't suit her.

It wasn't possible to think otherwise, all the more because there had been times when she had brushed off proposals from Hollywood's famous male actors. It was Jung Hyo Rin, who'd been far too clean when it came to scandals or things to do with men.

It was she who only loved songs.

"After holding arms with a guy once, it's a little thrilling. I wonder if everyone holds arms for this kind of feeling..."

"What?"

"I am just talking to myself."

Lee Hyun had heard what she had said.

'Although it's my first time holding arms with a girl too...'

As he passed over twenty-two years of age, his contact with women was solely with his little sister.

The life that had come in contact with women only in the faint age when he'd carried her around on his back when she was a baby, changed her diapers, and given her baths!

“Shall we play human whack-a-mole?”

“I don’t want to...”

“It’s 2000 won (~\$2).”

“...”

Two crumpled sheets of bills emerged from Lee Hyun’s pocket.

‘So a date with a woman costs money after all.’

For him to use 2,000 won, it seemed like this would be a day he wouldn’t be able to forget for the rest of his life.

It might even be something that could resurface in his moments of death in old age.

Jung Hyo Rin raised the plastic mallet without releasing his arm.

“Ya! ya!”

Lee Hyun tried to stand by and watch, but as he kept seeing her plastic mallet only missing, he couldn’t help himself from focusing on it.

“A little more to the left.”

“Alright.”

“Now they’re about to come from the right!”

“I saw!”

“The second from the left! It’s not going in right now. Catch it quickly!”

“I said I’m going to do it on my own!”

The competitive spirit of the two was raging up.

“Dang, I missed 12 of them.”

“You should have moved quicker.”

“I’m saying it was like that cause you kept making me talk on the side. If you just hadn’t made me talk, I wouldn’t have missed.”

“Try it again.”

“I’m really going to catch them all.”

Even though Jung Hyo Rin was swinging the plastic mallet even more fiercely than before, she didn't release his arm.

As he was trying to remove his arm because he thought it might be uncomfortable, Lee Hyun's hand grazed her hand slightly. Then, Jung Hyo Rin grabbed Lee Hyun's hand tightly.

It was something that happened so naturally and intimately.

"Che! I missed three of them."

"You did well though."

"What do you want to play next?"

The couple that had grown friendly while catching moles!

Perhaps because Lee Hyun also felt comfortable, he suggested, "Wanna get some plushies by shooting BB-pistols?"

"Sounds good."

300 won (~30 cents) per shot!

Lee Hyun checked the prices and chose the cheapest game.

"Mister, please load ten bullets for each of us."

This time, Jung Hyo Rin took out her own wallet and paid. It was an action that struck Lee Hyun deeply.

‘So she’s a nice girl...’

Jung Hyo Rin raised her pistol with one hand.

“I will shoot first.”

“Okay.”

The bullets Jung Hyo Rin shot missed the plushies exquisitely. Even when they hit a plushie by some chance, it didn’t fall over.

This game was originally like this.

It was a war between the owner and the customers who were recklessly coveting the plushies!

After Jung Hyo Rin’s failure, Lee Hyun didn’t aim for the big plushies.

‘A medium-sized plushie was roughly 780 grams (~1.72 lbs). It’s a weight I’ve felt countless times whenever I sewed eyes onto plushies. It won’t be easy to take it down precisely with a BB-pellet.’

Even if it hit the center of the plushie, the force was not enough.

It was only possible by shooting a barrage.

Since he was throwing away 300 won per shot, Lee Hyun aimed carefully at a small sparrow plushie and knocked it down.

‘Success.’

Lee Hyun planned to give the sparrow plushie to his little sister.

‘Looks like I can brush off this year’s birthday present with this.’

But Jung Hyo Rin snatched the plushie.

“Are you giving this to me?”

“...”

He couldn’t bear to refuse the sparkling eyes and beautiful expression that was asking him to give it to her.

“Y-you can have it.”

“Thank you.”

Jung Hyo Rin embraced the plushie preciously.

The two of them also rode the merry-go-round and watched a play by college students.

On the roof of Korea University's main building they had the opportunity to see the night view of the city and the festival.

Even when the fireworks were embellishing the sky, Jung Hyo Rin didn't let go of Lee Hyun's hand. She didn't confess her feeling for him; this was her way of conveying what she felt.

Lee Hyun thought, 'She must really like holding hands.'

*

Jung Hyo Rin went up onto a small stage by the lakeside.

It was a shabby stage without much of an audience. There was only one master piano as an instrument.

"Shall we sing a song?" Jung Hyo Rin asked after sitting on the piano's bench.

Since they were still holding hands, Lee Hyun also sat next to her.

“What song?”

“Any song... please tell me what piece you want. Any song is fine, but a happy piece would be nice. I feel so happy right now, I’m in a good mood.”

Jung Hyo Rin had toured around the world for concerts. With her magical voice, she made 60 thousand people go wild in her concert, and in some socialist countries, crowds of hundreds of thousands of people gathered in the plaza and fully enjoyed the freedom of music.

Although she was charming and shone incomparably bright when she was singing her song, once she left the stage, she went to sleep alone in her lonely hotel room.

Music was her only friend, a means to soothe her emptiness and loneliness. She sang of happiness, but she was actually very lonely after she sang.

She had the feeling that she would be able to sincerely sing happily if she was with Lee Hyun.

“Will you let me hear < Dialogue of Eyes >?”

Jung Hyo Rin’s debut song was < Dialogue of Eyes >.

It was also the song Lee Hyun's little sister liked the most.

It was released when Jung Hyo Rin was still a sixteen-year old high school student, this song became a worldwide hit and she became a star.

Although her subsequent songs received even more love from the public, there were many people who couldn't forget the ‹ Dialogue of Eyes › a youthful lady had sung.

“I'll sing it for you. In return... I'll play with only one hand.”

For reasons, I didn't want to let go of your hand.

There are no words in this world.

Just us repeating the meaningless murmurs.

Please say what you want to say.

Since I cannot listen.

Jung Hyo Rin's voice spread out like magic, amply rich and beautiful as it was enveloped in the melody of the slightly lacking piano which she played with one hand.

No gestures allowed.

Dialogues does not exist.

Connections made by the glint of the eyes.

Please show me the light of your eyes.

Earnestness, pain, despair, anger, regret, desire, intimacy, love

Please express all these feelings through your eyes.

A crowd, drawn by the music, walked towards the stage.

They found a place to sit quietly in order to avoid making even a slight disturbance.

Then they pulled out their cellphones and sent texts to their friends.

‘Jung Hyo Rin’s singing on the lake concert stage. Come quickly!’

What shall we choose when we eat.

Please tell me if you’ve eaten well, and where we must go with your eyes.

If we look into each other's eyes, we can read our feelings.

A world without misunderstandings and distortions.

So I can understand you, your feelings while looking into your eyes, we must make an effort.

Even so, we can never truly understand each other's thoughts.

Even if you see an action you cannot understand, I can accept it.

Because I may also do the same.

Looking at the light of your eyes is an uncertain vagueness.

They aren't words without feeling, please illuminate my happiness.

So that I can see myself in your eyes.

Even for just a short while, don't divert your eyes from my face.

One heart in one glance.

Please illuminate my heart.

The closer your shining eyes are, the better.

As ever, she sang with a magical voice.

She wasn't the youthful high school student she had been, but a woman who was now learning to truly love.

The magical voice did not convey sadness and grief, but was weeping to be taught about love.

If hard words cannot make the heart quiver.

Then, I want to speak with the light of my eyes.

Hear the sound of your eye's voice.

Because it will furrow far more deeply into your heart.

I will be able to convey what words cannot.

Speak with your eyes.

I want to see the light in your eyes.

Jung Hyo Rin did not look at the piano.

She looked at the Lee Hyun who was sitting right next to her, as she sang with her sparkling obsidian eyes.

Chapter 7: Smith's Curiosity

Weed returned to Nekan Castle with a haggard face.

The hunting without breaks inside Kramado Dungeon!

He could still gain a considerable amount of levels and items, but with his exhaustion, he incurred an Overwork Hex and fell into critical condition. His current Vitality and stats weren't even a third of what they originally were.

Weed entered a Tavern after purchasing a sack of peanuts, an onion, and garlic.

“Give me one half stout!”

He ordered beer and took a swig.

– A small amount of Vitality has been restored.

You are in a state of severe Overwork.

He felt he might live now.

‘It wasn't just hunting; the festival was wearisome too.’

The first festival of his youthful college life and it was boring to him!

‘I can’t relax like the others when it’s time to make money. If I ate whatever I wanted to eat, played everything I wanted to play, and did whatever I wanted just like other people, then when would I be able to make money?’

These days, even little kids knew about the gap between the rich and the poor.

In Weed’s perspective, a child who comes to kindergarten riding the foreign car their parent drives is full of confidence and dignity. However, a child who comes riding a school bus is somewhat intimidated.

“You....”

“Huh?”

“You use a Monami ballpoint pen for writing.”

[T/N: Monami is the name of a Korean company. It’s a little more expensive to use a Monami.]

“My mom was laid off... Next month, I’ll replace it with a Japanese-made pen.”

It was a conversation between kindergarteners from Weed's dream.

In truth, having money or not made a difference in even little things.

When eating the food on their lunch trays, a kid from a well-off family will dip their sausage in ketchup and eat it first. But kids from poor families ate their bean sprouts or vegetables first.

The obsession that the sausage needed to be saved for last.

Lee Hyun acknowledged his inferiority complex.

'Kids who grew up drinking white milk can never be the same as those who grew up drinking strawberry milk.'

His heartfelt theory on strawberry milk struck a chord in his heart!

As he drank his beer, Weed recalled the things that happened in the festival.

Jung Hyo Rin's live concert lasted until dawn.

It kept going as encores continued to be called out, and since she was grabbing onto Lee Hyun's hand, he had to stay with her.

‘And that wasn’t all, was it?’

If it had just ended there, his vitality wouldn’t be so severely exhausted like this.

*

On the last day of the festival, the seniors spoke to Seo Yoon.

“Seo Yoon, you’ve gotta enjoy the festival too. Are you just going to work here?”

90% of the pub’s customers came to see her, but her upperclassmen gave her freedom.

“At least go out and take a look around. Everyone should participate in the festival together. Is there maybe someone you would like to go out and play with?”

In response to her seniors’ goodwill, Seo Yoon reflexively stared at Lee Hyun.

Lee Hyun immediately smiled brightly for her.

“Alright. Don’t worry about the pub and go enjoy the festival.”

The pub was a success and since the orders went well, it seemed

there were almost no ingredients left. If they closed early at 8 pm, he could go home and log into Royal Road.

Lee Hyun was one to refuse even a date with Seo Yoon if he had 2 hours to spare in Royal Road.

“Lee Hyun.”

The reserve forces who came back from the army did not miss the delicate matter.

[T/N: In Korea, all able men are required to train in the army for two years. They come back as reserve forces.]

“Yes. Sunbae.”

“Although we can’t believe it, looks like Seo Yoon wants you. Go guide her around the festival.”

Since he couldn’t refuse his reserve force upperclassmen, Lee Hyun was forced to take on the role of a festival guide.

“Argh, I envy him.”

“Ah, I can guide you well too...”

In the midst of the seniors’ and customers’ envy, Lee Hyun and

Seo Yoon left the pub together.

She changed from the wedding dress into casual clothing, but her beauty was still enough to make the eyes of the men who came to check out the festival pop out. The men who passed them looked back again with expressions of disbelief and did not move.

“Shall we go?”

Lee Hyun suddenly grabbed Seoyoon’s hands.

Jung Hyo Rin had liked holding hands to the point of not letting go, so he held Seo Yoon’s hand first believing that she probably wouldn’t dislike it. It wasn’t manly courage, but the festival crowds were large, so his main reason was that it seemed they were going to get separated if they didn’t hold hands.

“...”

Soft and tender, her hands were surprisingly warm.

He felt Seo Yoon’s body go rigid after he grabbed her hand, but she soon relaxed.

“Is there something you want to do?”

When Lee Hyun asked, Seo Yoon couldn’t answer.

Although her voice got stuck whenever it came to speaking, it was also because she had never looked around a college festival before.

“Then I’ll guide.”

Lee Hyun went to play Whack-a-Mole with Seo Yoon because the price was not very expensive and the reaction had been considerably good when he played it with Jung Hyo Rin.

The students of the mole event who had seen Lee Hyun before were resentful.

“Argh...”

“It’s the same guy from yesterday.”

“Sunbae! It’s that guy who came with Miss Jung Hyo Rin yesterday... And today he’s with Miss Seo Yoon.”

The people from the moles event could not hide their severe jealousy.

As if it wasn’t enough that he was with Jung Hyo Rin yesterday, so today he brought Seo Yoon.

Moreover, Lee Hyun’s behavior was incomparable and extremely despicable.

‘Yesterday when Jung Hyo Rin was holding onto his arm, he acted as if he was shy... but today he’s enthusiastically holding onto Miss Seo Yoon’s hand.’

‘Pretentious bastard.’

‘He’s the player among all players.’

The moles surged in anger.

“You have to grab onto this plastic mallet and hit them.”

Under Lee Hyun’s advice, Seo Yoon raised the plastic mallet.

Pyok pyok pyok pyok pyok pyok!

]T/N: A pico hammer makes squeaky noises on impact.]

It was extremely different from playing with the clumsy Jung Hyo Rin.

Even while holding Lee Hyun’s hand, Seoyoon didn’t miss a single mole with her swift strikes.

Compared to her simpleton personality, her athleticism wasn’t normal.

Every time they got hit by the pico hammer, the moles simultaneous felt bitter and sad.

‘It wouldn’t be as unfair if it was a guy with a handsome face or had a whole lot of money.’

‘What kind of charm does such an ordinary guy have...’

They also went to shoot plushies. Thanks to yesterday’s experience, he was able to easily shoot down a small carrot and a kiwi plushie.

“Gift.”

Lee Hyun gave Seo Yoon the carrot plushie as a gift.

“I have to give the other plushie as a gift to my little sister, so you can only have one.”

“...”

Seoyoon grasped the carrot doll firmly in her hand.

Since it was the last day of the festival, Lee Hyun took Seo Yoon to sightsee the festival until late at night.

They were such a sight that a lot of people stared at them with looks of wonder as they went around various events.

Seo Yoon didn't burst into radiant laughter, but she was blushing bright red. When passing a crowded place, she went where Lee Hyun led her, and she even grabbed his hand tightly.

“Would you like to dance?”

Lights were brightly lit on the grass lawn where the main stage was.

A ballad piece was playing and couples were dancing, so Lee Hyun also asked Seo Yoon if she wanted to dance.

Seo Yoon nodded slightly, with a face flushed red.

Lee Hyun held her hand and brought her closer.

Their bodies moved naturally in beat with the music.

The piece wasn't extremely hard to dance along to, but they were both clumsy. They couldn't determine who was going leading, so they both stepped on each other's feet a couple of times.

“ ... ”

Lee Hyun was very uneasy because he didn't know when Seo Yoon would explode.

*

“The accursed festival is finally over. Seems like I'll be able to return my usual routine now.”

After drinking his beer, he stretched and yawned.

It was a restful and restorative when in an Overwork state. While in a Dwarven body, drinking beer and resting had a huge effect.

‘When my body goes back to normal, I think it will be the right time to release the Sculpture Transformation.’

*

Each race had its advantages and disadvantages. Dwarves were advantageous in terms of Vitality and Endurance, but because of their short limbs, they were considerably disadvantaged in actual combat. If one couldn't adapt quickly, that alone would make a fight more difficult.

Barbarians had the best physical ability. With their vast height and muscle strength, made their bodies optimal for becoming a warrior. However, they couldn't use Mana and have the disadvantage of being easily seduced by charms.

The Humans could be said to be right in the middle. They were good at using divine powers or magic and supplemented their weak points for each other while party hunting. Special races like Orcs, Elves, Fairies, or Hobgoblins were also in the spotlight, but the most commonly selected race was Human.

They also occupied the largest kingdoms and exerted the greatest influence in the Central Continent.

“They said the army of Demonic Spirits led by Daymond are currently engaged in a back-and-forth battle with the allied forces in Odin.”

“Fort Odin is showing its power, right?”

“Probably! Ain’t the fort notorious for being impregnable. It’ll probably be difficult to break through Fort Odin’s line of defense even if they’re giant Demonic Spirits.”

As the Versailles Continent fell into chaos, the allied forces gathered at Fort Odin to block Daymond and his Demonic Spirits.

Over 100,000 allied forces had gathered in one place, and another 100,000 reinforcement troops were concentrated on attacking them from behind.

Just the fact that some 10,000 attack spells were cast from Fort Odin each time the Demonic Spirits made a charge alone was

magnificent!

“Heroes, come to Fort Odin!”

“We welcome Magicians to join the war.”

The Empire of Prosperity Guild was in Fort Odin, including the gathered mercenaries. They were desperate because their territory would be stolen from them if the Demonic Spirits were able to break through Fort Odin.

Even nameless high-level users joined. Since massive amount of mercenaries participated, Versailles Continent’s attention was focused on Odin.

The overwhelming battles occurred daily from the walls of Fort Odin to a point where it was difficult to make a hasty prediction of the victor.

When the Demonic Spirits climbed the wall, the allied force’s defeat was predicted. However, the Demonic Spirits were barely driven back by the miraculous fighting spirit of the mercenaries, Warriors, and Knights.

The allied forces had been able to push the Resurrection Army back, but soon additional Demonic Spirits joined the battle and the allied forces had to retreat back into Fort Odin.

Battles by the regular armies of every kingdom were dispatched

as expeditions to recapture territory seized by the Resurrection Army were also raging.

Dark Gamers had plunged into Fort Odin with a sword strapped to their waists, so the market for weapons, armor, and combat goods was skyrocketing.

The whole Versailles Continent was raucous from the aftermath of what could almost be called the first large scale war.

*

Weed pulled out the statue of Death from his bosom.

This was the reward he'd earned by defeating Death Hand in Kuruso. It was an item he suspected was related to another chain quest.

“It probably isn't a quest that's related with the Resurrection Army, right?”

The difficulty of winning the match against Death Hand had been considerably high. He wouldn't have been confident of his win if he had made a normal sculpture out of wood or stone instead of a light sculpture.

“It's an evil sculpture holding a scythe...”

The appearance of the sculpture brought considerable suspicion.

The Resurrection Army had first appeared at a place not too far from Morata. As adventurers discovered the original location of the Resurrection Church, the shape of their symbol was revealed.

It looked exactly the same as the sculpture Weed was holding.

It was bad for Weed if the sculpture had any connection to Resurrection Army!

He never thought it might be a quest to fight against the Resurrection Army who was fighting 100,000 allied forces.

“Surely it won’t be such a ridiculous quest...”

Weed’s expression became serious.

In all actuality, Weed hasn’t been able to complete a difficult and ridiculous quest without any sacrifices.

Even though seriousness hardened in the wan-faced Dwarf’s expression, it made his wretchedness worse.

An employee approached him.

“Customer.”

“Yes?”

“The merchant sir over there have sent you a pitcher of beer to drink.”

“ ... ”

His miserable attitude went as far as to induce sympathy!

It was Weed, who had virtue, power, and charisma far from what heroes possess.

After waving his hand to express his thanks, Weed drank the beer.

– Your body is becoming languid.

Taking a nap will increase the speed of recovery from fatigue.

His overwork and abused body kept demanding rest.

Weed made up his mind after careful consideration.

“Even though it’s a difficult quest, if I avoid it completely, I won’t be able to advance. Essentially, it’s because I’ve succeeded the previous quests given by Church of Freya that I’m where I am

now.”

His battle with the Death Knight Van Hawk, Vampire Lord Tori, the war against Lich Shire and the Undead Legion, and even becoming the Lord of Morata were all related to quests he had accomplished.

If he hadn't been able to find the Helain Cup in the City of Heaven, Lavias, he might've become a Dark Gamer who only knew how to hunt.

Even way before that, if he hadn't received the quest from Sage Rodriguez, he would have become a Warrior or a Knight and progressed normally.

Iron becomes stronger the more you temper it.

Whether it was increasing his fame faster than others by becoming a Sculptor or the difficulties he faced as he acquired Sculpting techniques, they were all precious related occurrences.

He did not want to avoid any quests.

‘Even if it's really difficult, I won't know before I try. Nothing will come out of it if I just avoid it.’

Weed cast his skill with resolute determination.

“Identify!”

Ding!

– Your skill has failed.

You have failed to identify the item due to lack of concentration.

“ ... ”

He was completely disappointed.

His elevated alcohol exhaustion had made the usage of his skill fail.

“Identify!”

Ding!

– Your skill has failed.

“Identify!”

Ding!

– Your skill has failed.

“Identify!”

Ding!

A wooden toy box.

The toy’s appearance had been sullied by dirt.

It is the appropriate size for children to play with.

Artistic Value: Too shameful to mention.

Special Options: You can stop crying children.

A child around seven years old with candy in his mouth left a toy hidden underneath the fence.

“Hyung absolutely can’t find out about this, because hyung will steal my toy again. Hyung is mean, he always takes my toy and breaks it. He’s a really bad hyung.”

The young kid hid his toy while uttering bad remarks about his older brother.

It was a heartwarming scene communicating the bond between families.

The wooden box was hidden between thorns underneath the fence so it wouldn't stand out.

Then, Death Hand saw the toy as he was passing by and picked it up.

“This is... a wooden box worth using.”

Lost Toy

A toy a boy named Brave, who lives in Hagen Village in Sur Kingdom, used to play with.

If you return the toy to Brave, he will give you one of his precious candy.

Difficulty: F

Reward: Brave's Candy

Quest Restrictions: If play with it instead of returning it and get caught by little kiddos, you'll build up massive notoriety and receive the title 'Toy Snatcher'.

“GACK!”

He was so shocking that he completely sober up from his alcohol daze.

A sculpture he had identified with resolute determination yielded nothing but a rank F difficulty quest.

“Of all the places, I have to go all the way to Sur Kingdom... What a pain.”

It was annoying to go find the place just to solve a minor quest.

“A candy...”

Weed heaved a sigh.

Although he usually avoided annoying and common quests, since he has heard bad rumors about them, he never expected a rare request from Kuruso Kingdom to be an F-rank.

“But since I’ll be able to get there quickly if I fly... It’s a little better.”

Flying was only possible if he has recovered from exhaustion. If he crashed because his Mana flow got cut off while he was flying in the air with the Overwork hex, then it would lead to his death.

Weed decided to rest up while drinking beer.

“The cost of the beer I’ve had so far... Ack.”

He drank his beer while cracking peanuts and peeling onions and garlicks.

No matter what he did, there wasn’t time for any luxury or pleasure. Even as he drank beer in the tavern, he intended to recover his expenses.

*

Hagen Village, a village famous for its baking ingredients!

The town’s main products were sugarcane, flour, walnuts, grapes, corn, and the like. The quality of the produce was made to attract chefs. Now, homemade cakes, cookies, and sweet wine sold well.

It was a town where couples sought out intentionally to enjoy the romantic atmosphere.

“Oppa, eat a lot!”

“Honey, honey has to eat a lot too. Should I feed you?”

Couples were scattered everywhere like cockroaches!

Weed ignored them and walked with level shoulders, like a person who had a lover; a man who would come to buy a cake for his girlfriend.

“Please take a quick look at the cakes before you go!”

He didn't forget to glance at the wares the peddlers were selling, either.

While wandering around, he spoke to aunties he met.

“Do you happen to know about a child named Brave?”

The uncles might not know something like the names of children. However, he had a feeling that aunties who had kids of a similar ages would have a higher chance of knowing children's names.

“Brave? Jeez, has he gotten into some kind of trouble again?”

“What?”

“Him's a nasty, mischievous prankster in the town. He pays no attention to what adults say. My child shouldn't play with that kid, but...”

“Where can I meet Brave? I have a toy to return to that child.”

“It’s still early in the evening, so it’ll be difficult to meet him even if you visit his house... You’ll be able to see him iffen you go to the backstreet or the playground.”

It was a small town, but finding Brave wasn’t easy. Although he found and looked through all the places the aunties had suggested, he was still unable to find Brave’s whereabouts.

Eventually, he found Brave in a warehouse behind a bakery. The rascal was in the middle of stealing and eating bread while smearing tons of cream and bread crumbs around his mouth.

‘Found him.’

Weed said gladly, “Kid, this sculpture is a toy you’ve lost, right?”

“Huh? It’s a Dwarf. A Dwarf is talking.”

“You see, I found the toy you lost.”

“Your mustache is really funny. Are your legs shorter than mine?”

“This is your sculpture, right?”

Brave took the sculpture Weed had handed over to him.

Ding!

The quest “Lost Toy” has been completed.

You found and returned the toy to Brave, a boy in Hagen Village.

Quest Reward: If Brave is in a good mood, you will be able to receive one candy.

That annoying quest was completed.

Weed waited patiently to receive the candy.

‘It was a quest that doesn’t even pay the labor cost, but I can get about 3 coppers if I sell the candy at the store.’

Instead of a candy, Brave returned the sculpture.

“Yeah, this is mine. Although I thought my hyung stole it... But I don’t need this anymore.”

“ ... ”

“I’m no longer a kid. I’m eight years old. You see, I’ve passed the age to play with toys and the like. Mister can go play with it.”

Griiind!

The sound of Weed grinding his teeth could be heard. But he was patient, and remained patient.

The profits were greater the more you maintained the possible friendly relationships with the residents of Versailles Continent.

The basics of service mentality were friendliness, assistance, and dedication.

Endure even if you're angry, and if there was something unfair, you must never bring it up.

You could call it a grievous ironclad rule of a Dark Gamer.

“Even so, you should take this toy, since it's yours. Take it as a consideration of my sincerity; I came here especially to find you. Don't you think you should give me a candy?”

“I said I don't want to play with it!” Brave suddenly shouted. “Mister, do you want my candy that badly? How'd you know my cinnamon flavored candy was delicious...”

“Ahem.”

“Anyway, I'm not gonna give you my candy, so you can take the toy and play with it. Oh yeah, try giving it to the drunkard mister Smith, who wanted that toy.”

“Mister Smith?”

“He’s just an old uncle with nothing better to do. But well, I guess he’s better than a Dwarven mister who goes after a kid’s candy.”

Ding!

The Toy the Old Drunkard Smith Wants.

The toy the drunkard Smith from Hagen Village is asking for.

Smith who drinks in a tavern until he becomes dead-drunk, wants Brave’s toy.

Difficulty: F

Reward: There may be none.

Quest Note: There is no penalty even if you abandon it.

Brave grinned as he added, “He’s an old, incompetent uncle who always pushes left his alcohol tab unpaid. He doesn’t have any family, either. I’ll never get old and useless like him. Hehe!”

Weed breathed out a sigh.

An F-rank difficulty chain quest.

Since the tavern was nearby, he'll go in to see Smith at least once.

“Alright, Kid. I'll see you later then.”

“I said I'm not a kid. And there probably isn't any more reason to see mister anymore. If you maybe bring me the iron sword that I want, then we'll see.”

Weed quietly put the sculpture in his bosom and disappeared.

Brave was intent on stealing another fresh bread from the warehouse.

After a short while, a dreadful Orc leapt out from the place where Weed had disappeared.

The Orc Karichwi!

A powerful existence that reduced even vicious criminals to gentle lambs with his face and body!

“KYAAAK, IT'S AN ORC!”

“Chwiik! Found you. Little human boy!”

Weed did not say much.

He gave him a scare, to engrave respect for adults into the very marrow of his bones.

*

When he showed the sculpture to the tavern's drunkard Smith, a glimmer returned to his bleary eyes.

"Where did you get this sculpture?"

"It's a sculpture a kid named Brave used to play with."

"I did want to have the kid's sculpture... Did you perhaps steal it from him?"

Weed shook his head.

After his transformation into Orc Karichwi, he cancelled his Sculpture Transformation and returned to his Human form.

"No. I found the lost toy with difficulty and tried to return it to him, but he said he no longer wanted to play with it. Brave told me an elder wanted this toy, no, this sculpture, so I brought it here."

"Is that so. Will you lend me the sculpture to me for a bit? I

wanted to examine it when Brave had it, but he only let me see it very briefly.”

“Here it is. You can have it.”

Ding!

The Toy the Old Drunkard Smith Wants has been completed.

The drunkard Smith got his hands on the sculpture he wanted.

Although it's still midday, you will be able to get a drink from him.

Quest Reward: Get it directly from the drunkard Smith.

– Your Fame has increased by 1.

Smith examined the sculpture carefully.

“This sculpture... I've seen it once before while traveling during my youthful days.”

“What?”

“Did Brave ever tell you where this sculpture is from?”

“He did not say.”

“This is a story goes back from 20 years ago. The time when I roamed the continent as a mercenary... Ahem! Back then, I was an extremely prominent mercenary. You might not believe it, but I even commanded a mercenary squad.”

Of course, Weed didn't believe it.

Drunks were one and the same— there was no one who hadn't been a big merchant or first-class mercenary in the past. Their boasts didn't encompass one or two days, so he agreed to his claims and let it slide.

“Under the command of Her Majesty the Queen, I executed the traitor Count Savoid together with the Royal Forces. There was a sculpture that looked exactly the same as this one inside Count Savoid's warehouse.”

“I see.”

“It's regrettable, but I didn't know what kind of piece the sculpture was either. It's not as though I didn't have my suspicions... Do you think there might be a story about this if you went to check the local library?”

Weed somehow had a strong feeling the quest wasn't going to end here.

“Why don’t you look into it a little for me? If you do, I’ll tell you the stories in my old days as a mercenary.”

Ding!

Old Smith’s Curiosity.

The former mercenary, Smith, has questions about a sculpture he saw in his youth.

If you gather information about the sculpture and give it to him, it appears he will tell stories he gathered as a mercenary.

Difficulty: D

Reward: Smith’s Story

Quest Restrictions: None

Chapter 8: Reconstruction Of The Niflheim Empire

The linked quest already had 3 stages. It did occur to him that it was convoluted, however Weed continued on to the Kingdom's Library.

It held a considerable portion of the general history of the Versailles Continent, but you would have to personally search for information on individual histories.

Count Savoid (Sur Empire Year 436~Year 479)

Received his Knighthood at age 17.

Returned from fulfilling Knightly duties at age 20.

Inherited his territory at age 36.

Possessed exceptional talent for swordplay and horseback.

Executed for rising in revolt at age 43.

There was only simple information in the Biography section. He also read the History and War sections, but parts involving Count Savoid were missing, as if someone had intentionally erased them.

“Found it.”

“Where is it?”

“It says there’s a treasure hidden in this area.”

Adventurers and Magicians who’d been reading in the library hurried to leave. There were almost 20 users who, like Weed, had come to obtain information in the library.

A jackpot was hidden somewhere, but he would have to invest a lot of time and recovering the costs was difficult— this was the situation while hunting inside the library for information. It was also a condition in where many basic information was lacking, or there was simply nothing to be read.

‘Seems it’ll be difficult to find it this way.’

Weed was submerged in labor.

Finding a clue through a book was hard even for Adventurers with vast experience, so it seemed it wouldn’t be easy for his Sculptor self to gather information.

‘Is the method of my approach wrong? Alright. Since I’m a Sculptor, it might just be that I was supposed to look at the Sculptors first.’

Weed sifted through the art-related books.

« History of Monuments », « Excavated Carving », « Sur Kingdom's Proud Sculptures ».

He saw a book titled, « Ancient Sculptures » entangled among the many books he was reading. The contents of the book, although the name was different, there was information about the sculpture he currently had possession of.

Figure of Rest : Symbol of Religion

It is the symbol of the worshippers who followed the God Matallost, who guides the dead. They did not have a flag or pattern, but were famous for having a sculpture.

The Priests of the Matallost Church had strong holy power and can guide the dead.

After the birth of the continent's official language, rather than using their God's name, they also called themselves the Resurrection Church.

They weren't very high in public favor because they were close to and conducted research about Death. It was assumed they used as sculpture as their symbol primarily for preservation of secrets.

There was a story of some Matallost faith idol being special and sacred artifacts, very different from normal sculptures.

– You have acquired all of the required information for the quest.

He did flounder a little, but still finished the quest.

He went to the tavern and reported to Smith.

“This sculpture was apparently the symbol of the Matollost Church.”

“Whaddaya say?”

“It said it was a symbol of an ancient religion. And it might even be an idol.”

Ding!

“Old Smith’s Curiosity” quest completed.

You have answered the former mercenary Smith’s question about the sculpture he saw in his youth.

Now he will tell you the stories he knew of during his mercenary days.

– Sculpting skill proficiency has improved by 0.4%.

– Your Faith stat has risen by 1.

Since he could raise his sculpting skill proficiency while completing a quest, these kinds of commissions weren't all that bad either. Though it took up too much time for going to various different places.

“So that's what it meant after all. Hiccup.”

The old drunkard Smith was very intoxicated.

“As promised, please tell me stories of what you saw and heard when you were young.”

“Ayup! I was, ya know, a really reliable and well mannered Mer-mer-mercenary. I made lotsa money, too. Though I did use most of it buying drinks and women.”

With a loose-tongued way of speech, Smith told of how he came to be a mercenary and roamed the continent while fulfilling requests as a free mercenary.

For Weed, of course, it went in one ear and went out the other—there was no end to listening to each and every word of a drunkard.

After a long while, Smith finally spoke of the the main subject.

“This sculpture, ya see, at that time, the Count was going to escape through the castle’s basement together with this sculpture. Haaah, I’m gettin’ drunk.”

“Why do you think he did that?”

“I dunno either. Anyways I thought it to be really very strange. Hiccup. The alcohol tastes real good right now. What were we talking about again?”

With a befuddled look, Smith babbled on about more irrelevant stories for a long while.

He boasted of his job as a mercenary, and a drunkard’s preaching about the continent’s drinks!

Smith’s attention was directed at the sculpture once again, and as if he had regained his senses, he asked.

“Though I didn’t see this sculpture after long while... you’re not busy, are you?”

“I am busy though.”

“Could you take me to solve this mystery?”

Smith pulled out a rusty key from his bosom.

“If I remember correctly... after that time, the basement was sealed, so you can probably only go in if you have this key. Can you take me there with you and solve the mystery for me?”

Ding!

Old Smith's Second Curiosity.

The old, drunkard Smith has a question about the last time he saw Count Savoid.

In order to answer his question, search the Count's mansion, find the basement, and dig up the secret.

Chain quest, leads to the long-cherished wish of the Matallost Church, which guides the dead, and the reconstruction of the Niflheim Empire.

Difficulty: A

Reward: A drink from Smith.

Quest Restriction: Limited to Sculptors. Quest failure upon Smith's death.

If it was Niflheim Empire, it was a great empire that existed a dozen years ago in the Northern part of the continent, where Morata was part of, and Weed was her current Lord!

The castle and villages went up in flames due to the monsters around and Bone Dragon who descended from the Forest of Darkness. The emperor tried to seal them using the Serbian Beads, but it only resulted in lamentable freezing of the entire Northern area. Under the attack of the cold, the monsters, and division of the people, the empire collapsed.

If the Niflheim Empire were to be reconstructed right now, the North would be stabilized on its foundation.

It was a little unexpected that a quest such as this would become available from a sculpture, and then linked to the Resurrection Church. But it wasn't very surprising. The Resurrection Church and the Matallot faith were churches that had originated in the North.

If he solved mercenary Smith's question, then he would also solve the quest relating to the reconstruction of Niflheim Empire.

'I'll be able to sell off Morata for a more expensive price.'

Weed nodded his head as he tore into a chicken leg as an appetizer.

"I will do my best to solve the mystery."

– You have accepted the quest.

*

The Savoid County was made into an enormous hunting ground. Sur Kingdom was infested with level 150 to 200 monsters, so a considerable number of parties were out hunting.

“Recruiting people to hunt inside the mansion. Preferring People with experience or courage.”

Count Savoid’s Mansion was a region-class dungeon. The max level of the monsters was 282.

The astral Knights, Soldiers, and even astral maids spawns there.

Weed entered the mansion with the drunkard mercenary, Smith.

“Arghh. My insides are gonna die of heartburn.”

Smith complained as he followed.

“Won’t you give me just one bottle of booze?”

“I don’t have any.”

Weed firmly refused. There was, of course, a lot of liquor in his rucksack. All because he made brandy or whisky whenever he saw edible fruit or wheat, etc. There were a few cooking items that sold well, and easy to store like liquor. With its astounding taste, disinfectant properties, and since it even raised Health recovery speed, liquor received the most limelight among preferences.

Since well-distilled liquor could be priced expensively, it was no different from cash.

Although he distilled liquors in his spare time by plying his cooking skill, he was frugal with it to the utmost, to the point where if it wasn't SwordNoob or the other elder brothers, no one would even ask Weed for it.

“Ahem, my mouth is dry.”

Smith grumbled as he followed.

In the old mansion, dust was piled thickly and pieces of furniture were scattered around. The mural was damaged to the point of unrecognition, and the chandelier had fallen to the ground, shattered.

“Fire Ball!”

“Cold Strike!”

He saw many other parties, but they were hunting ghost

monsters.

Weed looked around the mansion a little before giving up. It was a colossal site, so it wouldn't be an exaggeration to call it a castle.

Weed had wandered through many castles of Vampires when he was in Todeum, but this was different from those castles, even the estimate of the number of rooms in the powerful Count's mansion was immense.

Weed asked, "Where is the basement?"

Smith just shook his head from side to side.

"It happened a long time ago, so I don't remember. Though, I might remember if I drink a bottle of booze..."

Weed frowned.

'Good-for-nothing alcoholic, drunkard!'

Other hunting parties were hunting all over the place in Count Savoid's Mansion. If it was a basement they didn't discover, it was either meticulously hidden or had to be an extraordinary place.

'Even if it was discovered, it might not have been made public.'

They wouldn't have been able to enter the basement even if they found it if they didn't have the key. It was human nature to not want to do something that was good for someone else. Even if the basement's entrance was discovered, it was possible it hasn't been made public.

If so, Weed figured he had to cooperate with Smith to find it.

Weed opened his rucksack and pulled out a bottle of beer.

"Come to think of it, I do have liquor."

"Harumph. Give it to me!"

"The basement..."

"... I do remember. It's probably down by the staircase."

The place Smith had pointed out was the bottom of the stairs, leading to two additional floors.

Weed tried going behind the wooden staircase. There was nothing there, except thickly piled up dust. However, when he probed around with his hands, he could feel an imperceptible crack.

'So it's here.'

Weed cleared the dust and found a small key hole. Then, he placed the key he received from Smith and turned.

Creeaaaak!

He had to push forcefully to barely open the old door.

Weed entered the basement together with Smith and closed the door. He didn't forget to pull out the key, either.

Because it might be discovered by another party hunting in the mansion!

Weed was absolutely not one who would fall flat on his face when the prize is in sight.

You have discovered Count Savoid's basement.

Fame increased by 50.

Through adventure, experience has slightly increased.

“Aha! So this is the Count's basement.”

Smith had emptied his bottle of beer somewhere along the way and smacked his lips as if he was in regret.

“If it’s a done deal, why didn’t ya give me whiskey?”

“I absolutely do not have whiskey.”

Beer was at least common and cheap, but since decent whisky was at minimum a few gold, he had no intention of offering it.

Weed looked around the basement.

Many books were arranged in this place, which seemed to have likely been used by the Count as a secret study.

« The Basics of Flame-Based Magic »

« The Study of Wind Elements and its Affinity »

« Ten Law of Flatterly Elementalist Should Keep in Mind »

« Traveling the Versailles Continent on Foot »

« Money-Making Opportunities »

« Witch, the Sorceress Who’ll Read Books for You »

He could tell just from looking at the titles, a variety of books were adorning the bookshelves.

Weed stuffed every book into his bag.

‘I’ll make money if I sell them at a curio store or antique bookstore.’

Since the quest’s next chain was determined, he packed them away cleanly.

He also searched the Count’s desk.

There were gold coins worth about 300 gold in the drawer, and a carving knife as well.

‘I’ll have to sell this too.’

Weed was one to memorize the prices of a wide variety of items on the spot.

Even if a supermarket’s automatic price calculation system broke, if it was Weed’s store, there probably wouldn’t be a slightest reason to worry. It was all because Weed was the type who would thoroughly remember the buying price starting from the factory to the selling price, surtax, and even what applied to the “Buy 1 Get 1” marketing deal.

365 gold coins multiplied by 12 gold coins is 4,380 coins!

It was to the point where he made calculations in the blink of an eye.

When it came to money calculations, he beat math prodigies!

Weed saw a book spread open on the table.

« The Origins and History of the Matallost Religion »

He began to skim through it.

The ancient Matallost faith's congregation was the largest compared to others who arose from rituals conducted by the people who held death sacred.

They considered death as returning to the embrace of their god... as the Matallost faith was adhered to as the Kingdom's established religion, Warriors pay their respects to the Church before going out into battle.

However, the public perception of the Matallost church changed as the years passed.

Wars between tribes decreased, and a castle was built against invading monsters, establishing peace.

The Matallost faith became shunned as death was regarded with fear.

In addition, the Arpen Empire's continent unification war, each kingdom competitively gave preference to the church in their own territory.

In particular, churches related to war received respect, and the Matallost Church was disadvantaged by its doctrine of being led and guided by Death.

Death became the last name the remnants of the Matallost Church yelled, and even mention of the name alone became abhorred in public regard.

Priest candidates of the Matallost Church decreased more and more, and the position became occupied by another Church.

The churches of Freya's prosperity or of the God of Fighters, Belacus, increased.

...The Matallost Church lost its power, and the support of each Kingdom was severed. It was assumed they, who hid in the shadows, increasingly could not throw away their desire for power.

The power to guide through death!

They dreamed of revenge by using their strong holy power. Specifically what kind of revenge they've planned is unknown.

Ding!

– Intelligence and Wisdom have both increased by 5 from reading advanced information about the Matallost faith.

– You have acquired information about the Resurrection Church.

Weed found something else from the desk. It was the robe worn by Resurrection Church Priests.

Matallost Church. Since currently they were more often being called the Resurrection Church, it didn't matter if you spoke carelessly about them.

“Count Savoid must've been a Priest of the Resurrection Church.”

Weed guessed judging from how Count Savoid had possession of the Statue of Death, the symbol of the Resurrection Church.

“Huuh, look here a bit!”

Just then, Smith discovered a wide room.

A magical circle was drawn inside the room, and in the middle, on top of an object looking like a tombstone, was a bowl where something could be placed inside.

An image of the Statue of Death was drawn into the bowl.

“Maybe this is where it should be placed in?”

Weed took out the sculpture from his bosom.

The Statue of Death he'd acquired at the end of his duel with Death Hand in the Dwarf's underground Kingdom, Kuruso!

The second coming of the Matallost faith and the reconstruction of the Niflheim Empire.

He didn't know what kind of effect it would have on the Versailles Continent, but when he recalled the contents of that quest, there was no reason for it to end here.

Weed placed the sculpture in the bowl. Then, as if it were given life, the scythe-holding malevolence flashed open its eyes.

Ruuuummmble!

The mansion shook, as if there were an earthquake.

A damp fog filled the basement, and a black vortex formed above the altar. A gate to another place had opened.

Smith staggered backwards in surprise.

The black gate.

Not only had he never seen a gate of this color anywhere, but the scythe-holding malevolence figure was glaring at him. An incomparably terrifying look.

However, Weed was not afraid.

There was nothing as terrifying as an empty account balance. It was so scary he had nightmares of negative interest even in his dreams!

– A gate to the River of Lamentation has opened.

Access is impossible for general users.

The quest will proceed in the River of Lamentation.

The success or failure of this quest will affect the Resurrection Army accordingly.

The message window popped up to all the users in the Versailles Continent.

Weed swiftly approached the gate, and the black vortex swirled as if it were going to eat him up. However, Smith hurriedly shook his hands.

“Hey.”

“What?”

“In order to solve my request, won’t I also have to follow?”

“Of course.”

Weed desperately wanted to leave Smith behind, but he had to take him.

“I have a condition. If I go in there, you have to make it so I can drink five bottles of liquor every day.”

“...”

“If I don’t drink, I can’t fall asleep, you see.”

Weed nodded his head and agreed.

“Alright.”

He couldn’t look after Smith all the time. It would be better to put him to sleep even if it was by drinking liquor.

“Also, recruit a mercenary.”

“What?”

“You’re a feeble Sculptor, aren’t you?”

If Weed was feeble, then the majority of Warriors or Swordsmen would be crawling around on the ground for lack of strength.

Smith continued, “I don’t feel safe with just you. And we don’t even know where we’ll arrive if we go through that gate, so wouldn’t it be better to bring one mercenary?”

Ding!

– It has become possible to recruit one mercenary to progress the quest together.

Hiring a mercenary in a Sculptor-only quest!

This meant there was going to be an actual battle.

‘Even if it’s low, it is an A-rank difficulty quest...’

If he considered the chain quests that would occur as Niflheim Empire’s reconstruction or the Matallost faith’s second coming, the actual difficulty could be much higher.

It was to the point where it wasn't the end of the chain quest that was a burden.

He had to find someone to do the quest with whom he could trust to some degree.

Weed immediately sent a whisper.

-Pale-nim.

– Yes.

Pale responded promptly.

– I'm doing a quest, but I need one mercenary.

– Really? Where are you?

– Hagen Village of Sur Kingdom.

– What to do? It'll take a minimum of twenty days to go from the North all the way to there.

– Might there be someone else who's in the Central Continent?

– Mapan-nim left towards Rosenheim Kingdom to trade, the others are all gathered here.

Mapan's fighting strength was too lacking to bring him as a mercenary, so he was ruled out from the start even though he was a little closeby.

– Right now we're also doing a quest called "The Secret of Manufacturing Ancient Breastplate."

– Seems difficult. I understand.

Weed clearly had to give up. If he were to ask Pale to come, Maylon would be sad.

Irene would be a big help since she was a Priest, but there would be a lot of times when he'd have to protect her. In that aspect, Romuna was also in a similar position.

Surka was young and timid at times, so it was burdensome to go through thick and thin for a dozen days with just the two of them in a difficult quest's dungeon.

Hwaryeong's dance skill was good for increasing stats or putting monsters to sleep. Her usefulness was outstanding, but her actual attack power was weak so it was dangerous. Even if she was good in general hunting, it was a strain to bring her to a fight where he didn't know what kind of difficulty might be waiting.

Zephyr was out from the start.

Though his Health was strong, Resilience was good, and he even had an AoE skill.

“Since he’s being friendly with my little sister, he is absolutely a no.”

Weed erased Zephyr’s existence from his mind.

How could he give his dearly raised little sister to a playboy. It was something never to happen even if the sky were to collapse.

“Since she says they’re just meeting, I’ll have to wait and see. Since my little sister has an eye for people.”

His little sister’s actions or demeanor hadn’t changed, so he was relieved for now.

A father’s ripping heart when his daughter when out on a date with her boyfriend wearing a short skirt!

Weed could also sympathize a little.

“Men are all wolves and thieves. If a man dies at the hands of a woman, she’s innocent. Because even if he dies, he was sure to have committed an inappropriate deed, or wanted to commit one!”

Even so, he couldn't take Yurin either.

He sent a whisper to SwordNoob.

– Master.

–

– Master.

– Ahem! What's up!

– What are you doing right now?

– I, I didn't do anything. I absolutely wasn't starting a conversation with a Dark Elf Lady. Disciple. There was just something I wanted to ask.

– Master...

SwordNoob's honest reply returned after a while.

– Shouldn't I also marry? It's difficult, but I should try a late marriage, at least.

– The other elder brothers are also busy, right?

– Yeah. They're in the Orc village, and many are in the Dark Elf's village as well. The Dark Elves with their dark-complexioned skin are healthy, so they like them very much.

– How are the Yuroki Mountains?

– There are many monsters. It's alright since there're a lot of monsters worth fighting. Making a party together with Orcs and trying out their hunting style is also fun.

SwordNoob and the other elder brothers were enjoying Royal Road. Flaunting their hearty masculine beauty as they protected the weak Orcs.

– Master, Dark Elves also like flowers.

– Oh, really? Alright. You should work hard as well. And call me anytime if you need help.

– Yes, master!

Weed ended the whisper with SwordNoob.

‘Who should I take?’

The Travellers of the Wilderness Guild!

A minority elite group of Armen Kingdom. A guild he estimated as having many unknown high-level users.

It was a guild Weed was a member of, but he hadn't looked at the guild chat window for a while. It was turned off because the guild members frequently chatted idly amongst themselves! It was also a burden due to fact that he didn't know anyone well enough to invite just one person from the Travellers of the Wilderness guild.

Just then, a whisper from Pale came.

– Weed-nim, you said you were getting one mercenary, right? Will you perhaps take one Shaman?

– What kind of Shaman are they?

– Her skill proficiency and utilization are to the point of being ridiculous. She is the most famous Shaman in Morata. She's being a really big help even in party hunting together. I said spoke about Weed-nim just now, and she said she really wants to go.

Weed recalled his time as a beginner, when he hadn't been playing Royal Road for very long.

‘I party hunted with a Shaman in the City of Heaven, Lavias.’

An unforgettable name. Dain.

She was exactly his ideal woman. It was difficult to say what exactly he liked, but his time together with her had been enjoyable. They talked a lot while dungeon hunting with just the two of them, and they had clicked even when they were hunting.

‘Although she left to undergo surgery... is she doing well now?’

Since there was no word, he could only hope for her wellbeing.

Weed brushed off thoughts of the past and spoke.

– It seems too dangerous a place for a Shaman to come.

A Priest-type profession was fundamentally a big help in party hunting, but they couldn’t protect themselves.

– Please convey my apologies for not being able to do it together.

– No. It can’t be helped.

He couldn’t call Hegel. If he called him, the news would soon spread all over through the Black Lions’ Guild.

The Thief Nide wasn’t an alternative, either.

‘A Thief is a profession with a lot of uses in a dungeon.’

A stereotype where Thieves or Assassins were vulnerable in a melee match!

Since he was getting a mercenary to help him in battle, a hiding, ambushing profession was unsuitable.

‘If it’s the strongest person I know, there’s only her...’

Weed recalled Seoyoon in his mind.

She, whose blade sliced up most monsters! A Berserker who grew stronger as the battle continued.

She had an outrageous level, and her utilization of skills was rapid.

The Berserker Seoyoon!

It would be the safest if she was here.

However, Weed shook his head.

His trust in Seoyoon was kindling a little, but it was too much to ask her to help him with a dangerous quest that had absolutely nothing to do with her.

‘Besides, I don’t even know where she is right now, and it would take lots of time if she were to come all the way here.’

He couldn’t get anyone he knew from around Sur Kingdom.

Weed made his decision.

“Call Death Knight!”

Death Knight Van Hawk appeared with smoke.

Since he’d been with him for a long time, he was used to meeting even Death Knight’s savage eyes.

“Did you call, Master.”

“Yes. Work has arrived.”

“I will knock down whomever it may be,” was steadfast Death Knight’s cry.

Weed turned his head and looked at Smith.

“If it’s Death Knight, we will not need another mercenary.”

Smith had not been that alarmed even when Death Knight had appeared.

“Seems like Death Knight can protect us. But the alcohol?”

Weed briefly opened his rucksack and pulled out several bottles of beer. There were dozens of beer bottles, he also had considerable amount of whiskey and wines. There was no need to purchase liquor separately, and if it was urgent, he could distill alcohol at any time.

Since there's always a chance he could be called to leave for an adventure, he prepared plenty of bandages, a whetstone, or herbs and the like.

He was done with preparation for departure anytime..

“Let us go.”

“Alright.”

Weed took the lead first, and Smith followed behind. The bodies of the two vanished completely with the black gate.

Ruuuuuuumble!

As the gate disappeared, the shaking of Count Savoid's mansion gradually faded.

The scattered corpses of monsters!

Fragments of monsters fell whenever Seoyoon swung her greatsword.

The monsters who ambushed from hiding beneath the earth or assaulted by falling from trees!

Seoyoon simply swung her sword.

Every time her blade flashed, monsters turned to grey light.

In the past, she had fought to forget everything. While dripping wet with sweat, if she could fight, then it was enough, and she would blindly run towards a monster group.

The fate of Berserkers who grew stronger the more they shed blood!

‘This place is too weak.’

A Berserker had the characteristic of drawing enemies and monsters.

A group of monsters gathered in Seoyoon’s location. Her footsteps were naturally drawn to a place where there were increasingly stronger monsters.

The absolute sense of a Berserker who sought blood and battle.

When there was a Berserker, the place would quickly become a battlefield with ceaseless screams.

The high-level hunting ground renowned even in the North, Maban's Forest!

Monsters were running en masse to Seoyoon's location.

‘Nobody loves me.’

Although it was she who had thrown herself into battle so her past wouldn't resurface, now her heart didn't hurt compared to the past.

‘Friend...’

Whenever she recalled the friend she had, a part of her chest became warm. The time when they shared an adventure in Royal Road was not long, but they could also meet in reality.

‘I want to protect him.’

The sight of him dying quickly at the Bone Dragon's Breath...

She was hunting for the sake of the feeble Weed as she amassed experience and skill proficiency.

Her level was 422!

Seoyoon entered an area with even stronger monsters.

Chapter 9: Sculptor Of Hell

The place Weed and Smith arrived at after passing through a black gate was a jet-black stone mountain without a single growing tree .

It was definitely not going to be a normal stone mountain.

The stone was jet black with holes all over, and a river flowed through the area.

– Waaaaah.

– Save us. Save us.

– Let me escape from this pain.

The river cried out. It was wailing like a ghost.

‘Is this the River of Lamentation?’

There were quite a number of sculptures on the stone mountain.

Like evil, murderous antagonists, they were sculptures creepy enough to make demons tremble!

The neck of a mother embracing her child was cut off. The mother and daughter were not Human, but Orcs. The Trolls were stabbing each other with spears. Humans were waging war en masse. Even a scene of a village being plundered and burned down was expressed through sculptures.

Following the flow of the river, groups of sculptures were lined up, and continued on endlessly.

“Ahem.”

It was enough to make even the likes of Weed grimace.

Some sculptures only depicted negative scenes that weren't positive at all. For a normal person, it was at a level where one couldn't help but feel repulsed.

But the one sculpture Weed liked and could understand was provokingly depicting a slaver. The sculpture of the man was ignoring the scrawny kids and enjoying a steak by himself. The kids, who looked like slaves, were eating barley bread at most.

“If you don't have money then you will starve! They must be treating them well to give them barley bread...”

It was a sculpture evoking 100% of Weed's sympathy!

Those kids might be considered lucky to be enslaved under the wicked trader. Because if it was Weed, he might not have even

given them a single bowl of porridge!

The procession of sculptures continued endlessly down the River of Lamentation. The river made more rough and raspy groaning noises as it flowed downstream.

– Waaaaah.

– Kill me. Kill me.

When Weed looked after approaching the river, he saw it wasn't normal water. Deep inside the river, ghosts of all kinds of monsters and humans were intactly flowing down the river. They had expressions of distress difficult to see even in the chilling horror of a haunted house.

Smith approached and said, “Maybe it's the influence of the sculptures?”

“What?”

“I'm talking 'bout the artwork. The basics of artwork is to move emotions. These sculptures are making the river wail.”

They were words Weed could relate to.

The sculptor's feelings were buried into a sculpture. They all looked like the same sculptures, but they were actually very

different.

A person who keeps waking up at night will definitely look haggard. But there's no reason for a girl who receives a confession from someone she really loves to appear haggard.

Hopes and aspirations. Feelings full of affection!

Even if the subject was the same, a sculpture will convey a completely different mood depending on the feeling it was sculpted with. It was something as natural as a poem written by a poet or an author's writing conveying a different mood depending on their feelings.

A work of art can move the emotions.

If a person's house was filled with gloomy drawings or sculptures, of course they would also feel depressed and wouldn't be motivated, either. If their house was filled with negative sculptures, they wouldn't even want to get up in the morning. It might be a momentary impulse or simply a feeling, but after several years, several decades, it could definitely change a person.

"It's the topography."

"Huh?"

"Shall I say it's similar to how an apartment overlooking the Han River is more expensive?"

“What do you mean?”

“The better the view, the more expensive the apartment gets. Well, it’s something like that.”

Weed thought he could understand.

If artwork could convey emotion, it was hard to see sculptures made with evil intent, could have given the river a good influence.

Sculptures created by the topography!

Weed was experiencing just about everything as he lived.

“Traditionally, there’s nothing as accurate as an apartment’s price. Besides, we should find out where this place is.”

It was at that time.

Ding!

– The Entrance to Hell.

You have entered the River of Lamentation.

The end of the continent where living beings can breathe.

It is the place where the Priests of the Matallost Church lead the dead to hell.

“Oh my.”

Smith shrugged his shoulders.

“So this is the end of the human continent. I’ve never been here even while working as a mercenary... At least gimme a bottle of liquor. With this, the boasts you can make to your friends at drinking parties have grown. Haw-haw!”

Smith was delighted as he drank.

Weed exhaled a deep sigh.

After wandering here and there, he was now at the entrance of hell. And with a drunk, no less.

‘No wonder the surroundings looked so strange...’

The eerie atmosphere was slightly similar to when he went to Todeum!

He couldn’t feel any traces of humans, and it was incomparably

desolate and bleak.

Weed tried pulling out a compass, but the needle just spun around and around without settling. He couldn't even discern the position of the stars in the sky.

‘I won't even be able to return like this...’

Weed walked along the River of Lamentation with Smith.

At least a thousand sculptures were grouped thematically along the river.

He couldn't find any positive sculpture no matter how hard he looked. When he approached a sculpture of a beautiful and adorable lady, the moment he took a closer look, he was able to confirm a shocking scene.

That cute lady was spitting! She was also clutching a frog in her hand. It was an indescribable scene, plunging him into an emotional shock.

There was also a grotesque scene of muscular women playing soccer. Of course, the soccer ball was an Ogre's head!

Weed identified to check the information of the sculptures.

“Identify!”

Ding!

Sculpture of Shameful Ogres

The work of a little known Sculptor. Ogres were Kings of the forests and mountains. With the pride they hold for their territory, they will show a savage attitude towards invaders.

However, because of a commission from the Matallost Church, they were sculpted in this manner instead.

If Ogres were to see this, it would make them seethe with rage and resentment.

Artistic Value: None at all

Special Effect: Stimulates the sadness of the Ogres.

– Waaaaaaaah.

The groaning sound of the River of Lamentations only amplified as they continued down the river.

On the second day at the River of Lamentations, Weed found some ruins. The temple of the Matallost Church!

The temple of the church which was thought to have completely disappeared from the face of the continent was here.

The building, which he estimated to be made out of marble, was completely no more than a ruin. It was hazardously built like it was going to collapse at any moment, so it made him worry about entering.

“Summon Death Knight!”

Death Knight appeared with a puff of smoke and raised his sword.

“You called. Master.”

“You, go in there. If there are any living humans or monsters, come out immediately and report.”

“Understood.”

It might lower his Intimacy with Death Knight a little, but seeing they had spent a long time in each other’s company, they were connected through sticky and tough situations.

After searching the temple interior thoroughly, Death Knight came out.

“There is no one inside. Master.”

“Really?”

Weed went inside the temple.

Inside, there were only stone statues worshipping the God who put the enormous temple's entrance to shame.

“The temple remains but all of the Priests are gone.”

Weed soon came out of the Matallost temple.

There was not a single item left in the Priests' quarters. His clothes only got smudged with a ton of dust inside the temple.

*

The third day on the River of Lamentation!

In a place not very far from the temple, Weed found over 100 Priests and Dark Knights.

“The Embinyu Church!”

A groan escaped Weed's mouth.

Even in the region where the Bone Dragon had been, he had found traces of the Embinyu Church. He remembered getting rid of them, with the help of the expedition, Seoyoon, and Alveron.

Weed's face hardened with seriousness.

“So the Embinyu Church is involved again!”

For him to find the Embinyu Church who had influenced the fall of the Niflheim Empire here, the situation was serious.

For now, Weed hid himself.

There had been over 1,000 Demonic Spirits gathered near the Priests and Knights of the Embinyu Church. Mighty power indeed!

Moreover, they were performing a grave ritual.

“Kehhh. Do not leave. Take revenge on those who made you like this!”

“Painful and agonizing feelings. Awaken the meaning of despair!”

“Return once more to take your revenge.”

They were performing a Ritual of Slaughter downstream the River of Lamentation.

The river sloshed every time a lamb or deer was offered as a sacrifice. The water spurted high like a fountain and surged like it was going to swallow them. Every time it happened, the Priests of the Embinyu Church hurried to escape the river.

“Erupt the bitter feelings, endless sorrow, and boiling anger!”

It was when the Ritualists offered the heart of a lamb.

Woooooosh!

The river's waters sloshed like they were going to reverse direction, and gushed up 10 meters high. The dirty and murky waste water!

Ghosts made groaning noises while making extremely distorted expressions in the river.

“Looks like they're doing something... Death Knight.”

“Speak. Master.”

“Defend Smith here.”

“Got it.”

He planned on leaving Smith and Death Knight to try infiltrating alone.

Smith came forward.

“Woah, no. I’ll help. It’s ridiculous to leave recon to a fledgling Sculptor like you.”

“ ... ”

“Where do you think you’re going without me, a first-class mercenary. Trust me.”

Weed threw him the remaining whiskey, about half of what he’d had.

“Ahh! Luxury whiskey! Sure enough, it tastes real good.”

Drinking the liquor thoroughly erased Smith’s thoughts of following the recon. Weed solved the luggage lump problem and infiltrated the Embinyu Church area alone.

‘Infiltrating’ was an exaggeration. In reality, he was just climbing the rock mountain while slowly approaching them!

Every time he crawled, stone debris fell down. When the Priests and Dark Knights of the Embinyu looked like they were going to turn their eyes, he quickly crouched and hid.

The wind blew through the holes in the rock, letting out an eerie ghostly sounding wails. Weed climbed as near as he could towards the Embinyu Church at the top of the rocky mountain. It wasn't enough to eavesdrop on the conversation or activities of the Priests, but he was able to hear what the Dark Knights on guard were saying.

“... Did what?”

“Today... seems like... reported they did that many.”

“To utilize the sculptures... It's an excellent plan.”

“The Versailles Continent into misery... our goal.”

The words he heard in fragments! Bits and pieces were cut off because of the wind.

Weed tried putting the pieces together to get the meaning of the conversation.

He'd survived thanks to his senses. By simply seeing the boss' expression, he could tell if his wage was going to come safely or be withheld.

‘They did that many. Dunno know what that is, but seems like it was about they what were doing with the ghosts in the River of

Lamentations... Utilize the sculptures. They're probably using them to give evil power to the ghosts in the River of Lamentations.'

There could be no other reason for them to be using the sculptures.

The River of Lamentations was becoming increasingly filthy downstream and the spirits were suffering. He had to assume they were interfering with the negative power the sculptures gave off.

".. Time is like this."

"Replacement... get a break."

"Fresh sheep's blood..."

The Dark Knights' guard duty was rotated.

Weed silently waited as the next Dark Knights stood guard.

"The wind is strong."

"The weather is bad... Caltrops emerged..."

They only spoke one or two words in an hour! And they were only talking about things unrelated to the ritual the Priests were

performing.

Weed withdrew to the place where Death Knight and Smith were hiding. And when he took out the figure of Death, he saw it was shedding tears.

“No way... Identify!”

Horse-like in appearance, the relic of the Matallost church opened its mouth. The voice of an old man could be heard.

– Listen.

This is the history of the Matallost Church that guides the dead.

The Matallost Church lost its influence to the other churches. Then, it formed an alliance with the Embinyu Church while dreaming of revenge.

The Embinyu Church is a cult that worshipped demons knowing nothing but hatred.

“Use the power you have. Keke!”

“Make it so the Versailles Continent cannot help but worship the Matallost Church.”

“Our sole desire is destruction. We will help.”

The Matallost Church became corrupted.

They neglected their duty to guide the dead and became the eleventh sect of the Embinyu Church.

They trained Demonic Spirits, becoming an evil army that would trample the Versailles Continent.

Cleanse the River of Lamentation, the source of their power.

If the River of Lamentation is purified, the Demonic Spirits will lose their power.

Ding!

The Fight Against the Embinyu Church

Stop the deeds of the Embinyu Church, from attempting to stain the continent with evil.

As the Embinyu Church’s ritual progresses, the Versailles Continent will fall into chaos. In order to prevent the progression of their ritual, change the sculptures in the River of Lamentation basin.

Note, if you destroy the sculptures, you will be pursued by the Dark Knights.

Quest is linked to Rescue the Prisoners of the Matallost Church, Eradicate the Embinyu Church's 11th Sect, and the Matallost Church's Long-Cherished Wish.

Difficulty: Sculptor-limited Quest

Reward: Will be recorded as a great work of sculpting. Favor of all the churches in the Versailles Continent, except the Embinyu Church, will increase. An honorable title.

Quest Limit: If the Resurrection Army and Embinyu Church destroy the Versailles Allied Forces, the quest will automatically be cancelled.

Weed's eyes brightened.

“Looks like this is the start of yet another chain quest.”

A Sculptor quest!

it was a following quest he received after getting the Statue of Death.

If he accepted this quest and succeeded, a chain quest would continue after he interfered with and destroyed the Embinyu

Church's ritual.

It also meant this was really the starting point of the quest.

Weed did not reject the challenge.

“I will attempt it.”

– You have accepted the quest.

*

The River of Lamentation's basin!

Monsters and Demonic Spirits were overflowing even a little way off the riverside. It was no exaggeration to say this was the worst hunting ground.

Thin physiques so scrawny, there were only bones left and monsters with dark blue skin radiating electricity!

Hellish monsters were wandering about en masse.

Since the monsters and Demonic Spirits were fighting, Weed couldn't escape to a safe spot in the riverside either.

“Though the monsters are at the very least in their late 300s...”

The weakest monsters on the river bank were about that level.

The weather was drab, and if there was fog in the air, the electricity the monsters radiated would be formidable in power.

Weed tried an experiment.

“Death Knight, attack!”

“Okay. Master!”

He verified Death Knight couldn't last 10 minutes before dying after engaging two or three of them!

Since he couldn't leave the area near the River of Lamentations, it was impossible to guess what kind of monsters he would encounter if he traveled further.

Death Knight could keep reviving since he was a Knight of Death, but he was severely weakened for awhile.

Weed meekly raised his carving knife.

“I should do this slowly, step by step.”

He went to work on the mother Orc with the chopped off head

who was holding the child.

The work of creating and attaching the mother Orc's head!

Since he had to positively change nearly a thousand sculptures on the River of Lamentation's basin, even Weed could call this a great work in history.

It was when he was making a warmly laughing mother Orc's head.

The Orc's eyes gained a sharp, piercing look, and hunger surged in the eyes as they looked down on the child.

Eyes that looked like it wanted to eat its own child!

Its head looked like it was going to make the baby Orc die of a heart attack while breast feeding it.

He had ascertained plenty of the unique sense of beauty with Orc Karichwi, but because his head was full of distracting thoughts, he couldn't make the sculptures like he wanted.

"This won't do."

Weed set down his carving knife.

It wasn't because he didn't dare change the thousand sculptures on the River of Lamentation's basin, or because the ghosts within the river were wailing and the sculptures looked terrifying on the foggy riverside.

The monsters!

He couldn't ignore the Embinyu Church's Priests and Dark Knights and while sculpting. It was like telling a growing elementary school kid in his prime to ignore the meat on his plate and only eat the vegetables.

Desire for experience and items. It boiled within Weed until he couldn't bear it anymore. Copious strong monsters and items. He couldn't leave those monsters alone and sculpt an Orc's head.

With explosively rising thirst, Weed raised his carving knife again. His plan wasn't to correct the sculptures on the River of Lamentations basin, but to create an entirely new sculpture.

Slice Slice!

He was making a sculpture by hewing the darkness.

Making a huge sculpture out of stone was the method he was used to. Unexpectedly, he couldn't cut the brittle, porous stone easily.

"I must make a mount first."

He recalled back when he had been a Skeleton Knight.

The Skeleton Knight alone had managed the battle he'd been transported to from the Tower of Heroes.

The tremendous acceleration he'd had while riding his horse on the plains in the historical Palrangka battle!

There was no obstacle for a Knight's gallop.

When he charged, his attack cleaved through monsters. Given a horse, Knights became at least 3 or 4 times more powerful.

"I may be a Sculptor, but I can run."

He didn't have a special skill like a Knight did, but even if he didn't have a skill that allows him to become one with a horse, he was still able to run.

It was also common for Mercenaries to have their own horse once they grew to some extent.

"Even so, I don't need to bother to sculpt a horse."

Weed did not want something weak like a horse.

A horse was fast, but didn't have very high endurance. They behaved differently in variable moods. They were also often afraid of fire, lightning, ghosts, and the like.

He wasn't a Knight specialized in horses anyway.

“The best of mounts is that after all.”

Weed was a Korean citizen.

The livestock that had appeased people's pain numerous times in Korea's lengthy, winding history!

There was no reason to sculpt a horse when there was a strong and firm livestock possessing immense, leathery muscular strength he was so familiar with.

Our cow.

Korean beef!

Weed sculpted the special rock, the jet-black darkness.

The legs were thick and solid. The thigh muscles were incomparably delicate, and the entire body was completely muscular.

If a normal cow raised on grain was dangling with fat for the sake of the meat, the cow he was sculpting right now was different.

This one could enter Versailles Continent's Mister Bull Olympiad!

If hunk-loving heifers were to see him, they would immediately shake their short tails as they lied down.

“It won't do to blindly develop muscles.”

Weed even demonstrated the virtue of self-control.

A muscular body might have strong bursts of power, but it had the disadvantage of lackluster endurance and agility.

“I have to minimize the unnecessary muscles and optimize the muscular strength and endurance.”

Weed paid attention to even the bull's beauty.

Before he won his sculpting victory from Death Hand, he had intentionally made a failed bull to appear weak. He had gained experience while losing Fame. It was why he couldn't help but be much more skillful as he sculpted the bull.

He sculpted the size of the horns to be around 30 cm (~1 ft) long with its tips sharp enough to penetrate a steel plate, and also made

its face broad.

It was a muscular bull, but its butt was expansive.

“The face of Korean cattle must be broad. The bigger the butt, the better. The eyes have to be round.”

His deep-rooted bias concerning cows!

Weed finally completed the sculpture.

– Please set a name for the sculpture you’ve made.

“Yellowy.”

– Would you like to name it ‘Yellowy’?

It was a black cow right now, but he planned on dying it yellow afterwards.

Weed nodded his head as he looked at the 5 meter (~16 ft) mass of darkness inspiring awe and horror.

“The name ‘Yellowy’ really is perfect for a cow.”

Ding!

You have completed a Historic Sculpture, the Legendary Bull Yellowy!

A Legendary sculpture!

All that you have sculpted will be written in the Versailles Continent's history.

With noble talent and abundant artistry, you have created a piece of work people cannot help but marvel at, time and time again with your unrivaled, delicate skill.

A work invoking the solemn charm and dynamism of a cow.

With its different interpretation and perspective, it will become a legendary sculpture of livestock.

Artistic Value: An artwork of the Master Sculptor Weed. 6,124

Special Effects: Those who gaze upon Yellowy will gain 15% increase in health and mana regeneration for a day.

Those who gaze upon Yellowy will gain 49% increase in obtaining meat products while hunting for a day.

Strength has increased by 80.

Perseverance has increased by 25%.

Production related skills are enhanced by 5%.

Breeding capacity of female cattle has increased by 38%.

Cattle gain weight faster.

Suppresses monster activity that threatens cattles everywhere.

Effects do not stack with other sculptures.

Number of Historic Sculptures completed until now: 1

- Sculpting skill proficiency has improved.

- Handicraft skill proficiency has improved.

- Fame has risen by 412.

- Art stat has risen by 70.

- Strength has increased by 3.

– Perseverance has increased by 10.

You have created a Historical Sculpture of a cow. Intimacy with cattle has increased, and if you own a large grassland, they will start gathering naturally.

If talented Sculptors see this sculpture, it will be a considerable help in developing their sculpting.

– For creating a historic sculpture, all stats have increased by 2 additional points.

Weed was satisfied.

“There is no other livestock that understands our people so well and has rewarded us like the cow has.”

His gratitude towards cattle!

If cattles hadn't existed in the past, it would have been difficult to farm and many people might have struggled with starvation.

Cattle had supplied the Korean food industry with endless assistance until the development of agricultural machinery.

Weed immediately returned the favor.

It was a waste to simply appreciate a sculpture this awesome. Plus, this was a place normal people couldn't come to!

“Sculpture Life Bestowal!”

– Sculpture has been granted life.

The sculpture ability will be converted from the current art stat of 1316 accordingly to a level of 422.

Due to the effects of a Historic Sculpture, the level will be added an additional 15%, increasing it to 485.

However since the material of the rock is weak, there is a 20% penalty to the level.

The creature has been given three properties.

Depending on the sculpture's level and form, the granted attributes will differ in level and ability.

Perseverance attribute (100%), Earth attribute (100%), Loyalty attribute (100%)

Perseverance will raise its patience no matter what kind of work it performs. With increased defense, it will not topple easily from poison or magic attacks.

Earth attribute slightly increases defense and weight. Can obtain special assistance due to familiarity with the earth.

Loyalty will make him follow its master's words well. It does not choose its master easily, but when it does recognize its master it will profusely devote himself to the death.

Historical sculpture will be given special abilities.

It possess dominance over cattles. Bulls who have seen Yellowy will lower their heads and display obedience, while heifers will feel safe and bear offspring.

Wild Frenzy.

Yellowy possess a gentle, loyal nature. He does not anger easily, but humiliation, abuse of a young cow, or witnessing the death of his owner will make him run amok.

5,000 mana has been used.

The skill efficiency has increased, so the level and stats consumed when bestowing life have decreased by 20%.

Art stat has been permanently reduced by 6. The reduced stats can be recovered through sculpting or other art related activities.

Level has declined by 1. As a result of the level reduction, the

stats you have gained have decreased by 5.

The reduced stats can be restored again by raising your level.

Please cherish the sculpture you have granted life to. If life is lost then it must be granted again.

In the case where it is completely destroyed, it can not be resurrected.

Yellowy!

Light flashed in its jet-black eyes.

He raised his cow head as he dug into the ground with his hind leg.

Mooooo!

It was the sound of Yellowy's dignified bellow.

Weed was also very satisfied. It would have been more ideal if the rock material was good, but for a mount it was first-class!

“Yellowy.”

Yellowy blinked his innocent eyes.

He was an enormous bull full of muscle, but his eyes were good-natured.

Yellowy opened his mouth. Then he said.

“Yellowy is my name?”

“Yes.”

The bull communicated with his feelings. It wasn't very surprising, either. Even if it was made out of a sculpture, Bingryong and the Wyverns also spoke.

Communication was possible because they had mental connection with Weed. They could understand the words of other people too, but there were many cases where they would ignore them or be unable to express their intentions.

Unless they had outstanding intelligence like Bingryong or Gold Man, communication with a Human or Elf was impossible.

“I don't think the name is very good. Do you think it matches my rough behavior?”

Yellowy furrowed deeply into the ground with his hind leg.

The ground crumbled as pebbles flew back.

He was a bull with great strength indeed!

“But Yellowy is a good name with feeling. From now on, your name is Yellowy.”

“You are a master I really do not like,” Yellowy said roughly.

He was a loyal cow, but he displayed wariness in the beginning. He was inspecting Weed like a fearful baby calf. He gave off the feeling he was going to decide his attitude after looking at Weed’s subsequent actions.

“What do you plan to do with me from here on? I want to graze on a wide grassland, meet a pretty heifer, have calves, and live peacefully.”

Yellowy dreamt of grazing freely!

Weed shook his head.

“I’m going to ride you and hunt monsters.”

“... ”

Yellowy’s brow furrowed severely.

It seemed he possessed reluctance to hunt or fight because of a cow's nature.

Weed felt the need to teach this naive cow the way of the world.

“Do you think freedom is so easily obtained? Do you have money?”

“I don't.”

“You spoke of grassland, but have you got land on a wide grassland?”

“I don't.”

“No money, no land, but you think a pretty heifer is going to like you? Tsk tsk. Heifers these days are very shrewd.”

“...”

“How will you raise your baby cows. Do you want your children to grow up eating weeds their entire lives? You're going to need something to feed them nutrient-rich hay.”

Weed was informing a cow about the bitterness of society!

Yellowy's high spirits fell and he became meek.

“Looks like I will need money in life. I understand why I must hunt monsters.”

Yellowy was soon persuaded. He possessed obedience because Weed was his master.

However, Yellowy made a dissatisfied expression when he looked back at his own body. Because on the side of the perfectly muscular body, about one handspan of flab was attached.

Every time he walked, the flab jiggled.

“Master, what is this?”

“That’s rib-eye.”

“ ... ”

Weed considered the rib-eye and shanks important!

Yellow furrowed the ground with his hind leg, showing his obvious displeasure. He was protesting with force.

It was a completely ineffective action.

Weed said in a low voice.

“Yellowy, I see there’s no end to your arrogance.”

“Gasp.”

“I’ll pierce your nose tomorrow and start dragging you around with it.”

“...”

“I’ll make you do field work. Do you want to farm? Wanna plow the wilderness?”

“...”

“I’ll butcher you, nom nom nom, and swallow you. You know soy paste isn’t spread on cooked beef, right? Just as raw beef...”

“How can you say such horrible things...!”

“I’m not one to leave behind a tailbone even for the broth.”

For Weed, making threats for 2 days and 3 nights was possible if he so desired.

At some point, Yellowy furtively bowed his head.

Obedience!

With that, Yellowy's fate was decided.

*

Weed felt Yellowy alone was lacking and made another sculpture.

A sculpture made of light.

His proficiency had increased after making the Wings of Light, and it was a sculpture he attempted with painstaking care.

Blazing bright red color.

The concentration darkened as if flames were taking form.

He made a giant bird.

Since it was a sculpture made of light, making a small figure was much harder. His technique wasn't perfect, so he won with size over details.

Phoenix!

He created a sculpture of red light and granted it life.

The sculpture came out as a Masterpiece instead of a Magnum Opus of light, but that alone wasn't too bad of a success. The Phoenix's special characteristic was especially awesome.

Unquenchable Fire Attribute

Even if its Stamina is completely depleted, it can revive as long as a small flame remains.

Will have 50% of its maximum Health and Mana when revived.

The awesome appearance of the Phoenix Down!

[T/N: Phoenix Down is a revival item from Final Fantasy.]

Strength was important for sculptures made by Weed, but the durability of Health was more valuable than anything else.

Necromancers could steadily raise undeads if they had a bit of Mana and a corpse. But every time Weed gave life to a sculpture, it consumed his level and art stats.

So even if he carved a sculpture and made something stronger than an undead, it was over if it died!

Sculptures were faithful, independent individuals.

If they were destroyed, he wouldn't be able to recover his losses.

Longevity.

Sculptures granted life weren't consumables, but family he had to develop together while backing their shortcomings.

"The Phoenix is alright."

Weed made a total of 5 Phoenixes.

Since they were sculptures with the same appearance, they only came out as Fine pieces when he sculpted them again.

Their final level was 400.

"You will be known as the Five Phoenix Brothers!"

"We understand. Master."

The Phoenixes folded their wings and bowed.

Weed received the bow of the Phoenixes while atop Yellowy.

Chapter 10: The Bull Riding Sculptor

The Proam Allied Mercenary Guild.

The Black Sword Mercenaries had garnered the right to call themselves first-class Mercenaries.

“Heh. It was really difficult to get to this point,” said Michel, the leader of the Black Swords.

There had been a whopping one hundred and eighty-nine requests that led them to this point.

They were acknowledged within the Proam Allied Mercenary Guild, who had branches all over entire Versailles Continent.

The Black Swords even owned a castle and a village. They were the best mercenaries, and they lived up to their reputation.

It was a guild consisting of thousands of mercenaries. It possessed numerous Warriors and Magicians and even had connections to nobles.

The uniforms of Black Sword Mercenaries were embellished with their distinctive symbol, a jet-black crossed swords. Other Mercenaries who saw it expressed respect. Simply being a member of the Black Sword Mercenaries was enough to garner great respect from general players.

Michel had access to the Proam Alliance Mercenary Guild's records.

“Unfinished commissions. If we can finish them, the Mercenaries will become even stronger.”

Michel glowed with pride.

Not only was he level 431, but a considerable number of other top-rankers also belonged within the Mercenaries.

He was a celebrity who appeared on television, and his relationship with other guilds was good. Whenever occasional conflicts occurred, even if he solved them with brute force, there was no complaint afterward.

In the Versailles Continent, there were many weak and endangered people. Countless people desired the power of the Black Sword Mercenaries, so their influence continued to grow.

While reading the Proam Alliance Mercenary Guild's records, Michel stumbled upon a section that caught his eye.

“Former Mercenary Guild Master Smith. The man who made the Proam Alliance Mercenary Guild the best in Versailles. So no one has seen him since he retired?”

*

Kyaaaaaaak!

Hehe!

It was the desperate struggle between the Human army and the Demonic Spirits.

The Demonic Spirits were fighting at Odin's walls.

The short and long-legged Demonic Spirits advanced unsteadily, looking like they were about to collapse, closely resembled zombies.

“Fire!”

A rain of arrows flew down from the walls.

The Archers fired without sparing any arrows.

The Resurrection Church Priests raised their wands.

“Regors, go forth!”

“Charge. Trample Odin.”

Demonic Spirits resembling huge elephants or mammoths ran forward.

The small Demonic Spirits in the Regors' paths were kicked and went flying into the air, but they paid no attention to them and continued to charge forward.

Kuuooooooooo!

Small Demonic Spirits blew horns, shrieked horribly, and stamped their feet.

“Archers, what the hell are you doing, FIRE!”

“Stop those Regors!”

It was a nightmarish Demonic Spirit for Odin.

Many Human players had been trampled to death by a Regor on the Plains of the Great War.

Twa-twa-twaaang!

Arrows poured out from Odin's walls, covering the sky.

The Regors deflected the arrows with their thick grey skin.

Grawr rawr!

Kweeeeeeee!

Medium-sized Demonic Spirits kept rushing out from hiding under the Regors' bellies and behind their rumps.

Saliva dripped as they let loose jaw-splitting shrieks.

There was only 200 or so meters left until they reached Odin's walls.

The Knights defending Odin knew the Demonic Spirits they fought to exhaustion could cross the distance in an instant.

"Shoot more arrows!"

"Magician squad, what are you doing?"

"We're replenishing our Mana through Meditation," replied Kiam, the representative of the Fort Odin Magicians and a Magician of the Prosperity Wings Guild.

"What Meditation are you doing in a time like this! Don't you know there won't even be a chance to use magic if the walls fall? Quickly, stop those bastards even if you have to use all your Mana!"

The Magicians cast spells from the walls of Fort Odin.

CRAAAAASH!

The ground was upturned and thundering lightning came crashing down.

There was a deafening roar as flames, lightning, water, and magic arrows exploded towards the Demonic Spirits!

It was an attack so powerful, it transformed the terrain and razed the whole area.

The Demonic Spirits, including the Regors, didn't survive. Where the magic had swept by, all that remained was japtem!

“Daaang... and we can't even go pick them up.”

“I'm gonna die. There's no profit since we can only guard the walls.”

The Mercenaries on the wall grumbled complaints, since there were definitely many good items among the japtem.

They had to suppress their greed because going down the walls was no different than a suicide act.

The Demonic Spirits' advance was only beginning.

Although the magic had taken the lead, there was no sign of decrease in the huge Demonic Spirit Army. Due to the attacks of the increasingly fierce Demonic Spirits, Fort Odin was like a candle in a storm.

Daymond shook his Bone Staff.

“Your resistance will end here.”

Suban followed with a laugh.

“It is today at last.”

“Yeah. Deliberately restraining our offense so we could gather our forces has paid off. Today, we will penetrate Fort Odin.”

If they could take down Fort Odin, then seizing Aidern Kingdom would just be a matter of time.

Once they take control of the large granary and armory, the Demonic Spirit Army would be better fed and armed.

The Allied Forces may have been formed, but those who hadn't personally faced the Demonic Spirits hadn't yet realized the magnitude of the situation. The expeditionary force was said to

have been deployed from another Kingdom would take a long time to arrive.

High tax rates and army training!

The prestigious guilds and lords hadn't come to their senses. Before the Resurrection Army invaded, except for local siege warfare, every single one of the Kingdoms were peaceful and their only enemies were monsters.

They were deluded by the fantasy that Fort Odin's walls would defend them!

Already, a deadly epidemic was spreading inside the fort. The Allied Forces were breaking apart due to the distress and horror.

Daymond pointed his Bone Staff at the castle.

“Keep attacking!”

More Regors ran towards Fort Odin. There were also Goblins were riding on their backs.

The weak Goblins were not easily motivated, but with money and the Demonic Army as bait, they had been recruited as medium officers.

As the Goblins led, the might of the Demonic Spirits became

much stronger.

The Goblins raised their shoddy Spears as they danced upon the Regors.

Daymond, who led the Resurrection Army and was invading the Versailles Continent, was nicknamed the 'Prince of Darkness.'

He an existence of chaos, seeking to stain the Versailles Continent with Demonic Spirits.

*

Jefferson walked in his suit and tie towards the conference room with a frown on his face.

“Today won’t be easy either.”

“Hello, Mr. Jefferson.”

“It has been awhile, Miss Johanna.”

Jefferson amiably received every greeting made to him by the passing women. However, after passing them, dark shadows returned to his face.

The company he worked at was Global J.K.I Financial Group in

New York!

As was typical of America, they had one motto with their speculative funds:

‘Invest in places that make money.’

Resources, people, companies, and countries.

There weren’t any restrictions on their investments.

They had been quiet for some time because their endless greed had netted them a big loss. However, they were once again increasing their capital as of late.

Jefferson, the Executive Director responsible for Asia, presided over a meeting with the major shareholders who held the company’s wealth.

Their profit from investing on an American and European infrastructure company was excellent. Their investment on Egypt’s oilfields was gradually yielding profit, and the investments in environmental technology were also showing promise.

The problem was in Asia.

The shareholders were annoyed because the returns were too high.

“Our share ratio of Unicorn is currently approximately 7.2%. With current market price, it’s estimated to be 16.8 billion dollars.”

“The return of our investment must be over a hundred fold,” said Benjamin Chandler, who had served as a Vice President of the United States.

“Yes. The return on investment is exceeding 130 times. It has the highest return from all the companies we’ve seen until now.”

“Why didn’t you invest a greater amount in Unicorn beforehand?”

A profit of 130 times the investment!

But wasn’t enough for the greedy Chandler. The other Directors and Shareholders also criticized Jefferson’s mistake.

“We missed out on a chance to make money. Did you forget opportunities soon grows into profit?”

“I cannot believe you were careless with our company until Unicorn developed more maturely.”

Jefferson coughed up an excuse.

“We also tried to take action, but the stock value jumped too

suddenly.”

“Stock prices have risen by 130 times. We should have invested more in the beginning!”

“Formerly, it was an unproven enterprise. The press and America’s academia treated it negatively, so a greater investment was difficult.”

“How much is the foreign investment for Unicorn?”

“It is about 19.4%.”

J.K.I. Financial Group, the California Government Employees Pension Corporation, and other investment companies had a combined total of nearly 19.4%.

“What do you think about combining forces and merging with Unicorn Corporation before it gets any bigger?”

Seizing control with the use of astronomical funds!

It was a remark no one but Chandler would dare to say.

The back of Jefferson’s shirt became drenched in sweat.

“We’ll only know by exploring the idea, but I think it will be a

very difficult venture.”

“For now, we will get the funds.”

“Even with the money, it is close to impossible.”

As Royal Road hit upon its initial success, Unicorn was already experiencing unbelievable growth.

The stock price skyrocketed in a globally unprecedented manner! As soon as the stock market opened, it soared into higher heights.

There were no sellers either. Those who owned stocks were certain it will still continue to rise, so no one wanted to sell. The money they received yearly from just those stock dividends alone was enough to live off of for a lifetime.

In contrast, people who wanted to buy stocks were trying to buy them no matter the cost.

Stock traders worldwide tried to buy just one Unicorn stock, but exploded in anger because no one was willing to sell.

“How can there be a stock like this?”

Chandler felt like his stomach was overturning.

Even now, Unicorn's stock was soaring with no limits, and the current price per stock had become the most expensive in the world.

“Even if we offer a high price, no one is trading. And if rumors spread of our plans to merge, the periodically occurring trades would atrophy.”

Jefferson was sorry he could only inform the major shareholders of the bad news, but it couldn't be helped.

Moreover, Unicorn Corporation had a vast amount of money.

In fact, several finance companies had united and revealed their covert hostile intentions towards Unicorn. They shook Unicorn through the press and credit companies, trying to buy stocks.

Unicorn's response to those actions were drastic.

They used overflowing funds to drastically expand their shares in foreign media and financial companies. They interfered in company management and forcibly replaced board members, so their opposers had to back down.

Foreign financial companies were swayed by the large losses they suffered because of the economic power Unicorn Corporation possessed.

Unicorn was the largest stockholder of a foreign investment

bank.

A monthly usage fee of 200 thousand Won (~\$200)! That was only possible because it was Unicorn Corporation, which was earning astronomical funds every month.

J.K.I Financial Group's meeting concluded without any results.

The major shareholders pulled up their heavy bodies.

"I'm going home to rest."

"Abigail, are you planning on connecting to Royal Road today as well?"

"Certainly. I even bought a villa near the sea."

"What level are you, Mr. Chandler."

"290. Do you want to go hunting together?"

"Sure. Please help me level a little. Hunting is really difficult after passing level 200."

"It's bound to be hard without know-hows."

The major shareholders were also players of Royal Road.

They had accumulated wealth and power in the real world. Since they could live new adventures and experiences on the Versailles Continent, there was no reason to dislike it.

They lived new lives with slightly younger and more handsome bodies.

“I’ll see you in the next meeting.”

Jefferson even politely saw off the luxury cars from the door.

He was also a Royal Road player.

Since he was an investment company Executive, he had chosen Merchant as his profession. He was struggling to earn a lot of money through trade to acquire a land and a title as nobility.

After all, Royal Road was an alternate reality no one could help but be sucked into.

*

Moooo!

Yellowy bellowed ponderously.

He looked tired, as if he had been arduously plowing the fields all day!

It was because he had struggled to familiarize himself with strange footwork to be helpful during battles.

Weed pulled out his sword.

“Charge. Yellowy!”

Mooooooooooooo!

Yellowy stamped his hind foot and ran.

Wild Bull Rush. As they ran fearlessly down the steep rocky mountain. Their speed got faster and faster.

Weed’s mantle flapped wildly in the wind.

“This is the feeling.”

There was nothing cooler than a flapping mantle when you while running quickly.

Weed was fully armed in his best equipment.

His blade was the Daemon Sword he’d acquired in Todeum. It

was the prized possession of the honorable Knight Kolderim of Kallamore Kingdom. The light-absorbing Talrock's Armor, the noble Black Helmet of Elegance, Vampire Cloak, and black boots. He even had his Ancient Shield equipped.

Even if he were to ride a wild mustang in the wilderness, his appearance couldn't be any cooler.

“Clothes makes the man after all.”

Although riding Yellowy was incomparably awkward, Weed was satisfied with his own appearance nevertheless.

“It's only because I don't dress up, but if I had paid just a little more attention, even actors aren't a big deal, huh?”

His baseless confidence even actors couldn't match to him if he changed his hairstyle and clothes!

It was classy; he was a Knight wearing elegant armor riding atop a bull over 5 meters tall!

He was extremely energized by the force of the gallop.

“Charge. Run faster!”

“This is already the top speed. Master.”

“Hya. Hyaa!”

Weed even made whipping noises with his mouth. He was riding a bull without a saddle or reins, but he had to do everything that needed to be done.

The Caltrops at the bottom of the rocky mountain noticed Yellowy charging in from afar.

“It’s a cow.”

“A Human. How did a Human get here.”

“Is he a Knight of the Embinyu Church? They can’t mess with us because of the agreement.”

“No. Their symbol isn’t on his armor. KILL HIM!”

The five Caltrops settled in their stances.

They charged their antennas and lightning surged out.

BOOOOOOOM!

With the sound of crashing thunder, streaks of lightning poured forth.

MOOOOOOOOOOO!

Yellowy wailed lengthily in alarm as he leapt to the side.

He had reduced his speed while changing directions.

The lightning streaks narrowly brushed past Weed and Yellowy.

The lightning streaks struck the rocky mountain and earth, shattering the ground. Broken rock debris flew in every direction.

“As expected of our cow!”

Weed did not save his praises.

It's movements were agile and it's superior stamina exceeded those of a horse. He hadn't given any instructions, but Yellowy had avoided it on his own.

To think Yellowy avoided the approaching lightning in a fleeting moment! He exceeded Weed's expectations.

“Charge again!”

Moooooooo.

“It's scary. I don't like it. I don't think fighting matches my

constitution.”

Yellowy shook his head.

It seemed battle didn't suit the innocent cow.

Instead of motivating with praises, Weed mobilized a stronger threat.

There should not be the slightest bit of hesitation in a fight!

“If you're scared, run towards those guys. Grilled beef, raw beef, short rib soup, marinated beef slabs, boneless marinated beef, shabu shabu*, oxtail soup, cow heel, bovine bone broth soup!”

T/N: Shabu shabu is a Japanese dish consisting of thinly sliced beef boiled in water. It is served with dipping sauces. Similar to sukiyaki but more savory and less sweet.

MOOOOOOOO!

Yellowy ran with all his strength on all four feet.

Even though he had a heavy build, his strength and stamina were so great that he reached his peak speed again.

They closed in, coming within 100 meters of the Caltrops.

“Lightning Spear!”

Another lightning attack was fired!

Weed raised his Ancient Shield.

Because they were close, they couldn't dodge the attack completely even with Yellowy's quick reflexes. Even if they dodged it, attack power would decrease if their speed fell, so evasion wasn't desirable.

The lightning attacks were blocked by the Ancient Shield. They were enveloped by the shield's soft aura and the attack flowed off into another direction.

Weed felt great resistance, but he endured it and swung his sword.

They were already a stone's throw away from the Caltrops.

“Moonlight Sculpting Blade!”

The moment Yellowy ran past the Caltrops, the Daemon Sword also sliced the Caltrops as it passed by.

He quickly struck the Caltrop on his right, then reversed his grip on the sword hilt and slashed again, upwards.

The Daemon Blade frolicked freely within his grip!

Weed's movements didn't stop.

He grasped Yellowy's horn tightly with his left hand and twisted his body.

Mooooo!

His legs and bottom rose slightly. He used the centrifugal force that was pulling the sword and twisted his body.

While doing a 360 on top of Yellowy, he sliced the neck of the Caltrop to his left.

“Gaargh!”

The Caltrops' stances withered.

Although it might not be a Knight's charge, but the damage he inflicted was immense because it was sword attack with enormous acceleration. And Caltrops weren't monsters with much Health, either.

Their dry, sturdy skin blocked with formidable defense, but his Moonlight Sculpting Blade had the effect of ignoring the opponent's defense.

It was when they had defeated two of them and were charging between the Caltrops—

Lurch!

Yellowy moved with his front legs in a zigzag manner. They approached the clumped Caltrops while executing steps in a much slower speed.

This was the biggest disadvantage of a Knight's charge on horseback!

It became the strongest weapon on the plains, but once you grazed past the monsters, turning around again was way too hard. For a monster who knew long-distance attacks, it actually became a weak point.

However, Yellowy was not a horse.

Sidestep, backwards step. He was a cow who could perform directional changes smoothly!

He sharply reduced speed and changed direction as they grazed past the Caltrops. He even knew the perfect distance for Weed to swing his sword.

He was faithful, his efficiency was good, and like a cow sincerely

doing the work it was entrusted, he didn't make any mistakes even when doing something for the first time.

The Caltrops didn't die after getting hit with one slash each, but since they had drastically lost fighting power. All he had to do was decisively slit the thin layer of skin on their throats.

The last remaining Caltrop was in front of Yellowy.

Weed stroked Yellowy's neck.

"Yellowy, take it down!"

"Don't want to. How could I do such a nasty act."

He still had not thrown away his reluctance in battle!

Weed knew how to properly use the carrot-and-stick tactic. If he only fostered threats and horror, there would be resistance no matter how loyal of a cow he was.

"Take it down and I'll give you one copper. If you kill it completely, I'll give you two coppers."

Another incentive in battle!

For Yellowy, one copper was a monstrous amount.

‘Things can be bought with one copper... A handful of highly nutritious hay. Ten buckets of chilled water!’

Apparently he could buy a handsbreadth of land if he saved and saved to gather ten coppers. If he planted at least weeds, he could eat them up whenever he was famished.

If he collected about 10 gold, he could supposedly build a shabby barn, which was Yellowy’s hope in life.

Dreams of owning his own home!

MOOOOO!

Yellowy’s energetic acceleration!

He flew forward to the point of plowing deep furrows in the ground and rammed the Caltrop with his pointy horns.

The Caltrop wailed miserably as the impact knocked it several meters away.

Weed hunted the Caltrops, acquiring savory experience, japtem, a sooty iron plate, howling plant seeds, a blue marble, and the like.

“I don’t know what the marble is used for yet, but if I collect it, there’ll be a place to sell it.”

Weed checked his income and laughed heartily.

The fruits of his labor, such as the smithing item, and the EXP was so savory.

“Hunting has got to be this flavor after all.”

The relationship between the Caltrops and Demonic Spirits was hostile!

Demonic Spirits' very similar in appearance to Demonic Spirits of the Resurrection Army, and they were dispersed along the River of Lamentation. It seemed beasts who drank water from the River of Lamentation turned into Demonic Spirits.

Weed mainly hunted these Demonic Spirits and Caltrops.

“The Five Phoenix Brothers. Deploy!”

He also made the Phoenixes participate in battle.

The majestic Five Phoenix Brothers!

They vaporized the deep fog with a single breath. The ground glowed with heat and caught fire.

Once the moisture disappeared, the Caltrops' lightning attacks weakened.

The Phoenixes flew long distances at once and pecked at enemy heads.

Since they were guys with almost infinite Health, they simply took normal attacks with their bodies.

They could self-recover, even if their Health dropped significantly! They soon rose again.

They could revive even at the brink of death as long as a slight flame remained; the Phoenixes' contribution made the battle convenient.

“Huhuhu.”

Weed laughed wickedly.

He felt pleasure while watching the sculptures he had granted life fighting very valiantly.

The stronger the Phoenixes were, the more items and japtem he could obtain!

“Fight. Become stronger. Cover the world with your fire!”

The Five Phoenixes and Yellowy!

They became Weed's powerful reinforcements.

As he hunted Monsters along the River of Lamentation, he increasingly expanded his activity zone.

However, he didn't leave the riverbank and wandered around the wide areas because he didn't know what kind of danger might be lurking.

Even so, as many as ten Caltrops could be hunted with just the Phoenixes.

However, he had to wait for a very long time.

[T/N: Weed had to wait for the Phoenixes to keep reviving.]

Chapter 11: The Sculptures Erected On The River Of Lamentation

Weed raised his sculpting knife again.

It was the start of the monumental task of changing the sculptures on the basin of the River of Lamentations from negative to positive.

The sound of the ghosts crying in the river was now familiar to his ears. The sound surged forward like echoes, exhausting all strength in the legs and raising goosebumps.

“What’s an affectionate expression you would have while looking at a baby Orc?”

His first sculpting attempt had failed; this was his second.

When he posed as the Orc Karichwi in the Yurokina Mountains, he had seen quite a lot of Orcs. However, he hadn’t been interested in the weak baby Orcs. Even if he had seen them toddling around in the village, as long as they weren’t his quarry for a quest, he immediately forgot about them once he passed by.

Orc infancy was short, and they grew at a very fast rate.

“What kind of thoughts would a female Orc looking at a baby Orc

have?”

It was an expression he could only understand if he was in the mother’s shoes.

Weed had a different idea.

Greedy female Orcs. They found meat. They would drool. But what if their bellies were full right now?

“They would have an absolutely peaceful expression!”

Weed made the female Orc’s head.

There was a splitingly satisfied smile on her lips, and her eyes were laughing, creasing into crescent moons. Her expression wasn’t really bright, but she was still quite pretty considering she was a female Orc.

At least there wasn’t a grievous feeling anymore, such as when she had been holding the child without a head.

You have altered “Bleak Baby Orc and Mother”, a sculpture of the Matallost Church.

You have purified 1 River of Lamentation sculpture.

Purification of the River of Lamentation: -100%

– Handicraft skill proficiency has improved.

Only one.

Weed had taken the first step, but the path he had to walk was very arduous.

Making one sculpture positive didn't reduce the bitter wailing of the ghosts in the River of Lamentation. Looking at the sculptures all around the basin of the River of Lamentation, it was a bleak task.

The next sculpture he chose was the Trolls, who were fighting desperately while stabbing their opponents with spears.

Weed made a clear decision.

“It'll work if I just get rid of the spears!”

He broke the spears and made them hold bowls of rice instead.

Now they were Trolls giving food as gifts.

You have altered “Slaughtering Trolls”, a sculpture of the Matallost Church.

You have purified 2 River of Lamentation sculptures.

Purification of the River of Lamentation: -100%

– Sculpting skill proficiency has improved.

The increase in Sculpting or Handicraft skill proficiency was almost insignificant.

“So slightly modifying someone else’s sculpture doesn’t raise the proficiency much.”

The strength went right out of Weed’s shoulders. Even so, he altered 10 sculptures in a day. However, there was no change in the purification value of the River of Lamentation.

“I need to recover my levels first.”

Weed engaged in desperate hunt to recover the levels he had lost by giving life to his sculptures! He repaired 13 sculptures daily, and led Yellowy and the Five Phoenix Brothers to battle.

If they went too far away from the River of Lamentation, the levels of the monsters leapt drastically.

Boars of Hell.

He estimated the Wild Black Boars to be slightly under level 400. Of course, he ascertained this fact through Death Knight.

“They can fight Death Knight neck and neck — they’re quite delicious prey.”

He didn’t even glance at the Caltrops anymore, since stronger monsters yielded more experience and items.

“I should leave the Caltrops to the Five Phoenix Brothers. Phoenixes.”

“Yes, Master.”

“Hunt the Caltrops. Be careful not to melt the items.”

“Yes, Master. Understood.”

The Phoenixes were handy for being able to be ordered to do various things.

It was similar to Military Discipline Training of new enlisted recruits in the army received! How well they performed in this training enormously influenced their army life.

For the sculptures as well, it was good to establish the hierarchy immediately after their birth, but there was no need to give them

this mental training separately.

The Phoenixes had realized something while watching Yellowy.

‘Ah, we’re stuck with a really dirty Master.’

‘What rotten luck.’

The outstandingly intelligent Phoenixes became obedient.

They were Phoenixes who didn’t die easily and were incomparably tenacious! They dove with their outstretched wings to avoid lightning attacks unleashed by the Caltrops.

And the flame attack they discharged! The damage was weak, but the flames spread over a wide area. The heat wasn’t enough to melt the rocky mountain, but it was still quite hot.

They didn’t even die from area of effect attack skills, and they were quick on chasing land monsters, not giving them a chance to run away. As long as he cautioned them not to burn the japtem dropped by the Caltrops, there were no problems with the hunt.

While the Phoenixes hunted the Caltrops, Weed went with Yellowy to deal with the Black Wild Boars.

The Wild Boars ran through the uneven rocky mountains!

Mooooooooo!

Weed hunted them while riding Yellowy. Together with Yellowy, he defeated the Wild Boars one by one.

Weed's Moonlight Sculpting Blade and Sword Mastery skill proficiency were increasing rapidly.

“This method of fighting isn't bad.”

Weed was pleased because the hunting speed was decent. Thanks to Yellowy, Stamina consumption was reduced and damage was doubled.

Sword Mastery did not accumulate uniformly by just swinging a sword. The proficiency rose when consecutively hunting monsters stronger than himself.

Weed's Sword Mastery was currently at Intermediate Level 8!

It couldn't be compared to the SwordNoobs, but it was much higher than normal users.

He had also modified a total of 262 sculptures in the basin of the River of Lamentation.

You have altered “Snakehead Fish Going Belly-up and Dying”, a sculpture of the Matallost Church.

You have purified 262 River of Lamentation sculptures.

Purification of the River of Lamentation: -98%

A hopeless purification level!

He was gradually reducing the level, but the point where he could bring the level to normal was still distant.

“This might not be the method to end this.”

Weed thought deeply. He had raised his level by 2 while hunting for a week in real time, proof that it wasn't a bad hunting ground. Since monsters stronger than Weed were all around, he didn't need to go looking for them.

It was also the perfect hunting ground to raise Yellowy and the Phoenixes! Even considering the time he spent on mending the sculptures, they were growing extremely quickly.

His level had fallen frequently from granting life to sculptures. Since his combat-related proficiency remained the same, it was gradually accumulating.

“The problem was purifying the River of Lamentation. It will take too long...”

His brilliant judgement emerged every time there was a crisis!

Normally, it would have materialized earlier, but his declaration was delayed because he was grinding. As long as stats and skills definitely increased, he could repeat the same grinding for hundreds of days.

After all, he had the experience of carrying bricks and going up to the 20th floor while others were still going to high school.

“There’s no wage as fixed as the one for a construction site!”

When he returned home in the evening, he received crisp cash as his daily pay.

“Grinding has never lied!”

On the other hand, sewing in plushie eyes and beards was calculated by unit.

A fixed job gave a more definite income. Grinding was boring and difficult work, but the reward had an exhaustive aspect.

Weed had trained in dozens of kinds of grinding, but the task this time was really hopeless.

“There’s at least ten thousand sculptures. Doing them one by one like this isn’t the answer. It’s a hopeless task that I don’t know

when it'll end.”

Weed carefully observed the sculptures he had to change in advance. He found out how much and what he had to modify! He meticulously examined and recorded the size, weight, and how much he had to match the balance of the body.

Then he made the necessary sculptures whenever he took a break while hunting. He utilized the division of labor method of taking sculptures made separately and attaching them!

As his method improved, he became capable of modifying 17 sculptures a day. He could fix an additional 4 sculptures, and the time he could spend focused on hunting also increased.

However, the purification level was still changing slowly.

“This still won’t do.”

While surveying the area around the River of Lamentation, Weed found a swamp. There were a few trees and clay.

“This is it!”

Using the clay greatly shortened the time it took to make sculptures. It became possible for him to modify about 45 sculptures a day.

Every cloud has a silver lining.

Weed increased his work efficiency like an incarnation of grinding!

– The work of purifying the River of Lamentation basin with sculptures, a great accomplishment of Sculpting, has progressed by 11%.

Weed was struggling alone to achieve a great accomplishment. While doing so, an idea suddenly came to mind.

‘Altering all these sculptures would really be an enormous achievement.’

It occurred to him the reward given to the Sculptor would be really big, because Fame and Contribution points to each of the Churches were very difficult to obtain.

Contribution to Churches or Kingdoms could be used however the player desired. They could earn a weapon or an item, but it was also possible to take an army or an order of Saintly Knights to battle.

‘Do I really need to cling to only modifying sculptures?’

At his level, Weed could tell the sculptures on the basin of the River of Lamentation weren’t great. He estimated them to be completed with an Intermediate sculpting skill or lower, and the

finer details weren't finished either.

He occasionally saw a few Fine ones, but the sculptures were generally just ordinary.

“How about if I made sculptures here instead?”

As soon as the thought came to mind, Weed began moving to take action.

A large Orc family's meal! Over 20 Orcs made of clay were eating food. It was a moment where Orcs had no choice but to be happy.

You have made a sculpture on the River of Lamentation.

Orcs' Supper.

You have made 1 sculpture on the River of Lamentation.

Purification of the River of Lamentation: -82%

He could also lower the purification need by making a sculpture.

The sculpture was capable of overwhelming the the negative effects of other sculptures!

“This is the solution!”

Weed moved his sculpting knife quickly.

Improving a sculpture was also considerably difficult since he needed to form an idea in his mind. He would rather make a work overwhelming the sculptures around it.

“I’ve gotta make a sculpture embodying hope.”

He made hopeful sculptures instead of the negative sculptures that were spread out on the River of Lamentation.

Each of the races who had been engaged in merciless slaughter was now laughing heartily. Money, weapons, and food made of clay were piled up abundantly in a warehouse.

– Ooooooooooooooooooooo!

The birth of a Fine sculpture!

The purification decreased by 3%.

The wails of the ghosts in the River of Lamentation were slowly diminishing. The volume wasn’t as loud, and the grieving had decreased too.

However, Weed could still hear screaming sounds in places far away from where he had created the sculpture.

“This time, I’ll make a sculpture to comfort the Humans.”

On the banks of the River of Lamentation, there was an unusually large number of Human sculptures being persecuted by the Nobility or Military.

A father hanged from a scaffold, and a mother being whipped!

There were even sculptures of children having their hands tied up together with the Soldiers’ hands while being dragged into the battlefield.

Weed changed their appearance a little and sculpted anew.

Nobility, Royalty, and Soldiers hung from a scaffold while being whipped by young children.

It was not an elegant or peaceful sculpture, and had very little artistic value. However, such extreme sculptures could bring great happiness to the those who had been treated unjustly in their lives.

It was a sculpture channeling humor and satire!

The young children were smiling brightly while the Nobles and Soldiers wore agonized looks.

It was completed as a Fine sculpture, decreasing the purification

by 4%.

You have made a sculpture on the River of Lamentation.

The Great King.

You have made 43 sculptures on the River of Lamentation.

Purification of the River of Lamentation: 0%

2 Masterpieces.

17 Fine Pieces.

As well as miscellaneous sculptures!

Weed slightly changed the easy-to-repair sculptures and made the rest anew.

“The Great King” was a sculpture of a King leading Humans! The King sculpture was adorned with expensive jewels and his belly was well rounded; it came out as a Masterpiece.

In just two weeks, he was able to purify the River of Lamentation.

– Aaaaahhhh...

The groaning sound coming from the River of Lamentation faded away.

The grievous wails had disappeared, leaving only the sound of serenely flowing water. The river was still incomparably dirty, but the ghosts made far more comfortable expressions.

Ding!

The Fight Against the Embinyu has been completed

The secret plot of the Embinyu Church to call forth ghosts and fill the continent with Demonic Spirits has been stopped by a righteous Sculptor.

It created a significant disruption in the Embinyu Church's plans, but they will contrive another plot.

In addition, the darkness enshrouding the Matallost Church has not yet been lifted.

– Fame has increased by 720.

You have accomplished a Sculpting Achievement.

For demolishing the Embinyu Church's plot, intimacy with all the Churches in the Versailles Continent has increased by 20.

Contribution to all the churches on the Versailles Continent has increased by 300.

With the Sculpting Achievement, you have acquired the title, 'World-Changing Sculptor.'

Kings and nobles will treat you like a famous figure and be prudent.

– Level has increased.

– Level has increased.

– Level has increased.

He completely recovered the levels he used to grant the sculptures life and even went up by two more levels.

His current level was exactly 360!

“It must be done now.”

Weed pulled out the Matallost Church symbol, the Statue of Death.

The statue was holding a sickle, and opened its eyes. Then it

spoke.

– The trial has not yet ended. The Embinyu Church's plan has been disrupted, but they will conceive a new, more powerful ritual.

Ensure their ritual does not progress.

Interfere with the Embinyu Church's Ritual

The Embinyu Church will not cease to interfere with the River of Lamentation.

Stop the ritual completely by taking away the articles necessary for the altar and the ritual.

The Guardian Knights of the Matallost Church who guides the dead will assist you in your endeavor.

Chain quest to Rescue the Prisoners of the Matallost Church, Eradicate the Embinyu Church's 11th Sect, and the Matallost Church's Long-Cherished Wish.

Difficulty: A

Rewards: Relic of the Matallost Church

Quest Restriction: All chain quests will end if you are defeated by the Embinyu Church.

It meant if he were to fail the quest; Rescuing the Prisoners, Eradicating the Embinyu Church's 11th Sect, and the rest would also end.

Weed's eyes had already started sparkling the moment "rewards" were mentioned.

"As a righteous adventurer journeying across the Versailles Continent, I cannot turn a blind eye on the evildoings of the Embinyu Church. For the sake of the Matallost Church, I will ensure their ritual will be stopped for good."

– You have accepted the quest.

Black smoke gushed out from the Statue of Death, and the River of Lamentation began to overflow. The water surged to the riverbank like crashing waves, and after a while, Knights walked out of the river.

Ghosts!

The 100 Guardian Knights who were hazily coming into existence were Weed's reinforcements.

Weed put the Guardian Knights, the Five Phoenix Brothers, and Yellowy on standby where he stood and stealthily crept near the location of the Embinyu Church.

The Embinyu Priests and Dark Knights had suspended their slaughter ritual and were plunged into chaos. The over 1,000 Demonic Spirits who had been guarding them also looked somewhat weakened. The light in their eyes had weakened, and their steps were strengthless.

‘Seems like the purification of the River of Lamentation had an effect.’

Weed used the opening the Dark Knights on guard duty provided to inch closer.

There was a blood-red Skull and Coffin sewn on the robes of the Embinyu Church Priests. There were only 10 Priests who had Crows on their robes.

He could overhear their conversation.

“The River of Lamentation is not responding to our ritual.”

“Sacrifice more offerings.”

Priests with the Crow emblems looked like they were in charge.

As they performed the ritual, hearts of lambs and deers were sacrificed.

The ritual showed a violent response, enough to flood the River of Lamentation! It had been potent enough to erode the rocks, and ghosts flew out helter-skelter.

Weed watched the ritual nervously, but the river continued to flow leisurely.

The Priests, whose faces were barely visible due to upturned robe hoods, halted the ritual and said, “The strength of the ghosts has decreased.”

“What about the Demonic Spirits we sent aboveground?”

“They will also become increasingly weak.”

“The ritual must continue in order to make additional Demonic Spirits.... We’ll have to bring the Matallost Church prisoners and ask them the reason why.”

The survivors of the Matallost Church!

It seemed they had become prisoners and were captives of the Embinyu Church.

“If we are to bring the prisoners, we will have to report to His

Holiness, the Pope.”

“His Holiness will lead us. Let us return to the temple for now.”

They left about half of the Embinyu Priest and Dark Knight troops behind and moved downstream.

The temple was at a place where Weed hadn’t scouted yet. He snuck behind them, and after following them for about two hours, a brilliant fortress made of gold and jewels appeared.

It was a high-class temple, entirely different level from the ruined temple of the Matallast Church!

The temple had been built into the natural terrain of the rocky mountain. It was equipped with a thick stone gate, a moat, ballistas, and even defensive installments for the deployment of Archers.

“Defend this place.”

Uuuooooohh!

At the command of the Embinyu Priests, the Demonic Spirits guarded the fort like an iron wall.

Weed couldn’t go inside the fort, so he turned back to the place where the rituals had been performed.

“If they’re to come back, there’s probably only going to be a day, maybe two days in between!”

Weed mounted Yellowy in his full equipment, the armor and equipment gave him happiness!

He stood in front of the Guardian Knights with his cloak flapping.

It was a decisive moment.

Weed raised his sword high and burst out with Lion’s Roar—

“GUARDIAN KNIGHTS, ATTACK!”

60 Guardian Knights ran forward in unison.

It was a charge made by only 60 party members towards over 500 Demonic Spirits, Embinyu Church Priests, and Dark Knights!

It looked incomparably reckless, but the reality was actually very different from the exterior.

The Guardian Knights who lead the dead were not living beings. As warriors of the Matallost Church, they were no different from ghosts. They would never die from normal methods, and they only received blows from the holy power of high-rank Priests or the

black magic of the Dark Knights and above.

“It’s the remnants of the Matallost Church.”

“Stop them!”

30 Dark Knights and over 500 Demonic Spirits held the front lines, but the Guardian Knights broke right through them.

Grawr?

“Get them!”

The Dark Knights turned and chased after the Guardian Knights.

The Guardian Knights only had one purpose.

Eradicate the Embinyu Church’s Priests!

Just as Weed had commanded, they ran straight towards the Priests.

The Embinyu Priests uttered an incantation.

“O beastly and dark power, let merciless punishment fall. Dark Sword!”

Blessing magic! The Priests endowed holy power into the guarding Dark Knights' swords.

Rawr!

“Wipe out the remnants of the Matallost Church.”

The Dark Knights intercepted the Guardian Knights. Demonic Spirits were surrounding them layer by layer, so they were really like rats in a trap.

Woosh!

Weed raised his hand. Then the Phoenixes outstretched their wings.

The Phoenixes breathed flames towards the ground as they flew over the battlefield. The Demonic Spirits were burnt and the Dark Knights were also wrapped in flames.

“Death Arrow!”

“Water Blaster!”

The Priests inflicted magic attacks on the Phoenixes, majestic magic creatures who soared in the air! The Phoenixes twisted violently as they dodged the magic. Guardian Knights were

crouching down while on board the Phoenixes.

“NOW!” Weed’s voice erupted with Lion’s Roar at the exact moment.

Figures leapt from the flame-bodied Phoenixes! 40 Guardian Knights were falling to the ground.

“Let’s go. Yellowy!”

Weed matched himself to Yellowy’s rhythm.

Moooooooooo!

Yellowy bellowed invigoratingly as he ran on all fours.

Weed cleaved through the weakened Demonic Spirits in an instant and advanced while the Phoenixes dominated the skies. They exhaled flames at Demonic Spirits in midair; wherever Demonic Spirits were gathered, the fires spread and became a sea of fire in all directions.

Weed and the Guardian Knights leapt within the sea of flames!

The 20 or less Priests were the first to be massacred in the fierce battle.

“Guardian Knights, protect the relic of the Matallost Church, fight the Dark Knights and leave the Demonic Spirits alone! Make a blockade and DO NOT ALLOW EVEN ONE ENEMY TO SLIP AWAY!”

Weed burst out with Lion’s Roar as he commanded the battlefield.

The battle was already won.

As long as there weren’t any Priests, he was confident he could win even by only mobilizing the Phoenixes!

‘I can’t just hand over my prey!’

The Phoenixes were still weak.

After surrounding the whole area with the the Guardian Knights, he hunted the Demonic Spirits and Dark Knights with the AOE flame attack of the Phoenixes.

Roaring, blazing flames!

Weed walked through the flames.

“Angry Pebble, Dirtmen!”

The Fire and Earth Spirits were protecting him. He had infinite intimacy with them, so even if their spiritual abilities were lacking, he could call on them anytime as long as he had the Mana for it. It was the benefit of being their creator.

Thanks to Dirtmen and Angry Pebbles, the ground where Weed walked was split open, and flames on his sides were diverted.

He arrived at the place where the Embinyu Church had been performed the ritual.

Weed picked up and looted the goods greedily.

- The Relic of the Matallost Church, the Copper Plate of Perception has been acquired.

- The Relic of the Matallost Church, the Promise Staff has been acquired.

Two relics!

There were also considerable amount of food for the lambs which had been offered as sacrifices.

Chomp!

Weed ate a baked apple.

While drinking its juices, Weed looked around for a place battle was still being fought.

The Dark Knights and Demonic Spirits were collapsing from burns.

Ding!

Interfere with the Embinyu Church's Ritual has been completed.

The relics of the Matallost Church have been passed to you, the righteous.

The ritual of the Embinyu Church will no longer be able to continue. However, the Embinyu Church's main force is still alive and well.

The head of the 11th Sect, Feylord, will seek your head to get revenge for this humiliation.

You must absolutely not be caught by the Embinyu Church.

To resist them, you must revive the promised alliance contracted by the Deliverers of the dead.

– Fame has increased by 220.

- Leadership and Charisma has increased by 10.
- Faith stat has increased by 10.
- Level has increased.

Quest success!

Weed took a breath at last. However, the linked quests were still continuing.

“I should go to a more remote location.”

Weed finished the ritual interference quest and made time to take the Phoenixes and Yellowy somewhere farther away. He estimated that even if something dangerous were to happen, the Phoenixes would be able to pull out quickly. Weed could also escape by riding Yellowy.

“Even in the worst case, I’ll have to save Yellowy.”

Moooooooooo!

Yellowy’s innocent eyes watered in gratitude. He hadn’t expected it, but his master would sacrifice himself to save him.

While Yellowy was overflowing with emotion, Weed coldly finished making his calculations.

If Yellowy died, the sorry one would be himself, Weed. The damage would be severe if he created yet another sculpture and granted it life.

Of course Weed would throw the Death Knight first before dying.

“Since I’m here, rest easy, Yellowy.”

Mooooooooo!

*

Weed passed the River of Lamentation with Yellowy and the Phoenixes and moved into a region full of Plains.

There, he saw monster legions! Legions of monsters he couldn’t even identify were wandering around in droves.

They were probably one of the the beast-type monsters, but since it was the entrance to hell, he couldn’t relax his guard no matter what kind of monster it was. Weed moved further back whenever he saw a monster horde.

“Mhm, where am I?”

Smith, who had gotten dead drunk and had fallen asleep, slowly opened his eyes.

He was riding Yellowy behind Weed's back. Smith was one of the reasons why Yellowy had to be saved no matter what!

“We are on an expedition.”

“Eh. I see.”

Smith hadn't woken from the alcohol and looked around with bleary eyes.

While conversing with him, Weed had gotten the feeling Smith had originally been a truly impressive Mercenary. The stories of adventuring everywhere around the Versailles Continent were impossible if not for a Mercenary of considerably remarkable skill.

However, he was now just a former Mercenary who was living intoxicated!

Nevertheless, Smith's comprehensive knowledge of traps, terrain, and monster traits was a big help. If he was given a little liquor, he also stood guard well while Weed made sculptures. His sword skills had probably diminished, but he still had many uses.

His observation skills identified traits after merely a brief glance at the monsters! His ability to distinguish drinkable water and edible grasses was also excellent.

In any case, he was being very helpful in his own way.

Smith looked around and said cautiously, “This place seems too dangerous.”

“What?”

“The level of the monsters is too high. Even with the protection of the Phoenixes and Yellowy, this isn’t a place where a Sculptor can come.”

While Weed hunted, he gave Smith liquor and put him under Death Knight’s care. It might be the reason why Smith was still underestimating Weed.

“I see.”

Weed absentmindedly listened to his words.

“Anyway, let’s head back.”

The purpose of the expedition was to check the monsters and identify the terrain. Since going too far from the River of Lamentation was extremely dangerous and had no purpose, he was about to turn back.

But something white was flying towards them from the sky.

The dignified appearance of a monster flying towards them as if it was piercing the sky!

“ROOOOAAAAAAR!”

The monster roared, shaking the whole area. The faraway beast-type monsters were also standing nailed to the ground, petrified.

“It’s a boss-class monster!”

The boss-class monster dominating the area appeared. The monster was flying through the air was steadily increasing in size. Even from a considerable distance away, it appeared bigger than the palm of his hand.

As the distance gradually shortened, the body continued to grow! It was a huge figure easily exceeding hundreds of meters in length.

The monster closed in with formidable speed while permeating a cold chill all around it.

Smith’s face turned a sickly pale color.

“That’s an Ice Dragon. It’s an Ice Dragon!”

It was enough to intimidate and disperse the Phoenixes who had been circling above Weed in the air as if keeping guard.

“Hurry and run!”

Even at Smith’s urging, Weed stayed still. He narrowed his eyes and simply looked at the steadily growing Ice Dragon’s body.

Fierce eyes and long snout, a lengthy beard. A strong upper body and a weak lower body!

Even its broad wings comprised the majority of its body!

It was a look he had seen a lot somewhere.

“ROOOAAAAAAAAAAAAAR!”

The Fear hex from Dragon Roar broke out, sending shivers through the body!

In the face of the Dragon’s fighting spirit, Yellowy sank down, and the Phoenixes folded their wings.

The Ice Dragon flew in with its enormous power to defeat the Humans and Phoenixes who dared to intrude upon its territory in an instant.

The Ice Dragon’s large pupils glanced past Weed and Yellowy.

“You dare to intrude on my territor—...”

The words were suddenly cut short!

There was a slight spasm around the Ice Dragon’s eyes. Then, after examining Weed again with wide open eyes, it outstretched its wings.

Flap flap flap.

The Ice Dragon accelerated instantaneously, then displayed incredible agility while turning in a semicircle. It was going to quickly return the way it came.

Weed said casually, “Are you perhaps, Bingryong?”

The Ice Dragon’s body faltered in the air as if it had received a huge shock.

“You’re Bingryong, right?”

“Absolutely not.”

The Ice Dragon even shook its head while flapping its wings hard.

An action indicating its desperate wish to escape!

Although it was obviously anxious, since it hurriedly turned around, but it still didn't speed up very quickly.

“Each flap of the wings is about 500 million won.”

The Ice Dragon's wings stopped right away.

Although it was floating because of its buoyancy, it acted like it didn't know what to do.

“You want to see the Wyverns, right? Wy-Three asked if you were doing well.”

“Wy-Three! Is Wy-Three doing well, master?”

“See. You are Bingryong.”

“...”

Book 16: Black Dragon

Chapter 1: Wanted

Within the Embinyu Church temple, Dark Knights were taking their positions in an orderly manner. The armor of the Knights on display was made of Mithril and Adamantium, shining like jewels as if they had never been used before. The floor was soft and luxurious, covered with the highest grade of carpeting, and on the ceiling was a chandelier made of finely cut emeralds and sapphires.

"The ritual failed? Even the tools necessary for the ritual were stolen?"

The Priests and Dark Knights bowed their heads before the rebuke of the Pontifex of the Embinyu Church 11th Sect, Feylord.

"We are ashamed, Feylord-nim."

The Pontifex, Feylord, was obesely fat, and his face was covered by his upturned robe. However, the golden Embinyu statue of their evil God stood out prominently behind the Pontifex. It was a figure holding a different weapon in each of its 12 hands while killing Humans, Elves, Dwarves, Dragons, and other races.

The golden statue, which exuded revulsion, was lightly shrouded in something like a gloomy fog.

"Mobilize all our forces to kill the man who interfered in our activity. Also, be sure to recover the items of the Matallost Church he took."

"We obey the Pontifex-nim's command."

The Dark Knights and Priests bowed deeply at the waist.

Ding!

- You are an enemy of the Embinyu church!

The Embinyu Church is a merciless group worshipping the most destructive and despicable evil God.

Because they do not stop at any method or means for seizure and propagation, their relationship with the other Churches in Versailles continent was to the point where they would not share one hands-breadth of land or one sip of water.

The 11th Sect of the Embinyu Church has publicly declared enmity against the man who interfered in their ritual and has mobilized pursuers.

Formation of the Pursuers:

10 Intermediate Dark Knights

3 Priests

100 Soldiers

Weed-nim, you are wanted by the Embinyu Church.

Pursuers will be on the chase for your trail.

Along with the message window, Weed could see an image of what had happened within the Embinyu Church.

"Pursuers.... this will be annoying."

If one's notoriety for murder became extremely high, there were cases where the Kingdom sent pursuers. Those pursuers came chasing the trails fairly quickly.

Even if the first group fails, a second wave of pursuers will quickly follow. The next group of pursuers will have higher numbers and superior skills.

It was virtually impossible to escape from a group of pursuers!

He would definitely be caught at some point.

Even if his movement speed was fast, or if he was a Thief or an Assassin with 'Stealth', it would only make a minimal difference on how long he can run. As the number of pursuers accumulated, outstanding Thieves or Assassins would join the group.

Weed decided to think positively.

"I did expect something like this was going to happen at some point."

It was due to good fortune nothing like this had happened to him until now! Since he had accumulated many resentful relationships while solving quests, getting chased wasn't surprising.

Anyway, accomplishing the quest here came first, since it was a chain quests with countless enormous rewards.

By Weed's side were the useful Bingryong, Phoenixes, and Yellowy. Not only were the Guardian Knights of the Matallost Church unable to leave the area around the River of Lamentation, but they couldn't follow him to complete the quest because it was their duty to protect the Church's temple.

*

Once Bingryong entered the scene, the Phoenixes lowered their wings and bowed.

Proper treatment to an elder brother!

Yellowy also displayed obedience, like a docile Korean cow.

Bingryong swelled with self-importance.

"You guys are working hard."

"Not at all, senior. We are merely utilizing the path you have already cleared."

Yellowy acted especially friendly.

"So you understand. In our time, we always listened intently to the words of our seniors."

"Please tell us the ways of life and what we must do to endure living under our particularly evil master."

Bingryong was greatly satisfied by the seniority treatment and told them the absolutely necessary information for living.

"No matter how hungry you are, you must eat cautiously. Never eat around the master. You'll be abused for eating a lot. You must not recklessly eat meat dropped from any prey. You have to give the tasty and fresh meat to be sold."

Yellowy and the Phoenixes understood and nodded their heads in sympathy.

"In the end, we have to live while only eating the food the master gives? When can we eat tasty meat?"

"You have to eat in secret. Be it hillock or hollow, you must fill your belly in such a place. The master has a talent for constantly

keeping us hungry. Jeez. Does a boat get lazy if you fill it with oil? Make sure you eat properly."

"As expected of our senior."

"This is the wisdom I learned in life. You guys will also come to know it all with the passing of time, but I'm telling you beforehand so you don't suffer. There are also times when you hunt with the master, right?"

"There are many occasions. We want some time to ourselves, but he always drags us along."

"Watch out for japtem. He gets edgy when there's less japtem drop. On such days, it's good to not stand out and you have to pretend you're hunting diligently."

"Ooh, so that's how it is!"

"He becomes extremely happy when a weapon or armor drops. Even if he was irritated just five minutes ago, he laughs mirthfully. When that happens, you must get close to him and imprint your presence."

"Why?"

"We must flaunt our roles to him. With how much he nitpicks and abuses..."

This was vital information for a peaceful existence!

Bingryong fully did his part as their senior.

*

Weed took out the symbol of the Matallost Church, the Statue of Death, to do the follow up of the chain quest. The Statue of Death opened its mouth.

In a place close to hell, the Matallost Church made a promise with three tribes. It was a promised alliance to fight together against any enemy that threatens them.

In order to take up the promised alliance, you need the Cane symbolizing the token of the alliance. Take the Cane and persuade those tribes.

Do your best to avoid pursuers and escape.

Ding!

Alliance of the Deliverers (1)

In order to retaliate against the Embinyu Church, you need the alliance contracted 130 years ago. However, your task to persuade the descendants of these tribes will not be simple, because all of the people concerning the alliance are long dead.

You will need the communication skills of an expert compromiser and a daring mind; if you fail, you might even be hung by the neck on a tree.

You must embrace the great danger and depart.

Before you face the Tribes of the Alliance, broaden the distance between yourself and the pursuers sent by the Embinyu Church

You must avoid being seen by the other tribes on this land, which are dominated by the Embinyu Church, so they cannot oppose you. You cannot relax in any place besides the three tribes of the alliance.

Revive the Alliance of the Deliverers and seize the fortress of the Embinyu Church.

If you bring about the alliance, you will be able to use the relic of the Matallost Church, the Cane of Promise.

Chain quest to Rescue the Prisoners of the Matallost Church, Eradicate the Embinyu Church's 11th Sect, and the Matallost Church's Long-Cherished Wish.

Difficulty: S

Reward: Colossal Fame and Charisma

Quest Restrictions: A quest with a total of three steps. You must complete all of them successfully.

Occupy the fortress of the Embinyu Church to complete the quest's first stage. Fulfill the requirements of the quest to progress to the quest's second stage.

It will result in failure if the pursuers take the Cane. If you fail the quest, all chain quests related to the Matallost Church will end.

At last, the appearance of a quest with an S class difficulty!

"I've come this far."

Weed closed his eyes.

To bring about the alliance with the three tribes and destroy the Embinyu Church's fortress!

It will not end in a simple manner. It was merely the first step of a long quest!

Of course, the reward was probably immense, but he also felt a mental burden.

'Although it's true I'm not a normal Sculptor...'

A quest restricted only to those with the profession of a Sculptor!

Weed was the Legendary Moonlight Sculptor, a profession granted to the only person who had unified the continent. Since he had underlings like Bingryong, the Phoenixes, and Yellowy, he was in a much more advantageous position than others.

Even the 'Interfere with the Embinyu Church's Ritual' quest possessed a high difficulty. It was a whopping A. Regardless of difficulty, a difficulty of B or higher impacted the Versailles Continent.

The ritual interference quest had been among the somewhat easier quests for an A-class difficulty, but leadership and the ability to command was needed in order to deal with the Guardian Knights of the Matallost Church.

If not for sculptures he had prepared in advance, his Charisma, and quick tactical decisions, the quest could have been extremely difficult!

How much he had suffered with other difficult quests such as 'True Blood Vampires' or when he fought the Immortal Legion! When he fought the True Blood Vampires, he failed the first hunt and died helplessly. He had also died in his fight with Lich Shire, and literally melted from the Bone Dragon's Breath. He didn't even have time to resist!

Sculpting Blade, Sculpture Life Bestowal, the Art of Sculpture Transformation, the Power to Reject Death. He applied every technique he possessed; his Resilience, Perseverance, and his polished swordsmanship to endure.

Although Weed completed those dangerous quests, this time an S-class difficulty quest had appeared.

A powerful Sculptor lord leading his sculpture army! It was Weed's vague dream for the future, but some of the sculptures he created and granted life to lost their lives.

He couldn't just blindly rely on the Legendary Moonlight Sculptor profession or the effects of his sculpture underlings.

For an S-class difficulty quest, without completing it with all his body and soul, it might result to the quest being marked as unresolved.

Others weren't even able to take a glimpse at an S-class quest, but he also couldn't see it as a blessing.

Weed submerged himself in thought with his eyes closed.

'If I abandon it now... I will likely lose a significant amount of Fame and trust.'

Stopping in the middle of a quest with a high difficulty, especially a chain quest, yielded an enormous loss. He would get hexed with a curse difficult to lift, or he could lose precious fortune, accumulated fame, or contribution.

Weed came to a clear decision.

'Let's accept.'

The penalty from giving up and the penalty for failing the quest probably don't differ much.

In worst case scenario, with the Power of Reject Death, he could only lose his life a second time!

He decided to give it a go while preparing for the worst case scenario.

He was able to strengthen his weakening spirit with confidence.

If he was weak, then he needed to be challenged until he gets stronger.

He had sewn buttons onto 500 sets of clothing, and stayed up all night to attach eyes onto dolls!

He just had to further increase the amount of grinding he had to do for the sake of success.

"A long time may have passed, but they will remain as friends who can be depended on. The promised alliance will surely be kept."

- You have accepted the quest.

*

Nehalles Metropolis — The capital city of Brent Kingdom, the long-standing enemy of Rosenheim Kingdom.

Peddlers selling fruit called out to players.

"Miss, have you heard about Weed from Rosenheim Kingdom?"

"Huh? Weed?"

Saerin, a Summoner, knew the peddler was just trying to make small talk and didn't pay any attention. Sometimes NPCs gave out information, but they were rarely helpful!

"If it's someone from Rosenheim Kingdom... I don't know any famous Adventurer or Warrior by the name of Weed, are you perhaps talking about Sculptor Weed?"

The famous Sculptor Weed who had made the Pyramid!

Saerin was sightseeing the East. She had known of Weed ever since she first stopped by Rosenheim Kingdom.

"So you know of him. They say Weed is undertaking an amazing quest!"

"What kind of quest is it? Did he meet up with another Kingdom's King?"

Other users who overheard them interrupted Saerin's conversation with the peddler.

"What is going on?"

"They said the Sculptor Weed is currently doing a quest..."

"The famous Sculptor Weed?"

Even in Brent Kingdom, almost everyone knew of Sculptor Weed, who made Rosenheim Kingdom famous.

"If you guys are talking about Sculptor Weed, he recently became the Lord of Morata."

"What kind of quest is he undertaking?"

"Shhhh! Let's listen."

Saerin was quite flustered because of the players who suddenly gathered around her. She didn't know Weed was so popular!

Players from Brent Kingdom often went on hunting expeditions in Rosenheim Kingdom. The effect of the Pyramid provided

immense help. The popularity of Sculptors in Brent Kingdom was at its peak.

There were also rumors of players from Rosenheim Kingdom traveling all the way to Morata in the North and its Tower of Light.

Weed's delicious grass porridge and barley bread had already become regional specialties! Variations such as Seafood grass porridge, Mushroom grass porridge, Chicken grass porridge, Beef grass porridge had been produced. The highly nutritious and aromatic baked Barley Bread was also a popular snack.

They were legendary foods Weed, who was also well-versed in cooking, distributed to the workers who were helping build the Pyramid.

Although there were many imitations, none were as light and savory as the millet and grass porridge Weed had personally made for them.

Through those who had eaten Weed's porridge, the story had spread to the point of becoming a folk legend.

The peddler shook his head as if troubled.

"Do you know of the Embinyu Church, who is dominating the Versailles continent with darkness and fear?"

"What? Which church?"

Information of the Embinyu Church was coming from the peddler's lips!

The Brent Kingdom players, including Saerin, heard the Church's name for the first time.

"The Embinyu Church, dominating with darkness and fear. They say the ancient, sinister group is still active."

"Embinyu Church, this is the first time I've heard of them."

"Simply mentioning it is foul, so it isn't normally spoken of."

"What does it have to do with the Sculptor Weed?"

"It seems Weed is opposing the Embinyu Church. He gained knowledge about them while tracing the Origin of Sculpting, and it looks like he is fighting the Embinyu Church, a church only can be found in history. Despite being pursued, he is trying to reconstruct an alliance for the sake of the Versailles Continent."

An S-class difficulty quest.

When the highly famed Weed took the quest, almost all the NPCs of the Versailles Continent began to talk about it.

"Do you know about Sculptor Weed? I'm starting to want to know more about him."

"It's really too bad he's a Sculptor from Rosenheim."

"How beautiful do you think Morata is? Since it's an area ruled by a Sculptor with artistry and courage, it's definitely a city with magical adventures, don't you think?"

*

"You say you're an Elemental Magician? Your skills aren't outstanding enough to receive my quest." Viscount Boldman rejected her with a sneer.

Selsia smoothed down the collar of her robe in embarrassment. "I'm afraid I won't do."

Even after Hegel, Nide, Selsia, and Twitter finished their quest for the school assignment, they frequently travelled together.

In Hegel's case, he asked for some assistance from the Black Lion Guild, but asking for help every day was awkward. The Black Lion Guild consisted of only high level players, so there were no guild-mates who would travel with Hegel to hunt or complete quests.

He could show off his skills and become friends with the girls, so travelling with his friends was a chance to kill two birds with one stone!

Hegel walked up confidently. "After I receive the quest, I'll share it with you."

Since Hegel was a party member, Selsia agreed. Granted, if he was able to accept the quest, he could only share it with his party members if it was shareable.

"I will help you."

Boldman just snorted at him. "Your help? You've given up in the middle of many quests, haven't you? So there's a rumor you're someone who can't be trusted. The Nobles of Sur Kingdom won't entrust any kind of quest to you."

The humiliation he suffered from Boldman!

Hegel's face turned beet red.

However, Boldman had a few more words to add. "If you were as talented as Sculptor Weed, you would be able to solve my problem... But that impressive individual is busy and has many things to do, so he probably wouldn't be able to help me with my quest on top of it all."

"Weed-hyung?"

"Do you know about Sculptor Weed? He is worthy of being a good example to the Adventurers of Versailles Continent. There has never been a greater Adventurer than he. He is throwing himself into helping those who are hampered with difficulties and is righting the world. Why do you think there is still a fragile peace on the continent? Don't you think it's because of the Sculptor

Weed?"

Hegel was dumbfounded.

Boldman, who had spoken nothing but offending words to him and his party, was sparing nothing to praise Weed.

"Weed blocked the machinations of the Embinyu Church, which no one could challenge. The Embinyu Church's pursuit has been organized, but I believe Weed will never be captured."

Hegel really wanted to say his two cents. 'I'd be overjoyed if he was caught and killed!"

Boldman continued his praises.

"Weed truly deserves to be called the great Sculptor who protects the continent's peace. From his long journey to find the origin of sculpting, he is stopping the Embinyu Church. It seems there are many secrets hidden in sculpting."

The Black Lion Guild chat window was flooded with messages.

Provence: It looks like Sculptor Weed is in the middle of challenging an amazing quest with the highest difficulty. All the civilians and Soldiers are talking about Weed.

Ject: Provence-hyung, I've been hearing about it too.

Provence: Where are you currently?

Ject: In a small village named Neria in Zen Kingdom. The NPCs are all talking about Weed.

Shen: I'm in the Britten Alliance Kingdom; they are also talking about Weed here.

Pine: I'm in a rural village in the Western continent. You can also hear talk of Weed here.

Shen: Mister Pine, is that true?

According to the Black Lion guild chat window, NPCs from across the Versailles Continent were talking about Weed.

Provence: For such an uproar to happen, what kind of quest is it?

Ject: Surely it's an incredible quest, a quest related to sculpting?

Bindel: A Sculptor... Nowadays, you can see many amazing Sculptors.

Provence: Bindel-hyung, what kind of quest could it be? And surely he's not soloing it, right?

Bindel: I don't know anything about it either. But he must

definitely be sharing it with someone. I should have gotten friendlier with the Dwarven Sculptor I met in Kuruso. Then maybe I would hear more about sculpting.

The impact from completing an A-class quest and then receiving an S-class quest was enormous. Following Weed's actions in Kramado Dungeon, his name was now the rage all over the entire Versailles Continent.

Selsia spoke without knowing Hegel's resentful feelings. "So awesome. Weed-oppa must be doing a really amazing quest."

Twitter's excited look was also apparent. "I sent a whisper to my friends, and they said there's no one on the Versailles Continent who doesn't know of this."

Hegel's insides curdled violently. Now, there would be no one who didn't know of Weed even in school.

*

"Did you hear? A Sculptor named Weed is going to fight against the Embinyu Church using the power of sculpting."

A young Dark Elf lady in the Yurokina Mountains whispered like this to everyone who approached her.

"The Embinyu Church is our enemy as well!"

"They are the enemy of all races."

The cute and slim Dark Elves did not hide their hostility towards the Embinyu Church.

The SwordNoobs quickly used their heads. Ordinarily, the gears in their boxed in minds didn't turn, but they had now received training on how you had to live from Weed.

'We're definitely giving a fervent response.'

'We have to reply like we would give everything we have.'

SwordNoob360 nodded.

"We will eliminate the Embinyu Church. Since Weed has stepped forward, they are an enemy of ours as well."

"Do you know of Sculptor Weed?"

"We are brothers in arms. You can say we're like family."

"You don't say! You're so manly!"

Their intimacy with the charming Dark Elves increased!

The SwordNoobs were grateful to Weed. Their efforts to become stronger were increasing day by day. To master the Swordsmanship skill and advance their levels through hunting!

*

"Yellowy, let's take it slow."

Weed made a simple wagon and loaded it with the drunkard Mercenary, Smith.

The quest difficulty alone was very burdensome, but to make matters worse, the pursuers were gaining ground.

'It's not something that'll work out by blindly rushing.'

Weed coldly analyzed the situation and intentionally acted relaxed. To solve an S-class difficulty quest, he couldn't become hasty. If his vision becomes too narrow, a chance smaller than the eye of a needle would disappear.

In the end, the pursuers drawing near weren't just time with significance attached; it was an opportunity.

"It's scary to fall to the dredges of life, but the bottom is actually peaceful."

Weed actually felt at peace while undertaking a quest with the highest difficulty!

Bingryong was responsible for the recon and information

gathering about the nearby area.

"By the way, Bingryong."

"Why are you calling me, Master?"

Bingryong and the Five Phoenix Brothers were escorting them from the air. Bingryong's physique, which had grown even more enormous, and the red blur left from when the Phoenixes passed by, were sights ordinary monsters couldn't help but run away from in fear!

"Where and what have you been doing until now to led you all the way here?"

"That's..."

"Sit down and explain. It's hard to keep staring up in the sky."

"Yes, Master."

Bingryong folded his wings and seated himself on the ground.

His body had been lacking because it was made of ice!

Bingryong had dripped ice water everywhere if it got a little warm. Needless to say, his abilities would weaken accordingly.

Although it was true the current weather was breezy and refreshing, Bingryong appeared to be in perfectly normal condition.

His frame had grown much larger than before and the strength he could exhibit had increased. Before, he had staggered around while walking on the ground because of his weight, but now he outstretched his wings and was able to lower his neck close to the ground by bowing his upper body!

Bingryong's well-made, dignified snout was wide open. His white whiskers shook with suppleness.

"Well that... it was after I left master."

*

Bingryong immediately headed north after leaving Morata. After the Cold Rose Guild retrieved the Serbian Beads, the temperature had cooled down slightly.

This was a positive thing for Bingryong.

"ROOOOOOOOOAAAAARRRR!

It wasn't the peak of the strength he'd had when the North had been frigid with chill, but normal monsters were still no match for Bingryong.

Bingryong sucked in a deep breath, an inhalation so large it ballooned his belly. Not long afterwards, his jaws stretched open

almost to the point of tearing.

WHOOOOOOSH!

An arctic chill blasted through the air and swept over the terrain.

Bingryong's Ice Breath!

Monsters froze together in groups. The earth, trees, and even the roots were frozen as tens of thousands of icy shards and silvery dust spewed forth.

"YIELD!"

Dragon's Fear!

Compared to a real Dragon's Fear, its power was minuscule. However, at Bingryong's roar, all ordinary monsters were paralyzed like mice in front of a cat.

"Kuhehehe."

Bingryong's body became larger as he grew, and his mind became increasingly intelligent.

He only attacked strong monsters from the air. It was so he could flee by flying at any moment if it looked like he couldn't win, his

ulterior motive!

Whenever the battle looked a tiny bit dangerous, he would flee quickly.

In the first place, he didn't touch the high-level monsters that could fly faster than him or were dangerous ones who could use magic in mid-air.

He was a coward who would flutter to the ground and wait until the flying monsters passed!

Once he was in the cold region, it was completely Bingryong's territory. He grew rapidly by hunting monsters.

Weed and human players have a time limit. No matter how much time they invested in Royal Road, they still have to sleep and eat.

However Bingryong, who lives inside Royal Road, doesn't have such limit, so he grew while hunting continuously. He could become stronger and faster than any player as long as he didn't die; was a characteristic of a sculpture with granted life.

*

"But why are you here and not in the North?"

At Weed's words, Bingryong couldn't bear to give an honest answer.

"You were definitely trying to do something weird, right?"

"..."

"Do you wanna be hit and then talk? Or talk and then be hit?"

Bingryong was forced to give an inevitable confession. "To be truthful, I also wanted to try making a lair."

Bingryong wanted to do everything that real dragons did. As his level and intelligence rose, his behavior was becoming similar to that of a real dragon.

"While I was searching through the areas, I found a large cave beneath an iceberg difficult to access by foot. After hunting the ancient monster inside, I was brought here."

"Monster hunting?"

"When it died, something like a crack in space appeared and I ended up like this."

"But why are you still here? Surely it's not because you don't know the way back?"

"..."

Bingryong looked away. The sight of him silently preening his wings sure made him like a loser!

While Weed was conversing with Bingryong and leisurely chatting away, the drunkard Smith looked anxious. Seeing as he wasn't drinking the liquor he so liked, he was definitely recognizing the impending crisis he was in.

"Are you out of your mind?"

"What?"

"Didn't you say the Embinyu Church's pursuers are hot on our tail?! We have to flee quickly, how can you be wasting time here?"

If pursuers were coming, of course it was a wanted criminal's duty to hightail it!

But Weed's actions were considerably far from it. He did run while riding Yellowy, but trying to save time was simply on a different level; he didn't show even a slight hastiness.

Yellowy was also on the grassland lazily munching on grass. The nature of the slowly moving cow even when it was being led to the slaughter!

Weed didn't rush. "This isn't something that can be done by rushing."

"Don't you think we should move a little more before the pursuers come?"

"Why should we?" Weed actually responded in the opposite.

Weed was one to set up an entire schedule for hunting or quests and move thoroughly, but his laxness was currently unparalleled.

"Looks like I'll have to help."

Smith came down from the wagon, angered.

As expected from a former Mercenary, he erased the trails they left and disturbed them; extending the time it would take for the pursuers to catch them.

"Go eastward, I surveyed the terrain and there should be a creek to the east. If we move along the creek, we can considerably reduce our footsteps and smell."

The former Mercenary, Smith, used to have plenty of time. But as the quest progressed, he became more hurried, so he was voluntarily helping by going ahead and determining the route, erasing the trail, etcetera, and extending the distance from the pursuers with his diverse experience.

*

The pursuers emerged from the Embinyu Church's temple!

It was a group consisting of 10 Dark Knights, 3 Priests, and 100

Soldiers.

"The path they are going is predetermined. After finding the Cane, they will try and revive the alliance made by the Matallost Church."

Day and night the pursuers ran across the plains. The Dark Knights were on horseback, but the Priests and Soldiers ran with robust stamina. The pursuer group moved without rest! If their Stamina fell, the Priests cast recovery magic and blessings.

The distance between Weed and his pursuers was only a day away.

*

"Yellowy."

MOOOOOOO!

"You're hungry, right? Let's eat."

MoOOOOOOOOOOOOOO.

Whenever Weed came across a large grassland, he gave Yellowy plenty of time to rest and graze on the grass.

"Don't overeat and chew thoroughly."

The kindness was enough to make Yellowy rub his head against Weed in gratitude! It was treatment enough to give someone an illusion Weed was a master who truly loved his cow!

But Weed's eyes were gleaming frostily.

'He's fattening up nicely.'

The distance from the pursuers was quickly closing in. Since Weed was idly carving sculptures atop Yellowy, the pursuers approached even faster. The closest alliance tribe of the Matallost Church was still two days away.

Because they were taking their sweet time and moving slower than usual, the pursuers caught up to them in half a day. The drunkard Mercenary Smith, who struggled with all his strength, was still unable to delay them by much.

Even though he could see the dust cloud of their pursuers in the distance, Weed was not alarmed.

"So they're here now. Just waiting was boring."

Weed called Bingryong and the Phoenixes.

"Guys."

"Speak. Master."

"Wipe them out!"

"I see. I alone am sufficient." Bingryong soared into the air.

Each time Bingryong flapped his wings, he rose in a straight ascent high above the ground, until his body looked like it had shrunk to the size of a hand.

His belly bulged out and a snow-white Breath shot towards the direction of the pursuers.

The Dragon's Breath flew like a meteorite, leaving a long trail behind as it blasted the pursuers.

The powerful attack froze the ground and the pursuers all at once!

The Dark Knights were able to barely hold onto their lives by abandoning their horses and throwing themselves elsewhere. However, a part of their bodies was frozen.

The Dark Knights had lost all will to fight and were quaking like aspen trees!

Bingryong flew over to where they were and trampled them.

Crack!

Bingryong annihilated the pursuers in a single blow!

Bingryong inhaled another large breath and roared while looking all all round him. It let out a victorious battle cry similar to the King of the Dinosaur Era, the Tyrannosaurus Rex.

"ROOOOOOOOOOOOOAAAR!"

His roar echoed in every direction.

The frail, timid, and powerless Bingryong's level had now passed level 446. The grown Bingryong was boasting of his strength.

*

KMC Media's program 'Weed'.

It was on break for a while after broadcasting the adventure in the land of the Vampires.

- What's the meaning of 'Weed'?
- Are you not broadcasting these days?

Questions popped up once in a blue moon on the website's

message board because the program 'Weed' had been a broadcast with low viewer ratings.

The Website Administrator, Oh Yun Sil answered their questions politely.

— The meaning of the title 'Weed' is a secret. It'd be nice if this became a show viewers can get involved in. It is difficult to tell you about the future broadcast schedule as it is adjusted according to the station's internal schedule.

The viewers who saw the admin's words were certain.

'This program will be cancelled soon. It might've even ended already without announcement...'

As such, the program 'Weed' was slowly being forgotten by the viewers.

However, the head honchos of KMC Media hadn't lost their expectations for the program 'Weed.' The Equipment Technicians, Production Director, Writers, and Hosts were just waiting to be called.

Then a rumor Sculptor Weed was doing an incredible quest spread throughout the Versailles Continent.

KMC Media immediately held a meeting for the broadcast.

"We've looked through histories of the Versailles Continent, but the true nature of the Embinyu Church doesn't appear anywhere."

"There are 12 sects within the church, and we estimate there is a separate order commanding them."

"How are the players behaving?"

"It's as if a nuclear bomb has exploded. They are talking about the Embinyu Church and the Sculptor Weed in every village."

"Since the inhabitants of Versailles Continent haven't stopped talking about the Embinyu Church, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say it has become the most talked about topic in conversations."

It was a meeting personally being chaired by the Head Director.

A simple analysis had just been concluded after looking at the images from the circuit connected to Lee Hyun's capsule.

"It's an opportunity to once again see Weed's feats, like the Immortal Legion and the Palrangka battle."

The Head Director was a great fan of Weed.

Apart from the broadcasts, he was excited from just being able to see Weed's adventures!

Director Kang raised his hand to gain permission to speak, and moved his face closer to his microphone.

"Respectable Head Director and fellow colleagues, the matter is not as simple."

"What is the problem, Director Kang?"

"Well, Head Director. First, we cannot overlook the quest difficulty. An S-class quest! Is it not true not a single person has completed one? Considering it was enough to spread rumors, it is not an ordinary quest. It may attract attention, but we might end up disappointing the viewers."

"But we're talking about Weed's quest here. Wasn't he the first to ever complete an A-class difficulty quest?"

"That's right. He did do it, but..."

Director Kang took out a handkerchief and wiped the sweat on his brow. He felt the pressure of having to oppose the Head Director's words as a salaried worker!

In this desperately dangerous situation, his shirt was drenched in sweat, but he still had to say what had to be said.

"We have to examine the quests Weed completed. The Immortal Legion quest was an A-class difficulty, but he had the assistance of the Orcs and Dark Elves."

The Head Director nodded.

The battle where Weed had fought as the Orc Karichwi had been so impressive, he still hadn't forgotten it. The Immortal Legion broadcast was still at the top of the ranking for the number of downloads.

"Please go on."

"Yes. In large scale battles where he commanded these different forces, for a Sculptor, Weed had absurdly high Leadership and Charisma, instantaneous judgement in a rapidly changing battle, and the eye for detail and concentration to not miss even a small portion throughout the battle."

Director Kang thoroughly praised Weed. Since the Head Director was a fan, criticism of Weed was off-limits within the station!

"If players who only know how to fight had been presented the same situation, they would have likely fought while buried in the interracial Orcs and Dark Elves and would have been defeated. Even if their level was high, they wouldn't have been able to stop the Immortal Legion. Weed's strength shines in large-scale battles."

"His ability to command is difficult to rival; it is Weed's strong point."

"Yes. It is exactly as you say. Weed has an immense strong point in quests that provide military support. Other A-rank difficulty quests have shown it as well. In the quest related to the honor of the Niflheim Empire's Imperial Family, and the quest where the Bone Dragon emerged, how much did he suffer?"

The Head Director nodded since he understood what Director Kang was trying to say.

After all the troubles Weed faced while crossing the cold and desolate North, he rode a Wyvern and defeated the Bone Dragon at the end of a great struggle.

"So Director Kang thinks the likelihood of Weed failing this quest... will be very high."

"Yes. Though they say there's military support in his current quest as well, but I see it as being too much for him alone. If it was an A-rank difficulty quest, then he would have developed a resistance and the sculptures he made will have improved their skills on their own, so he would be able to complete it. However, I have judged the S-rank difficulty quest to be too much."

The heft of an A-rank difficulty quest was still as great as ever.

Their competitors, CTS Media, had broadcasted an eradication of Giant Forest Golems and a related A-rank difficulty quest, and their viewer rating jumped to 7% in an instant. For game broadcasting ratings alone, it was over 60% of the share.

"Also... if we broadcast the quest this time, Weed's identity might be revealed."

"His identity?"

"It will be quite difficult to hide the fact that God of War Weed and Sculptor Weed is in fact the same person."

"Hmm, there was that problem as well."

"Although we won't be able to hide it forever while continuing the broadcasts, but if we ignore the risk and broadcast it, we will lose a great deal. Therefore, I have come to the conclusion it is still a little too early."

The faces of the Head Director and the other directors turned serious. It was a quest overwhelming to manage even if Weed gave everything he had. He couldn't hide the skills he possessed on top of that.

"Though it was a chance to broadcast an S-rank difficulty quest, it's a pity."

In conjunction with the Head Director's words, the meeting was

coming to the decision of forgoing the broadcast.

Ring!

Just then, the phone on Director Kang's table rang.

After hesitating for a moment, Director Kang pushed the button on the phone.

"I'm in a meeting right now... what's going on?"

He heard the staff secretary's voice on the speakerphone.

— I'm sorry. There's an important call for you, Director Kang.

"Who's calling?"

— A person named Lee Hyun.

"Lee Hyun? If it's Lee Hyun..."

Surprise swept over Director Kang's face. Then he explained to the Head Director and other Directors.

"I'm certain Lee Hyun is the person with the character Weed."

"Is that so? Then please speak with him."

"I'll accept it on speakerphone then."

After a while, Lee Hyun's call connected from the Secretary's

room to the meeting room.

— Hello Mr. Kang.

"Oh no, I'm sorry, I should have called first."

— Not at all. More importantly, I received the money you deposited, thank you.

The salary from the Palrangka Battle had been deposited into his bank account. Since he was given incentives based on the ratings and even gained a profit each time the broadcast was downloaded, it was actually a considerable sum!

"Naturally, we have to pay you for your work."

— Huhuhu.

Lee Hyun laughed in a very satisfied manner!

— Actually, I have a question to ask. I contacted you because of the broadcasting of the quest I'm currently doing. How is it?

"It's...very difficult to decide."

Director Kang explained step by step. Since it was an S-rank quest and was the focus of attention, as broadcasters, of course they wanted to broadcast it. While earnestly expressing his very anxious feelings, he conveyed the difficulty of the situation.

"Therefore, we are currently in a meeting about whether we should do the broadcast or not."

Whether he understood Director Kang's mournful feelings or not, Lee Hyun's response was incomparably relaxed.

— You can broadcast if you want.

"What?"

— Don't you need to broadcast to raise the ratings? The rating needs to rise to get commercials.

"That may be so, but the issues are..."

— If there's a program you need, then all you need to do is broadcast it. If it's for the station and the viewers, won't your company's public relations be able to do a lot of marketing?

Lee Hyun was explaining the necessity of the broadcast to Director Kang, who was a veteran in the field!

— Please think about the viewers. What do the viewers want? Fun and the answers to their curiosity! And don't they want to enjoy it together?

"..."

— How can a station ignore the demands of the viewers? Is that okay? If you respect your viewers, don't you need to put swift

coverage and delivery of information first?

It was a lecture only to happen in a broadcasting association's get-together!

— On the message boards, there are a lot of viewer's comments asking to broadcast what kind of quest it is.

Naturally, there were many comments asking to broadcast the quest on the station's viewer forum. Not only KMC Media, but the unanimous opinions of viewers in CTS Media and other stations were also being flooded.

Director Kang explained with concern. "As a station, of course we want to organize the program, but we're worried about what kind of disadvantages there will be for you, Lee Hyun-nim."

— Is there anything that comes without a price in the world?

"..."

There is no such thing as free money. Lee Hyun had known this from an early age.

"But the difficulty of the quest is too high."

— I'll have to do my best.

"We'll try our best in the editing process, but it may be difficult to completely hide the fact you're the God of War Weed. Despite that,

is it still okay to broadcast?"

Director Kang and KMC Media did not want to inconvenience Lee Hyun with the fame from being the God of War Weed and the fact he was the main character of the adventure! For Lee Hyun's sake, the station had been on the verge of suspending or cancelling the broadcast.

— Yes.

Lee Hyun's answer was firm. However, immediately afterward he asked with a trembling, choked voice.

— Hey, by the way... Ummm.

"Please speak."

— The broadcast will have an incentive this time too, right? There was an incentive on the contract conditions.

"..."

That was the only thing he was worried about!

He didn't trust promissory notes, coupons, or anything like shares, whose values could rise or fall unpredictably. Only KMC Media held Lee Hyun's confidence, as they made sure to deposit the money on the agreed date.

'This station is truly reliable. They're a good station who succeeds on the trust of the people.'

After Lee Hyun's call ended, the mood within the meeting room changed immediately.

"Shall we try it?"

"Let's do it. He wants it, and... isn't this what the viewers' desire as well?"

"Director Hyun, the expected rating is?"

"Yes, Head Director. If we do the broadcast, we estimate the ratings will be considerable. Since it can also attract ordinary people who almost never watch game broadcasts, I'm confident of 17% at minimum.

"The commercials will be booked?"

"Of course."

The positive mindset was spreading!

This time, the Head Director asked Director Kang. "The quest difficulty is immense, but do you think he can pull it off?"

"I'm not sure either. However, is he not the Weed with the nickname 'God of War?' He will push forward somehow. Whether he succeeds or fails, he will make something out of it."

He was the God of War Weed who had always achieved surprising results, even results no one could have imagined. He had never been in an easy fight.

At other times, he didn't show the absolute authority or charisma from his time in the Continent of Magic. He went freely as a stingy person, grinding machine, Chef, Sculptor, Blacksmith, Tailor, and borderline scammer.

But when the battle broke out, with the appearance of the Orc Karichwi and the Origin of the Skeleton, he made the truth of who he was plenty clear to the viewers.

The station had absolute confidence.

They had just been indecisive about the broadcast because his enormous fame might be harmed. There was no one involved in the station who would hesitate to broadcast about God of War Weed.

The Head Director finally gave his decision.

"Prepare the program. Gather our best staff and get to work right away."

*

The Embinyu Church's Priests were able to detect the deaths of their colleagues.

The church formed a group to chase them again.

"Eliminate the man who interfered in our ritual!"

The pursuers composed of 20 Dark Knights, 5 Priests, and 300 Soldiers!

The Dark Knights were riding swift coursers, and the Soldiers and Priests rode carriages.

After improving their mobility, they pursued Weed again.

Chapter 2: Alliance Of The Deliverers

Weed checked the information of the Matallost Church's relics.

"Identify!"

Copper Plate of Rest

Durability: 12/1,000

The copper plate with powers to lead the dead to the world of eternal rest.

An item absolutely necessary for the existence of the Matallost Church, it is in severely damaged condition.

One of the five relics.

Because it is a dangerous item, if it falls into the hands of the wicked, the probability of it causing chaos is high.

Although it was being protected by the Holy Knights of the Matallost Church, it was forcibly taken by the Embinyu Church. As damage is severe, there is a limitation to the power it can display.

While it is impossible to repair by normal means, it can be repaired with the holy power of the Matallost Church's Pope.

The durability will decrease even more if used.

Limitation: Must receive the recognition of the Matallost Church. Faith 2,000

Special Effect: Lead the dead to their resting place.

Can forcibly cancel Undead magic. Can specially enhance Undead to decrease damage taken from Holy Magic.

If an Undead has hold of it, it can reject guidance to the world of eternal rest and retain very high Health, Mana, and Strength.

Can create and command Demonic Spirits.

Can pronounce the sentence of death. Once sentence of death has been pronounced, Health and Mana will not recover for a day.

Copper plate able to guide the dead to their eternal rest!

With the copper plate, one could return the Undead back into corpses. It would be an incredible relic for Necromancers.

The sentence of death would have a tremendous effect on living beings as well.

"Still, it's pretty lousy."

Weed felt it was regretful as he looked at the Copper Plate of Rest.

The durability will decrease every time it was used. Since the remaining durability wasn't high, it meant it could only used a few more times!

If the relic was destroyed, a great misfortune or a curse would follow. Becoming an enemy of the Matallost Church would be a certainty as well.

"The next item is... Identify!"

Token of Alliance, Wand

Durability: 139/200.

Attack Power: 15.

This Wand is a proof of the alliance of the Matallost Church with its neighboring brethrens.

The Wand acts as proof of the contract between the Matallost Church and its neighboring tribes. Though it's a relic with a God's blessing, it normally only has a slight ability to aid holy powers.

Once you have fulfilled the promised alliance, you can utilize the authority of the Deliverer vested in the Wand.

However, you must pay the price for the usage of authority.

Restriction: Must receive recognition of the Matallost Church.
Faith 2,000.

Special Effect: Holy Power 5%

The Copper Plate of Rest and the Wand!

They were relics of the Matallost Church he could use to win in the battle against the Embinyu Church. The battle's conditions would change greatly depending on the relics' use.

*

That night, Weed arrived at the village of the first alliance tribe of the Matallost Church, Vejague.

The tribesmen were closer to monsters than humans. They only had few strands of hair left, with their mouths were jutting out. They were also holding spears as weapons.

Weed and Smith were surrounded by the Warriors of the tribe at the village entrance.

"As an agent of the Matallost Church, I have come to request reinforcements."

Weed broadened his chest and spoke with pride.

Among the Vejague tribal Warriors who were murmuring amongst themselves, a muscular male with tattoos all over his body came forward.

"If you are an agent of the Matallost Church, you are our brother. Welcome, visitor. Could you please clearly state your business again about why you came to us?"

"I have come to request reinforcements to fight against the Embinyu Church."

The Warrior who came to meet Weed stabbed his spear into the ground.

"The Embinyu Church is strong. We don't like their actions either, but why should our tribe shed blood for your sake?"

Weed quickly glanced around.

A perfectly gifted conversationalist doesn't exist. It was important to survey with his own eyes. No matter how good words were, they would be nothing but nonsense to break the

atmosphere if they didn't match the situation!

The Warriors were robust and their gazes were piercing. They had no qualms an uninvited guest had arrived, and they didn't have cringing expressions.

There were many prey such as Caltrops and Black Wild Boars hanging above their village.

"I would like to meet the representative of the Vejague tribe. Can you represent the Vejague tribe?"

"I am a mighty Warrior. While hunting fierce and strong beasts, I am the strongest in the tribe. I am enough to represent our tribe."

Weed explained in a slightly softer tone, "The mighty Warrior of the Vejague tribe has called me his brother. The reason you are listening to such a request is because you are among those who share difficulties with the neighbors and brothers living next to you. If a brother was to break a promise because it was difficult, the Matallost Church and the Vejague tribe would not be brothers."

Warriors nodded energetically.

"Brothers will win this together in spite of any difficulty. We, the Vejague tribe, will fight together with the Matallost Church."

"WHOAAA!"

The Warriors of the tribe shouted as they raised their spears high into the air and shook them.

Success in winning over the first tribe of the alliance!

Alliance of the Deliverers.

The Vejague tribe who hunts in the River of Lamentation has joined.

The negotiator's Fame has increased by 100.

Charm has increased by 50.

The Mighty warrior said, "Unlike the our Vejague tribe, the other two tribes will not be easy to win over. Although they value the promise, and brotherly loyalty equals to ours, each tribe has its own circumstances. In order to fight the Embinyu Church, we will definitely need the strength of the two tribes, especially the Salmere tribe."

*

Weed rode Yellowy and moved on to the location of the next tribe.

Slowly. The very slow gait of a cow.

The Vejague tribe promised.

When the 3 tribes gather, we will attack the Embinyu Church. We will help in destroying their fortress and freeing the survivors of the Matallost Church.

Because one tribe had given its promise to attack, only 2 tribes remained.

On the rocky mountain like a knife placed upside down, rare flowers and grasses hard to find in the Versailles Continent were considerable.

Weed was moving along a ridge as curved as a camel's back. Although the angle of inclination was very sharp, Yellowy walked on without slipping.

The Phoenixes spoke, "Master, the pursuers are at a distance 5 hours behind us. If we continued our current pace, they will catch up within 5 hours."

"What's the scale of the enemy?"

"It is 20 Knights, 300 Soldiers and 5 Priests."

"Still being underestimated. Finally 20 Knights... The crowd of pursuers did not increase as much as I thought."

Words couldn't be spoken by a normal Sculptor!

However, Weed was determined to purposefully draw out the pursuers and weaken the Embinyu Church's forces.

Even if it wasn't a huge help in siege warfare, he needed to reduced the enemies' numbers beforehand even if it's only little. As an S-rank quest, it would be an incredibly difficult battle even if he brings about the alliance of the three tribes.

Divide and conquer based on incentives! With the motive to weaken the enemy forces, he instinctively took tactical action.

'I'll crush them one by one for now!'

"Hurry and run before the pursuers arrive!"

Whether the drunkard Smith was fretting or not, Weed's mind rolled onward, flawlessly, and coldly.

"Bingryong. Phoenixes."

"Speak, Master."

"No need to wait until they come here. You guys go and wipe them out. Only, our side mustn't take any damage."

"Understood, Master! You need not have any concerns."

"Bingryong, you're the commander. You must return safely with the Phoenixes."

"Thanks for believing in me, Master."

Bingryong and the Phoenixes flew to the back as they flapped their wings.

Perhaps because of their fire disposition, the Phoenixes were quite aggressive and reckless. However, since Bingryong valued his body dearly, Weed had given the position of commander to him.

"They're my sculptures. If they were to be abused, I'll be doing the abusing. I can't watch them get hit by some other guy."

If not for that reason, there was no other reason to give the stupid and timid Bingryong the position of leader.

After a while, the sky to the west lit up brightly.

Ice Breath must have been fired, since the temperature lowered significantly. Afterwards, smoke from flames rose into the sky.

Fire and ice attacks.

Even in the midst of this, Weed was strengthening Bingryong and the Phoenixes.

After the group of pursuers was decimated by Bingryong and the Phoenixes, the Embinyu Church assembled new pursuers once more.

This time the pursuers consist of 40 Dark Knights. 10 Priests, 3 Magicians, 300 normal Soldiers.

Weed swallowed his saliva with a gulp.

Not only were the pursuers were chasing them more and more rapidly, but their forces were improving as well.

With both burden and pleasure, the enjoyment was increasing.

Like when he dealt with the True Blood Vampires with Alveron, his energy was surging with appropriate tension.

The second alliance tribe of the Matallost Church, Lekiyé.

It was a tribe with Knights and Sorcerers.

"We have not forgotten the alliance with the Matallost Church. However, too much time has passed. It's doubtful if the Matallost Church still has the qualification to act with us."

The Chief of the Lekiyé tribe neither welcomed nor opposed Weed.

"How should I prove the qualification between allies?"

The Chief said to Weed. "The power of the Embinyu Church is fearsome. To see if you can fight against them, you will need to undertake a test of courage,"

A test to pass Valley of Courage in the middle of the night without any outside help!

It was the valley the children of the Lekiyé tribe ascended when partaking in the coming of age ceremony.

Weed didn't think deeply and simply accepted.

"I will prove I possess courage."

As long as he didn't want to give up the quest, he had no choice but to continue forward.

The Valley of Courage!

Weed walked quickly under the dark night sky.

The sound of the trees rustling in the wind was frightening, and it felt like something would jump out at any minute.

A situation and place perfect for a test of courage. Without mistake, it was an actual place where courage was being tested.

Unnecessary thoughts would make the heart stiffen and contract.

If one is caught in fear, even footsteps became scary, and will be surprised by shadows. It would get more and more terrifying until one could no longer take another step.

The Valley of Courage was such a place.

Because the space of the passage in the narrow valley was only 50 cm wide, it created an illusion anything could jump out from between the bushes or trees. It was a place ceaselessly stimulated fearful thoughts, and made one's resolve crumble!

It would actually be a relief if a monster or ghost really appeared, however the place was only stimulating pure terror.

Walking in the dark, the path looked like it could lead to anywhere. Anxiety and panic-causing Valley of Courage.

Like a chant, Weed memorized something. "Spinach 2,500 won (~\$2.50), sesame leaf 1,000 won (~\$1), eggs 1,700 won (~\$1.70), sausages 4,000 won (~\$4)."

Calculation for a week worth's of expenditure!

Since it was dark and quiet, it was excellent for mentally organizing his household accounts.

"We're out of olive oil. I collected the coupon, so I should buy it the next time I go to the mart. The mart next door was holding an event for kitchen supplies... I must buy rubber gloves in a pretty pink color."

Calculating his shopping list. The part Weed loathed the most made its appearance. This time was the most difficult and painful.

"This month's total expenditures have risen to 8,000 won more than last month. It was because of the transaction on the 24th. Damn the rising prices! It was because the gas price rose."

Simply by thinking about the date, he could recall the sum he'd used during day. He could even list the fluctuations in price from last month and the month before last.

Savings, savings, savings.

Even so, the household expenses absolutely wouldn't decrease!

The biggest worries of housewives were difficult for Weed too. "House expenses: once it increases, it never decreases again."

The desperate battle against the household expenses. Having a large income didn't necessarily mean having money saved up. Thorough management along with limiting impulsive spending was necessary.

"I shouldn't have bought the expensive salt from the supermarket that one time... I needed to live frugally." He was assailed with bitter regret.

By gathering small sums, it will eventually become a large amount of money.

As he was thinking about the household expenses, he soon exited the Valley of Courage.

Weed's face was haggard and filled with horror.

Ding!

You have passed the Valley of Courage.

You have passed the Valley of Courage in the shortest time.

You have passed the ceremony much faster than young men of the Lekiye tribe.

Willpower stat has formed.

Willpower : Increases concentration. No matter how chaotic your surroundings are, your skill success rate rises and failure rate of magic decreases.

Damage in melee range has increased.

Warriors, Adventurers, and Magicians will admire those with outstanding Willpower.

Speeds up growth of Fighting Spirit. Points can not be distributed into the stat and it will increase by itself based on character's actions.

You have earned the title 'The Courageous.'

Fame has increased by 200.

Courage has increased by 80.

Fighting spirit has increased by 10.

Leadership has increased by 5.

The Chief and Warriors of the Lekiyé tribe were waiting at the exit; after seeing Weed coming out of the valley, they ran to him.

With rings dangling on his nose, the chief outstretched his arms.

"Brother has passed the test. In accordance with the alliance, let us assault the Embinyu Church."

"WHOAAA!" The Warriors shook their spears and cheered.

The drunken Smith came close and patted Weed's shoulder knowingly.

"Seems like the Valley of Courage was extremely difficult."

Weed replied feebly, "It was truly horrible."

"At least it's all over now. Take it as a valuable experience."

"I have to suffer it every month."

"The Chief said the ghosts of the Lekiyé tribe within the Valley of Courage are truly terrifying, but what do they look like?"

Weed shook his head. "I did not see ghosts."

Household expenses were much more frightening than ghosts.

Between the trees and behind his back, the ghosts moved stealthily. They weren't obvious, but you could feel something was there! Weed had been so immersed in mentally organizing his household accounts that he'd walked right past them without noticing.

Ding!

Alliance of the Deliverers.

The Lekiyé tribe who hunts in the River of Lamentation has joined.

The negotiator's fame has increased by 200.

Charm has increased by 60.

*

The alliance of the second tribe taken care of, Weed headed towards the direction of the third tribe.

The pursuers caught up quickly and had set up camp on the plains and were waiting.

Without breaking through the Dark Knights and the Embinyu Church forces, it would be difficult to go to where the third village was located.

"Bingryong, Phoenixes! Get rid of them!"

"Got it, Master."

The fight between Bingryong, the Phoenix Brothers and the pursuers took place. Weed just watched them with folded arms.

The reason he made and granted life to sculptures based on aerial monsters was because aerial monsters had a high survival rate.

"They can't be compared to land monsters."

Land monsters could perish quickly if they were surrounded and received concentrated attacks. However, a flying creature couldn't be hunted easily without a Magician or Archer squad.

Later, he had to prepare a balance so he could afford both aerial and land creatures. But so far, he mostly had aerial monsters centering around Bingryong.

The Embinyu Church's pursuers were having hard time thanks to Bingryong and the Phoenixes.

The highlight of the Phoenixes' power!

"Fire Blaster!"

When the Magicians used offensive magic, the Phoenixes flew enthusiastically.

"It's mine!"

"I saw it first."

"I'm going to eat it first."

As if they were competing, they ate the fire magic with greedy gulps.

The ability to absorb fire to replenish Health and Mana!

They also spewed flames as they flew low over the flaming ground.

As the trees burned and the flames spread, the Phoenixes demonstrated nearly infinite Health and attack power.

One must use Holy Magic, Spiritual Magic, or Mana Drain skills in order to deal with the Phoenixes. Or bombard them with Ice magic. Otherwise, there was no way to defeat the Five Phoenix Brothers!

The Phoenixes flew to the ground and flapped their flame wings or spewed fire in front of the Knights.

"ROOOAAAAAAR"

They were doing far more damage than Bingryong's ruthless attacks. Bingryong went around with his massive weight, picking out the Priests and crushing them.

The force of the Embinyu Church's pursuers crumbled to at least

half in an instant.

This is the power of the sculptures!

A thought of mass producing Phoenixes grazed past Weed's mind.

"I should make about 30 Phoenixes... then they probably wouldn't disappear and die."

With 30 Phoenixes, it would very well be a fiery hell!

With the characteristic of gaining strength from fire, he thought there would be almost no reason to lose Health!

If it wasn't winter or a rainy day, they wouldn't receive much effect from the environment either. While utilizing the most out of the fire characteristic, Bingryong couldn't compare in flanking capability.

However, sculptures have sensitive personality.

They were quite severely opposed to sculptures looking similar to themselves. What's worse was, they showed attitudes of wanting to fight each other.

The higher the Art stat, sculptures granted life were stronger, so the personality demands and egos became greater.

Due to the limitations of Weed's Leadership and Charisma, it was tough to handle over 10 of the same kind of sculpture.

"Yellowy, let's go!"

MOOOOOOOOO!

Weed and Yellowy took care of the remaining forces together.

With each pursuer team, Yellowy, Bingryong and the Phoenix Brothers gained 2-3 levels each, and collected plenty of japtem and weapons.

*

Before arriving at the next village, the team of pursuers once again drew close.

60 Dark Knights.

10 Priests.

10 Magicians

400 Normal Soldiers.

This is indeed an extremely bloodthirsty army!

The large army came with the purpose of capturing Weed.

"Knights, Priests, Magicians, and Soldiers were all on horseback and chasing us with amazing speed."

The Phoenixes he sent in five directions to scout had returned and reported.

Weed stroked the back of Yellow's neck. "Yellowy, let's go quickly from now on. Any more laziness and dinner will be beef soup."

Even without Weed's threat, Yellowy was extremely worried every time food was prepared. He was getting stressed to the point of losing his perfectly good fur.

Weed's eyes looked like they really wanted to soak Yellowy's head or feet for a while whenever Weed boiled soup!

MOOOOOOOO!

Yellowy increased his speed and charged forth with his supple body. With speed easily exceeding a horse's, downhill or uphill, he ran without rest.

"Bingryong."

"Speak, Master."

"Use Breath once and come back."

The Ice Breath he used after flying to the Embinyu Church's

pursuers! Like drinking a glass of milk every morning, he was ordered to shoot out Ice Breath everyday.

The Embinyu Church's pursuers sustained injuries by the Ice Breath and were dying little by little.

"Phoenixes."

"We are listening to your words, Master."

"You guys go and torch them. If they ascend the mountains or woods, quickly set them on fire."

It was a strategy that didn't consider the likes of nature conservation. Attacking with fire! In the forests with many trees and flammable reed beds, the Phoenixes attacked the pursuers without fail.

"Bingryong, is there a canyon or large forest around here?"

"You need to move a bit to the west."

"Let's go there."

He chose a path difficult for a large army to move through and delayed the pursuers.

Fairly fighting one on one!

A duel of Knights fighting with their honor on the line!

Warriors fighting with their lives!

Weed was far, far away from those things.

Even though the Priests and Magicians used protective magic, they took considerable damage from Ice Breath, killing over dozens of people. The horses slipped due to the frozen ground, and the movement speed of the Soldiers were delayed.

However, once the Embinyu Church's pursuers came a certain distance, they ignored all obstacles and caught up by traveling in a nearly straight line. Since they were moving at maximum speed to catch up to Weed, the damage they have taken from Ice Breath had accumulated.

Even Weed could see the dust trail produced by the pursuers.

"We're screwed. They are almost upon us!"

The drunkard Smith, who had tried to help, gave up everything and was drowning in despair as he sought more and more alcohol.

However, Weed didn't think this was the end. He had already accounted for the pursuers catching up to them at this point.

"I'll make it more troublesome for them."

He used an underhanded tactic of deliberately going only to places where monsters gathered, making slight detours and causing fights!

An escape superior to that of mud eels, creatures who make streams muddy!

The Embinyu Church's pursuers advanced straight through Bingryong's Breath and while fighting monsters.

The Dark Knights and Soldiers went through as they cut up the ordinary monsters, but the damage to the troops were great.

The pursuer numbers gradually dwindled and their stamina also reached the limit. The horses frothed as they collapsed, while the Priests and Magicians became a wreck.

Then, Weed found an herb field where many yellow grasses bloomed.

The most expensive medicinal herbs!

A herb with the effect of giving boundless Stamina.

Weed positioned Yellowy against a hill.

"We'll have the showdown here."

The Salmere tribe's village was only a day away.

It looked like he could get there safely without the pursuers catching up, but he intended to hunt them down to the very last man. It was ridiculous to leave the herb field behind.

"Yellowy, let's use this quickly."

"Don't wanna. It looks weird."

Yellowy, who hoped to graze freely, instinctively showed a strong rejection.

"I heard that the price of beef rose a bit recently..."

"..."

Peaceful persuasion!

He made a plow and attached it on Yellow's body to harvest the herbs.

Truly an all-terrain Korean cow!

Weed took Yellowy to collect herbs, and prepared for battle. He sharpened his sword on a whetstone and also cleaned his armor with a cloth. He even had wine with premium steak. He also mixed the herbs good for increasing Energy and Stamina with soft grass and gave it to Yellowy.

Mooooooooooooo!

Yellowy was grateful for his master's grace!

When they were completely prepared for battle, the group of pursuers appeared. After having their numbers been reduced to a third, they were no different from stragglers.

There were only about 20 Dark Knights, and only 2 Priests and 2 Magicians left.

"The enemy of Embinyu Church!"

"The Pontifex said there is no need to capture him alive. Kill him!"

The Soldiers lost their horses and ran while their armor rattled.

The Soldiers and Dark Knights attacked simultaneously. Even as they charged, their Stamina was exhausted and didn't seemed like they were gaining speed.

A situation where the pursuer's army would be massacred if they were harassed a little more!

"Bingryong, Phoenix! Launch the preemptive strike."

"Got it, Master."

Bingryong drew in a deep breath to use its Ice Breath.

"It's shooting its breath!"

"Cast protective magic!"

The Priests and Magicians cast a transparent circle covering the pursuers.

Before long, a white stream of Breath spewed from Bingryong's snout.

The tremendous force of the freezing breath crushed the enemy's transparent circle!

Over 100 Soldiers were frozen solid. The damage would have been worse if they did not have protection magic.

"Whoooooooooosh!"

The Phoenixes broadly set the ground aflame.

"Kill the bastard."

"Let's kill him and sacrifice his heart to Embinyu's God!"

The Embinyu Church's pursuers pounced like little demons within the flames.

As he rode Yellowy, Weed's eyes became infinitely cold.

Like an air conditioner set at 18°C (64°F) in an empty bank*, the glint in his eyes was lonely, forlorn, and yet violent.

[T/N: We're not exactly sure about this idiom. We think it's something along the lines of the air conditioner feeling lonely because it's working hard in an empty bank.]

If the monsters were strong, he became stronger by hunting and any means necessary.

The words "cowardly" or "dirty" didn't exist in Weed's dictionary. He used any means to destroy those who blocked his path.

He always fought while giving his all, so there was no need to hear he was underhanded.

"Kill him." The Dark Knights rode their exhausted, frothing horses and were nearly up the hill.

Weed extended his hand forward. "Blessing."

You've used the High Priest's Blessing. Physical abilities will be enhanced for 20 minutes.

The High Priest's Blessing increased Maximum Health and Mana

by about 30% and raised all stats by 20%! In the past when he was at a lower level, it raised his stats by nearly half.

He could use the High Priest's Blessing through the ring's power once a day anywhere. During that time, it was a moment where Weed felt like a Warrior, not a Sculptor.

Weed slapped Yellowy's rump with his palm.

"Let's go, Yellowy!"

Yellowy ran on all fours and sped down the hill. He accelerated as he went down the slope, making his flesh vibrate.

He wasn't just as fast as a horse. He was faster.

Power!

He charged with his heavy weight and speed.

A Dark Knight came stabbing straight at them. He was extremely fast and was delicately aiming for the neck. It was a sight of a truly skillful Knight of the Embinyu Church.

Weed ducked his head, narrowly dodging and grazing past a sword, and also raised his sword.

"Moonlight Sculpting Blade!"

He struck the neck of the armorless horse and toppled it along with the Knight.

Even before Yellowy took another two steps, another Dark Knight came at him.

"DIE!"

The enemy Knight swung his ax so fiercely, Weed felt the wind pressure!

If he blocked the weapons the galloping Knights swung head-on, he feared durability of his sword would fall or break. Weed's weapons were maintained at their maximum condition, but there was no need to clash deliberately.

'Make a gap.'

Weed moved Yellowy half a step to the side as he swung his sword.

A tactic using the short range of an ax and the length of his sword! He was able to decapitate the Dark Knight with the wide gap he purposely made.

The art of attacking in unity with the bull!

In a fight between Knights, the outcome sometimes depended on the steed.

Weed treated Yellowy like an extension of his hand as he engaged in battle.

Neeiighhh!

The horses the Dark Knights were riding on puffed breathless gasps as they rose up the hill. When they saw Yellowy's dangerously transformed eyes, they lost considerable fighting spirit.

M-O-O-O. Oo. Oo. Oo!

In the frenzy, Yellowy was on the verge of going crazy!

As he struck with his hind legs and rammed with his horns, the horses fell underneath him without fail. On all fours, Yellowy fundamentally combined offence and defence.

On the bull's wide back, Weed could use his sword favorably.

Like a wild raging beast, he swung his sword left and right between enemies.

Every time he grazed past the Dark Knights, spear and sword

clashed. His sword flashed as Dark Knights undoubtedly fell to the ground.

Exactly one each for every breath!

"Yellowy, let's go!"

Weed rode Yellowy in between the Dark Knights.

For riders donning armor, just falling to the ground alone was enough to sustain a nearly fatal blow. Regardless of the excellent defense of the Knights' armor, it was a situation where the weight of the armor worked against them.

Weed was dominating the Dark Knights with effective and precise attacks every time their paths briefly crossed.

The Knights and the horses were exhausted, and on top of it all, their pace had slowed while ascending the hill. On the other hand, as Weed ran down the slope with his strength and momentum at their peak, comparable to the collision force of the Knights.

The use of strategy and tactics!

He lured in monsters to deal damage to them, and made it so they couldn't rest, to drain their Stamina.

It was a different method from the one he used while fighting

with the Orcs and Elves. Orcs were easily lured by bait, while Elves disliked dirty things. Since they used archery, magic, and spiritual power, he had to lead them in close combat.

Each race's trait or code of action followed a method of fighting, deciding the strategy and tactics.

Even if it was a minor fight, Weed commanded it with an advantageous battlefield.

However, his blazing heart only wanted more enemies without measure. When he saw many overwhelming enemies, he became intoxicated in battle and his blood boiled, hungering for more victims.

The disposition of a wild beast.

Instinct of the body.

"UUWAAAAAH!"

Lion's Roar burst from Weed's mouth.

You have used the skill Lion's Roar.

The skill 'Lion's Roar' has increased the morale of all allies within range by 200%.

All existing Confusion hexes have been lifted.

Leadership will increase by 270% for 5 minutes.

"Hear my order! Bingryong, Phoenixes! Wipe out the enemies!"

The Embinyu Church's pursuers — a force so large, it was nearly an army.

In order for the troops to move in accordance with the Commander's leadership, morale was a very important element!

Due to the daily use of Ice breath, half of the Dark Knights had perished.

A situation where the control of the cavalry was weakened!

Bingryong leapt as he trampled, ravaged, and froze enemies.

The Phoenixes gave rise to frenzy, spewing fire and spreading their plumage to create a rain of fire.

As everything became a sea of fire. The pursuers lost moral and plunged into chaos.

While riding on Yellowy, Weed ran straight into the middle of the enemy lines.

He slid past his opponents' weapons and struck them down, like an arrow piercing through the enemies.

The Soldiers and Dark Knights who had been ascending the hill, ran in the opposite direction.

"UWAAAAAAAAAAHH!" The battle cry sizzling escaped Weed's mouth.

After passing the Dark Knights, the Soldiers of the Embinyu Church he encountered next were merely easy pickings.

MOOOOOOOOOOO!

Yellowy also let out a ululation. A bull bellow!

With the sound of the bull's cry ringing around him, Weed cleaved through the exhausted and wounded Dark Knights and Soldiers.

A fray among the raging flames and falling ice shards, the bloody battle of Salmere Hill!

*

The SwordNoobs had settled in the Yurokina mountains!

They had actively followed Zephyr's advice when they had first come to the Orc village.

The way to date a woman? First, meet their eyes.

The SwordNoobs stared piercingly at the Orc females.

"Uwaah, scary. Chwik chwik!"

The gleaming eyes made chills run down the spines of the Orc females!

The SwordNoobs scattered across the Versailles Continent were gathered in one place.

With their rough, muscular appearance and sharp eyes shinier than glass beads, the SwordNoobs flocked the Orc village.

The Orc females felt the pressure and avoided the SwordNoobs whenever they saw them.

Zephyr's second advice.

Next, naturally start a conversation. You don't need to force it to try and make a special moment. Naturally, do you want to go eat

together? That'll be enough.

The SwordNoobs approached the terrified female Orcs.

After rapidly surrounding them with instant reflexes, making the female Orcs unable to escape—!

"Orc miss, shall we go to a quiet forest and chew on bloodily dripping deer meat?"

The Orc females came to Royal Road and chose the Orc race, were filled with a dream.

'Ah, now I'll happily have adventures.'

There were many college freshmen who were fresh out of high school and entered university.

They wanted to enjoy the cheerful and lively beginner life, but ignorant-looking misters approached them.

"Kyaaaaaaah!"

The Orc females showed their broad backs as they fled!

They may be dull, but the SwordNoobs were able to feel it at this

level.

"Something's strange."

"Seems like Zephyr's advice isn't having any effect at all."

When having a date, grasp the atmosphere and don't talk too much.

The third advice also only showed negative side effects.

They managed to get a date finally after a hundred attempts, but the SwordNoobs were just staring silently.

An awkward and uncomfortable atmosphere. The female Orcs were forced to stand and down their meals.

"I ate well. Chwik! We're going now. Chwit chwit."

The SwordNoobs waited anxiously, but they weren't able to see those females again.

"Something isn't right here."

"That bastard Zephyr tricked us."

Bitter retribution!

"He tricked bachelors because of lack of people in the world to lie to?"

"We worked so hard to create opportunities... But now the rumors have spread, so the female Orcs just run away at the mere sight of us!"

Zephyr came to the dojo regularly and received training, because SwordNoob2 had dragged him by the hand and he became a new member.

The amount of training increased by 3 times as much.

"We need a dating method that suits us." The SwordNoobs learned from their failure and reflected on themselves.

It was a good chance to realize one's shortcomings.

They asked Maylon, Hwaryeong, Romuna, Irene, and Surka about what kind of aspect they lacked compared to other men, or if they weren't attractive.

The very first one, Romuna spoke as if there was nothing to ponder, "First of all, your body is too thick. It's a bit burdensome because you have so much muscle."

"If you're a man, you gotta have this much muscle!"

SwordNoob3 flexed his forearm.

Forearms 52 cm (~21 inches) thick!

They were much thicker than a woman's thighs, and sinews wider than worms wriggled.

Their forearms weren't the only muscular ones. Their legs were thicker than a woman's waist.

"How's my manliness?"

"Urgh, muscles like that aren't manly, just gross."

Their likeability decreased through muscles.

Maylon pointed out their attire. "You have absolutely no fashion sense. What exactly do you usually go around wearing?"

Fashion was also important in Royal Road.

When wearing a robe, boots in matching color had to be purchased. The fabric was dyed, and even if the special effect dropped a little, matching as a whole was held in high regard. Pretty clothes or well-designed armor sold for especially high prices.

Since Royal Road was like a society in reality, going around well dressed was very important too. People even took care not to let

their clothes or armor get dirty while exploring dungeons. It was a basic courtesy of a Knight to clean their armor until it sparkled if they had reason to go to a town or castle.

But the SwordNoobs equipped were not metal, but swords and armor made out of rotten bones.

Bone Breast Armor, Bone Sword. Advanced items made from the bones of the Bone Dragon!

Weed had personally produced and given it to them, but the disgusting, foul odor was no small issue. Chainmail pants, gloves and helmets with holes in them. It was completely wanton equipment.

"I usually only wear Martial Arts uniforms and sportswear."

The voices of the SwordNoobs became smaller.

"If it's sportswear, then you mean a tracksuit? There're lots of pretty tracksuits these days."

The tracksuits Maylon was talking about were produced by sports companies to match the top trends, or were jumpers released by famous brands.

But the tracksuits the SwordNoobs wore were thick, grey sportswear reeking of sweat! Having worn only uniforms and sportswear for over 10 years, their fashion sense was completely

non-existent.

Hwaryeong also said, "Do you have a female friend? Do you have a woman you know and spend time with, but not a girlfriend? If you've got lots of friends you can comfortably hang out with, you'll be able to find a girlfriend quickly too."

The SwordNoobs could only heaved a sigh.

While focusing on training, how could they become close to a girl?

They were acquainted with Hwaryeong, Irene, Romuna, and the others, so they were on the level of being able to chat once in a while. In reality, they lived lives truly far away from women.

SwordNoob300 suddenly looked up. "Restaurant lady?"

Mumble mumble.

"Milk delivering lady."

"The next door lady and the kid in middle school."

"My lil' sis cousin."

All of the women they knew and spent time with!

While hanging out with a group of just men, they were living

lives far from women.

Hwaryeong asked with difficulty, "Do you watch T.V.?"

"Huh?"

"A drama or movie, or dating program... even radio is fine."

She was asking if they were living cultured lives.

"I do watch T.V. sometimes..."

It was at least a positive sign!

"I mostly watch boxing, wrestling, and mixed martial arts broadcasts."

"I watched 'Memory of Violence' last time..."

"I did see soccer, baseball, and volleyball broadcasts too."

The SwordNoobs had lived existences too far removed from a cultured life.

Hwaryeong actually felt amazed. 'How can guys like them exist?'

Just then, Surka landed a completely unintentional critical hit.

"You look scary."

"..."

The key reason for disqualification!

The SwordNoobs had been living with a grave delusion. Their dating ability would only increase as they gained experience. It was a big mistake to naively believe a woman they loved would like them back!

They needed to meet a woman they truly loved, and also undergo trial and error in order to date her. Moreover, they also required an attitude to know how to lie and embellish.

Why do girls fall for bad boys or playboys?

A kind man is not attractive. He would only think of nice things. He couldn't understand a woman's heart as a boyfriend, and couldn't even approach her familiarly.

You can't like someone you don't even know!

They were beginners. They had to undergo love, dating, and getting hurt, but simply saying they had to stubbornly keep at it wasn't going to help.

Even so, Irene helped them.

"Elder bros, you have appeal too. If you get friendly, you'll be able to show off your appeal."

She then gave them practical advice: To show off the best qualities of the SwordNoobs to the max!

Women are bound to like reliable men.

Interact with the beginners while getting friendly with them. They were even encouraged, it would work if they slowly approached step by step.

The SwordNoobs who were most active in the Orc village received an offer.

"Chwiik! Humans, your fighting skills are pretty good. How about teaching the young Orcs?"

A formal recruitment as Instructors in the Orc village training center!

The masters were a granted, and the practitioners also had experience in dojo management.

'Since it's instructors teaching beginners...'

'It matches our aptitudes perfectly, and it's an area where we can show off our talents.'

The wage was 2 Gold a day!

It was nothing compared to the money they could earn through hunting, but they consented.

"I will do it."

"You'll be employed as an Instructor."

From that day on, the SwordNoobs became instructors and taught the beginners who came to the training center.

They taught things like how to use a glaive, a weapon unfamiliar to beginner Orcs.

"Welcome, all the beginner Orcs who have come to the training center. Then as an Instructor, I will first give you a demonstration on how to use a glaive."

SwordNoob5 showed a demo for the beginner Orc females.

Over 50 Orcs were sitting and watching in the training center.

SwordNoob5 powerfully kicked a tree. Then the leaves hanging on the branches began fluttering down.

Chop chop chop chop chop!

The glaive sliced through as if skewering the fallen leaves!

"There, too easy, right?" SwordNoob5 smiled brightly.

There was no way the beginner female Orcs could follow those actions and imitate it.

"Tchh, why's it so heavy?"

"It doesn't swing well either. Chwiiik."

It was hard to hit even just one falling leaf, but SwordNoob5 repeatedly showed them the demo while continuing to ask as if extremely puzzled, "You can't do this? Why not? It's really easy to do..."

Chop chop chop chop chop!

Chapter 3: Power Of The Deliverer

When Weed finished the bloody fight on Salmere Hill, he only had 150 Health left.

While riding Yellowy, Weed broke through the enemy's line several times. Fully immersed in the battle, Weed threw himself into the dangerous battlefield. Faced with a life or death crisis, he barely survived thanks to Bingryong and the Phoenixes fighting desperately. Yellowy was also busy leaping within the flames to shake off the pursuing Soldiers.

Sculptures!

It was regrettable when he made the sculptures first and granted them life, but it was definitely worth it.

Even so, Weed didn't acknowledge them.

"Useless bastards."

"..."

"It's all because you guys are weak and foolish. Can't you do it right?"

The never-ending criticism of subordinates!

Nagging and criticism. He would usually say a few words when

they won a battle.

"They can't go up against me after all. Daring to fight me, they were really reckless."

If they won, it was because of him. If the situation was unfavorable, it was because of his underlings.

Although it was said that great commanders do not blame their subordinates for their failures, Weed ruled over the sculptures with grumbles, complaints, and nagging.

Mooooooooo!

The kind Yellowy submissively rubbed his head against Weed, showing the affection of Korean cattle. He was one of those Korean cows who didn't resent people even up till the moment it was dragged to the slaughterhouse, simply showing sorrowful eyes.

However, every night when Weed briefly rested or slept, the subordinates held a meeting.

Bingryong, the Phoenixes, and Yellowy were crouching in a corner.

It looked like they were scheming a treacherous conspiracy!

Afraid that someone might hear him, Bingryong whispered

cautiously, "Be patient and eventually an opportunity will come."

"Will an opportunity truly come?"

"Senior, I think the opportunity you speak of will never come."

Bingryong flexed his neck and spread his wings wide for a moment. "No. Look at me. It was only for short while, but I was able to earn freedom."

"Freedom!"

Yellowy's eyes were filled with desire.

Free grazing.

What beautiful words they were.

"Freedom is truly an unspeakable joy. You can roam the wide continent while hunting monsters and spending time happily."

The Phoenixes silently nodded their heads.

They were accepting the advice of their heavenly senior as the gospel truth.

"Do you know how picturesque rainy days are? You can travel to the lake, and pass through the clouds as you go by a mountain range. The Versailles Continent is truly beautiful."

"We want to go to the Versailles Continent as well."

Yellowy and the Phoenixes had been born near the edge of hell, so they had never gone to the Versailles Continent before. They had only heard of it through Bingryong's words.

"There are many varieties of soft grasses on the Versailles Continent. Savory and refreshing grasses are sown in great abundance. The river water is clear and cool."

"Oh, grasses!"

"Phoenixes, do you know about sweet potatoes?"

"Sweet potatoes?"

"Eat it grilled and it's sweet like candy. It melts gently in your mouth."

"What is candy?"

"You don't even know about candy?! Candy is a snack Humans eat."

Bingryong had hunted to buy and eat many snacks with the money he earned.

When Weed hunted in the North, Alveron and Seoyoon had been with him. Alveron had taken a portion of his meal and shared it with him. This was how Bingryong was able to taste sweet potato.

And the candy Seoyoon had thrown to him!

"Candy is a snack worth sacrificing your life for."

"Is it really worth that much?"

"The greatness of candy... You little ones still do not know. When you roll your tongue as you slowly melt it..." Bingryong licked his lips.

"There was a lady as pretty as a Goddess who went around with the Master... If you happen to see her, act cutesy. She's weak against cutesiness. If you do well, you might be able to earn a candy."

"Is she the Master's friend? Or his lover?" Yellowy cried out loudly with a strong look of disbelief.

"I can't believe the fact that Master actually has friends."

A nature which seemed like he wouldn't even have any friends!

Bingryong shook his head. "I don't know what their relationship is either. Human relationships are very complex. Anyway, the story strayed elsewhere for a bit, but an opportunity will definitely come. You cannot obtain freedom without sacrifice. Endure, and one day..."

"Some day..."

Yellowy spoke most dismally. "I definitely want to try eating candy."

*

After disposing of all the pursuers, Weed reached Salmere Village. The Salmere tribe's village was the biggest out of the three tribes and also had a wide territory.

The great Chieftain of the Salmere was a hunchbacked elder. He slowly raised his cane.

"The alliance with the Matallost Church? Our Hunters are not afraid of death. We will keep the promise regarding the alliance."

Against his expectations, the Salmere tribe readily agreed to stand by the alliance.

"There will be glory for the great Chieftain and the Salmere tribe."

Weed followed the actions of the tribe's Hunters as examples. He assumed the ambiguous posture of a wide open mouth and glaring eyes.

There were often eagles sitting on the shoulders of the Hunters.

You could easily see people grasping prey in their hands or dragging prey around by a rope anywhere in the village. They had a lot of food compared to the other villages. The fact that they had abundant prey meant the Salmere tribe was strong.

The Hunters had many weapons hanging from their backs or shoulders, such as bows, spears, axes, hammers, and various other weapons.

"However, among our villagers, there are many who have not yet even left a name for themselves."

"..."

"Leaving a name is important. In our tribe, when we go on a big hunt, we carve their appearances and set them in the village. We make sculptures of the Hunters so growing children can know the greatness of their parents."

"So..."

"The amount of Hunters who will join the alliance in the fight against the Matallost Church will depend on the number of sculptures."

The sculptures would be the last memories of the Hunters. He needed to make sculptures to get the Salmere tribe to fight.

*

Weed examined the appearances of the Hunters in the village.

Savages wearing feathers and leather clothing! It wasn't difficult to sculpt them because they carried all sorts of weapons and had very characteristic appearances.

Since the sculptures had to be preserved for a long time, he had to use stone rather than dirt or wood. But still, Zahab's Sculpting Knife cut through stone as if it were nothing.

"Manly... as well as compassionate."

Weed made sculptures of the Hunters on the open ground within the village. After making the basic Barbarian shape, he made them different with detailed expressions. His mass-production system became increasingly fast.

Advanced Sculpting level 6 and Advanced Handicrafting level 6! Based on skill proficiency, it would be a while before he reached Master level, but the skill level he'd gained from grinding was helpful for the value and artistry of the sculptures.

"External appearance is important for sculptures after all."

The quality of the stone used to make a sculpture is as important as the finishing material for an apartment.

After having gathered so much experience, he could see an appropriate part or appearance simply by looking at the rock. He could effectively make sculptures while also completely utilizing the texture and design of the stone! Even though they were rocks from the same place, there were valuable rocks good for making sculptures.

"It's the same logic as shank and rib eye being different prices."

Weed used high-quality stones to quickly create sculptures!

Mass production was certainly not a virtue of an artist. Even so, if the sculptures gave happiness and were needed, so he wasn't against making them.

Salmere Tribe sculptures — over 3,000 Hunters sculptures were made over twenty days. It would have never been possible if he had to make them life-size, but it was feasible because they were miniatures. The experience he had of shortening the sculpting time while making many sculptures on the River of Lamentation was also helpful.

3,000 was the maximum number of people who could be mobilized in the Salmere Tribe! It was everyone except for the minimum number of Hunters to protect the village, the children, and the women.

The Chief and the Hunters of the Salmere Tribe appeared once the sculptures were completed.

"We recognize you, the holder of the proof of the alliance with the Matallost Church, as the representative. We will fight in the war."

"Uwaaaaaaaah!"

Ding!

The promised alliance of the Matallost Church has been formed.

The Vejague, Lekiyé, and Salmere Tribes will call forth Hunters and Warriors for the war against the Embinyu Church.

The war to correct the displaced order of Versailles Continent has begun.

Honorary title, 'Representative of the Matallost Church's God' has been acquired.

You are now able to use the relics of the Matallost Church.

*The Token of Alliance; can utilize the authority of the Deliverer vested in the wand.

*The wand's attribute has changed.

Fame has increased by 450.

Level has increased.

Level has increased.

With the formation of the alliance, Weed's Fame increased again. Weed's Fame was originally one of the very highest. The great Fame he'd earned as an artist making sculptures! He also earned Fame while progressing with the quests.

In the Dark Gamer Union Guild and the program broadcasting the 'Versailles Continent Story', those who had higher Fame than Weed could almost be counted on one hand! There were only Merchants who had donated colossal amounts of money to a temple or people who ranked in the top 10 in Royal Road.

Since he'd gained a lot of Fame while progressing through this quest, it was enough to make him wonder what kind of changes there would be when he returned to the Versailles Continent.

Weed took out the wand in the middle of tribes' Hunters.

A wand filled with pure-white light! The dull wand which seemed suitable for the elderly to use, changed to be as graceful as the Staff of a High Priest.

"Identify!"

Token of the Revived Alliance, Wand

Durability 2,000/2,000

Attack 98.

This is the wand established as the token of the alliance the Matallost Church contracted with the neighboring tribes.

An item granted with a God's Blessing.

All creatures in Versailles Continent have a duty to answer to Power of the Deliverer.

Restriction:

One who has received the Matallost Church's recognition.

2,000 Faith.

Options:

+35% Magic Attack

+100% Divine Power

+1,200 Fame

Increased diplomatic negotiation ability.

Able to use Power of the Deliverer.

- Power of the Deliverer: Forcefully summons creatures of the Versailles Continent. Does not distinguish between races, monsters, and objects.

The power granted by the blessing of the Matallost God. With the current fallen state of the church, only the one who has the authority can use this power.

Can be used for a total of 3 times.

For a living summoning, it will take 15 hours after the authority's manifestation.

If you use the Power of the Deliverer in the quest, Contribution and rewards will decrease at a set value.

*Caution : There is a high possibility for summoned monsters not cooperate. Untamed monsters will make their own judgements and act upon them.

The power to summon any living creature, even boss-grade monsters! Weed now had the ability to summon any boss-grade monster from Versailles Continent.

*

The Vejague Tribe! 2,000 bald Warriors, that looked like monsters, gathered.

The Lekiyé Tribe! 1,500 stern Warriors and Shamans were

participating in the battle against the Embinyu Church.

The Salmere Tribe! 3,000 Hunters with deep gazes and familiarity with patience and victory were mobilized.

Weed moved with them to the Emibinyu Fortress' location for a long ten days.

"Warriors, fight!"

The group became a little more coordinated through fights with monsters during their journey. The Shamans of the Lekiye Tribe summoned ghosts to cause confusion, and the Vejague Tribe's Warriors put their lives on the line to block the Black Wild Boars. The Salmere Tribe's Hunters seized the opportunity to shoot arrows and throw spears.

In fact, the Salmere Tribe's specialty was setting up traps and the like, so there weren't many opportunity to use them in an actual monster hunt.

A combination of Shamans, Hunters, and Warriors!

However, the alliance tribes' weapons were far too poor. Many used chipped, rusted swords, and it was at the level where they were wrapped with thick leather and no armor.

"They're not savages for nothing."

Due to their poor defense, they had been in critical life threatening situations several times.

Whenever he had spare time, Weed repaired their weapons or touched them up, and he also arranged for their armor. Even so, they weren't in perfect condition because he didn't have much time. He smelted low-quality iron and passed out basic swords, and the armor was also just a combination of metal and leather.

"A greatsword like this...! It's sparkling with light, how amazing."

Even so, the alliance tribes were extremely happy.

They shot poison-covered arrows well and were agile, so they were optimized for hunting. Only, they were a pain because they ignored commands or control and tried to fight with monsters whenever they wanted. No matter how much he raised the Intimacy, the competitive spirit of the alliance tribes overflowed and they took damage.

Over the span of ten days, 42 allied tribesmen had died while traveling. It was probably partly because Weed made them stronger through hunts, but the majority had died by disregarding their low defense and fighting a monster to the very end without running away.

In that manner, he returned to the Embinyu Church's fortress with the disorderly allied tribes.

"As expected, this won't be easy."

Once more back at the Embinyu Church's temple! It was tightly guarded by Demonic Spirits, and the height of the walls exceeded 10 meters.

There was even an enormous and magnificent bronze statue of the Embinyu God set up in the middle of the fortress like the Statue of Liberty. The bronze statue was enveloping the Embinyu fortress with something like an ominous dark cloud. It was something he could only sense as a Sculptor, but it was probably the bronze statue that granted the Embinyu Soldiers and Priests considerable power.

He felt it was at least a Masterpiece or a Magnum Opus. Given its size, it was likely a Magnum Opus.

It would be reassuring to have if it was an allied Sculptor who had the Magnum Opus sculpture, but if it belonged to the enemy, so such a sculpture would only create psychological anxiety.

"I'll be able to turn the Demonic Spirits to our side if I use the Copper Plate of Rest, but..." Weed shook his head.

He had fought them while making sculptures on the River of Lamentation, but most of the Demonic Spirits weren't strong. He couldn't be careless just because he could pull the Demonic Spirits to his forces without knowing how strong the Embinyu Church was.

Furthermore, despite being a holy relic, the Copper Plate of Rest was in a low quality condition with only 12 durability left. The damage wouldn't be as great if the durability was over 100, but when it was this deteriorated, it wouldn't be strange if it broke at any moment.

'All secondhand goods are like this.'

The Copper Plate of Rest was an item he needed to use as sparingly as much as possible. If he used it carelessly, he wouldn't be able to use it at a crucial moment.

'It'll be tough to penetrate the walls with the Barbarians... what method should I use?'

Not only were the alliance tribes unskilled in a team battle, but they also didn't follow commands well. Furthermore, they didn't have a single siege weapon!

"I'll have to make siege weapons first."

Weed started making siege weapons with the bones, sinews, and wood he'd obtained while hunting monsters and chopping trees.

He set two huge logs in a line and used the thick and outstandingly elastic Black Wild Boar sinew to make a trebuchet.

A siege weapon created with Intermediate Blacksmith skill!

Ding!

Weed's Trebuchet

Durability 130/130.

Max Destructive Power 26.

Range 37.

Fire Rate 3.

Accuracy Rate 3.

A basic trebuchet made by a versatile craftsman.

It was made with overwhelming skill considering it was the first he had created, but the wood which plays a central role and must maintain the balance is of weak quality.

Because the accuracy rate is low, it is doubtful whether it can land a concentrated blow on the walls. It seems immense force will be necessary in order to use it.

Restriction:

Requires a massive labor force.

Options:

Low accuracy.

Almost no chance of an accident happening.

- Blacksmith skill proficiency has increased.

Considering it was his first, it wasn't a bad siege weapon.

"For now, I have to increase the numbers."

Weed produced 10 trebuchets.

Since he was making them all for the first time, it was impossible to predict their performance. He normally underwent multiple runs of trial and error while improving, but everything was a first.

The alliance tribesmen approached.

"It's an extremely large weapon. Are you giving it to us?"

Weed gave them a thumbs up. "Yep. I made it for you. You'll be able to destroy the fortress with it too."

"You're the best."

"As long as you've got this, you'll be unbeatable. You must definitely win."

"Thanks, brother!"

All Weed made were stone firing trebuchets, ladders, and ropes that could be hung on the walls by throwing hooks!

The trebuchets' quality wasn't verified, and they didn't even undergo a test launch.

Weed dumped the items he did not dare to use for the alliance tribesmen, whose weapons and armor had been mostly touched up while getting near the Embinyu Church's fortress.

Weed called Yellowy. "Come here."

"....."

Yellowy took a step back.

"Hurry up and come."

"Tell what you're calling me for, Master."

"I'm just trying to give you a pat."

"But why is Master holding a rope?" Yellowy's eyes were filled with suspicion.

"Why the rope? Can I not just be holding it? Come here for now. Just come."

"This doesn't feel right. I would like to refuse."

"It's nothing. I get it, so just come."

Yellowy approached very cautiously. Weed gently stroked his neck a few times and then wrapped his neck and torso with the rope like a flash of lightning.

MOOOOOOO!

The sorrowfully bellowing Yellowy!

"Master, why are you doing this? What have I done wrong..."

"Don't worry, I'm not going to eat you. There are luggages, so shouldn't you move it?"

Yellowy's fate had already been determined ever since the trebuchets were made.

Bingryong and the Phoenixes had very little pity in their gazes.

'Lucky it's not me.'

'It's fine as long as it's not me.'

After finishing a hearty meal Weed had cooked from their prey, they marched to the Embinyu Church's fortress.

*

Boom! Boom! Boom!

In the fortress of the Embinyu Church, drums sounded to announce an emergency. Dark Knights, Priests, and Archers were deployed to the walls as they swiftly prepared for battle.

By the time Weed, Yellowy, and the alliance tribesmen drew near as they pushed the trebuchets together, Embinyu Church's troops were on the fort walls in full force. The trebuchets were so heavy, their movement was slow despite having put wheels on them.

To make matters worse, there was black smoke rising from the spires of the fortress.

The alliance tribesmen pointed at the smoke.

"Seems like they're roasting meat."

"Looks like they're gonna eat something tasty."

An ignorant response to the smoke!

Weed's face hardened.

'They're making the smoke to tell their surroundings that they're

under attack. It's an emergency communication to summon their allies.'

It was a signal fire informing the start of a the war! The savages in the River of Lamentation basin who saw the signal would summon Warriors to subjugate Weed and the three tribes.They would have to fight the Barbarian reinforcements at the Embinyu Church's fortress.

Weed swallowed his saliva with a gulp.

It wasn't something he hadn't expected, but it was definitely tough.

"We'll have to attack before the reinforcements arrive."

Weed yelled at alliance tribesmen who had moved the trebuchets and were briefly resting.

"Load trebuchet!"

100 Vejague Tribe Warriors dragged the trebuchet and lowered the pouch. Then, after lifting a boulder into the pouch, they fired it.

Wooosh!

The powerfully ejected boulder drew an arc as it flew mightily. It

was a rock attack with deadly weight.

However, the trebuchet was too far. The boulder lost most of its force and collided into the bottom of the wall, not the center.

In the end, it was a dud and it merely grazed the wall!

Durability of the wall has decreased by 49.

Total durability: 9,999,951/10,000,000.

"This won't work even if we hit them all day. No, we'll run out of stones to throw first. Trebuchet forces, advance!"

Weed pushed the trebuchet along with the Vejague Tribe. It was so they could fire from a slightly closer location!

Since he had to break walls much thicker than Odin Fort's, he decided to take the risk.

Yellowy powerfully towed the trebuchets forward, displaying the strength of a Korean cow.

The Embinyu Church's fortress also responded.

"Fire!"

They struck back by densely covering the sky with arrows.

"Hold your shield and block!"

Even without Weed's command, the Vejague Tribe lifted their shields in order to survive.

There was already a shield fastened onto Yellowy's brow, and his torso was wrapped in silk. Weed had weaved together a tangle of unusable silk pieces to block the arrows.

The rain of arrows poured down on the Vejague Tribe and the area around the trebuchets.

Ba-ba-ba-ba-ba-bang!

"AHHHHH!"

"MY FOOT, AN ARROW HIT MY FOOT!"

The impact of the arrows was conveyed directly through the shields. Although they were holding shields, the Vejague Tribe's warriors were pushed back by the strength and fell to their knees. Some arrows even penetrated the shoddy shields and hit the tribe Hunters.

The Salmere Tribe Hunters also fired arrows but they could not go over the walls.

"Let's fire the trebuchet too!"

Weed approached about a hundred more paces and ordered the use of the trebuchet.

"Too many arrows are flying in."

"Jungbal... Jungbal died."

"Find cover. Hide yourselves behind the trebuchets, and Vejague Tribe Warriors, load the trebuchets quickly!"

It was a one-sided arrow attack on the plains without any cover! Over thirty Vejague tribesmen died from the arrows while moving 10 boulders. But when they put their lives on the line and used the trebuchets, the boulders surged towards the wall.

All but one failure were successful attacks!

Durability of the wall has decreased by 1226.

Durability of the wall has decreased by 751.

Durability of the wall has decreased by 956.

Durability of the wall has decreased by 2160.

Durability of the wall has decreased by 173.

Durability of the wall has decreased by 486.

Durability of the wall has decreased by 1198.

Durability of the wall has decreased by 3110.

Durability of the wall has decreased by 896.

Total durability 9,998,995/10,000,000.

11 Archers have perished and 5 Soldiers have been wounded.

8 Demonic Spirits have been severely injured.

3 Dark Knights have suffered minor injuries.

1 Priest has died.

The trebuchets' tremendous firepower!

Although there were boulders that hit the bottom part of the wall or aimed at the spires, it was a considerable gain. It was a moment proving siege weapons to be vital in siege warfare.

However, even as they fired, the Embinyu Church's forces continued to gather on the fortress walls.

Only the Vejague Tribe was taking damage from the arrows that came pouring down like rain.

"AHHHHH!"

Some of the arrows were enveloped in a red aura. They were

arrows granted with the divine power of the Embinyu Church Priests! It was a fire arrow attack, burning a whole body even if it was blocked with a shield.

The Vejague Tribe's Warriors were sturdy and didn't die easily, but once they were pierced with countless arrows, including arrows filled with divine power, they helplessly lost their lives.

The whole area where Weed and the Vejague Tribe were staying was becoming densely surrounded with arrows.

It was a spectacle overflowing with tension and energy when watched from the sidelines, but for those being attacked, it was enough to make them go crazy!

After Yellowy finished moving the trebuchet, the rope was broken at some point and he fled to the safe rear.

The high-ranking Priests were also on the walls.

"Show true power to these wicked group of people. Holy Buster!"

An attack of divine magic flashed at the walls before flying towards them and dealing great damage in the next moment. As if they had been hit by something, the Vejague Tribe around the trebuchet were sent flying.

"Those who do not believe in the Embinyu God, punishment will fall unto you."

Widespread curse magic! The alliance tribesmen hit with the divine power attack became unable to fight as they moaned with high fevers.

Weed's face became completely calm.

It was a face as serious as when he had mistakenly sold a 10 gold ruby gemstone for 9 gold!

'I expected some level of hardship given the quest difficulty.'

The Barbarian reinforcement troops, the tall, sturdy wall. Even the Embinyu Church's forces did not seem like they would lose even if they were to fight regularly!

Not a single thing was easy.

'The greatest difficulty in siege warfare is... you could say it's them concentrating their firepower while we approach.'

Even if he were to tell the shabbily defended Vejague Tribe or Salmere Tribe to try and go over the wall, it would cause nothing but a massive catastrophe.

In a battle like this, it was perfect for the blocking side to fight, whereas the side who had to penetrate was set up to make the worst-case result. Unfortunately, Weed was on the side that had to

take the alliance tribesmen and occupy the fortress.

"We're never going to make it like this."

Weed shouted towards the Tribal Alliance. "Retreat!"

The frontline was announced to withdraw.

Weed left the 10 trebuchets and tried to escape with the alliance tribesmen, but arrows kept pouring down on them.

"Bingryong, fire your breath. Phoenix Brothers, cover us!"

Bingryong inhaled a large breath and launched Ice Breath towards the fortress. The enormous Ice Breath cut through the sky!

The results of Bingryong's breath had never disappointed before, but it was neutralized by the protective magic of the fortress's Priests. So although it didn't do any damage to the fortress, there was a brief lull in the arrow attack.

Under the cover of the Phoenixes, Weed and the alliance tribes were barely able to escape.

*

Cruel defeat.

It had only been a light skirmish, the allied tribal force had lost a full 104 people. Although Weed had hurried to bandage and apply medicinal herbs, that was the number who had died!

The alliance tribesmen who had been hit with divine power hadn't regained their senses.

"Mmm hehehe."

"Where is this place?"

"Leave me alone. I'm leaving to take my coming of age ceremony in the Valley of Courage."

Due to the divine power, more than 70 people were in the state of confusion.

Morale had also plummeted.

"Doesn't seem like an enemy we can win against."

"That was a useless fight. I wanna return to the village..."

"Warriors who have left home must fight until their bodies have been laid to rest. Even if they cannot win..."

The alliance tribes had lost much of their fighting will and were pessimistic.

A smile spread across Weed's lips. "It really has to be this tough since the quest difficulty is high."

The more difficult a quest it was, the greater the reward — it set his motivation ablaze.

He was relieved he had to suffer perilously. If it advanced easily, he would have been terribly suspicious.

"It'll be difficult to capture the Embinyu fortress. Since the recon battle is over, I'll have to make a sculpture."

Weed decided to prepare for a full-scale battle.

Since the alliance tribal force had left their homes, their morale would fall over time. However, as a result of the recon battle, there was a bleak sense of an giant enemy.

"First, I'll make a sculpture to provide some help."

He was fed up with rocks, and it didn't do much for his Sculpting skill proficiency either.

"For the sake of effects, this isn't the time to save materials."

Black Wild Boar and Caltrop bones. He decided to use the bones he'd gotten as japtem as sculpting materials.

"Though these are good bones for making broth..."

Although they could also be used as food ingredients or medicine, for a Sculptor, sculpting materials came first!

The price of bones wasn't fundamentally high, so he used them without being stingy.

"I'll sculpt the three tribes all at once."

He made the basic form using bones.

He intertwined broken bones to make the frame, applied clay on top, and baked it.

"I need to show the Barbarians' distinct look of cruel brutality."

Tattoos and scars were essential in expressing the alliance tribes. He even painted it with dyes and made the sculpture of the three tribes.

After spending time with the three tribes and waging a battle with them, he knew which faces and appearances were courageous and received respect.

"Something is still missing..."

Weed used light sculpting and made a bonfire.

A Shaman of the Lekiyé Tribe, a Vejague Tribe Warrior, and a Salmere Tribe Hunter were gathered as they roasted meat on the bonfire!

- Please set a name for the sculpture you have made.

Weed spoke the name he had already decided on while creating the work. "Brothers of Faith."

The savage tribes who remembered the alliance and promised to shed blood together!

- Is "Brothers of Faith" correct?

Although they had showed a slightly insufficient appearance in the fight against the Embinyu Church, they were a group who had willingly come forth to form the alliance.

The technique of appropriately glorifying was essential for a Sculptor, but a thought born of sincerity.

Weed firmly nodded his head. "That's right."

Ding!

Masterpiece! Brothers of Faith has been completed.

A sculpture made from a foundation of monster bones!

The sight of the tribes involved in the alliance sharing and eating food together was sculpted. It is a symbol of their unity.

It is a work the three tribes will greatly celebrate.

A very detailed portrayal and expression shines through this work.

Artistic Value: 712.

A roughly made sculpture by the Sculpting Master, Weed.

Special Option: The 3 tribes who have seen the Brothers of Faith sculpture will have their Health and Mana regeneration speed increase by 17% for a day. Maximum Health of the 3 tribes will increase by 12% for a day.

Perseverance increased by 60.

Fighting Spirit increased by 30.

Intimacy with the tribes has increased by 30%.

The involved tribes will engrave pride and honor into their hearts.

Number of completed masterpieces until now: 12

Sculpting skill proficiency has increased.

Fame has increased by 125.

Leadership has increased by 2.

Charm has increased by 7.

For making a Masterpiece sculpture, All Stats have increased by an additional 1 point.

Now, even the sculpture was complete!

The preliminary preparations for the real fight were finished.

Chapter 4: Strategy Of Invincibility

Weed agonized over discovering a method to destroy walls.

"There's a long way to go before the fortress walls collapse, so we can capture it."

As a blacksmith, he could create siege weapons. However, his proficiency to do so was still severely low.

"I don't know how many siege weapons I'd have to make before I can get a useful one, either..."

If it requires as much weapon production proficiency as making a Great-Sword, it would take several long weeks! Material supply was also a problem, and the alliance tribes might try to return to their tribes again.

"Well, it's not like I really have the confidence to beat the Embinyu Church's Knights and Priests even when the walls fall down."

Weed's mind was eased. Since the solution wasn't in siege weapon production, he had completely given up on it.

"A normal siege battle won't do. Of course there isn't an answer."

No one would dare to attack the high, thick walls of the fortress when the people inside were well prepared to defend them.

The alliance tribes were outnumbered and at a disadvantaged when it comes to a group battle. The greatest roles the individuals could play were only in dogfights and hunting.

Weed had used his Tailoring and Blacksmithing skills to touch their gear up a bit, but with the alliance tribes' fundamentally crappy armor, most of them would die from a concentrated attack even before they climbed the walls.

"Should I have listened to Smith's advice and brought another person with me?"

But Weed shook his head. It was too late to regret it, and he couldn't go back, either. Even if Pale, Zephyr, or SwordNoob were to come, the situation probably wouldn't change much. Having personally experienced the enemy's strength, it seems like the quest success would, at the very least, take a combat profession in the mid level 500s. It would take a force capable of destroying the gates with a sword blow or highly destructive skill, capable of subduing the Embinyu Church's Priests with an ambush!

As a Knight, he could command the alliance tribes by demonstrating the peak of his Leadership. Although the tribes have gathered, they were merely rag-tag troops, but he made the alliance tribes fight past their limits with his Leadership and Charisma. Even if the alliance tribes took a lot of damage, he had to bring out their maximum potential to use them and look for an opportunity.

It could become a mighty victory worthy of being left in the Versailles Continent's history.

Weed didn't rate his own ability to command very highly.

"I only won the wars I could win."

He didn't have a scrap of desire to fight a battle with only a tiny chance of victory with the alliance tribes. Overcoming the quality and quantity of his troops, the terrain, and the state of their equipment wasn't as easy as it sounded.

There was also a limit to granting life, a Sculptor's advantage. He'd want to give it a go if he just had 100 sculpted lifeforms or so. He'd be able to see a chance of victory, too. But if he did that, Weed's level would fall by at least 160.

"Even if I succeeded the quest, there'd be nothing left."

At best, the life-granted sculptures would die brutally in the siege war.

If he successfully completed the quest but over half of his sculptures died, it would be a tremendous loss! He'd also have to start again from the beginning with a level below 200. Even if the quest succeeded, there'd be nothing left.

"This is what they call an unprofitable business."

Weed decided to return to the basics and construct his plan again. Before starting the battle, he had to nitpick on many variables and choose a battlefield favorable for his forces. For now, Weed logged out for the first time in a long while to rest.

*

"Is this the library?"

Lee Hyun sought out the library for the first time since his admission into Korea University. He had neglected it until now because there weren't any comic books at the university library.

"Though it was my dream ever since I was young."

Reading comic books and making ramen to eat when he was hungry — it was a happy fantasy he'd wished for in his middle and high school days.

He was also a reader who diligently read the daily published comics while delivering newspapers.

"For a library to not have comic books, this school is truly rotten!"

Lee Hyun criticized the school library's policies without reserve. Many other libraries collected comic books, but Korea University hadn't put comic books out on their shelves yet.

The generous scholarships, study-abroad benefits, large state-of-the-art classrooms, and research facilities the school arranged to provide for the studying students were not subjected to his consideration.

"Seems like a backwards school if it lacks comic books. Rotten, it's rotten. Where are they using all the tuition fees?"

The number of novels, economic books, dissertations, history books, and books about art was enormous. The whole building was a library.

"Hello, oppa."

"You came, hyung?"

His classmates from the Virtual Reality Department recognized Lee Hyun and greeted him quietly. It seemed they were studying in groups of twos and threes in the library study rooms.

"Ah, yeah." Lee Hyun simply nodded his head lightly.

It was the most important thing he had to watch out for while attending university.

'I absolutely must not get close to those who are younger than me.'

If he became a senior, he would treat his juniors like robbers, because they'd have the impudence to chase him around asking to be treated to a free meal!

In Lee Hyun's case, he'd already been asked a few times by other students to buy them food, since he was older than his classmates.

"I have to consider my health. I pack and bring my own lunch from home."

He narrowly averted the crisis.

The views of the students had changed now.

'A family man oppa who thinks of his health.'

'He'll never buy us a meal.'

Nevertheless, Lee Hyun was always careful. He didn't know when someone would ask to be treated a meal. They could also ask for something to drink at the cafe or a snack at the cafeteria.

'This damn school, is it some kind of a restaurant? Why's there so much to eat?'

It was so bad he had to avoid the vending machines, located in

every building.

"Did you come to study?"

"No. I came to read books," Lee Hyun replied as he lightly walked forward.

"Hyung, literature novels are on the 2nd floor."

"I didn't come to read a novel. There are just a few things I want to look for."

"What did you come here to find?"

"Strategy, tactics, warfare. Y'know where they are?"

"They're on the 7th floor, but..."

"Mm. Thanks for telling me."

Lee Hyun pressed the button for the 7th floor in the elevator.

The 7th floor held Eastern Philosophy, history books, and other old related books, so students didn't frequently visit it.

After Lee Hyun went into the elevator, the students whispered to each other.

"He must've been pretty interested in Eastern Philosophy."

"Though he's usually not talkative at all... his level is really high."

"He must have depth to him somewhere, and many good points

to have even dated such pretty unnis."

Since Lee Hyun had a date with both Seoyoon and Jung Hyo Rin during the school festival, he had become a famous figure.

Rather than jealousy, many men had endless respect for him, and for women, he became a mysterious man concealing a host of charms.

"But he must be pretty good at Chinese, too."

"Huh?"

"I've gone to the 7th floor out of boredom before, but most of the books on the shelves were untranslated originals."

*

"Holy sh—!" Lee Hyun hurled out a swear.

"Why the hell would they have foreign books in Korea? It should be published once it's all translated!"

He couldn't make heads or tails of it.

About half of the shelves were filled with foreign books, and the rest were Korean, but written with many ancient Korean

characters. Since they weren't written out in modern Korean, they were extremely difficult to read.

"I have to find a book on strategy..."

The books Lee Hyun was looking for happened to be rare and weren't well translated. As he rummaged through the bookshelves, of course it was difficult to understand. Despite seeing the titles, he couldn't find what he was searching for.

"Most bookstores order by title, but why is it so hard to find stuff in a library?"

It would actually be easier to find the strategy text Lee Hyun wanted in the novels section. Books such as «The Art of War», «Admiral Yi's Tactics», and «Wuzi» had been published as novels. With the Korean explanations, they were easy to understand and even had illustrations.

However, trying to find the book he wanted in the untranslated, original-lined shelves of the Eastern Philosophy section was hell.

"I need to find a strategy or tactic that can be used against the Embinyu Church to win."

It was obvious why Lee Hyun spent his precious time to come to the library. It was difficult to strengthen the might of his troops. He had to utilize his current force to the fullest. If strategy and tactics shone through, he needed plans at a high enough caliber

that extraordinary generals might attempt them.

"I have to find a strategy like that..."

No matter how much he looked at the strategy texts, simply reading them was impossible.

The strategy texts he managed to find in modern Korean had phrases such as this—

— Know thyself and know thy enemy and you will be ever-victorious.

If you compared Lee Hyun's Weed and the alliance tribes with the Embinyu Church's forces, it was really too much.

"Ever-victorious, as if... looks like the quest is gonna fail." Lee Hyun grumbled as he looked for other books.

As he was doing so, he spotted a novel on the shelf.

«Romance of the Three Kingdoms»!

Apparently, someone had read it and then left it on a random shelf.

"«Romance of the Three Kingdoms»... other than the name, it's a book I've never read before."

Lee Hyun glanced through the «Romance of the Three Kingdoms». It was a story about the oath of the peach garden sworn by Liu Bei, Guan Yu, and Zhang Fei.

[T/N: It is a novel written by Luo Guanzhong during the 14th century. It is a true story based on the happenings during the Han Dynasty with some fictionalization.]

He didn't read the mighty «Romance of the Three Kingdoms» in detail, but merely skimmed through the stories volume by volume.

The best part was where Liu Bei visited Zhuge Liang three times to recruit him. It caused a complete reversal from a totally disadvantageous position.

Lee Hyun discovered the strategy to deal with the Embinyu Church from the «Romance of the Three Kingdoms».

*

The Embinyu Church's great army!

After Weed and the alliance tribes' attack, their vigilance had

greatly increased. The personnel posted on the wall had grown considerably, and there were also more Archers with bows. It was evidence of the continuous growth of troops and the expansion of military weaponry even within the Embinyu Church's fortress.

"Bingryong." Weed spoke from behind a rocky mountain, a spot that couldn't be seen directly from the fortress.

"Speak, Master."

"Scout how many there are over there and report."

"Understood, Master."

Bingryong flapped into the sky. Without going near the Embinyu Church's fortress, he reported after observing them from afar.

"The humans on the wall alone are a little over 5,000."

"That's quite a lot. How about the ones wearing armor?"

"About 1,000."

1,000 Dark Knights alone! He had to assume the rest were Normal Soldiers, Priests, or Magicians.

Including the ones who weren't on the wall, their overall number had at least more than doubled!

Weed had anticipated the siege, so he had elicited and destroyed the pursuit forces in advance. The strategy of dividing and conquering! He had lured and annihilated the weak enemies first.

Despite it all, an enormous number of forces still remained inside the Embinyu Church's fortress. Moreover, given the great might of the Embinyu Church, it wasn't an exaggeration to say they dominated over the nearby tribes. As the battle wore on, reinforcements would continue to arrive from other tribes.

"It means the enemy's at least over 2 times larger... it'll be totally impossible like this."

"Master, surely you're not going to attack the fortress again?"

"Yes."

Since Bingryong had been caught in the middle of the quest, he didn't know what kind of quest Weed was doing.

The retired old mercenary, Smith, did not come and had remained in the Salmere Tribe's village. He refused to participate since he said that fighting the Embinyu Church was suicide.

"I want to listen to Master's plan. The fortress looks really dangerous."

Bingryong's growth!

His intelligence had grown, so he had the admirable thought of finding out what Weed's plan was in advance.

Weed gladly responded, "There's something called the Power of

the Deliverer. It can even call forth an amazing Versailles Continent boss monster. Remember the Bone Dragon? I'm going to bring one stronger than him."

"You're going to bring another monster although we can't handle the current enemy?"

"Yeah. I'm going to call it here. And we'll fight together."

"But what if the monster you bring attacks us?"

"We'll have to be careful to not get attacked."

Bingryong nodded as if he was satisfied with the answer.

"Master is a genius."

"Well, it's true that I'm pretty smart."

Weed pulled out the Wand of Promise in order to use the Power of the Deliverer. Unlike normal magic, he had to recite a spell for a holy blessing.

"Thy servant desires to use the strength of the blessing the divine Matallost granted upon the world. I beg for permission."

Ding!

— You have used Power of the Deliverer.

At that moment, all of the Versailles Continent was projected into Weed's eyes.

Monsters!

He could summon any kind of monster if he looked through any area and chose a monster. Of course, with Power of the Deliverer, if he brought an unmanageable monster, there could be a negative effect.

"Uhehe."

"Kuhuhuhu. Humans are scary."

Goblins running around in the dark were passing by.

'Anyways, I have to bring a strong monster. Or an NPC worth making a comrade.'

Weed scoured canyons, mountains, and rivers.

As ever, there were many boss monsters and unconquered monsters in the Versailles Continent. Punitive expeditions were often made in the Central Continent, but in the East, West, South, and North, the likes of half-baked punitive expeditions were stamped out by boss monsters who trampled them lightly.

Monsters lurking in undiscovered dungeons.

The levels or characteristics of many such boss monsters were not known to the public.

'For the quest to succeed... the answer can only be a truly strong monster.'

Ridiculous, jaw-dropping monsters! He intended to bring a monster such that even a prestigious guild would have to gather over 500 people to fight it.

The minimum standard was Vampire Lord Torido or Bone Dragon-class!

Weed spent 6 hours carefully looking for suitable monsters.

A terrible, terrifying monarch recorded in the history of the Versailles Continent! It was a figure deeply related to a quest Weed had resolved before.

'I'll bring this to start the battle.'

The next was a monster which had become famous after annihilating a prestigious guild who had devoted themselves to attacking it!

The last was taboo to even be spoken of. A symbol of power and authority!

It was a destructive existence that could sweep away an entire Kingdom overnight.

"I've got to pick something of this level, at least."

Weed showed great satisfaction as he used the Power of the Deliverer.

Magnificent casting!

It was all or nothing for an S-class difficulty quest anyway. It was not a quest that could be completed through normal, non-committal means.

"The worse possible outcome is for me to die twice. Let's try it with all we've got!"

Weed felt his mind was at peace. He was only at conflict before the decision, but once he set himself to it, he didn't have any regrets.

"Well, with the little time that I have left, should I try making a sculpture?"

He was going to try and sculpt using the rocky mountain before the monsters were summoned. He couldn't hope for a Masterpiece since he was tight on time, but if there was another useful

sculpture, it would help in its own way.

Weed pulled out his sculpting knife and headed towards the rocky mountain.

*

The station received and looked at Lee Hyun's video in real time.

There were parts that naturally lagged a little due to the time differential in the processing speed within the capsule.

Since there was so much they had to work with, staying up all night was a given!

However, the unnecessary parts, like when he was cooking or moving, were fast-forwarded, so they were seeing Lee Hyun's adventure in real-time.

Director Kang grabbed the back of his neck.

"Ugh!"

He was so dumbfounded that he was dizzy. It was all because he had seen the monsters Lee Hyun had summoned using the Power of the Deliverer.

Panic!

Not only Director Kang, but also over 50 of the staff were fascinated.

"Is he crazy?"

"He's completely insane!"

"UWAAAHH! What are those monsters...?! Even the one coming out first is ridiculous!"

Director Kang and the station staff thought he would summon a moderately strong and manageable NPC or monster.

The Royal Knights of Rosenheim Kingdom, if he asked them, were good, since Knights mounted on drakes would be considerably helpful on the battlefield.

Summoning a Royal Magician wasn't bad either. Weed could exchange the contribution he had with Rosenheim Kingdom to ask for help Or, since he had contributed to strong nations in the Central Continent, he could summon from there too.

Kallamore Kingdom's Knight Kolderim! For the station people who knew about the quest of the Vampire Kingdom Todeum, summoning the somewhat attractive-and currently on a winning streak; Kolderim, was a fairly good choice.

The Lu Church's Paladins and Priests would also have been an effective choice! The Embinyu Church were their enemies, so if they were summoned, they devote their strength without another word. Using the priest's divine power as a backup to raise the overall power of the alliance tribes and going out in an all-out war would have been the choice of a normal person. Of course, it would still be very unfavorable for the alliance tribes. Completely changing the war situation was difficult with a few Drake Knights or Priests.

Having to attack the Embinyu Church's fortress without even a proper siege weapon would leave an expectation of an atrocious amount of damage.

It was a situation where he could never raise the chance of victory, but you could still be a little hopeful.

But all of these were somewhat ordinary monsters and NPCs that people would normally summon. However, Weed only summoned the grotesque monsters that made you tremble.

"No, bringing just one of those monsters would be enough to cause an uproar..."

"Won't it be no problem to get 15% viewer ratings even if only one of those appeared?"

"One? Forget the ratings, they're enough to cause an uproar on the Versailles Continent."

The staff members chattered wildly.

However, inside the broadcasting station, a faint light of hope was beginning to bloom.

For those who had quested before in the Versailles Continent, they knew how hard a C-class quest was. If you had a high level and your team-mates helped, you could do a B-class difficulty quest. A truly outstanding user or guild could even try challenging an A-class.

Still, the only person who could progress through an A-class quest alone was Weed. Despite a favorable view, many considered the quest this time to be way too much and were in despair.

However, the station's atmosphere was changing now.

Anyone could feel that the indication of some kind of change was ripening.

Director Kang raised his receiver. It was so that he could report to the Director-in-Chief, but the phone connected and the Director-in-Chief spoke first.

— Director Kang? I'm looking at that video too.

"Is that so, Director-in-Chief."

— It's really amazing. Indeed... he's Weed. I envy his reliable image. Is it because he's young? There's something special about him.

"Yes. I think so as well."

Director Kang spoke while bowing as he held the phone.

"Yes yes, we will do that. Yes, of course. We will do as you say, Director-in-chief."

Ka-chak!

Director Kang put down the receiver and blew out a long sigh. "Pheew."

Tension was always high for a salary-man. But he then he vigorously rose up from his chair.

"Bring Supervisor Yoon from the Programming Department."

"Yes, Director."

At Director Kang's words, the station staff members focused their attention on him for a while. Then, Supervisor Yoon, who'd been in the adjacent office, opened the door and came in.

"Director Kang, what's going on?"

"Cancel all the regular programs from this moment onwards!"

"What? Then there would be massive grievances from the viewers."

"What program is broadcasting right now?"

"Tree and Monsters. It's a broadcast that introduces the peaceful monsters of the Versailles Continent and is popular among women and children."

"The average ratings?"

"It's 3.3%."

The popularity of Royal Road was growing to no end. As viewers who had never looked at game broadcasts before were drawn in, the general ratings had also risen considerably.

A rating of 3.3% was not bad for KMC Media.

"Stop it! I received full authority from the Director-in-Chief. An official document will arrive electronically in the Programming Department soon as well!" Director Kang urgently explained.

His sense of duty to cancel all the broadcasts before the quest's end!

Considering the monsters Lee Hyun had summoned, it was the jackpot. It secured the audience rating for sure.

The fight against the Embinyu Church would be interesting after all.

If the result was leaked after the battle finished, the excitement would be spoiled.

Even if the station completely maintained their security, with a quest of this size, you may never know what might happen.

Since it would impact the Versailles Continent based on the result, you could guess the quest's conclusion from the words of the residents, or a change in the situation.

From the station's viewpoint, it was a chance laid out with a feast — side dishes, richly roasted meat, and even the delicacy of soy sauce crab legs. A situation where you could starve to death while agonizing on what to eat! Though the meal was laid out, the dishes clamoring to be eaten would be your ruin.

Before such a disaster occurred, there was an order from the Director-in-Chief to immediately cancel all broadcasts.

"Production Supervisor Shin! Where is the starting point of Weed's linked quest?"

"It was the confrontation with Death Hand in the Dwarven Kingdom Kuruso."

"Broadcast that quest quickly. For the editing, just hide the truth that it's the God of War Weed... but can we hide it?"

"It will be possible until the battle starts for real. It could be difficult depending on how the battle goes."

"Broadcast anyway. Hand over the footage to Programming now, start broadcasting as soon as it's ready."

The main screen on the homepage of KMC Media changed.

A sign announcing a war!

The Undead were pressing in, and the Orc Karichwi, who looked like he flossed with iron bars, let loose a scream. Part of the extremely popular Undead Legion video appeared on the main screen.

There was also a change in the broadcast schedule.

- 12:30 Tree and Monsters
- 14:00 Exploration Team for Sabain's Treasure
- 15:00 Eastern Great Adventure
- 15:50 Adventurer Milestones
- 17:00 Versailles Continent Story
- 19:00 Challenge! Monster Hunting, You Can Do It Too
- 20:20 A Road to Money, the Life of the Merchant
- 21:30 People For Whom the Stage of Their Dreams has Changed

— 22:00 The Searoute of Captain Urgan

— 23:30 Continent's Home

The schedule occupied by the regular broadcasts disappeared, and a new schedule was registered.

An incomparably simple schedule.

It was the incredibly flashy revival of the program, Weed.

On television, a caption alerting the cancellation of Tree and Monsters popped up.

— A few words of information for the viewers.

Soon, Weed's adventure will be broadcasted.

As it is an emergency change, we apologize for not being able to inform you beforehand.

The linked quest of the Great Sculptor Weed and his war against the Embinyu Church will be broadcasted continuously.

This quest, which is currently progressing on the Versailles Continent, has a quest difficulty of S-class, and there are more linked quests left.

The broadcast end time is undetermined, our entire current production staff are doing their best, but as it is an emergency broadcast, there may be insufficient points.

We ask the viewers for a lot of understanding.

It was a rather lengthy notification, but it was enough to throw the viewers into a frenzy.

— Sculptor Weed? Isn't it the adventure of the person who built the Pyramid and the Tower of Light?

— They say KMC Media is broadcasting the fight against the Embinyu Church that made such a ruckus in the Versailles Continent not long ago. Apparently it's a chain quest of S-difficulty.

— I'll tell all of my friends too.

The news was conveyed through various Royal Road fansites and forums. People turned on their TVs and changed the channel to KMC Media.

3.3%, 3.8%, 4.2%, 5.1%, 7%, 7.6%.

In a moment, the ratings sky-rocketed!

The number of posts written by viewers on the forum increased by 10 times more than usual.

— Why aren't you broadcasting?

— You said it was a little later, but when are you broadcasting?

For smooth broadcast preparation and the viewers of Tree and Monsters, the content wasn't changing immediately.

— I have been a fan of Tree and Monsters since the 1st episode and seen them all without fail. Please turn on Weed's adventure immediately.

Even the fans of the show were clamoring for them to end it quickly and broadcast 'Weed'!

A 10 minute counter appeared on part of the broadcast screen. The counter decreased every second!

The competing broadcasters felt like their blood was drying up at their decreasing ratings.

While receiving enormous attention from the viewers, the broadcast of the program Weed began.

Chapter 5: Zhuge Liang's Strategy

Weed once again marched with the alliance tribes to the Embinyu Church's fortress. To ensure swift mobility, he didn't make any trebuchets.

"Waahh."

"That fortress is too strong. We won't be able to win."

Widespread pessimism among the alliance tribes! The number of alliance tribesmen had decreased by about 140 people. They were simple-minded people, who didn't lose hope easily, but it was an inevitable result, since they had been defeated after suffering one-sidedly and dealing almost no damage.

Weed didn't try to boost their motivation in order to encourage the alliance tribes members.

"Realistically speaking, it's hard to take them down and capture the fortress."

He deliberately didn't bring Bingryong, the Phoenixes, and Yellowy. He intended for them to get plenty of rest in order to maximize their power.

The spearheads of the Salmere Tribe drooped downwards. The decline in morale made their shoulders slump.

Nevertheless, as Weed and the alliance tribes approached the fortress, there was a response. Even more troops were posted to the wall, and smoke announcing the attack was rising from the spire.

Weed's eyes flashed. 'The Embinyu Church are calling all the savages under their command.'

After the initial recon skirmish, he had taken Bingryong and the Phoenixes for a light survey.

"The savages in this area under the Embinyu Church's command are very weak."

The other tribes near the River of Lamentation were much weaker than the tribes allied with the Matallost Church, the Lekiyé, Salmere, and the Vejague.

"If we kill 10 and 5 of us die, there'll be a profit of roughly 27 troops."

A ridiculously absurd calculation!

As smoke rose from the beacon and time passed, the savage tribes flocked in. They were armed with bamboo spears, axes, and crude arrows.

Weed pointed not at the fortress, but at the newly appeared savage tribes as he instructed, "Minions of the Embinyu Church.

Kill them."

Weed made a simple order the alliance tribes could perform,
"Vejague Tribe, CHARGE!"

At first, the alliance tribes and the other savages both didn't show formation or tactical movements since they hadn't been trained.

"UWAAAH!"

"LET'S KILL THEM ALL!"

The muscular Vejague Tribe Warriors ran. Each Warrior was a 100-man army!

"Salmere Tribe, it's your turn."

Weed ordered the Salmere Tribe into action. As it was their characteristic, the Salmere Tribe scattered to find and hunt enemies. They were top-notch Hunters who shot poison arrows and had abnormally pointy, elongated spears!

The Lekiyе Tribe took on the role of casting Confusion hexes on the savages. They bombarded the savages with AoE (Area of Effect) Confusion hexes and curses.

"I feel dizzy. The ground is shaking."

Though their surroundings were normal, the savages staggered

around in the middle of the battlefield.

"My axe. My axe is heavy."

They couldn't even lift their stone axes, which seemed to have become 2-3 times heavier.

Such assistance from the Lekiyé Tribe greatly augmented the Vejague and Salmere Tribe's roles.

Against the savages, the alliance tribesmen presented their rather outstanding specialties!

"Kill them all."

"Let's not leave a single one behind."

The 10 thousand neighboring savages were one-sidedly cornered by the 6,000 or so alliance tribesmen. The corpses piled up, and the alliance tribes were getting stronger and stronger as their combat experience grew.

To be honest, he had somewhat planned for the alliance tribe's growth, but it wasn't too important.

"It's too late to make them grow now."

Since there were over 6,000 of the alliance tribesmen, trying to kick them into shape now was too much!

If he couldn't maximize the power of his forces, he'd find a more dangerous battering ram.

"We'll break away from normal siege warfare. There's no need to fight a disadvantageous battle. Even if the enemies grow more...and even if it's a hellish battle, we will fight in a favorable environment."

Weed changed the rules of the battlefield and planned to overturn it with chaos.

The tattooed, scarred, and muscular savages, wearing bear and leopard leather, were fighting for their survival.

Struum.

Weed pulled out his harp and strummed it lightly. The harp's clear sound passed through the battlefield.

Ah. Something is sparkling in that darkness.

Oh. Oh. Oh. Oh!

This is bronze japtem.

If it's rusted, let's clean it till it sparkles~

You can sell it at the store.

Turn the lights on in your eyes and search~

You can't miss even a single one.

Let's collect japtem and make money~

We've got to save enough to buy barley bread for a hundred years.

Ah. Ah. Ah.

Item!

A Unique item.

So excited. Let's dance. Today really is the jackpot.

As Weed's impromptu harp performance reached its peak, the battle between the alliance tribes and the savages was also progressing.

The Lekiyé, Vejague, and Salmere alliance tribes completely overwhelmed the savages. Although Bingryong or the Phoenixes weren't there, the increased power from the Brothers of Faith sculpture was likely a great help.

Ruuumble!

While the alliance tribes excitedly hunted the savages, a change arose in the Embinyu Church's fortress. The gate was slowly opening as it rumbled loudly. Through the gap in between the gate, Dark Knights and Soldiers could be seen readying themselves

for battle. Their armor sparkled with light from blessings and protection imparted by divine power.

We'll hunt in a place no one has found~
The lonely Hunter's path.

Solitude is necessary for a rich harvest of japtem~
I don't hope for someone who understands.
What I hope for is just money~

As he played the harp, Weed's hand moved more flashily and quickly.

It wasn't just because the Dark Knights and soldiers were about to sally forth.

Grooowwl!

More accurate than a luxury watch worth millions of Won, his belly watch told him the time.

"It's finally time for him to arrive."

Weed gazed at the battlefield as he played the harp.

Like soldiers from historical war novels or films splendidly

commanding the army! By handling either a fan or an instrument, Weed was directly copying the romanticized appearance of command. His actions reflected the naked reality of how films and novels devastated a person.

Plunk plunk!

By the time the gates were completely open, Lion's Roar was cast from Weed's lips with all his might.

Unlike the bad tune and song with horrible lyrics he'd been singing earlier, it was a roaring cry!

"ALLIANCE TRIBES, FLEE WITH ALL YOUR MIGHT!"

The alliance tribes left the corpses of the savages in the field and backed off like a receding tide at the signal.

The moment when the Dark Knights and Soldiers were about to spring forward as the gate opened—!

Tremendous Mana flooded the battlefield.

A whirlpool and gale raged, as dark Mana driven by black magic pressed in.

GRAAAAAWWWR!

Horrible shrieks and screams of ghosts.

The area darkened and was swept over by murky clouds.

RUMBLE— CRA-CRA-CRA-CRA-CRASH!

Thunder and lightning exploded.

Right in front of the Embinyu Church's fortress, the ground where the alliance tribes and the savages had been fighting was splitting apart. Weed extended his two arms widely.

"He's finally coming!"

He sincerely welcomed the first monster summoned by the Power of the Deliverer.

"Come quickly!"

A skeleton wearing a robe slowly rose from the crack in the ground.

The leader of the Immortal Legion. The worst Necromancer, who had probed into forbidden domain; it was the appearance of Balkan Demoph.

*

Balkan did not know of forgiveness or mercy. If the Embinyu Church didn't spare method or means for domination and propagation, then Balkan was an entirely different being.

Subordinate to the power of darkness, he did not tolerate any living beings. A fierce hatred for the living!

A frigid chill emanated from his appearance alone. A monster of the highest rank, just his appearance made the battlefield's atmosphere sink low. An overwhelming atmosphere rushing in like a great storm.

Weed carefully observed Balkan's appearance. An old lich with rotting bones. From his appearance, he didn't differ much from Lich Shire, who had been his disciple. He was slightly taller and his jawbone looked thicker, but Weed, who had personally faced Shire, could only distinguish tiny differences.

"You can really say he's a truly rich Lich."

Lich Balkan wore high-class attire. A bleak, black aura was flowing from his body. Made out of extremely good-quality material but shoddy because it looked like it had been used for over a hundred years, the robe would look as good as new with a little mending.

"All luxury goods are originally like that."

He wore a crown adorned with gems somewhere atop his head. The duck egg-sized gems embedded in the crown sparkled with light. There was an eagle's skull attached to the staff he was holding. The combination of crown and skull matched Balkan perfectly.

Even from a single glance, he could tell they were Unique items. Lich Shire had also been equipped with incredible items, but his master one-upped him.

"Magician families have a lot of money after all. But..."

There was one weapon in particular that drew Weed's gaze. A sword penetrating Balkan's chest! It was the only place the black aura could not cover.

Weed speculated, "Looks like the sword was stabbed in during the Versailles Continent war." Based on the design on the sword hilt, he guessed it was the relic of the Church of Lu.

It seemed the holy sword was restricting Balkan's tremendous black magic. Balkan was in the state of an incomplete resurrection!

"Did I bring a reject?"

While Weed was worrying a little, the alliance tribes were overcome by Balkan's charisma and were fleeing with their tails turned.

Hidden behind the rocky mountain, Weed scrutinized the battlefield. The alliance tribes had now fully retreated.

Balkan's gaze turned towards the nearby savages, "Worms. For the likes of you to have flowing blood and breath, I cannot believe it."

Balkan did not ask who they were. With an extremely unparalleled, arrogant manner, he extended one hand towards the savages around him.

"Thunder Storm!"

CRA-CRA-CRA-CRA-CRAASH!

Black clouds rushed in, and countless bolts of lightning plummeted towards the savages.

The bodies of the savages, who were once living beings, simply exploded. With almost no magic resistance, the savages were being massacred.

"Return to the ground on which you once lived and moved. This place is dark. A bad and rotten land. The law of darkness that will never disappear, let it be so they can all return. UNDEAD RISE!"

Balkan's chilling Necromancer magic began.

Doom Knights and Death Knights clattered as they rose from the pile of savage corpses. The Lich Balkan had summoned more than 100 Doom Knights over level 300!

"This land is ruled by my law of darkness. It will be dominated by an eternal, immortal strength. Dark Rule!"

The skull wand Balkan had been holding was stabbed into the ground. The earth turned dark red around that area. Then, the remaining corpses also slowly rose.

Each flash of thunder and lightning lit up a shocking scene.

There was a legion of zombies and ghouls. Countless Dullahans and Skeleton Soldiers!

"The Undead are rising. Run away!"

The few remaining savages scattered and tried to flee, but Balkan did not permit them to. He pointed a bone finger at the savages.

Then the Undead army began to slaughter the barbarians. The dead savages automatically rose as Skeletons or Dullahans.

The horrifying strength of the Dark Rule spell.

Weed, who had the Necromancer Magic Book written by Balkan himself, recognized the spell, "That's one of Balkan's three spells."

It was a spell that could only be used by a Necromancer of the highest tier, a special spell which dominated the entirety of hell with magic power and raised unlimited Undead.

The savages were completely hunted down by the Doom Knights, Death Knights, and Ghouls. Raising 10 thousand Undead did not even take 10 minutes.

It was the birth of an Undead Legion strong enough to put Weed's worries about the holy sword piercing Balkan's chest to shame.

"Balkan's aura. It's probably Death Aura."

It was indeed a spell only a Necromancer of the highest tier could use. It was a spell that strengthened the Undead Legion, improving Strength, Intelligence, Defense, Resistance, and Magic Power. Undead wrapt in the black aura became much stronger than a Skeleton Knight or an Archer. They probably weren't up to par with the high-ranking, monster-lined Immortal Legion, but it was a tremendous force indeed.

The black aura also had other truly terrifying points.

It did have the effect of strengthening commanded Undead, but the Health they captured while fighting was also absorbed by the Lich. In addition, it weakened divine power attacks and was the magic that acted as the source of a Lich's unlimited Mana and Health.

After slaughtering the savages, Balkan's gaze turned towards the Embinyu Church's fortress. The robe-wearing skeleton magician Lich's gaze overflowed with charisma!

Weed inwardly nursed great worries. 'He won't get scared and run, right?'

Though he was the leader of the Immortal Legion, Weed needed to confirm his true worth. If Balkan refused to fight because there was no reason to do so, nothing could be done.

'It's still an Immortal Legion in name, so... he won't leave after just saying hi. He won't. Yeah.'

Balkan Demoph willingly met his expectations. This time he pointed his bony finger at the fortress.

"Kua."

"KUUEEEEEEL!"

The Undead rushed towards the fortress.

A fearless advance of Skeletons, Dullahans, Death Knights, Spectres, and Doom Knights! Tangling and trampling, they tumultuously went forward.

For the Undead, Balkan was a father-like figure. As soon as Balkan gave the command, the Undead advanced towards the

fortress.

The Doom Knights yelled, "It's the supreme sovereign Balkan-nim's command! Do not leave a single stone of that fortress' foundation undestroyed!"

Balkan's great Necromantic army declared war on the Embinyu Church.

CRAAASH!

The Skeleton Mages shook their gathered arms. Green, blue, and white streaks of magic struck the fortress' wall!

The Skeleton Mages' magic didn't even have half the force of the trebuchets Weed had made. However, the magic of thousands of Skeleton Mages was more than enough to shake the wall. Pieces of broken rocks rained down.

There was finally a response from the Embinyu Church's fortress. The Embinyu Church was extremely arrogant and tried to dominate all the races and monsters in the world. The Priests and Dark Knights did not tolerate anyone who challenged them.

"The likes of the Undead dare to defile the Embinyu's land, fire!"

At the Dark Knight's command, the church's Soldiers loaded their bows. The arrows were fired from the walls and thickly covered the sky.

They struck the Undead Legion covered in black aura!

The advancing Undead fell to the ground as they were pierced by arrows. However, they weren't living soldiers so they didn't receive much damage from a normal arrow attack.

"KUO!"

Skeleton Soldiers pulled out the arrows penetrating the Death Knights.

It was a very emotional sight.

The skeletons bit the metal arrowheads with their yellow teeth.

CRUUNCH!

The skeletons didn't falter despite the shock of their teeth cracking. Though they were silver-plated arrows, they couldn't kill the skeletons who weren't hit smack-dab.

"Occupy the fortress."

"If we capture that fortress, we can increase our minions."

"Follow Balkan-nim's command!"

While their armor and shields were peppered with arrows, the Death Knights went forward. Doom Knights swung their

greatswords and cut down arrows in midair.

"Keep firing!"

Countless points appeared from the fortress walls and flew in as arrows.

"Holy Buster!"

"Divine Strike!"

The offensive spells of Magicians and Priests materialized. Attacks with divine power.

For the Undead, divine magic was their natural enemy.

With each blow, scores of Undead were annihilated or lost their strength and collapsed to the ground. But even as they took damage, the Undead steadily went forward and soon reached the vicinity of the wall.

The Priests became desperate, "Let us sing. Let's sing a hymn!"

— The Embinyu God is he who lets us enjoy freedom and gives us strength.

The hymn sung by the Priests! It was a song that added Strength to the Dark Knights, Soldiers, and Priests.

Their bodies tangled together, the skeletons crawled up the wall.

"Cl-cla-clack."

"Go up. Go up."

The Ghouls rammed the wall with their bodies.

After the annihilation of the savages, an Undead Legion of over 10 thousand had been made. They swarmed thickly at the base of the wall and waged siege warfare.

On the wall, Archers shot directly downwards, and divine magic poured down.

*

Weed laughed heartily. "Nothing less from Balkan."

Just one Necromancer was able to present such a terrifying display of power.

"He have to be at this level to say he has the right to lead the Immortal Legion."

There was nothing more electrifying than simply looking at the fight, hidden behind the rocky mountain.

Mooooooooooooooooo!

Yellowy bellowed his happiness as he raised his head and extended his tongue. The pure and simple Korean cow was, to some degree, in the process of taking after Weed's wickedness.

"Walls. Take over the walls."

"Get up and fight. It's Balkan-nim's command."

A skeleton who fell while climbing the wall soon applied itself again despite its broken bones. Even though it was pierced with hundreds of arrows and fell, the Ghoul also rose again.

"Kuuaaaah." It plucked out the arrows embedded in its body, stomped on the shafts, and pounded the wall.

The Embinyu Church Priests worked hard to use divine power. "O Emibnyu God, punish these who know not thy mercy."

Flames of divine power flared to life at the base of the wall. Purification by blue flames! The flames swept over the Dullahans, Skeletons, and Ghouls, melting scores of Undead. They were completely destroyed, unable to revive again.

The divine power of the Priests of the Church of Freya was also great, but the offensive power of the Embinyu Church Priests was enough to see them as upper-tier Magicians.

Archers shot their arrows and Dark Knights swung their swords. Undead clung to the wall in a swarm, but thanks to their much more favorable position atop the wall and the help of the Priests, the Embinyu Church was not pushed back easily.

The Demonic Spirits under the Embinyu Church's command were also taking orders and fighting hard. However, they only barely reduced the numbers of the Undead.

Even if Dark Knights or Soldiers shoved them and they crashed to the bottom of the wall, the Undead quickly rose again. They did not die unless they were annihilated by holy magic. When the Soldiers and Priests from the Embinyu Church died in combat and weren't purified with magic, they became Undead from Dark Rule. Allies suddenly became Undead while fighting with wounds!

Balkan didn't play around either and actively participated.

"Poison Cuffs!"

A deep blue malice emanated from the bodies of the Undead crawling up the wall. An evil Necromancer spell contaminated and corrupted the surrounding area!

The Embinyu Soldiers who had been deployed to the wall to block the Undead fell to the ground.

"Mass Curse. Mass Weakness."

This time it was AoE curses!

The curses brought misfortune on the holy magic casting Priests and weakened the Dark Knights and Archers.

Balkan was a Necromancer through and through. Rather than demonstrating his own offensive magic, he commanded the Undead and had a type of specialized profession focusing on AoE curses.

It made Weed emotional. "Indeed, the world is driven by specialized professions."

He was watching a fight that was much more fun than Go-Stop! He followed the scene between Balkan and the Embinyu Church with feeling from behind the rocky mountain.

[T/N: Go-Stop is a Korean card game. It often gets quite heated and is best enjoyed with friends and beer.]

The sight of the Undead persistently crawling up the wall gave him the chills, and the Embinyu Church's might was surprising. Though they had also participated in the siege of Fort Odin before, this was very different from what they had shown the players.

There was tenacity and intensity in the fighting of the Undead Soldiers.

"If only I could have a large unit like them..." Weed smacked his lips in regret.

There wasn't even a need for another plan in capturing the Embinyu fortress. After all, at higher levels, it was justified to call a Necromancer capable of leading an Undead legion a one-man army!

Among players, many Magicians job-changed to Necromancers with such dreams. It would take a long time for Necromancers to become mainstream on the Versailles Continent, but it was easy to find beginner Necromancers taking one Golem and shaking hunting grounds.

Weed observed the battlefield with cold eyes. "The Embinyu Church won't go down easily with this level."

The Undead raised by Balkan were really strong. It was indeed true that 10 thousand Undead were raised in an instant. There was nothing unjustified in calling Balkan the master of the Immortal Legion. Balkan's ability to create Undead with high magic power was incredibly thrilling.

However, there was fundamentally a big impact on the Health of living Undead. There was a limit to how the Undead could be made from low-level savages. Simply making an impressive Undead Legion from low-quality corpses as the foundation was ridiculous, but with the added disadvantage of their position, they weren't enough to capture the Embinyu Church's fortress.

"But the fight begins here."

Weed's belly was growling again. His stomach clock told him the exact time.

Satiety has fallen to less than 30%.

Maximum Vitality and Health will decrease.

You will tire easily and feel weak.

Weed gnawed on some pre-dried boar jerky, "It's time for number two."

At that moment, the space above the Embinyu Fortress distorted greatly. Similar to when the Lich Balkan was summoned, there was an enormous flow of Mana.

The crows that were flocking to feed as they watched the battle unfold flew away altogether into the sky. There was something even the ominous crows could not help but consider as a threat.

The summoning gate opened atop the fortress and an extremely large monster appeared from within.

It was the 9-Headed King Hydra.

*

Pale entered a tavern with his teammates, the 'Yurokina Black Skin.' The bar was run by Dark Elves.

Orcs who came were overpriced by more than 100%, but humans only received an additional charge of 30%. It was a popular tavern for Adventurers, Mercenaries, and Fighters who came to travel in the Yurokina Mountains to rest and eat.

"Looks like it already started," Surka said anxiously.

"Yeah, we should've come faster."

Romuna found empty seats for the whole party to sit at. They came to the tavern to eat food, but they also came to watch the broadcast. They could watch TV through the magic glass installed in the tavern.

There weren't many empty tables in the Yurokina Black Skin tavern because of the Adventurers, Dark Elves, and Orcs who came to watch TV.

An S-class difficulty linked quest. War against the Embinyu Church!

The news spread within the Versailles Continent. In fact, the bars of large cities, Kingdom capitals, castles, and large villages, currently had long lines from quests rushing in. It was a given that

the insides of stores were full, and there were even temporary tables set up outside. As people crowded the taverns of the Versailles Continent, the beginner hunting grounds in front of castles and villages actually became peaceful.

"Hehehehe." Pale couldn't help but laugh as he watched the broadcast glass. Whenever the celebrity Maylon acted as the commentator, his eyes were glued to the broadcast. Wearing a blouse and looking intellectual, Pale's lips stretched to his ears whenever she smiled refreshingly.

Irene sighed. "We need to order first... but will we even be able to order properly when it's this crowded?"

Zephyr then lightly raised his hand, "Dark Elf lady with the gentle smile and sparkling eyes brighter than black pearls!"

The Dark Elf waitress immediately gave her attention to Zephyr's table.

"We'd like mugs of beer for everyone here and orange juice for Surka, please. For snacks, the Dark Forest Kebab set will be good. Of course, you'll bring it quickly, yes?"

Wink.

Zephyr instinctively smiled with his eyes even while ordering drinks! He possessed the talent of raising intimacy with women no matter the situation. With his handsome appearance, confident

actions, and attention to even the smallest details, he easily earned favor. Of course, there was a severe side effect to it too.

Hwaryeong shook her head as she grinned.

"Zephyr-nim."

"Yes?"

"You still haven't been hit enough."

"Cough!"

Zephyr had become a punching bag for the SwordNoobs! Every time he showed interest in girls, he trembled whether the SwordNoobs were watching or not.

When they finished ordering, they focused on the magic glass.

Da'in, who had become their teammate from questing, was also with them.

*

The future of KMC Media was riding on this special broadcast.

The regular broadcasts had been canceled and they were broadcasting the program Weed live. If they failed, their image as a

broadcaster would certainly fall and the hit to their credibility would also be enormous, so they were investing maximum manpower.

The special effects team, sound team, subtitle team, and camera directors all took part in supporting the broadcast. The writing team was also mobilized in force, but there wasn't a script made because they were pressed for time.

Since the broadcast was unscripted, they set up the qualified commentators Shin Hye-Min and Oh Joo-Wan and invited Lee Jin-Gun as a special guest.

Lee Jin-Gun was a famous player within the top 400 in Royal Road. He had also completed many quests as an Adventurer. Hastily casted, he was an invited guest for the broadcast.

The sculpting match with Death Hand, the sculpting of the Wings of Light, and the restoration of Dwarf Kendellev's water sculpture were broadcasted.

The viewers' response to the new look on Sculptors was also warm.

? It's beautiful.

— Is this a rediscovery of Sculptors? Please make programs like this more often.

— I'd like this to be an opportunity to bring interest to dismissed professions again.

Besides the main professions the majority of players picked, there were many professions in Royal Road. Professions were divided based on race and hidden professions! The responses of viewers who had chosen such professions were good.

— When will the actual content be broadcasted?

— Is the Embinyu Church coming out or not? You're not gonna keep going like this and broadcast the rest of it tomorrow, right?

— I want to see the contents of the chain quest soon.

— I'm guessing the sculpting match with Death Hand is one part of the linked quest.

— It must be. But how can a Sculptor do the quest? A Sculptor's combat strength is awful.

— The sculpture put out by Death Hand looks a lot like the symbol of the Resurrection Church. Anyone know about this?

The viewer forum buzzed with discussion and speculation. Since it was the first S-class difficulty quest, it was sure to attract a lot of

attention.

— But who is this Sculptor Weed?

— He is the main character of a program called 'Weed' that was broadcasted not long ago. He also traveled to the Vampire Kingdom.

— Ah, the program with the low ratings... but I don't think I've seen many Sculptors.

— He is the Lord of Morata.

— He's the Great Sculptor who made the Pyramid and the Tower of Light.

There was a considerable number of people asking about the Sculptor Weed. Many people still didn't know about the Sculptor Weed. They knew of the Tower of Light and Morata, but actually, even after they heard the name of the person who made the sculptures, they had carelessly soon forgotten. The same sad fate as the creator!

Shin Hye Min had a slight smile on her face.

Anyone who'd watched game broadcasts even a little knew the God of War Weed — the charismatic individual who, after standing

as the absolute being of Continent of Magic, emblazoned his strong presence in Royal Road as well. By the recognition he garnered and his fame alone, he was at the level of Bardray, who was guiding the Hermes Guild.

'What kind of response will there be when people find out he's God of War Weed?'

She was not the least bit worried. The response of the viewers would definitely be explosive enough to overload the broadcast station homepage!

As a commentator, it was enough to make Shin Hye-Min feel sorry she was still keeping this secret to herself. Even within the station, only directors and related staff members knew Weed's true identity. The one other commentator, Oh Joo-Wan, and the special guest Lee Jin-Gun were not aware.

After the release of Kuruso's broadcast, Shin Hye-Min said, "It seems like the quest this time will show us many new truths about Sculptors, but what do you think, Mr. Oh Joo-Wan?"

"It's surprising. Weed is the Lord of the Northern Morata region and the creator of awesome sculptures. In fact, can't you say he's the figure who represents Sculptors? For such a person to be doing a war quest, I'm anxious to watch it."

"The viewers also have of the same thought, right? But will Sculptor Weed be able to win a war against the Embinyu Church, a strange, fearsome force?"

Oh Joo-Wan quickly replied, "I wonder. It's hard for me to even imagine how he'll do it. It's true that it looks very difficult as of now, but I'm curious about what kind of method and means he'll use."

"In short, we can't lose hope, yes?"

"If he accepted the quest, I think he means to do his best. He could have gained some kind of power or authority during the quest, and even if he fails, there will be great meaning in the challenge itself."

This time, Shin Hye Min turned her attention to Lee Jin Gun, who was sitting to her left, "Mr. Lee Jin-Gun, what do you think about this quest?"

Lee Jin-Gun smiled as he made a conclusion. "Of course it's going to fail."

"What?"

"If it's the same Embinyu Church that I'm thinking of, it'll definitely fail. There is absolutely no way he can succeed."

"..."

"There'll be meaning left in the challenge, but even for that, he

could've just gotten a hard quest from good luck. The Embinyu Church? It's an enormous unidentified force."

Lee Jin-Gun snorted as he ruthlessly cut Weed down. "Hmph! Moreover, the quester is a Sculptor. His skills may be recognized in the Sculpting field, but he'll fall short in adventuring experience and will lack ability as well. Failure is definite."

They were words prickling with his pride as an Adventurer and a well-known ranking player in the Versailles Continent. Lee Jin-Gun was so narrow-minded, he could not even imagine a person other than himself would succeed the quest.

"Oh my. Do you really think so?" Shin Hye Min laughed gaily.

Normally, she would call a break time and give him a harsh scolding for being such a downer in the broadcast. Speaking somewhat critically in the introduction did not disappoint the viewers and it could have a dramatic effect if the quest happened to succeed. However, Lee Jin-Gun had magnificently thrown a wet blanket on the broadcast. If viewers heard his words and decided the quest would completely fail, their reason to watch the broadcast would also disappear!

Even though Lee Jin-Gun hadn't been told of the Power of the Deliverer Weed had used because he was a guest, it was still no good. For the casting to fail in such an important broadcast, it could be nothing but a huge disaster.

But Shin Hye Min held back her laughter. In a little while he was

going to get knocked down a notch!

Shin Hye-Min couldn't forget how he had belittled Archers and Rangers in the last broadcast.

— Archers? It's a good job for cowardly people, since they can kill the monster before it gets close. They're of a different standard from Adventurers, who leap into places with unknown dangers.

Shin Hye-Min was resolved to dish out retaliation on behalf of Archers and Rangers!

It was a broadcast full of ulterior motives, but even she was extremely curious about how Weed's war quest would go. Weed's real-time video was being taken and edited to the best of the production department's ability. Since she was following the broadcast and commenting and couldn't watch the live feed, she also wanted to see it quickly.

Chapter 6: Black Dragon

GRAAAAAAWR!

Stepping on the wall to stand, the supersized King Hydra's 9 heads sought prey. The heads shot around like arrows, swallowing up Priests and Soldiers.

GRA-RAWR!

It demolished the stone tower and gobbled up the Archers.

It was on a different plane from Yellowy's rumination of fresh grass, which was leisurely enough to make one blow up in frustration.

A sight inducing horror and vertigo.

In a bog three prestigious guilds united to explore, there was a legendary monster, the King Hydra. Then, in just a few minutes, the King Hydra ate up all the prestigious guild members and moved to yet another location to eat more prey.

An existence burning with an endless appetite, the King Hydra!

"F-fire!"

The Archers' target changed from the Undead to the Hydra. They loosed arrows towards the Hydra's body as it stepped on the wall and cleared away their teammates.

The Hydra's 9 heads saw the arrows. The majority of the arrows couldn't pierce its thick hide, and even if they left a wound, it only lasted a minute; its green blood would immediately stop flowing, and the wound would heal. It was thanks to the Hydra's special characteristic of regeneration, which surpassed even Trolls'.

"The attack isn't working."

"Save me!"

"Dark Knights, protect the Priests."

The Hydra's heads each moved several meters to search for food. Each head boasted a snout bigger than a castle tower and even emitted a fire and poison gas attack!

On the fortress wall, there was a clamor of exploding screams.

"Dark Knights, come back!"

The Dark Knights, who faced the Undead on the front lines of the battle tried to gather to fight the Hydra. However, before they could attempt an organized maneuver, the corner of the wall the Hydra had stepped on crumbled down. Suddenly, a part of the fortress wall gave in all at once, unable to bear the Hydra's ponderous weight.

"Uhuhuhu."

"The wall collapsed. Let's go up."

Climbing the wall collapsed from the ground up, the Zombies, Ghouls, and Skeletons at the head of the Undead army pressed forward in a line. There were also many Embinyu Soldiers who were crushed to death.

"Fight!"

"Embinyu Soldiers, don't give up our holy ground to them!"

A mass of Embinyu Soldiers rushed out from within the fortress and charged at the Undead, including Dark Knights and Priests, they were the Embinyu Church's remaining troops! Unmobilized in the fight until now, it was the first appearance of the Embinyu Church's hidden forces.

Balkan did not let them eliminate the Undead.

"Core Explosion!"

Due to the ultimate evil Necromancer's magic, the dead corpses erupted in a massive explosion. As bones and flesh splattered, the terrain where the Embinyu Soldiers had gathered took enormous damage. More than several hundred people lost their lives, and far more were rendered unable to fight because of large wounds. Without shields and armor, they would have taken damage near to impossible to shake off.

Even normal Necromancer spells became chilling spells of mass

destruction when Balkan cast them.

Rustle.

Debris in the collapsed wall moved. Living Death Knights who became Undead from the Dark Rule magic swung their swords to slaughter those who had been their allies not long ago.

"Holy power, protect us. Grant your servants wills and bodies like steel. Iron Armor."

The protective magic of the Priests encased the Soldiers. In addition, the High Priest Feylord, who hadn't shown himself, finally appeared.

Apparently, Feylord was also plastered with high-class items not falling too short of Balkan's. Jeweled rings hanging from each finger, a bracelet, necklace, and earrings! The peerlessly expensive accessory items sparkled in the sunlight. A high priest robe embroidered with golden thread was draped over his obese body.

Feylord yelled, "Servants of the Embinyu Church, your pain will disappear and joy will burn within you. Divine Bless!"

Feylord's propensity to bless primarily Soldiers was also strong. If Lich Shire or the Bone Dragon's overall force was undoubtedly explosive, then the High Priest Feylord did not show such offensive power. However, in the eyes of the Embinyu Church's army, he was so great that there was no wall sturdier than he.

A part of the fortress wall had collapsed, but the Embinyu Church's Soldiers filled the gap instead.

"Oh. Oh. OH!"

"We won't let our land be stolen."

"Eliminate the enemies. Embinyu God, give them eternal pain."

Covered in the blessing magic of Feylord and the Priests, the Soldiers easily overcame most of the attacks and their pain.

The footmen were perfectly equipped with shields and armor! They demonstrated strength firm enough to feel threatening. As they swung their hammers and axes, they pushed the Undead army back. Though a Dullahan was adept at battle, it wasn't able to penetrate the wall of footmen easily when three or four footmen defended together and counterattacked.

However, it was only after many of the Undead had already entered the fortress through the fallen wall. Doom Knights and Death Knights went around picking Priests and slaughtering them.

"I am Sowed Veron, Knight of the Embinyu Church 11th Sect."

"Ke. Ke. Ke. Ke. I'm Death Knight Teirum, Balkan-nim's minion."

It wasn't hard to see a Dark Knight and Death Knight having a one-on-one match. There were cases when the Dark Knight dominated and beheaded his opponent with a holy sword. However, when a Death Knight won, the dead Dark Knight

immediately became the same Death Knight or Doom Knight and revived.

"A huge demon."

"Let's go. Let's fight."

Some of the Undead went after the King Hydra. With their fear removed by Balkan, the Undead tried to hunt even the likes of the King Hydra. However, there was no way the King Hydra would be hunted down by scores of impertinent Undead! Whenever the 9 heads moved in turn, Undead flew into the sky and scores of Soldiers and Priests were eaten.

The battle of the Embinyu fortress continued on as a grand dogfight.

Whenever the King Hydra moved, Soldiers and Undead were crushed underneath.

GRAAAAAAAAAAAWR!

The King Hydra's fearless roar rang out in all directions like thunder.

*

Standing by with the barbarians over at the rocky mountain,

Weed looked at the sky. The direction of the drifting clouds had changed. Of course, Weed's actions weren't for probing the secrets of nature, as legendary genius philosophers have done.

"The sun is at high noon. It's time to eat. Let's eat, everyone!"

Weed ate a meal with the barbarians first. It was time to give his stomach sturdy fuel.

"Your body can't endure if you don't eat up." Weed didn't spare the back meat of Black Wild Boar and roasted it.

The ultimate wild boar barbecue! It was the delicacy of all delicacies one could eat with a big battle ahead. As he turned the boar round and round, he sprinkled on plenty of salt and pepper.

Gulp!

The sound of the barbarians swallowing their saliva rang aloud.

The well-roasted barbecue was savory and melted gently in the mouth. As they ate boar, which boasted the most delicious taste, they watched what could be called the ultimate view.

"It's gonna take quite a while."

The King Hydra, Embinyu Church, and Balkan's fight was now kicking into high gear. The Undead army's numbers rose steadily,

and the King Hydra ran amok while destroying the fortress as if it owned it.

The Embinyu Church's remaining forces all came out as well— it was hard to judge where the course of the battle would flow. It had seemed the Embinyu Church was briefly getting pressed back when the wall fell, but they blocked it with additional forces. Thanks to the service of the elite Dark Knights, the Embinyu displayed unfaltering might. Since they were fighting with the Demonic Spirits' aid as well, the Embinyu Church seemed to be alive and well.

"Since the fortress isn't completely destroyed, either."

Archers shot arrows while hidden in cover! The Priests also eliminated the Undead with Holy magic by using the narrow passages and structures. The Embinyu Church seemed like they could beat the Undead army in a moment if they could restore order!

The King Hydra began to spray poison gas as it leapt around hellishly. As was characteristic of Necromancers, Balkan raised the Undead army from the safety of the rear.

The incredible scenes, awful enough to make a watcher's eyes spin, did not cease.

A tower rising high into the air steadily tilted to the side with a roar and completely collapsed. The stone gargoyle mounted askew on the spire spread its wings as it flew towards another place. It

seemed Balkan had also summoned the stone gargoyle and a harpy-like aerial monster at some point.

A fire broke out in the castle and was blowing acrid smoke into the sky; there were also many Soldiers falling on the wall.

The dogfight of all dogfights!

Finished with his meal, Weed spread his arms wide. "It's finally time for the last guest to arrive."

He was positioned to actively welcome the most precious guest. It was time for the last guest to be summoned by the Power of the Deliverer.

As the three groups leapt about in the Embinyu fortress, the space above distorted greatly and something black and lump-like bulged out.

The crystallization of dignity and nobility! With scales sturdier than mithril and perfect aesthetic quality, it was an existence possessing even beauty. The race no one on the Versailles Continent did not know.

There was a rumor that by simply consuming the Dragon Heart, their body would experience an increase of maximum Mana by over 5,000, and if a Magician were to eat it, it would raise their magic level up a step.

The embodiment of great authority, the Black Dragon.

At the tremendous flow of Mana, the King Hydra, Balkan, and the High Priest Feylord looked up at the sky. It was an existence capable of throwing them all into despair.

A monster with small wings in contrast to its 60 meter body appeared. Not only was it very different in appearance from a Black Dragon, but it was much shabbier as well. For starters, it didn't have a beard, and the head, which looked like a giant snake, and didn't exude dignity either. A real dragon's body exceeded 300 meters. However, the black lump which had appeared wasn't even 70 meters from head to tail. Its body was thin and long. Rather than calling it a dragon, it was more like a snake with wings.

It was a fellow trying to molt into a dragon by training a lot and eating tons of good food for a long time. The Black Imoogi!

[T/N: An Imoogi is a legendary creature in Korean mythology, said to aspire to become a true dragon. It is a large, python-like creature (Wikipedia).]

Weed had summoned a dragon, symbolizing its own kind of strength and authority. Only, it was just a fake!

Of course, it was something you absolutely couldn't underestimate for being an Imoogi. A monster at the level of a King Snake had to undergo hundreds, thousands of years to become one. This fellow was a big-shot even in the boss-class.

Even the fake was in a different class.

"Because it's not a normal fake, but a dragon fake!"

The Black Imoogi opened its maw wide.

MUUAOOOOOO!

Dragon Fear!

The Embinyu Soldiers covered their ears with both hands as they staggered. The Undead also made groaning noises, as if they were in pain. Apparitions like Spectres and Ghosts were even forcefully unsummoned.

The Black Imoogi announced its appearance in an incomparably flashy way. Though it was an Imoogi and not a real, legitimate dragon, the force of the Dragon Fear it used was immense.

The entire castle was in its range, and since it was enough to deal a huge blow to the monsters, Weed's Lion's Roar was no match for it.

As they looked at the Imoogi, Balkan and Feylord's fighting spirits flared.

"This one is of an appropriate size to kill and make into a Bone

Dragon."

"I shall sacrifice that one to the Embinyu God."

The Black Imoogi did not turn a blind eye to these challenges. 'Foolish humans, unsightly Undead, and a hideous Hydra! The bunch I dislike are all gathered here.'

The Black Imoogi scorned all three groups without reserve. The amount of pride it had was similar to a real Dragon.

As the Imoogi butted in, the Embinyu fortress fight entered a new situation.

Controlling the skies, the Imoogi used magic. It was a being which didn't even need complicated spells or embellishments. Lightning bolts the size of the Imoogi's body and huge insects were summoned and fell below. The fortress was crushed as Undead were exterminated, and Embinyu Soldiers also died mercilessly.

Though it was a fake dragon, it wasn't an Imoogi for nothing.

*

KMC Media's production!

Personnel were mobilized to analyze and edit the video that was

being transmitted in real time. Including the director-in-chief, director, and the chairmen above them, the personnel were absorbed in watching the video.

"Oh!"

"Really!"

"How can that be..."

"So the King Hydra looks like that."

God of War Weed's war! It was the biggest war in Versailles Continent's history. A battle of overwhelming proportions that showed beings no one could even dream of, gathered in one place!

The station employees were, of course, Royal Road players.

'Yeah, skeletons are scary.'

'The monster army is really strong. If I were the commander, I would never go down the wall with those Soldiers.'

The area below the fortress was seething with the Undead army. No matter how you looked at it, descending with the Soldiers was suicide, but the Embinyu army had no fear. A group of Knights and Soldiers leapt down from the wall to 'punish' the Undead. Though they had briefly boasted of being the strongest force, when the Skeletons and Ghouls came in from all directions, they quickly reached their limit. Once they disappeared like a boat sinking in the middle of the ocean, they were born as Undead. It was even the cause of the Undead army's expansion.

However, it was a feat which could only make you say the Embinyu army was truly terrifying. Even as they took enormous damage, they swarmed forward and were opposing the King Hydra.

'Impressive.'

'Ah, if I were there...'

'I wanna fight too. My level is also over 320...'

The staff were energized. As they watched the video, the directly conveyed tension of life and death and the excitement of the scene hit them hard. From the perspective of making broadcasts, how long had it been since they had been this impassioned?

'If I could receive a quest like this once too, I'd have no more to wish for.'

'How awesome it would be if I could fight even one of the skeletons there.'

The personnel were standing in place. The vigor that had disappeared with age was boiling up. They forgot their hunger, and were unaware of the pain in their legs.

*

Weed took out a fan.

It was the 30 Copper fan he'd bought at the general goods store in case he needed it one day. Cheaper than cheap, it had almost no function.

As one day passed in Versailles Continent time, the Embinyu fortress fight steadily became more gruesome and intense again.

Sparsely Feathered Fan

Durability 3/5.

Attack 0~1.

A fan young children wouldn't even play with as a toy. It can make a little wind, but it is useless in cooling down heat.

It seems like it will incite rage and frustration if it is given as a gift to someone.

Weed gently waved the fan. Yellowy came to his side and suddenly shoved his head in, but he went back to grazing because it wasn't refreshing.

A full smile was on Weed's lips. "As expected, it's going as I planned."

Weed slapped the fan onto his palm, and consequently, two of

the already scant feathers fell out. There were barely 11 feathers left!

"Zhuge Liang is also an admirable tactician."

The Embinyu Church had the advantage of overall might and geographic element. Balkan raised low and intermediate Undead as he fueled an endless war. The King Hydra agitated the heart of the battlefield with its nearly indestructible regeneration. The Black Imoogi was no different from an executioner. Though it was a fake dragon, it mercilessly destroyed the Embinyu Church and the group of Undead.

The Embinyu Church, Balkan, King Hydra, and Black Imoogi!

"This is truly a four-part division!"

It was an upgrade from the three-part division Zhuge Liang was said to have caused. Of course, those were completely only Weed's thoughts.

[T/N: The three-part division refers to the Wei, Shu, and Wu kingdoms warred in China's Three Kingdoms period. Zhuge Liang was a brilliant Shu strategist. Although Shu was much smaller and had far less troops than Wei, Zhuge Liang's genius kept the Wei on the defensive. He is a famous hero in Eastern Asia. (Wikipedia)]

The Phoenixes asked Bingryong. "Senior, what is 'four-part

division'?"

"I don't know either. Yellowy, do you know?"

"I also do not know. Moooo."

The sculptures asked amongst themselves, but they were finding no answer! Despite it all, since he was the big bro, Bingryong thought about it and replied, "I think the four-part division means the four groups fighting over there. The four groups are divided and fighting as they attack each other. As in, they've been trapped and frozen even without my Breath."

The Phoenixes were in awe. "It's a really awesome plot."

"To think Master had such a good trick."

In a general sense, the Phoenixes were classified as birds. Unable to overcome the limitations of fowl, they were easily surprised by Weed's strategy.

Bingryong swaggered as he said, "Don't underestimate Master. He is a person who is shockingly smart at times."

"Yes, senior."

Having stayed mostly out of the conversation to nonchalantly munch on grass, Yellowy asked, "This, right now, how is it different from just summoning three more guys to make four guys fight?"

"..." Bingryong couldn't think of anything decent in response. With just a slight change in perspective, it could easily be regarded as such.

If Zhuge Liang had formed the three kingdoms Wei, Shu, and Wu from a foundation of genius resourcefulness and a tactical victory, then Weed was different. His foundation was the experience he'd gained while struggling a great deal and the combat ability of monsters his body learned while fighting to its limits.

He had chosen which monsters to summon through the various pieces of information he'd acquired through the Dark Gamer Union or Royal Road info forum. Consequently, he made four incompatible groups fight.

Unaware of the conversation between the sculptures, Weed fanned himself leisurely. "The true object of this four-part division isn't here!"

Zhuge Liang's plot was greatly admired even today. Though Zhuge Liang had been in a disadvantageous situation, he had restrained the Wei, one of the three kingdoms!

"However, Zhuge Liang couldn't bring about national unification in the end."

Even if he called forth incredible guys to arouse a fight, it was no use if he failed the quest.

"You can say this four-part division has a waiting aspect. When those four groups are tired from fighting hard, when their armies are weakened, we will attack. We'll become the final victor."

As they listened to Weed's words, Bingryong and the Phoenixes were perfectly appreciative.

"A truly outstanding plot."

"As expected of Master."

"We'll drive the Embinyu Church to the bottom, and catch all the other guys to top it off— this is the best approach."

The supermarket also lured in customers with buy one get one events. But because they had a basic margin, there was a limit to the giveaways. They also needed to make a living!

However, the merit of Weed's scheme was he could get one and an additional three. This could be called the resolution of a crook's wickedness.

Yellowy still didn't retract his cynical gaze. "Aren't you just planning to make others fight tons, then catch them all when they're tired? Moooooooooo."

Though it was called a genius scheme, a great challenge, it was ultimately extremely simple! The difference between success and failure could be seen as paper thin.

Weed remained taut with tension, as if he were tightrope walking. 'This is gonna be damnably difficult. I expected it wouldn't be easy since it's an S-class difficulty quest.'

He assessed the Embinyu Church's power very highly. Since he had gone through an awful lot for each success in the quest, he had to keep plenty of hidden schemes in mind as well.

The remaining troops swarming out of the fortress were still existences to be leery of! If he had just taken the barbarians and fought, he could have never assured victory.

Even if Balkan won, it would still be tough. In order to succeed the quest, he needed to capture the fortress. Capturing the fort against the Undead army rather than the Embinyu Church would be difficult all the same.

"The time is slowly approaching." Weed's eyes sharpened.

If he just waited around, he would earn almost no profit even if the quest succeeded because his contribution was low. If only for the enormous reward of an S-class quest, he couldn't just watch.

The four groups were exhausted from fighting desperately. Balkan was a Lich with endless Vitality, but he was being harried by the Embinyu Priests' concentrated attacks. Just like how the Priests killed the Undead, hymns and holy magic flew towards Balkan. Even the High Priest Feylord launched offensives. Consequently, having come up the fortress with the Undead under his command, Balkan was struggling. The King Hydra's

movements were slowed, and the Black Imoogi's Mana wasn't the same as before.

The fortress became a sea of fire from the tracks of the intense fight. The battle was precipitating towards the climax.

Weed pulled out his sword. "Now it's time to go."

The loosely relaxed and resting barbarians rose with gleaming eyes. They had rested up and eaten well, so their fighting will surged. Their recovery strength was fairly fast. Granted it was in part due to Weed commanding them to not pay attention to the fight and not showing them the sight of the Embinyu fortress. They would soon cower if they saw the Black Imoogi, King Hydra, and Undead army.

"It's time to hunt. All troops, advance!"

Weed advanced to the fortress with the barbarians, Yellowy, Bingryong, and the Phoenixes.

*

RAAAAWR.

The Black Imoogi was summoning and throwing down large rocks from midair as it flew around.

"It's close to the ground. Now! Shoot."

"Concentrate magic attacks on the dragon!"

The divine magic of the Priests and the Archers' arrows went skywards. Skeleton Archers and Skeleton Mages discharged fireballs and poisonous green auras into the air.

They were paltry attacks that could be neutralized and disabled with a mere glance if it were a real Dragon! However, the Black Imoogi had to flap its wings to dodge the magic attacks. Some of the spells crashed into its body directly. Every time it moved while flinging itself about, countless magic attacks chased it from behind. There were even Doom Knights and elite Dark Knights swinging blades on top of the Imoogi's body.

It was weaker than when it had first appeared was palpable from just watching it fight. It had easily deflected arrows with the defense of its scales alone, but now it took pains to avoid them. From taking the combined attacks of both the Undead and the Embinyu Church, there were scratches on the flawlessly smooth scales which had sparkled like jewels.

But an Imoogi is still an Imoogi!

In the beginning it had spewed searing attacks and sent over 7 of the King Hydra's heads flying, and it smashed half of the Embinyu Church's fortress. It ejected poison and melted about half of the Undead army as well. It was weakened because of severe Mana depletion, but the Imoogi's combat ability was outstanding.

"It's a tasty dragon. Let's eat it!"

Though it had already eaten up over 1,000 Soldiers, the King Hydra's heads flew towards the Imoogi with gaping maws.

"You dare? A tiny thing like you!?"

The Black Imoogi wheeled in midair to tear at the back of the King Hydra's neck. The King Hydra's head went flying in an instant, but the Imoogi's joy was short-lived. The King Hydra's new head was generated immediately.

Regeneration surpassing trolls!

Having exchanged attacks with Balkan, the High Priest Feylord commanded his Priests, "Recite the sacrifice spell."

"Noble Embinyu God, we dedicate our bodies; send down a blade to swing at the world."

Sacrifice Sword!

100 Priests lost their Health and collapsed. Immediately afterwards, a huge sword of golden light was formed above the Imoogi. Without delay, it plummeted down.

The Imoogi flapped urgently as it turned to one side, but the thin

wing joint was cut.

"KUAAAAA! Cowardly bastards!" The Imoogi screamed in agony.

The Black Imoogi wheeled round and round as it crashed into the fortress. Hundreds of soldiers, Demonic Spirits, and Undead were smashed underneath.

"Hunt down the dragon."

"Catch that bastard!"

Soldiers and Undead swarmed forward. Despite losing one of its wings, the Black Imoogi totted as it fought fiercely. When its eyes flashed viciously, the Human Soldiers froze and were prickled with gooseflesh, rendering them unable to fight.

However, it didn't work on the Undead. Doom Knights sliced wildly at the scales, and arrows and magic flew in without giving the Imoogi a chance to use recovery magic.

The Dark Knights and Doom Knights came at it like a swarm of gnats, dealing damage little by little to the Black Imoogi.

*

Weed, Bingryong, the Phoenixes, and the savages descended the rocky mountain.

"Strike the undead first!" Weed targeted the Undead at the outskirts. "Hunt the undead far away from Balkan."

The barbarians shot arrows at the Ghouls and Zombies. Filled with the power of the Lekiyeh Tribe Shamans, Undead who were hit with the arrows burst into flames or froze.

"Completely obliterate them so they can't regenerate!"

Weed was completely eliminating the Undead little by little. He fought with the Vejaguh Tribe's Warriors in places where Bingryong and the Phoenixes trampled and passed. He cleaved through vital points with his Sculpting Blade and completely destroyed them so they couldn't revive.

He even acquired japtum. It was the most definite sign of the Undead being destroyed!

Bingryong went in first, trampling and tearing, and the Undead melted as the Phoenixes spewed flames. Flames were second best for facing Undead, next to holy magic! The Phoenixes' fire even had a slight purification effect, so average skeletons, Ghouls, and Zombies were dead meat.

MOOOOOOOO!

Yellowy was also fighting hard around Bingryong. He had an admirable desire to earn money for the sake of buying hay to feed

his calves, when the time came, and to build a cowshed to stave off the rain!

However, he didn't approach the area around the Phoenixes. There were a few fatty slabs hanging from his muscular, robust body. Yellowy avoided roasting his rib eye, shank, and prime ribs!

Weed was easily able to slice the weakened Undead at the outskirts of the fortress. The main force of high-leveled Undead were inside the fortress, so it wasn't so difficult.

"The size of both sides has really fallen a lot."

There had been over 10 thousand Undead and more than 20 thousand Embinyu Church troops. However, the remaining power of both sides was weakened to about 2,000 each.

The soldiers had been melted away by the Black Imoogi or eaten by the King Hydra! There was also huge losses from fighting between the two enormous armies.

It could make you realize how cutthroat the war was.

His contribution would be much less when he completed the quest, but he was forced to accept the loss!

Over the collapsed wall, the Undead and Embinyu Soldiers were fighting as they raised a turmoil. The King Hydra, Black Imoogi, Balkan, and Feylord were fighting a fierce battle there.

"Let's enter the fortress and sweep up the remnants!"

Weakened enemies!

Even so, Weed and the savages couldn't guarantee victory over any of the groups. Balkan would be as tough as ever, and the King Hydra was violent. The Embinyu Church was still hostile towards them, and the Black Imoogi was fighting so well that you had to see it to believe it.

There was no rule saying it couldn't be a life where shrimp were crushed in a fight amongst whales.

Weed shouted vigorously, but the savages just hesitated.

"It's dangerous inside."

"It's better if we don't enter."

Perhaps because they felt very uneasy, the savages stepped back. However...

"We must capture the fortress. If you retreat here, you will have to live as pawns of the Embinyu Church forever. Alliance of the Deliverer, let us fight courageously!"

At Weed's Lion's Roar, the savages gained the will to fight again.

But Bingryong, the Phoenixes, and Yellowy were also shrinking back.

"Master."

"I don't think we really need to go in."

The Sculptured Lifeforms' disobedience!

Even if Weed were to use violence, this problem would persist. No matter how much they were hit, they did not want to enter the dangerous fortress. Yellowy had already eaten more than one sack of japtem! Like a peace-loving cow, he did not want to fight anymore.

Weed nodded. "I understand your position as well. I was not considerate enough. I am really sorry."

A frank self-reflection and apology! These were things shouldn't come from Weed.

Weed, the man who always forced and insisted, bowed his head to his subordinates. "Forgive me. And forget about me."

"Master?"

"This will be the last time you see me. I will fight bravely with the alliance tribes and meet my end... Remember that and forget about me now."

"Master!"

"Forget about me and go to a safe place to rest comfortably and live well. I am especially burdened with deep regret because I won't be able to treat you well to the very end, Yellowy."

UMMOOOOOOH!

"Eat plenty of good grass and father many little cows. Even if you don't have money, you absolutely must not take any loans."

MOOOOOOO!

At the words similar to a will, the highly sensitive Yellowy cried big tears.

"I'm sorry I just caused you to suffer without doing anything for you. The atmosphere will get weird if the parting is too long, so I'll go now. Live well."

And then Weed turned and walked away. However, his pace wasn't fast at all. He gave the sculptured lifeforms plenty of space to follow him. He deliberately hunched his shoulders and his head hung low to the ground.

"Master, let's go together."

Bingryong flew towards the fortress, followed by the Phoenixes.

Yellowy furrowed the ground with his hind leg and positioned himself to charge.

The Sculptured Lifeforms were ready for battle!

Chapter 7: Weed's Ideal Type

Vampire Kingdom Todeum!

Yurin's Painting skill improved as she painted the Vampires.

"How are they?"

"Very good. Pretty lady, would you like to go to a quiet spot for a glass of wine? We'll go to my castle and draw in the dark curtains to prevent sunlight from shining in. Then we'll have time all to ourselves until morning, in my coffin..."

"No way!" She refused the seductions of the Vampires coldly. Going along with the Vampires could end with sharp fangs plunged into your nape.

'Looks like I've gone through most of this place, too.' Yurin decided to conclude her journey in Todeum.

In Todeum, there were many paintings created by great artists. There were many works by masters that any painter would want to see at least once hanging here and there. Thanks to that, her Painting skill improved considerably, but she wanted to travel throughout the vast continent.

"Shall I move to a different place?" Yurin stood from her seat.

With a broad-brimmed hat pressed onto her head, she packed up her paint container and sketchbook. On her back hung a large brush.

Level 16.

At that level, it was impossible to even arm herself with good weapons. This brush was really just an ornament she had pulled out from the treasure trove of the Vampires. Its broadness was good for painting and it also had the effect of stunning weak monsters.

It was made of Mithril!

Since its durability was high enough for the hair on the brush to not fall out, it was quite useful.

"Well then, shall I go?"

Yurin roughly painted a picture onto the ground.

The scene she painted was one of the pub where Pale and the others drinking beer as they watched the video of Weed's battle. She drew things like Pale and the party members, the tables and the gathered people, and the interior of the pub.

When moving to an area she has never been to before, she had to make a fairly accurate depiction. If there was even the slightest difference in the portrayal, she could end up in a completely

different place. However, when moving to a place with a person, she had to draw that person's portrait exactly.

If she roughly drew the party members and the location, she could use her Picture Teleportation skill.

After drawing the pub's scenery, Yurin drew herself sitting at an empty seat at the group's table.

After that, she was sitting in the pub.

"Kyaa. A King Hydra came out!"

"This is the best! Is he really a sculptor? The size of that monster really isn't normal."

The pub was ringingly noisy, almost painful to the ears, from the sounds of people ordering food and beer, and there was even an uproar of boisterous cheers.

Although Yurin had suddenly appeared, no one paid any heed.

"Come quick."

"Have you been well, sis?"

As expected, Hwaryeong was the very first to greet Yurin. With that, Yurin greeted Irene, Romuna, and Surka, whom she had not seen for a long time.

"So you were in Todeum until now....you shoulda come sooner."

"There were many things I wanted to draw. I was busy doing drawing quests. Now that I've come, please buy me lots of tasty things, sis."

"Sure. I'll buy you anything."

Hwaryeong and Yurin clicked really well. They chatted busily even while watching Weed's video. Because Irene and Romuna were also chatty, there was no end to the conversation of the girls.

"You changed your equipment?"

"Yeah. The last outfit was too revealing, y'know. This time I picked an elegant outfit. What do you think, is it alright?"

"It's really pretty. Where did you buy those earrings from?"

"They're a monster drop. They're from Goblins, do they suit me?"

"They suit you really well."

Da'in also introduced herself to Yurin first. "I'm the party's Shaman...Da'in. Nice to meet you."

"Nice to meet you too, Unni."

Da'in was pretty shy, but because they were really nice people, she opened up to them quickly.

Then, while they were chatting and watching the adventure video, after exchanging a few greetings, a question suddenly jumped out from Hwaryeong's mouth.

"Yurin, what kind of girl does your brother like?"

"What?"

"I mean... does he have a preference in a girl's personality, appearance, or stuff like that?"

"Are you asking me about his ideal type?"

"Yeah. Don't you know a lot about your brother as a little sister?"

It was loud in the tavern due to the battle video, but people's attention was more drawn to the table where Yurin sat.

The ideal type of Weed, who had never shown the slightest interest in women.

"I don't know either."

"Why not? Hasn't your brother dated anyone before?" Hwaryeong's eyes gleamed exceptionally.

"Not that I know of."

"I see. Still, there has to be an ideal type he likes."

"I kind of know, but I don't know how to explain it."

"For example, what about a girl like me?" Hwaryeong smiled brightly as she asked. She, who ranked number one as the most desirable date and wife in world-famous magazines! Hwaryeong was full of dignity, charm, and confidence.

Yurin slightly shook her head apologetically. "Unni... is probably not brother's ideal type."

Hwaryeong quickly became glum and asked, "What part of me is lacking?"

The party was shocked.

How could he dare to not love Hwaryeong? What kind of deep reason could there be?!

Could it be a painful story of the past? Or was it because he was worried about getting swept up in a scandal since Hwaryeong was a

top celebrity?

"Sis, how many clothes do you buy a year?"

"About fifty or so. I also receive a lot of clothes from my sponsors."

"My brother hates spending money on buying clothes."

Hwaryeong, who was wearing brand-name clothes, brand-name heels, and brand-name perfume, could never become Weed's ideal type!

"Then what about me?" asked Irene, smiling demurely.

Since she had befriended Yurin through in-game whispers, Irene asked it half-jokingly.

Pale and Zephyr silently nodded. No man could dislike Irene. She had a devoted, kind, feminine, and had an austere personality. Plus she was pretty to boot.

"I don't think you're his ideal type either, unni."

"Why?"

"He won't like that you'll probably get scammed later because of

your kind nature."

".....!"

Romuna also asked, "How about me?"

"Since unni has a snappy, firm personality.... but because of your major...."

"What's wrong with my major?"

"You're a music student. My brother says he doesn't like that because it takes a lot of money to play music."

A deep-rooted prejudice against the fine-arts!

Hwaryeong spoke sulkily, "Does he even have an ideal type of woman?"

"Actually though, my brother probably doesn't even think about his ideal type. I don't really know about things like his preference, but it'll work with the right mindset."

"A mindset he likes, huh."

Yurin looked at Da'in and continued, "I think Da'in-unni is the closest to my brother's ideal type."

"Why?" Da'in smiled happily.

Sometime in the middle of hunting in the caves of the City of Heaven, Lavias, Weed had told her:

They had many conversations at the time-- they'd also talked about ideal type.

"I really don't know if it's okay for me to ask..."

"It's fine, ask."

"Unni, how do you manage your long, straight hair? Do you go to the salon often?"

"Nope. My hair is naturally easy to style, so I've been growing it for a few years."

"You don't like earrings, rings, and other accessories, right?"

"Yeah. I don't put on cumbersome metal things."

"As I thought! You also like to wear clothes modestly, right?"

"I buy them mostly from the supermarket. Only the goods on sale

in February!"

Weed's perfect ideal type had appeared!

Da'in also realized this fact while answering, and her complexion changed as it paled. It was because she now realized why Weed had said she was very nice, and his ideal type.

*

Together, Weed and the barbarians took over the walls at lightning speed. The Undead had already pushed into the fortress so the walls were empty!

Weed took out the High Elf Yeric's Bow.

"Spirit of the wind."

Aided by the spirit of the wind, the arrow flew and penetrated the head of a Dark Knight in the blink of an eye.

The Salmere Tribe exclaimed, "Let's shoot arrows too!"

"Fire until your quiver is completely empty! The time has come for us hunters to act!"

The Salmere Tribe hunters took out their bows and fired. Despite shooting two, three arrows all at once, each shot was a perfect hit!

With arrows fired from above, they were utilizing the enemy's sieging advantage against them. Weed relentlessly only aimed at the Dark Knights.

- You have subdued Dark Knight Benson with an arrow.
- Experience has been acquired.

The arrow assault barraged the Dark Knights swarming below.

At a buffet, too, your hand went to the tasty foods first. "Pork roast and bulgogi are must-haves at a meat buffet!"

You had to fill your stomach with rapidly cooking meat. When Weed received his paycheck, he went to a meat buffet with his sister. They only stood after viciously eating meat to the point of nausea.

The satiety he felt when his belly was so full it was hard to walk... there was nothing more beautiful and peaceful than that memory.

Weed's treasured memories of his adolescence.

"There are monsters everywhere!"

This situation clearly reminded him of a buffet. Attacking weary enemies to increase his experience and contribution!

Since normal soldiers weren't even worth the value of the arrows, he obstinately avoided them. Even if Weed didn't get them, the Salmere Tribe's arrows were pouring down like rain.

"Enemies have appeared."

"We have to stop the arrows..."

The Embinyu Church's army wanted to retaliate against Weed and the Salmere Tribe, but they didn't have a chance to because the Undead army was bearing down on them.

Atop the naturally advantageous walls, they fired arrows over the heads of the Undead. The Undead were involuntarily protecting Weed's troops while fighting. Thus, due to the unexpected storm of arrows, the Embinyu Church's soldiers took continuous damage.

Dead soldiers instantly revived as Undead. The Undead increased exponentially. Simultaneously, the balance of the previously closely matched battle broke and the Undead army pressed forward.

The Vejague Tribe warriors drummed their shields with their swords. "We want to fight, too."

Weed nodded gravely. The current situation could not be solved

with arrows alone. They had to bring it to an end when the Embinyu's army was greatly weakened.

"I'll give you a hundred Salmere Tribesmen. For now, go towards the inside of the castle with them!"

"Inside of the castle?"

"Bypass the walls and enter the inner castle. There will probably be Priests and Magicians of the Embinyu Church there. Kill them!"

Using the observation skill he had honed through sculpting, Weed roughly estimated the fortress' structure. The Embinyu Church was still able to firmly hang on because of the fundamental strength of their Priests. Their soldiers took strength from the recovery and holy magic and fought on.

Their resting place had to be raided.

Then the soldiers wouldn't be able to heal anymore, and they wouldn't be able to take the poison attacks of the Imoogi and Undead, and thus they would fall apart.

There were probably Dark Knights protecting the Priests, but the Vejague Tribe was worth believing in.

"But we don't know where the Magicians and Priests are."

"The Salmere Tribe's pursuit skills will help you. Yellowy, you follow them too."

His command even considered the specialties of the three tribes.

"Yellowy, open a path from the front."

MOOOOO!

He wanted to summon Death Knight Van Hawk and entrust the command to him, but he couldn't call him as long as Balkan Demoph was nearby. He couldn't use stolen goods in front of its original owner. In addition, if Van Hawk sought to go away with Balkan then it would be nothing but an enormous loss for himself.

"Thanks for leaving it to us."

"We're going inside."

The Salmere Tribe and Vejague Tribe hunters ran from the walls with Yellowy and entered the castle.

Yellowy's gaze!

The ancient paintings, decorations, and furniture within the castle were on fire. A group of guards and zealots were spraying water to quench the fire.

MOOOOO.

Yellowy's previously naive eyes were filled with rage, resentment, and displeasure.

Some people were so poor they didn't even have a shack to protect them from rain, but they built and lived in a castle this big and magnificent! With now violent eyes, Yellowy struck the ground. The enraged Yellowy's battle speed increased far beyond that of a battle horse. Actually, for an ability acquired at a fairly high level, there was really only speed and unrelenting endurance.

Thud thud thud thud thud thud thud!

Yellowy charged through the corridor wreathed in flame and surrounded with artwork.

"It's a MAD COW!"

"For the likes of a COW to enter our temple! Hurry and slaughter it!"

"We should sacrifice it."

Yellowy rammed his head into the zealots and guards who were warding him off with spears. He fought by throwing his weight into his attack.

MOOOOO!

Yellowy bellowed as he opened a path.

While in the mad cow state, it was as if he had lost his vision and was just charging while ramming anything he saw. He threw his head up, kicked to the side, roundhouse kicked, and even kicked using his hind legs, demonstrating the incredible attack power of the bull!

He fought so well it was hard to believe it was really the meek Yellowy. After parting with Weed, Yellow's coyness had completely disappeared.

Part of the Vejague and Salmere Tribe were able to seize the opportunity and easily bypass the zealots.

Even if they died, Embinyu Soldiers were all revived as Undead because of Dark Rule. Since they had to clear away the Undead, too, it took a considerable amount of time to advance.

Because Balkan, Feylord, King Hydra, and Black Imoogi were all engaged in a fierce battle on the grounds at the center of the fortress, the shaking of the castle walls from explosions was also a frequent occurrence.

In places that had been cleared out, the Salmere Tribe's hunters set up traps. The Embinyu Soldiers who moved through the halls or gave chase took a lot of damage from the traps. Good use of the

Salmere Tribe's trap-setting skills was being made within the castle.

The Salmere Tribe discovered the Priests' waiting room.

"It's an enemy invasion."

The Priests, Dark Knights, and Soldiers resisted, but the Vejague Tribe completely wiped them out, even while taking great damage.

The number of Dark Knights was greatly reduced, and above all, the Priests' holy magic was no more. Knights lacking the strength to even pick up their shields were helpless against the long-range arrow attack.

They were able to end it with the Salmere Tribe's arrow attack, and the Vejague Tribe's valiant rush.

With the slaughter of over 200 Embinyu Church Priests, the Embinyu no longer had reserve forces.

*

While reaping excellent results, Weed and the savages fired at the Embinyu Church's troops.

The increased Undead army was running to the center of the

castle. The skeletons and Death Knights sprinted.

"Seems like we'll go up against Balkan."

Balkan, the King Hydra, the Imoogi, and Feylord were fighting fiercely at the center of the castle. At Balkan's command, the undead threw themselves on the King Hydra, Imoogi, and Feylord. There were times when one side would go on the defensive, but victory did not come easily. Balkan, the Imoogi, and the King Hydra recovered very quickly even if they were hurt. Their health and defense were also high.

The High Priest Feylord's Holy Barrier just neutralized most attacks. Even Balkan's and the Imoogi's magic were neutralized. The Undead couldn't even draw near him.

It was hard to concentrate because of the King Hydra's extended heads attacked in every direction.

"There'll be no end if it keeps going like this."

Weed thought that it was time to make a decision. The weak point of the four-part division was that even if one side weakened, it was hard to finish it because the attacks would just be concentrated on another side.

"There's no time. If this goes on any longer, I won't know who'll go down first. Feylord won't last long, but if Balkan wins or the Imoogi is left, it'll be really tough to get rid of them."

It was quite tricky to fight Balkan's Undead army, the flying, magic-casting Imoogi, and the King Hydra's high Health.

With the Imoogi's wings broken, this was his chance. Weed took out the Copper Plate of Rest.

"Deeeeeeath Seeentence!"

A dark energy gathered around the rusted, broken and cracked copper plate and headed into the fortress.

The durability was low, so it couldn't be used many times.

Weed threw down equal sentences on the King Hydra, High Priest Feylord, Lich Balkan, and the Black Imoogi. A dark red stigma was imprinted on their foreheads.

- You have laid the Death Sentence on King Hydra. Health recovery and body regeneration has been sealed for a day.

- You have laid the Death Sentence on High Priest Feylord. He cannot recover Health, Mana, and Stamina for one day.

- Lich Balkan Demoph's ability to Drain Life and Drain Mana have been sealed for a day.

- Imoogi Freykis' Health and Mana recovery will not work for one

day.

- The Copper Plate of Rest has 4 durability remaining.

Death Sentence applies critical restrictions on creatures! In return, the Copper Plate of Rest was on the verge of breaking.

Weed used the Copper Plate of Rest again. "Defiled dead ones, follow your true master!"

The Demonic Spirits that had become puppets of the Embinyu Church and were fighting the Undead and King Hydra! The Demonic Spirits rebelled and did not listen to Feylord. Weed used the Copper Plate of Rest to have them attack the Embinyu Church soldiers that were protecting the area around Feylord.

- The Copper Plate of Rest has 3 durability remaining.

With the dark red brands on the Imoogi, King Hydra, and the Lich Balkan, they were forced to take serious damage.

The Lich Balkan's endless Health and Mana absorption had stopped, so he could no longer spew nearly infinite magic attacks.

The one that the greatest blow was probably the King Hydra. The King Hydra moved its nine heads to devour its targets and spew

venom, but its huge body was nearly motionless, so it was taking many attacks. It quickly healed when the Embinyu soldiers and Undead stabbed and slashed it with spears and blades, but it no longer recovered.

— KUAAAAAAAAAAAA!

The King Hydra's scream rang shrilly throughout the fortress.

With the Demonic Spirits converted, a battle royal where friend or foe was indistinguishable was unfolding within the fortress.

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"It's a success."

Whenever he used the Copper Plate of Rest, Weed couldn't suppress his nervousness. Since it was on the verge of breaking, the copper plate could be a defective item. There were more than one or two fake or defective items that looked fine on the outside but had unbelievable interiors.

He worried that if it broke even before he tried using it, what the hell could he do!

"As expected, I've got to use this carefully."

He only felt relief after he'd used the Copper Plate of Rest, however carelessness was prohibited!

A huge creature ran amok while destroying the fortress' towers. The King Hydra.

It was coming to attack him after discovering that Weed was the ringleader behind this whole fiasco.

— I WILL KILL YOU.

With Undead dangling from it, the King Hydra was coming at him with incredible force.

Weed clicked his tongue. The appraisal for what he could earn had dropped considerably in no time.

"It'll be hard to get a full price for the leather."

King Hydra had only 5 heads left, and the body was also riddled with wounds. After losing its regeneration ability, bitten by the Imoogi, and having a Balkan's curse cast on it, it wasn't in top form.

The huge monster was near death.

In comparison, Weed, Bingryong, and the Phoenixes were alive and well, and over 5,700 barbarians also remained.

Weed raised his hand.

"Arrow attack!"

The Salmere Tribe fired arrows towards the King Hydra. The sharply pointed arrows' penetration strength increased as they spiraled around and around.

— KYAAAAAA!

The King Hydra cried as it was struck by thousands of arrows.

Weed finally declared, "I've given up on even getting a second-hand price for you."

The King Hydra's leather was heavy and thick. Even so, because it was precious, it wasn't often used to make leather armor. Priests, Elemental Shamans, Summoners, and Magicians could not wear the King Hydra's heavy leather while fighting. The defense also fell compared to steel plate mixed with Mithril, so it wasn't an easy material to sell.

"At best, this material is only suited for making winter socks. Everyone, attack!" Weed made a violent command.

Bingryong immediately flew over and bit into the King Hydra's neck.

A massive body hundreds of meters long!

Bingryong, sculpted from a raw chunk of ice that was formed from gathering of ice and snow, blocked the King Hydra's charge with its hefty mass.

The Salmere Tribe shot arrows, the Vejague Tribe wielded their blades after returning from carrying out their task, and the Lekiyé Tribe used magic to strike the King Hydra.

— Savages! To think insects like you would dare!

Nevertheless, the King Hydra leapt about courageously.

Even while entangled by Bingryong, it flung its tail as the heads shot forward and swallowed the barbarians. It even wrapped Bingryong's body with its head and pressed down.

It wasn't an ultra high level boss for nothing.

It was well over level 500, and it held its own in a fight against the Imoogi, Balkan's curses, and the Embinyu Church's attacks.

Weed waited a while. 'Despite resisting like that, it won't be long until it dies.'

For now, he took out the High Elf Bow and only shot arrows.

King Hydra was a stepping stone to his goal, and because there were a lot more enemies he must fight, he didn't deem it right to use up all his energy here.

Although he has the skill Power to Reject Death, he wanted to play it safe because it was only valid for one use.

He only had to wait for the King Hydra to kill itself from exhaustion!

More than 100 Vejague Tribe members had been eaten.

— Something like you can not kill me!

The King Hydra roared ferociously.

It opened its five mouths and shouted towards the sky.

Although it was pierced with thousands of arrows to the point of resembling a porcupine, and those wounds getting bigger and bigger, it refused to die.

"So was that... really true?"

Weed clicked his tongue as he stood before the majesty of a monster that would not fall.

The legend of the King Hydra.

According to the records of the Versailles Continent, the King Hydra would never die until its nine heads are cut off.

Now, they needed to cut off the five remaining heads.

"But there is a limit to King Hydra's vitality."

Thanks to the Sentence of Death, the decapitated heads wouldn't regenerate. It'd be extremely difficult to cut off all 9 heads, but now it was not impossible.

Weed spread his Wings of Light and flew towards the front of the King Hydra.

— KYAO!

The King Hydra stretched its head.

It opened its mouth and thick teeth that could crunch up iron were visible. Its strongly acidic saliva fell in drops and melted rocks. Anyone who gets swallowed up by this monster would face certain death.

"Master, dodge!" Bingryong cautioned. He was wrestling with the King Hydra, so he couldn't save Weed.

"Master, it's dangerous."

"Avoid it!"

"We're going to help you!"

"Master, come back!"

Yellowy and the Phoenixes' commitment were shown one after another.

They were all worried about Weed.

The Weed that his sculptures knew was someone who abused them, made fun of them, and only took the spoils of a battle at the drop of a penny!

The battle fought against Embinyu Church displayed a different side of him, but he almost lost his life because of the faceoff.

Perhaps it was inevitable because of limited vitality and mana, but all of Weed's sculptures apart from Bingryong saw Weed as someone they needed to protect.

'This is my battle.'

Weed folded the Wings of Light and fell from the air.

He dodged the King Hydra's attack and flew to the side of one of

the heads to Bingryong's side.

— Kyaoooooooooo!

King Hydra's heads were aimed at Weed like vipers. The four outraged heads were shooting towards Weed.

Bingryong unfolded his wings to try and stop them, but two of the heads still threatened Weed.

Weed avoided the heads by a width of a hair by flying into the air.

There was no room for relaxed movements. Because of the close proximity, it was impossible to move like so without predicting the attacks.

"Bingryong, I need you to do something for me."

Bingryong replied while biting into the King Hydra's neck.

"What do you want at a time like this, Master."

"Let go of the heads."

"Then you will become its target, Master"

"It's okay. Let go, now."

Bingryong believed in Weed. During the battle of the Northern

Expedition, Bingryong wouldn't have been able to hunt down the Bone Dragon without Weed.

As soon as the King Hydra's heads were free, with strong hostility, it attacked Weed. Weed took the priority rather than Bingryong who was right next to it.

— KUAAA!

King Hydra's attacks were menacing and dangerous.

Weed stuck close to it and avoided its thrilling attacks.

He flew below Bingryong and King Hydra's legs and between its armpits to avoid the blows.

When he finished avoiding them all, King Hydra's long necks were entangled up like as if it went through a washing machine.

Weed recalled his experience with his part time job at the laundromat. The ignorant people that were brutally using automatic washing for good clothes worth more than 100,000 won (~\$100)! It was a big mistake to think that putting detergent in would solve everything!

"It is best to hand wash laundry."

Weed sat down on its neck and raised up his sword.

"Blessing!"

The Ring of the High Priest that he was wearing covered his entire body in light.

- The Blessing of the High Priest has been used.
- Physical abilities are enhanced for 20 minutes.

It's duration was brief but he decided to use the blessing for the critical moment.

The legendary sword that was said to have cut down an Inferior Demonic Ice Daemon fell and cut down on the Hydra's nape.

"Sword Kaiser!"

His strongest attack skill.

Weed used his sword to cut down the tangled neck of the King Hydra as if it was a ball of yarn. Of course, the thick leather didn't tear with a single cut.

"Sword Kaiser!"

Using his single point attack technique, he struck down his sword

as if he was splitting firewood.

"There are no necks that don't get cut after ten strikes!"

Weed did not spare any health and mana for his skills and hit the King Hydra's neck.

Tied up with Bingryong's huge body, the King Hydra's necks were cut off one by one and were pumping out blue blood. It did not revive again.

Then, after all 9 of the King Hydra's heads had fallen--

- Level up.

- Level up.

The violent monster King Hydra, which dominated the Nopren Swamp, has gone into eternal rest.

For completing a great achievement, Fame has increased by 350.

- Strength has increased by 3.

- Vitality has increased by 10.

He had managed to level up two times for getting the finishing blow on the extremely injured King Hydra.

Of course Weed did not forget what he needed to do; to pick up the spoils.

- A large sapphire crystal gem has been acquired.
- A strangely shaped feather hat has been acquired.
- Sophia's Great-Spear has been acquired.
- A total of 3,140 antique gold coins have been acquired.

1 Gold and gold coins are usually exchanged at the same rate. However, old coins had antique value to them too.

"This isn't a bad profit."

He should also check the other items but the battle wasn't over yet.

"Yellowy, come here!"

Weed pulled out his sculpting knife after calling for Yellowy.

Slice slice slice.

His hand movements carefully cut the King Hydra for its leather! Although the leather had a lot of scratches, he still put it aside in case there was another need for it.

Weed even made sure to take the King Hydra's head.

- The King Hydra's severed head #1 had been acquired.

Five heads!

A normal monster's body only left useful parts and disappeared, but since these remained intact, he picked them up.

He made Yellowy drag the King Hydra's leather and its huge heads.

"As expected, there's a lot to gain from a big monster."

This must be how a fisherman must feel when he catches a whale.

The story of the old man catching a whale... There even was a famous novel about a man returning back to land after facing a storm and losing his whale meat due to sharks.

How great must have been the old man's regret that it could resound in hearts worldwide!

Chapter 8: Commander Of The Battlefield

Weed, the group of savages, the Phoenixes, and Bingryong took a break.

The original plan was to seek more prey for contribution points and spoils. However, the Vejague and Salmere Tribes' Stamina was dropping, and the Lekiyé Tribe was fainting from mental exhaustion, so a break was unavoidable.

Weed held bandages and ran around treating the Vejague tribe.

"First Aid!"

His hands did their utmost to tightly wrap the wounds. This wasn't because he was a devoted saint, but rather, for his objective to drag them further into the battlefield.

However, his saved up herbs soon began to run low. The Vejague Tribe's warriors were the size of mountains and they had many big wounds, so it couldn't be helped.

"Yellowy, we're running out of herbs. Spit some saliva out!"

The bull's thick saliva was used instead of herbs.

After treating the troops like so, they advanced once more.

Balkan, the Imoogi, and Feylord's fight was reaching its final stage.

— Kiyaaaaaaaaooooo!

"I'll kill you and turn you into an Undead."

"I will not forgive any of you who have defiled the holy ground of the Embinyu."

They were waging a fierce battle with strong hostility against their opponents.

Balkan's robe was torn, completely revealing his skeleton. He was a high-ranking monster who had covered the continent in blood and corpses! However, his strength was limited by the holy sword in his chest, and because of Death Sentence, it was no longer possible for him to absorb Health and Mana. It could be said that his life had become wretched indeed.

"Evil Undead, return to the place where thou wouldst sleep. Turn Undead!"

Undead cleansing magic! The Embinyu Church's Priests' Turn Undead magic was focused on Balkan.

"Not yet... There is work left to be done here. There are too many living beings."

Balkan was the sovereign ruler of the Undead. He tried to eradicate the Embinyu Church while commanding the Undead, but they stubbornly held on until the end, so it wasn't easy. Moreover, the Imoogi was spewing magic so the damage to the Undead Army was also great.

At last, a problem arose with Balkan's body. Bright light erupted from the holy sword lodged in his chest.

Craaaack!

A large crack formed on his skull, and the Death Aura that had surrounded his body became thin and faded.

"This sword's curse is..."

The Holy Sword was inversely absorbing Balkan's mana.

Balkan's body was wrapped light as radiant as the sun.

"This... I cannot go on. On the day I clear this sword's curse, I will surely have my revenge."

Leaving behind words filled with hatred, neither the Lich Balkan or the Holy Sword remained.

He was not completely destroyed, but unsummoned! Lich Balkan had returned to the location of the Life Force Vessel where his life was sealed because he had no Mana left to compose his body.

The Undead were noticeably weaker after Balkan disappeared.

"Kuueell?"

The Zombies forgot about facing enemies and were in confusion. A part of the Skeletons even returned to piles of bones. The Doom Knights' Death Auras were also weakened, so they dropped like stones from the purification magic of the Embinyu Priests. Leaping ghosts and the innumerable Undead Army wandered about.

"It's too bad Balkan already left." Weed smacked his lips in regret.

Balkan, the leader of the Immortal Legion, was indeed the real deal. He had shown them an incredible sight, demonstrating that Undead worthy of being written in the history of the Versailles Continent had to be at his level.

The Undead Army Balkan made had to be dealt with in order to hunt him, so for most guilds, he was truly an enemy they could not even conceive!

"His ability to handle Undead is far more outstanding than Lich Shire's."

He mass-produced low-ranking Undead, made them fight, and even aided their abilities. If not for the Death Sentence and the constraints of the Holy Sword stabbed into his chest, he could have captured the Embinyu Fortress alone.

A chance to hunt Balkan was far and few in between. Weed would've won even if he had to sacrifice all the garish savages, so it was regretful that Balkan had left.

Even with Balkan gone, the situation was not looking good for the Imoogi. Riddled with wounds, it couldn't even fly due to its torn wings, and the Undead and Dark Knights were brandishing their swords at it. With its movements restricted, there was even a war being waged between the Undead and Dark Knights atop the Imoogi's back.

Indeed, it was hard for the Embinyu Church's situation to be any worse than this.

There weren't even a dozen priests left, and fewer than 100 Dark Knights were left to barely block the Undead Army! It was thanks to the High Priest Feylord emitting divine power and pushing back the Undead Army that they were able to endure.

Balkan, who departed and abandoned the Undead Army. The craft Imoogi, who reserved its strength to breathlessly save some Health. The Embinyu Church, who were trying to drive out the intruders.

This was the place Weed dragged the savages and the sculptured

lifeforms to.

— Ringleader!

"Is he the lowly human who summoned Balkan Demoph here?"

"You're the culprit who brought all these monsters here!" The representative of the Undead was one among the Doom Knights.

Weed received violent castigation from the three groups. However, he spread his shoulders wide and spoke tenaciously. "As a rule, the popular guy receives malicious remarks."

His baseless sense of blamelessness!

Weed said towards the Imoogi, "If you were stronger, you would have been able to kill all those ugly enemies. Right?"

—

Next, it was the Doom Knights: "Who told him to appear with a blade in his chest? Even Balkan was unsummoned because he was weak."

Then Feylord: "I was originally enemies with you. Who are you resenting and to whom are you griping at?"

Such self-centered statements and endless self-justifications!

"History only remembers the winner. It doesn't even care about the cowardly excuses of the losers. Isn't that right, Bingryong?"

"Master's words are true." Bingryong, who was just as underhanded as Weed!

"The strong is not the one who wins; the winner is the one who is strong."

"You are indeed our Master."

"Smart."

Weed drew positive responses from Bingryong and the Phoenixes by citing the proverbs he'd picked up.

There was still a duration of more than 10 hours left on Death Sentence. However, there was nothing good about dragging the time on!

With the Undead Army Balkan left numbering in the thousands, the Embinyu Church's Priests and Feylord, and even the Imoogi, the battle was not finished.

"Wipe them out!"

As soon as Weed announced the start of the battle, Bingryong

stretched his maw wide. Ice Breath shot forth as he expelled the breath he'd been holding in one go!

The pure white Breath shot towards the place where the Imoogi and the Undead were gathered.

While treading upon the earth, the Undead froze in place. The Imoogi covered its body with the one wing he had left to block it, but the Undead couldn't resist and became chunks of ice. The Undead that were outside the Breath's range came charging in.

"Block them!"

The Vejague Tribe Warriors went on the defensive, swinging their hatchets and hammers. They destroyed the bones of Skeletons and slaughtered Zombies.

The Dark Rule magic was cancelled with Balkan's unsummoning, so the Undead army no longer grew.

"Summon Death Knight, Van Hawk!"

At last, the Death Knight appeared with eerie smoke.

"There are... many enemies worth fighting here."

"Then fight!"

The Death Knight waged his battle as he fought on par with five

Doom Knights.

*

Following the point where the King Hydra's heads were chopped off, there was a festive atmosphere at KMC Media.

"Hurray!"

"He did it!"

As he watched the transmission of the video in real time, Director Kang was as pleased as if he'd done it himself.

The content of the broadcast had passed Weed creating sculptures on the River of Lamentations and the part where Weed took the Guardian Knights to interfere with the Embinyu Church's ritual.

With Bingryong's appearance, the viewer ratings had already exceeded a record-breaking 27.3%. The Royal Road forums were flooded with questions asking about the Sculptor. Due to the appearance of Bingryong, there were also hundreds of questions regarding the Sculptor's connection with the God of War Weed!

"Now all he has left to do is wipe out the remnants."

The High Priest Feylord alone was a top monster, so he was in no

position to be careless! Since the Undead army and the Imoogi were still there, the battle was not over.

*

Weed was most wary of the Embinyu Priests.

"Feylord won't recover, but it'll be dangerous if those Priests regain their strength!"

The Death Sentence only affected the High Priest Feylord. The Dark Knights and Priests could return to their normal states with the passing of time.

"They must be subdued."

In order to attack the Embinyu Church, the encroaching Undead had to be cleaned up.

"Vejague Tribe, take the lead! Salmere Tribe, lineup in the center! Lekiyee Tribe will standby at the rear!"

Following Weed's Lion's Roar, the barbarians quickly fell into charging formation. He was going to bring the three tribes together in a union and use them in battle.

It was undesirable for the alliance tribes to conduct a siege of the

fortress and the union had taken too much damage. Since they had neither Priests nor Clerics, the alliance tribes had basically only recovered with consumables.

However, in terrain that was littered with broken wreckage from the Imoogi and King Hydra rampaging, like now, the three tribes became a union with the optimal efficiency.

"Strike with spells and arrows. Attack!"

The Salmere Tribe's arrows and the Lekiyé Tribe's spell attack was fired at the Undead group. When their formation scattered, the Vejague Tribe advanced step by step. The Undead rushed in fearlessly, but they firmly resisted like an iron wall.

Weed's sharp gaze examined the entire battlefield.

"Capture the high ground first. Salmere Tribe, fire a volley at the ridge on your right!"

After a concentrated attack of arrows, the Vejague Tribe seized the area. They occupied the terrain favorably and built their line of defense while hunting the Undead.

"The unit Serpic leads, fall back after 20 steps!"

Rather than pressuring the Undead more, Weed made the entire barbarian group turn like a cogwheel.

"Vejague Tribe, fall out and Salmere Tribe, get in front. Fire a barrage! Salmere Tribe, wheel to the right, and Lekiyé Tribe, attack with spells. As soon as the spell attack ends, Vejague Tribe, charge as one!"

As he smoothly ordered charges and retreats, the entire army was made a living organism. The whole unit revolved as they adapted to the terrain, rapidly occupied the high ground and moved. It was a cogwheel tactic based on high stamina and mobility.

The Undead army, who had lost their commander, were slaughtered horribly by the arrow and spell onslaught, as well as the axe attacks of the Vejague Tribe.

Though it appeared to be a common tactic for reducing the number of sacrifices as much as possible, the results showed its hidden, gruesome, and destructive power.

If the Undead had emotions, they would have been driven into a state of panic and suffered additional immense damage.

"We can win."

"We'll be victorious!"

The morale of the barbarian unit led by Weed reached its peak.

"Phoenixes and Bingryong, strike the left flank!"

In places where the Undead gathered, Bingryong and the Phoenixes actively scattered the enemies. Their separate role ensured that the Undead were distracted. Balkan's departure robbed the Undead of organized direction, and they were rendered hopelessly cornered.

In this moment, the barbarian unit led by Weed appeared to be a unit of the highest caliber.

"Troops, divide!"

The barbarians had low intelligence, but their military learning efficiency was considerable. They found work that needed to be done faster than regular soldiers and fulfilled their duties.

Weed divided his troops into 3 cogwheels and fought the Undead. The 3 cogwheels made gaps as they intersected with each other, and when Undead were trapped in those gaps, they were crushed.

"Kiyooooo!"

"Doom Knights, advance!"

With the Doom Knights at their fore, the Undead pressed in.

The Vejague unit, which had soon reached its goal by advancing under concentrated arrow and spell attacks, had retreated far to the back.

Trapped within the cogwheel's vice, the front and sides of the Undead army suffered intense attacks and had their forces depleted.

The Vejague Tribe's Warriors avoided battle on the front lines and saved their stamina. When they spotted cracks in the Undead army, they had opportunities to reap fame for their bravery.

A strategy that maximized the advantages of maintaining the distance, the terrain, the concentration of firepower, and scattering the enemies' defence!

The Undead group melted in an instant.

"A path has opened! Let's go!"

Weed ran between the Undead with Yellowy. The goal was High Priest Feylord!

Bingryong and the Phoenixes guarded him from above, and 400 Vejague tribesmen broke away from the cogwheel formation to formulate the storming party.

Divided into small groups, the Undead group could no longer pose a threat. However, while they fought the Undead, the Priests would have recovered considerably. Weed couldn't help but be impatient.

'There aren't many Dark Knights left.'

There were too few Dark Knights for the Priests to get the most out of their unique blessing or healing. Weed calculated that he could leave the Priests to the Vejague Tribe.

The Dark Knights were spotted.

"Salmere Tribe, arrow attack! Lekiyé Tribe, support them!" Weed's Lion's Roar burst forth.

The arrows fired by the Salmere Tribe fell like rain upon the place the Dark Knights were blocking. The Lekiyé Tribe's charms and flame spells were also unleashed towards the Embinyu Priests, while the Vejague Tribe charged towards the defensive wall the Dark Knights erected!

Plastered with blessings and equipped with good weapons and armor, the Dark Knights were extremely powerful. Nevertheless, the Vejague Tribe brandished their short axes and took up the challenge.

Sitting abreast on Yellowy, Weed stormed past the Dark Knights and flew onwards. He planned to simply pass through, even if the Vejague Tribe took some damage. Towards where High Priest Feylord was!

The corpulently paunchy Feylord cast holy magic. "Oh, Embinyu God who reigns over all the world, we dedicate our bodies to thee.

Bring down thy stern punishment on those who defiled this land."

Feylord's ultimate sacrifice spell!

- Embinyu Church's High Priest Feylord has dedicated his body.

Cracks have appeared on the statue of the Embinyu God.

Weed looked up and saw that the Embinyu God statue in the middle of the fortress was collapsing. The statue of the god with 12 arms shattered into thousands of fragments and rained down.

Weed and Yellowy, as well as the Undead, the Vejague, and the Salmere Tribe, were all within the attack range. With nowhere to run, the statue's fragments fell. The metal shards were even exuding a sinister aura.

Considering the size and weight of the several hundred-meter statue, it was a large-scale disaster.

"NO!" Weed cried out.

How the hell could his precious alliance tribes be damaged like this!

Even if Weed were to die, he could revive through Power to Reject Death, but only a few hundred would be left of the alliance

tribes.

As large as steel reinforcement bars, the fragments were plummeting down terrifyingly. As if the sky was crashing down, finding a place to dodge was difficult.

Even the all-weather Korean cattle Yellowy would perish.

Terrible damage would be inflicted when they were on the verge of quest success.

"Sculpting Blade."

Weed spread his Wings of Light and took off into the sky. The Daemon Sword he held emitted a bright light.

He had absolutely no faith in whether he'd succeed or not, but he intended to blow away the falling fragments with his sword. For the sake of somehow saving Yellowy, he would try until the moment he died.

Just then, something hot approached.

"Master, we will try to block it."

The Five Phoenix Brothers flew in and wrapped their broad wings around the falling debris of the statue.

BOOOOM!

Fragments several meters large exploded onto the Phoenixes' heads, bodies, and wings.

Saturated with the negative divine power of the Embinyu, the statue debris dealt immense blows to even the searing Phoenixes!

In the wide range that the Phoenixes blocked, a great many fragments were falling.

- Phoenix 5 has suffered 3,859 damage to its Health. It recovered 759 Health thanks to the influence of the other Phoenixes.

- Phoenix 5 has suffered 10,112 damage to its Health. It recovered 1,029 Health thanks to the influence of the other Phoenixes.

- Phoenix 5 has suffered 7,326 damage to its Health. It recovered 817 Health thanks to the influence of the other Phoenixes.

...

"Master, sorry I could not protect you to the end..."

- From a severe blow of divine power, Phoenix 5's Health has completely disappeared.

One of the Phoenixes was destroyed.

Though the fire attribute Phoenixes had high Health and recovered quickly, they were helplessly destroyed by the combined physical and divine strength of the fragments.

- Phoenix 4 has suffered 2,905 damage to its Health. It recovered 315 Health thanks to the influence of the other Phoenixes.

...

Phoenix 4 was also killed by the debris. Phoenixes 3 and 2 could not endure the many fragments and also disappeared.

Before Weed's eyes, the 4 Phoenixes disappeared while blocking the fragments.

They could no longer be called the 5 Phoenix Brothers anymore.

"My Phoenixes!" Weed wailed bitterly as he fell to the ground.

Only one of the Phoenixes lived, and over half of the Alliance tribes were destroyed by unstoppable debris. If Bingryong hadn't covered them with his wings, the damage would have been even greater. Bingryong's Health was also reduced by about two thirds.

On the other hand, the Embinyu Church's Dark Knights, Priests, and Soldiers were also destroyed by the debris.

— GRAAAAWWRR! I WILL PUNISH YOU.

The Imoogi shook his one remaining wing, raising an intense gust that swept up dust. The barbarians couldn't endure it and tumbled to the ground.

There weren't many enemies left. With Balkan, the King Hydra, and Feylord gone, the Imoogi wanted the world to become his!

— How dare you summon me? I will kill all of you and be reborn into a true Dragon.

The Black Imoogi roared fiercely.

The Dragon Fear's might swept through and passed the Embinyu Fortress, where violent fighting had taken place. It affected Weed, Yellowy, Bingryong, and the barbarians, who had lost their will to fight from the damage their comrades had suffered.

"Ughhh, I can't fight like this."

"We can't attack the Dragon. Something sinister will happen."

"It was too much to start this fight in the first place."

The barbarians fell into panic.

- Physical ability will be limited due to Dragon Fear.

There will be a 5% chance of paralysis.

Due to insufficient Wisdom, skill use is limited by 77%.

Since the the Dragon Fear caused this much damage despite Weed's fighting spirit, there was no need to say anything about the primitive barbarians.

'Even if I pull the barbarians together with Lion's Roar, it won't be much help if it's not the Salmere Tribe.'

The Imoogi was an experienced veteran that had undergone and survived vicious battles. It could get from a tower on one side to a tower far away by simply sweeping open one wing. The Vejague Tribe wouldn't even be able to chase it, and they would fall over exhausted because of their wobbly legs.

For a Dragon, which could be called a helmsman of magic, even spell attacks were useless unless they were of a very high level. It was a fake Dragon, but it was by far the strongest monster Weed had ever faced.

Balkan was definitely strong, but for individual force alone, there were none as great as the Black Imoogi.

'But there aren't many chances to use the alliance tribes in battle, either.'

Weed was about to hurriedly use Lion's Roar. Then, in the moment that was was going to utilize Lion's Roar while forcefully freeing his body, which was being suppressed by Dragon Fear—!

FLAAASSH!

A pure white flame emerged where the Phoenixes had been destroyed.

Purification Flames.

The surviving Phoenix 1 flew to that spot.

The Phoenixes possessed the attribute of Unquenchable Fire. Their Health had dissipated due to the Embinyu Church's divine power, but they had left Purification Flames.

Phoenix 1 opened its beak and consumed the Purifications of that Unquenchable Fire.

Its body became more and more slim and elegant as its feathers blazed brilliantly. As if a golden sun had risen, a blindingly beautiful Phoenix 1 was reborn!

- Phoenix has grown.

Taking in the life source of its brethren, its Health has increased

by 2.8 times and its Mana has increased by 2.2 times.

- Level has increased by 67.

- The Unquenchable Fire attribute has changed; it has changed to the Power to Dominate Fire.

The Phoenix's mountainous, broad shoulders and large head became as slim as a crane's. It landed on the ground as its bright red tail feathers fluttered.

Arson had reduced the Embinyu Fortress into a sea of flames. The Phoenix glanced lightly the blazing citadel. When it did so, the flames subsided on their own!

It had expressed its Power to Dominate all fire.

— I will engrave into your bones the meaning of true violence, fear, and the horrible price of messing with a Dragon...

The Black Imoogi's words slowly trickled to a stop.

The majesty of the newly born Phoenix was not normal. Bingryong and the Phoenix. The contrasting two ice and fire monsters were glaring at it. It wouldn't be afraid if its body was in normal condition, but it was no exaggeration to call it a critically ill patient right now!

The Black Imoogi naturally continued to talk.

— It's not like I don't have the desire to beat it into you, but in this Versailles Continent where we live together, we must maintain consideration and care for the weak as well as the peace. Let's end this pointless fight here, I have something urgent to do, so I'm going back now.

The Black Imoogi turned around. It looked like it was obviously rushing off!

Before it could even take two steps, Weed spoke. "Hey, you."

The Black Imoogi ignored him and kept walking.

"Hey, come over here."

The Black Imoogi conveyed its words without turning its head.

— Say why you're telling me to go there?

"Where are you going."

— I'm going home.

"Are you joking? Come back here."

— There's something I have to do in a hurry...

The Black Imoogi really did not want to go back. However, when Bingryong and the Phoenix approached, it returned to its original location.

— To be honest, haven't I fought really hard after suddenly being summoned? I killed a lot of bad guys and helped you, so I shall go back now.

The Black Imoogi's sensible logic was this: it was going home since it had finished the work entrusted to it.

Anyone with a conscience wouldn't be able to treat a monster that had spent its body and helped out roughly.

Since the Black Imoogi was outstandingly intelligent, it conveyed an effective and convincing situation, but Weed cut him down explicitly.

"It may have been easy for you to come here, but you need my permission to leave."

— Such an unfair law is...

"The law is far and the knife is close. This earth was originally like that. You have a Dragon Heart, right?"

— I'm still young so I don't have such a thing yet.

A premature fake Dragon!

"You might have it, though. Has the area around your heart been warm sometimes, or have you ever felt strength coming from it?"

— Urk, don't even! I've got low blood pressure, so it's hard to rise every morning. Sometimes I have trouble breathing too...

"So you'll have no regrets even if you die."

Weed brought down the conclusion he had decided on beforehand. A chance to catch a boss monster was rare, so to simply send it off was out of the question.

'Bingryong has probably recovered a lot, too.' He had simply dragged on the time with conversation to give Bingryong a break.

The Black Imoogi's eyes flashed terrifyingly. It had suppressed its nature as a violent monster, and had endured more than enough.

— KUAK! I will kill you all!

The Imoogi raised its tail and struck out at Bingryong. It was a sharp surprise attack, but they were prepared.

"Sculpting Blade!"

Weed rushed in with his sword, and Bingryong and the Phoenix also assaulted. The barbarians had also recovered from their state of panic and were now supporting them with magic and arrows, which was much better than not having them at all. The Salmere Tribe showed the Imoogi a taste of their sharp, wedged arrowheads.

As the Imoogi leapt up and tumbled, it crushed the Embinyu Fortress' walls and destroyed its spire.

After about 30 minutes of frenzies combat, Bingryong tore into the Imoogi's nape, and the Phoenix pecked it torso with its beak.

The Imoogi's massive health was reaching rock bottom.

"Kaiser Sword!"

Weed stabbed his sword into the crown of the Imoogi's head, the fatal weak point Weed had discovered through the battle. That was the sole place where even the Imoogi's sturdy scales that were reminiscent of a Dragon's skin were ineffective.

— KYAAA0000.

The Black Imoogi suddenly disappeared from their eyes.

Level has increased.

Level has increased.

Level has increased.

- The Imoogi Freykis has lived a long life and has entered eternal rest.

For an unsurpassable achievement, Fame has increased by 760.

The stats of everyone who participated in the battle have increased by 3.

Chapter 9: The Tyrant's Return

The muscular savages that were reminiscent of barbarians raised their weapons and shouted a battle cry.

"We won!"

"This is the result of combining our strength."

"Our great commander Weed led the battle to victory! Hurrah!"

- You have acquired a new title, Commander who Hunted the Imoogi.

Influence when commanding soldiers has increased by 35%.

Maximum loyalty has improved, the effect when training troops has been raised to a max of 20%.

The strength and mobility of the army you command in battle will increase by 3%.

When hunting monsters of a lower level than the Imoogi, soldiers will never cower.

It was a tremendous achievement, but Weed did not take credit for it alone.

"Bingryong."

"Speak, Master."

"You worked hard. It's all thanks to you."

"Thanks for the recognition, Master."

Bingryong had cracks on every corner of his body from the tough battle as he replied with a haggard look.

"Phoenix."

"Yes, Master."

"It's regretful that your brothers were lost. I was able to survive thanks to that, but it would have been better if I had been the one to die; my heart is torn. But because you did the work of your other brothers, I am comforted. You have truly suffered much hardship."

"I will continue to devote myself in the future as well."

"Yellowy."

"What is it, Master?"

"I am watching over you as you constantly labor behind the scenes. Yellowy, you are such a faithful and competent fellow."

Weed stroked Yellowy's head. Since it wasn't something that cost money, he made do with words of praise.

'I've got to at least reward them for their merits.'

There was no need to hold back on giving praise.

Of course, he monopolized the items from the Imoogi.

- You have acquired Jorudia's Signet.

- You have acquired 8 diamonds.

- You have acquired Isuren's Magic Weapon #3.

The Imoogi did not have many items. However, depending on the appraised price, the diamonds could go from 1,000 to thousands of gold.

"I can get roughly 10 thousand gold each for diamonds like these."

Jorudia's Signet was the seal of a now vanished Kingdom's lord. Owning it raised Fame by 150. Besides that, there was no telling if it had antique value or it was a quest item someone needed.

"If there is someone who needs it, they'll appear in the auction site sometime. Since I don't need Fame, it'll be good to sell it off when I need money."

Isuren's Magic Weapon was a product of the talented master craftsman and Enchanter, Jerome Isuren.

"Identify!"

- You have failed to identify.

It was a magic wand, but it was impossible to check even with Weed's identification skill. It was possible that its value could only be known if a Magician personally identified it.

"Must be something expensive."

For now, he had high hopes as he packed it away.

The Sophia's Great-spear he got from hunting the King Hydra was also good weapon. A great-spear suited for use by a Barbarian or Giant, it was way more powerful than spears used by humans. However, because the level requirement was 470, he was doubtful that there was a player who could actually use it.

"If I put it on the auction site then someone will probably buy it."

Weed packed the loot and then pulled out his sculpting knife. More goods to be obtained remained.

Slice slice!

He got the Imoogi's meat and leather. By utilizing his Cooking and Tailoring skills, he could get more meat and leather. He manually carved the meat and leather off the corpse.

- You have acquired Imoogi Leather.
- You have acquired Imoogi Meat.

Imoogi Leather : Durability 30/30.

An item related to the production skill, Tailoring.

The ultimate Tailoring material, it is an exceedingly valuable item for making clothes or equipment. Imbued with the power of Mana, it grants resistance to poison and amplifies darkness related powers.

Imoogi Leather can not be handled with ordinary Tailoring skills or tools.

Only a Tailor who has risen to the ranks of a Master Craftsman will be granted an incomparably precious experience and the opportunity to create a masterpiece.

Traces of battle are left on the leather, so its value has been slightly compromised. In order to manufacture it into a product, it requires additional repair.

It is a top-grade Tailoring item.

Options: Amplifies darkness related powers. Increases maximum Mana by 20,000. Has poison resistance, so will not be easily poisoned.

Very light material.

Imoogi Meat: Durability 7/7.

Food. It is also used as a cooking ingredient.

The fresh flesh of a recently caught Imoogi; even if it is eaten as sashimi, it doesn't seem like it will be fishy at all. Preserving the best nutrients, it is a food that provides a great boost to Stamina.

As a Chef, no matter what type of food it is, you'd want to challenge yourself by making some. This meat is highly recommended when one desires to make the best food on earth and when cooking for a lover who is dearest to you.

It is an extremely rare cooking ingredient, and its price is difficult to determine.

It will be an incomparable honor for the person who tastes this. The disadvantage is that it has a slightly fishy smell.

Meat of the highest quality.

Options: The effect of eating 1 kilogram through normal methods

Vitality increases by 20. Maximum health increases by 120. Strength increases by 7. Fame increases by 150.

Greatly aids towards obtaining the title of Gourmet.

There is a significant difference in effects depending on the food created by the Chef and the techniques used. However, there are no additional increases even if more than 1 kilogram is consumed.

The best food material. There was such a colossal amount of Imoogi meat that he had to store it separately.

"It's too bad there's no Dragon Heart, but the meat is quite helpful."

He didn't check it because he was busy, but King Hydra's meat also had the effect of slightly increasing stats.

The effect of raising various stats by 1-2 each depending on the cooking!

No additional effect occurred if you ate more because your mouth and body adapted. It affected the body only once, so only top Chefs

should handle this ingredient.

Weed also packed away the Imoogi's head separately. Then he put the wand symbolizing the token of the alliance at the highest point of the fortress.

At that moment.

Ding!

- Alliance of the Deliverers (1) has been completed.

The Matallost Church's neighbors have won the battle with their burning loyalty and courage.

The Embinyu Church's sect has disappeared from here, and the land will be able to briefly enjoy peace until a new danger finds its way.

The scenario quest's 2-step 'Agent of the Niflheim Empire' will proceed after the Mercenary Smith's 'Second Curiosity' quest and the Matallost Church's 'Rescue the Matallost Church Prisoners' quest have been completed.

You currently lack the requirements to proceed.

- As a quest reward, Fame has increased by 3,200.
- Charisma has increased by 115.

- Leadership has increased by 25.

First of all, there was a change in the way the barbarians looked at Weed. There was much respect, deference, and adoration for him in their eyes.

Weed pulled out the Matallost Church's Figure of Death. The statue began to talk.

- Devout human.

Thy efforts have driven away the Embinyu Church and the High Priest Feylord who had persecuted the Matallost Church.

The Matallost Church's existence is not completely over.

Seek those in captivity in the Embinyu Fortress's underground dungeons. The experience and knowledge they possess will be a great help to restoring the future Matallost Church.

In order to accomplish this difficult task, go to the temple of the Matallost Church from the past. In a hidden room, installed is a huge portal by which you can go where you wish. It will connect to the place you want to go.

- Rescue the Matallost Church Prisoners

The Matallost Church Priests are absolutely necessary to complete the revival of the River of Lamentations.

Rescue the Priests who were kidnapped by the Embinyu Church.

The fortress's underground dungeon is a place inhabited by extremely dangerous monsters and the experimental subjects of the Embinyu Church. You must rescue the prisoners and take them somewhere safe.

Difficulty: B

Reward:

Contribution to the Matallost Church.

Large amounts of experience will be obtained by the purification of the River of Lamentations.

Quest Restriction: Failure if all the prisoners are killed.

"I will lead the prisoners to a safe place."

- You have accepted the quest.

*

By the time Weed took over the Embinyu fortress, KMC Media had mobilized all of their technicians.

"Put in all the CG effects where they were."

"Sound team, you have to put in the best background music."

"Camera team, why is the film setting like this? A more dynamic and intense dogfight! I mean, capture the King Hydra or Balkan being more active. Don't you know what the viewers want?"

The atmosphere was crazy with people cursing while being cursed.

The viewer ratings were exceeding 37%.

The viewer interest reached its peak when Weed exterminated the King Hydra.

— That guy... just who the hell is he?

— Is the rumor that he's Morata's Lord true?

— But they say he's Sculptor... Sculptors can't exhibit fighting ability like that.

— He's gotta be a Sculptor. He used sculpting techniques.

— It's certain that he is the same Weed who made the Pyramid. I can prove it. Those eyes that rise sharply and estimate the value when japtem drops! This is evidence that he is Weed.

The appearance of Bingryong and Death Knight Van Hawk, as well as the outstanding battle sense Weed showed in a brief moment made the name "God of War" show up as well. However, the broadcasters did not disclose the exact facts.

Even through a continuous broadcast of over 9 hours, Shin Hye-min was as lively as ever.

"At last, the King Hydra's necks have fallen! The monster that meets its complete end only when its 9 necks have fallen! The same monster prestigious guilds could not even deal with has come to die like this."

Even while watching it himself, Lee Jin-gun spoke disparagingly of Lee Hyun, as though it was hard for him to acknowledge. "It's thanks to that Ice Dragon. The mysterious Ice Dragon who had also appeared in the battle against the Bone Dragon. And he was able to hunt it because he came after it was extremely tired. He didn't even fight it alone. Thousands of barbarians assisted him."

"Well, it can be seen that way too. But even the viewers would not have guessed even the King Hydra would die like this. Mr. Oh Joo-wan, what do you think about this battle?"

Oh Joo-wan shook his head back and forth. "It is an absurd battle. The quest difficulty is awfully high. To think the Embinyu Church would be this strong! But to make a dogfight occur by summoning the King Hydra, Balkan Demoph, and the Black Imoogi on top of that... Would a normal person even thought of it? No, even if it had occurred to them, I don't think they would have dared to actually do it."

Shin Hye-min grinned as she replied, "Right?"

"Yes. The finest monsters on the Versailles Continent are gathered in one place to wage a fierce battle... I think this is the first time the viewers have seen a scene like this."

It was as Oh Joo-wan said. The flashy and terrifying battle shown by Balkan, the King Hydra, Feylord, and the Imoogi, overwhelmed and overawed the viewers. It instilled fantasies and dreams.

There are such strong existences on the Versailles Continent.

It made them yearn to become great Warriors like that by repeatedly going through quests and hunting.

"Just where did he get such ample forces! And is there no such thing as fear to him? I also want to meet that main character one day."

Oh Joo-wan expressed deep interest in Weed. Weed, who was fighting to the best of his abilities!

Lee Jin-gun shook his head strongly. "He was lucky. And it'll end here. King Hydra was the weakest monster— the rest are impossible."

However, just a moment later, Balkan was unsummoned.

Lee Jin-gun said rapidly, "The Death Sentence is truly fearsome. One could say it's decisive for a Lich with high mana consumption like Balkan."

He even applauded when Feylord cast the spell of destruction.

"Finally... Indeed, it's still impossible to beat an S-class quest. Those Phoenixes are dying too. The High Priest of the Embinyu Church is indeed incredible."

However, the moment the Phoenix transformed into a new appearance and was reborn, turning the bad situation around—

"Hu, huh?"

The Black Imoogi fought back, but Bingryong, Phoenix and Weed suppressed it.

Weed had completed the quest.

" ... "

Lee Jin-gun couldn't think of anything to say.

Oh Joo-wan also had a blank look, as if he'd received an unexpected shock.

Even Shin Hye-min was quiet this time. Granted, she had believed in Weed from the beginning.

'If it is Weed, he can do it.'

It wasn't something that could be explained by common sense, but ambiguous faith.

Nevertheless, who would have believed he would really succeed just like that.

Even in the studio, there was silence. Though the cameramen and staff had heard the outcome beforehand, their shock couldn't be compared to the one they felt while actually watching the video.

The name that comes to their minds now.

'God of War Weed'.

A great many speculations and disputes were taking place in the viewer forum as well as on discussion websites related to Royal Road. It was a quarrel about whether one thought the person

fighting the Embinyu Church was the God of War Weed or not.

Lion's Roar, Death Knight Van Hawk, Bingryong. The war against the Immortal Legion he had shown while handling Orcs and Dark Elves.

Disputes were extremely fierce despite all these facts.

— That is Weed. Those are the monsters Weed came out with in previous battles.

— Shouting to lead his underlings is a skill Weed used.

However, the objections were formidable, too.

— If you look at it simply, you could call him the God of War Weed because some of the monsters or skills are same. But isn't it just perfect to mistaken him since even his name is the same?

— I will explain it rationally, logically.

For reference, I have a doctoral degree in Economics from abroad, and I am currently a Fund Manager.

There is a considerable amount known about the God of War Weed. He started as a Paladin of Freya Church, and then changed class to Necromancer. Considering the skills he used when fighting the Bone Dragon, the proof is clear.

But now they tell us that he is a Sculptor?

If he's a Necromancer, then of course he would have fought using Necromancer skills. Rather than summoning Balkan, he would have raised Undeads himself and attacked the fortress.

— The person above, you have pointed out a very important part. You are indeed a doctor in Economics.

Let me tell you about Sculptor Weed.

Sculptor Weed started at Rosenheim Kingdom, and it is estimated that no more than one year and six months have passed since then. There are many people who saw him when he was becoming popular while making small sculptures in Rosenheim Kingdom. My friend also bought a sculpture from him.

The possibility Sculptor Weed and God of War Weed's similar aspects can be attributed to an undiscovered common skill or a monster that can be tamed in specific conditions or handled with intimacy is high.

Arguments continued.

— What about the combat sense that Sculptor Weed showed?

— Don't misunderstand because he is an impressively outstanding user who is the Lord of Morata, etc.. His current outstanding fighting ability may have been specially obtained through the quest.

— Then it makes sense.

— Sculptor Weed appeared a whole year after the God of War Weed from the Continent of Magic sold his account. Just considering the time, I judge it's not him.

Because the God of War Weed was such a big celebrity, seemingly credible false rumors spread extensively. Since they were now saying he was a Sculptor, it couldn't be helped that it was past all belief! Enormous disputes and questions were continuing on every forum.

The fact that the God of War Weed's identity could be unfolded wasn't easily accepted by the viewers. Though it was a completely unfamiliar name to the public, the God of War Weed already had the greatest recognition in Royal Road while being the most mysterious existence.

The God of War Weed who sought only the worst battlefields and passed over no impossible quests— Even though Sculptor Weed had shown several similarities, it wasn't easy to suddenly accept it. A situation amplified by doubts and shock!

Whether Sculptor Weed was the God of War Weed or not was becoming an urgent concern.

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Goddess Versailles.

The name of the continent in the virtual reality, Royal Road. In addition, the balancing system that managed everything, an absolute authority.

The system created by Yoo Byung-jun, the heaven-sent genius scientist.

Royal Road was a perfect virtual reality without any errors.

Even though he had led to the legend, the miracle of creating a new world, Yoo Byung-jun was not happy.

"We just took the first step at last. Isn't that right, Versailles?"

[- Yes. You are right, Dr. Yoo Byung-jun.]

The symbol of Goddess Versailles, an enormous crystal, replied as it emitted a faint light.

The other scientists only had class 3 restricted access; they didn't know about the true functions or influential power of Goddess Versailles.

"Hehe, it took a full 40 years to get here. The project I poured all my dreams into..." Yoo Byung Jun's eyes shone.

*

At an early age, Yoo Byung-jun was a child in the countryside who was extremely good at studying.

"Today we are going to learn how to use 3 linear equations. Do any of the students know?"

"Me."

"Do any students know the root equation?"

"Me."

"How about the Pythagoras theorem..."

"Me."

Middle school, high school, and college mathematics and science were too easy for him.

"When is the next lesson, teacher?"

He was the fellow most disliked by the other students in his class! Even though he suffered group bullying, Yoo Byung-jun did not care.

"Idiots. Jerks who can't do anything if they don't group up."

From the time he attended a domestic school, Yoo Byung-jun had already become an academic celebrity.

No matter what mathematical formula or a law of physics it was, he conceived the answer the moment he saw it. He created more advanced new theories and defined laws for them that only he knew. Since high school, he swept through various competitions and even took first in an international mathematical contest. At university, physics, chemistry, bioengineering, mathematics ... He was on the cover of a science magazine whenever he published a thesis.

The genius of the century.

Called the Devilish Brain, a world prominent institute tried to recruit him by offering him an astronomical salary.

His life had only known success after success. Then one day, he

felt frustration for the first time.

He met his first love.

He was always feeling apologetic towards her whenever they went on date.

"Sorry I can't buy something tasty every time. Let's go to a restaurant when I receive prize money."

"It's all right, oppa."

She who smiled brightly for him.

The amount of prize money Yoo Byung-jun won was never small. However, he could only live scantily in order to buy necessary equipment for his research. While thinking ahead of others and trying to commence research immediately, money could only leak out.

He didn't want to work under somebody else, and for Yoo Byung-jun, who'd had much interest in basic science, it was an aspect that he couldn't help but endure.

"I'll see you next week. No, the week after next."

"Are you busy?"

"Yeah. Materials I'm experimenting on are coming in tomorrow."

"Don't you know what day tomorrow is? It's my birthday. Is your

experiment that important, oppa?"

"Of course the experiment is important. I'll throw a birthday party for you the week after next. Bear with me until then."

He avoided his girlfriend when writing theses or doing experiments. Even when occasionally meeting his girlfriend, he showed up with a shaggy head and in grubby attire since he'd made a little time.

"Did you wait long?"

Yoo Byung-jun always arrived late for their appointment.

Eventually, his nice and thoughtful girlfriend left him.

"I want to meet a man who really values... and loves me."

His girlfriend left him for the man who had comforted her in Yoo Byung-jun's place whenever he was gone.

Even then, Yoo Byung-jun wasn't greatly discouraged.

"Dating? I can go about it slowly after doing all my research."

The ambitious young scientist even thought of love as extravagant.

"After just a few awards and the results of my thesis come out, women will be nothing..."

Yoo Byung-jun achieved his goals. However, she didn't come back.

Although he could meet other women, they weren't as pure as her and he could not love them as deeply.

In such a fashion, Yoo Byung-jun lost the one love of his life. One comes to know the true value of what one has lost.

Too late, he tried to find her, but she was married, even had a child, and was living happily.

"Love? That is nothing. Let's succeed. Let's try to succeed properly in this world."

Yoo Byung-jun entered a physics research lab and announced the outstanding results of his research. He continued accumulating money and glory.

In the physics lab, he was critically betrayed by someone he trusted, and his research results were even stolen. As he grew older, he began to see the world as only unreasonable.

A dirty dark side that grew as he gathered money and

government authority!

"Lies, tricks, and politics. There's nothing a mere scientist can do."

Even after rising to the position of research lab director, he had to live while bowing at the waist to politicians. If he developed a commercially valuable technology and presented it to a business, the business reaped the majority of the sweet fruits of his labor.

Yoo Byung-jun's research lab was developing promising technologies one after another, but he could not erase the feeling of helplessness and despondency.

"An award? I've won many since childhood. Fame means nothing to me."

Suffering from vicious loneliness, he wanted to truly succeed.

He even gave up on love to pour all his strength into research.

"A technology that can change the world, I'll develop a truly innovative technology. A technology without limitations or restrictions."

Yoo Byung-jun left his position as research lab director and returned to being a freelancer. Initially, he thought that 3, 4 years would be more than enough. However, as new challenges continued to appear, the time he spent researching alone grew longer. Even after countless white days without sleep, he

continued his research because he could not give up.

The new world made at the end of a whole 40 years of research—Royal Road was born like that. Unopposed, virtual reality was attracting the world's money. Unicorn was growing as an unprecedented enterprise.

Not only that. From the last 10 plus years, Yoo Byung-jun used the enormous power of his money to back national politicians. Granted, Unicorn was not a business that required help from politicians.

The politicians built up debt while receiving money from the unknown source. Several political groups were in fact being managed through Yoo Byung-jun's representatives.

Managing army support and weapons supply stocks were among the Goddess Versailles's important functions.

Goddess Versailles was now expanding her boundaries by investing Unicorn's enormous income in places all over the world. Unicorn grew so much that no matter the speculative capital, its political force could not be carelessly threatened.

By combining the immense underground funds and the secret political authority that Goddess Versailles managed, there was really nothing they couldn't do.

"Hehehe."

Yoo Byung-jun smiled with satisfaction since everything was going as planned. The dream he had conceived 40 years ago was about to come true.

"In this unreasonable world... I will set my own law."

A new world was created based on virtual reality.

People would be excited and enthralled by that world, because they could escape the dreary city and enjoy rest, adventure, and challenges.

"Hehe. And the most outstanding guy will appear."

An Emperor with unapproachable dignity would appear in the world Yoo Byung-jun had created.

"He will have the right to inherit everything I have prepared."

The things he had prepared for that time.

Yoo Byung-jun asked Versailles, "How goes the development of the combat androids?"

[- 123,020 have been completed.]

Androids of small and medium size. Faster than planes and installed with weapons, they were flexible. Necessities in modern warfare, the androids were known to still only belong to two powers, the United States and Russia.

"The financial side?"

[26 commercial banks have been acquired. If needed, 106 international banks can be paralyzed.]

The deletion of client data was granted, and preparations were even made for the collapse of payment systems. Even a great depression could be incited. However, what Yoo Byung-jun had prepared did not end there. What he had developed the most attentively was bioengineering.

"Humans are weak existences with many faults. They have great potential, but they can't even use it all."

A renovation using bioengineering technology! It evolved vision, hearing, cardiovascular functions, and motor nerves. Lifespan was also greatly extended, and antibodies could be made to instantly deal with any diseases. By activating unused parts of the brain, he predicted that intellectual abilities would also be increased manifold.

Moreover, the advantages did not end there.

Vigor, which could be called the most important aspect for a man!

"Hehe. It'll be able to satisfy ten women in one night."

Yoo Byung-jun was of a mind to create a superman.

He would give his heir powerful political authority, ceaseless money, and the right to manage Goddess Versailles. If an evil man became his successor, his false judgement could plunge countless people into agony and misery.

"It's not something I should get involved in. If my heir makes such a judgement, then the world just has to follow it."

Yoo Byung-jun knew that there was not much time left in his own life. Even though he could extend his life through processes like gene manipulation or organ transplants, he paid no heed.

Even if his own body took a hit in the course of preparing the birth of his heir, he planned to sacrifice himself. A man of absolute authority would become a god in the modern world, as well as in the Versailles Continent.

The Emperor conceived in the world he had created!

There was nothing lacking for the satisfaction of Yoo Byung-jun's self-righteous aspiration.

"Ow, I'm aching all over."

Weed's entire body ached. He even had a fever.

There has been an excessive consumption of Vitality. It is recommended that you rest until Vitality is recovered.

If Vitality is not continuously recovered, you may catch a cold or other complications.

You are now vulnerable to curses and your intellectual ability will be reduced.

While utilizing the Power of the Deliverer, the battle had been utter chaos.

Though the battle had been difficult, it hadn't been enough to be this afflicted. Among the battles Weed had gone through till now, there had been no easy battle without trouble.

"Cleaning up was more tough than the fight."

He had to clean up the collapsed remains of the fortress with Yellowy and Bingryong.

"Phoenix, don't even come."

He couldn't even put the obedient, puppy-like loyal Phoenix to work. The durability of japtem dropped and were destroyed from the high temperature if Phoenix drew near.

Bingryong even had to remove the wreckage while carrying the King Hydra and Imoogi leather and meat on his back.

"Master, why are you making only me work this hard. There are rascals who were born later than me..."

Bingryong had weak strength due to his huge stature. He was fast if gained acceleration, but normally, he was not even that agile. Even so, he wasn't able to refuse to work outright, he just wanted to push it onto Yellowy and Phoenix.

Simply put, he was asking for senior treatment!

"There's a lot of meat, so you have to carry it."

"That's an absurd reason. Yellowy's strength is good too, is it not."

Weed replied as if it was obvious, "We need to store it in refrigeration."

The method to extending the expiration date of the meat! The

King Hydra and Imoogi meat did not spoil in the low temperature. It was a certain fact that putting them on Bingryong's back would cryogenically freeze them nicely. The meat would keep for a long time before it defrosted again.

"Move quickly. Work long and stretch your back only once in awhile."

At Weed's urging, Yellowy and Bingryong cleared the wreckage with faces full of only dissatisfaction.

The Embinyu Church's treasures and decorations were crushed underneath the rubble. Weapons and defense items were in pieces, but even obtaining those fragments yielded lots of money.

Yellowy sulked with his tail hanging down.

"Don't pout! Right now is easy. Back when I worked, I had to crawl to the bathroom! You guys, do you think that the chance to make money by digging in the ground like this is common?"

Bingryong and Yellowy could only resent being born by the impoverished Weed!

If you sit, you want to lay down, and if you lie down, you want to sleep. It was a sad life where you had to put aside even your frustrations and work, living according to that ironclad rule. Yellowy carved it deeply into his memory.

"Money is something really hard to earn. I should never spend it carelessly."

Weed and the sculptured lifeforms found a large amount of jewels and metal scraps within the rubble. Because he was not able to fit everything into his pack, he had to make 5 new large pack using his Tailoring skill. Made by cutting a little Imoogi leather, the backpacks were lightweight, sturdy, and even had an option to halve the weight.

"It's a waste that the Dark Knights are dead. The EXP and items I'd have gotten by hunting them would've been considerable..."

Endless greed!

"Balkan, that scoundrel, fighting so hard when it wasn't even going to die..."

Blah blah.

"That bastard King Hydra, the hell was it trying to do by completely demolishing the fortress..."

Weed had his own secret method whenever he did difficult work. If he worked while resenting others, his efficiency rose and his fatigue lessened. He didn't need a sense of accomplishment while doing intense, hard labor. He just had to curse absently.

"I met the wrong master..."

"Bad master."

Bingryong and Yellowy worked while resenting him like that. Only Phoenix was loftily grooming its feathers atop a high spire. Even though Weed certainly made the sculptured lifeforms suffer, Phoenix became subject of Bingryong's and Yellowy's hatred.

"The guy that can play even though we have to work."

"Phoenix is the worst!"

After clearing all the debris of Embinyu Church, Bingryong and Yellowy were afflicted for a long while because of excessive use of Vitality.

Though medicines were useless, Weed forced himself to rise. "Before the prices fall... I have to sell them quickly."

He was anxious since he was carrying valuables. Cashing them in as soon as possible was the priority.

Weed went to the Matallost Church's temple. On the brink of collapse, the wall of the dilapidated temple shone faintly.

"So that's where the hidden room is."

When he pushed the wall aside and entered, he saw an inactive, large portal. It was like looking at a mirror made of white light.

In order to make a portal through which one could teleport to another place, an enormous sum of money, jewels, and Magicians were required.

"Still, once they're complete, it becomes pretty convenient to move between cities."

There were teleport gates in Versailles Continent castles and in big cities. Only, there was a limit of only being able to teleport the weight or size of what could be moved in one day, so they couldn't be used in businesses. Since they required mana stones as well as a team of Magicians, even maintaining them cost a lot of money.

Compared to a teleport gate, a large portal put two spaces in one. Of course there were some restrictions regarding weight and count, but compared to a teleport gate, the limitations were less strict. After it was first set up, there were almost zero maintenance fees as well.

"I've already chosen the location for the portal."

Weed immediately decided to open a portal into the heart of Morata Castle. He had made his choice without needing to think of other places.

"Connect portal to Morata Castle."

At that moment, the portal activated with blue light.

Weed strode into the portal without pause. Yellowy followed behind him, ambling along.

*

"Who is selling food! I'll buy all kinds indiscriminately."

"Specialties from the distant Belnine Kingdom have arrived. Who will taste this dried fruit peel! It's sweet."

"Come to the precious metals shop, the Goldrich. From specialize precious metals to rare ores, we stock all kinds."

Merchants had set up booths in the plaza of Morata Castle. There were tons of players who had moved to the North for hunting and quests. Having grown large as a city for them, Morata was acting as the capital of the entire North.

The portal that Weed connected opened in the center of the plaza. The blue light that fell in a straight line from the sky grew bigger and bigger, making a broad portal.

"Eh, what's that?"

"I've seen that before. I think it's a movement portal."

"A movement portal is forming in the plaza?"

The traders briefly stopped their commercial activities in

surprise.

Onlookers flocked in an instant.

"Could it be a quest?"

"A monster might come out."

There were Warriors putting hands to their weapons and Magicians chanting spells in anticipation of a some kind of event.

Morata's plaza had been on the large side even before it had been developed, and it had grown enormous through city planning. Hundreds of Merchants were doing business, and players selling japtem and even people acquiring team-mates for quests were gathered.

The portal drew to completion in the center of the swarming, crowded plaza!

Weed didn't even consider other places.

'It has to be this place.'

The core of real estate speculation.

You had to invest in a place where people frequently gathered. Near a train station, a department store, or around a mall are the places where business is most swell.

Making a plaza had been necessary to collect movement portal tolls and increase the number of users, as well as to develop businesses.

Why was escalator rather than elevator use always aggressively recommended in malls or department stores? There was a reason for this!

[T/N: To understand this line of thought, you have to know that there are tons of escalators in Korea. Because of an acute lack of space, buildings are built up rather than out. While riding an escalator, you can see products on the side that may lure you into buying them. A plaza performs the same function.]

As soon as the movement portal was completed, Weed appeared from its blue light.

"It's Weed."

"The great Sculptor Weed! Morata's Lord has returned!"

It hadn't been long since the end of the broadcast, so there were many people who recognized Weed.

Weed appeared amongst enormous popularity.

"Whew..." Weed pretended to use his hand to block the stinging sunlight and glanced around.

There were at least several thousand people looking at him. They had come from the tops of the castle walls and even the shopping district buildings to look at Weed.

"It must be due to my fame that people are gathering around like this."

He was greatly satisfied!

Then he heard the words of young merchants selling japtem.

"Soo-il, is that hyung over there Weed?"

"Shhh! Watch your mouth. He might hear."

"Is that person really the violent Weed with the foul mouth and personality from the Continent of Magic?"

"..."

Weed from the Continent of Magic back in the day! In truth, there was no difference between him and a ruthless tyrant.

Book 17: A Girl's Life

Chapter 1: Weed's Notoriety

A huge crowd had gathered when Weed reached Morata's square through the movement portal. People were buying and selling goods in the square as well as recruiting party members. With the Northern part of the Versailles Continent being showcased as an adventure region, Morata was flourishing into an even larger city.

"Please look this way!"

"Weed, Weed! Come hunt with us."

"Are you really Weed from the Continent of Magic?"

There were many people who were trying to get close to him, causing a commotion, asking questions about the River of Lamentation quest, or if he really was Weed from CoM. People even went up onto the castle walls to wave and cheer at Weed.

They welcomed Weed's return like a hero coming home after winning a war.

This was different from the time when he sold cheap sculptures in Rosenheim Kingdom. Weed folded his arms, raised his chin along with his gaze, and emanated arrogance.

"Heh, there are a lot more people here now."

He had to act unconcerned and completely unalarmed, as though the amount of people gathered were a natural course of events.

Abruptly, Weed yelled with Lion's Roar, "I went. I fought. I earned!"

"WHOOOOAAA!"

Cheers loud enough to shake Morata Square to its foundations erupted at once.

"He said he earned a ton!"

"Imoogi! Please show us the items from the Imoogi you hunted!"

"WEED! WEED! WEED!"

His popularity was greater than that of a pseudo-religious cult leader, and the crowd was at the peak of uncontrollable delight. The hopes and dreams of the ordinary people in the Versailles Continent! After all, Weed had returned after hunting monsters others weren't able to kill, and accomplished a quest no one had ever experienced before.

Morata's Soldiers and the Freya Church's Knights mobilized to contain the situation. Only then was the uproar narrowly suppressed.

The Freya Church's Knights bowed their heads towards Weed politely.

"We would like to thank you for defeating the evil Embinyu Church. It is an honor to meet the adventurer who will go down in history as the benefactor of the Freya Church."

Weed replied with dignity. "It was nothing. I did not suffer in the slightest. The fight against the Embinyu Church was extremely dull. It was easier than going into a bank to take a nap on a scorching summer day."

He would take a nap in a bank and read comics in a large bookstore. Those were the excellent cultural facilities that had allowed Weed to spend his youth in peace. Since there were several banks in his neighborhood, they were places where he could go in at any time and comfortably utilize. They even arranged the latest magazines categorically for their customers.

The people at the banks would sometimes gossip, but he simply ignored such things! Weed was someone who had even shared deep conversations about today's youths over a cup of coffee, with one of the older guardsmen he had become friends with.

"He's talking with the Knights."

"They're talking to him really politely."

The crowd broke into whispers. The sight of Paladins speaking to Weed was enough to make their stomachs burn with jealousy.

That a portal would suddenly form and Weed would come out of it, was something the Merchants or Warriors doing business in the square had never expected.

"I think this is the first time I've seen the Knights of Freya acting this friendly."

"It must be because they're talking to Weed, right?"

"Of course it is."

With the Knights of Freya arranged in the plaza, there was no one who tried to carelessly approached him.

"Hmm."

As the ruckus calmed down a little, Weed glanced around the square. The crowd in the square was packed in tightly, like a bag of sprouts.

'The number of players here has really grown.'

The thought of taxes occurred to him as he looked at the Merchants sitting in the stalls they had opened in the plaza!

'Should I raise the taxes or not? Even if I only raise the income tax by 1%, the revenue would be enormous...'

Weed invested all his energy into performing calculations. He was bad at math, but when it came to adding and subtracting money, he had never once made a mistake.

'No, not yet. It's still too early. If give off the impression of being desperate for tax collection this early, I won't be able to unleash a tax bomb later.'

His face paled, and even his expression became agonized.

He needed a clever scheme that would make people feel like he wasn't raising the taxes even when he was.

At the sight of Weed's deeply tormented face, the players gradually quieted as well. Looking at his expression alone, it appeared as if he was tackling a truly enormous problem. When he occasionally grimaced, the players' hearts would drop in alarm.

There were people who had previously met Weed, as well as those who had only heard of him here.

"Was his clinging to coppers while selling sculptures all an act?"

"His incognito skills aren't normal. He went around hiding his identity like that even though he's a player with a high enough level to hunt the King Hydra, y'know."

"Wargod Weed. Look at his expression, is he gonna wipe us all out because his mood soured?"

"They say that in the Continent of Magic, he was a solitary Warrior who didn't welcome even a little fuss or hassle..."

Once the excitement subsided, the people were struck with an eerie mood.

It was because the Weed from the Continent of Magic was a figure with extreme notoriety!

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In a corner of the square, Merchants were chattering thoughtlessly. They were discussing Weed's misdeeds from the Continent of Magic!

"Soo-il, did he really kill people ever so often?"

"Yeah. Weed's nasty deeds were crazy. I was killed five times myself."

"Why were you killed? Were you enemies with Weed then?"

Weed could also hear the conversation between the young Merchants. Since they were discussing his history during his

Continent of Magic days, he was deeply interested. it was an important conversation because, depending on the crowd's opinion, he could change the taxes as well.

"There was no particular reason. Once for making him wait because I was taking a long time to buy goods at a shop, once for meeting him by a stream, and once for going into a dungeon he was hunting in. The remaining two times were because I couldn't take his misdeeds anymore, so I joined a coalition and died while fighting as a group."

"He killed people for reasons like that?"

"He didn't just kill people, either. It was literally a massacre. He didn't leave anyone alive, even the unarmed or wounded."

In the Continent of Magic, Weed's notoriety was not limited to monsters alone. Even to players, he was merciless slaughter embodied. With his extremely overwhelming level, amazing skill management, and unique items, he was the strongest player. He trampled on those who challenged him to the point where they couldn't recover, and he simply killed those who were eyesores.

'I didn't differentiate humans from monsters.'

Weed briefly recalled his Continent of Magic days. He killed so much that it was difficult to remember all his opponents separately. He had found absolutely no reason to leave humans alive just because they were players, when he was already killing monsters. He even purposefully sought those who put on airs

because they were high leveled players, started a fight, and killed them.

The force of a large guild? He didn't care.

'No matter how well organized they were, everything worked out once I killed them three or four times.'

He used one guild as an example and thoroughly destroyed them. After that, the criticism against him became harsh, and the public opinion of him plummeted. Then he thrashed them again. Without any reserve, he tore them all apart.

After numerous repetitions of thrashing, other guilds also took heed and cowered.

Although coalitions against him were formed several times, he lured them into dungeons and annihilated them one by one.

Weed fought cleverly.

Fighting a group single-handedly was actually an extremely difficult task. He was a demon who took advantage of his surroundings, used items without reserved, and killed his enemies one by one!

The Merchant asked, "Even so, it seems like they don't think too badly of Weed. There aren't many players from the Continent of Magic who would curse Weed."

The Merchant who had been explaining nodded his head in agreement. "Because it was when the Continent of Magic was gradually losing popularity, something new was necessary. Who wouldn't feel satisfied watching him complete unsolved quests, breakthrough labyrinths, uncover the secrets of mysterious dungeons, and slaying extremely powerful monsters?"

People did not hate Weed.

Even in Royal Road, Weed hunted and quested with unmatched recklessness. Though in truth, he couldn't help but receive requests because of his high Fame. He barely finished them by suffering to near death, but others could only give up in the middle without making any progress.

For guilds raising excitement with power expansion or players tired of repetitive hunting, Weed was like a fresh beam of light. Even guilds or players who were completely hostile towards Weed could not help but acknowledge that, at least.

"Even the highbrow guilds completely avoided him because they were afraid of getting in a fight with Weed."

"Was it that bad?"

"He was someone who everyone wanted to become friendly with, even while staying away from him and dying. Someone you wanted to at least imprint your name onto."

"He must've emitted an incredible atmosphere."

"If you were hunting in a hunting ground and heard Weed had appeared nearby, you'd get a feeling of goosebumps prickling all over your skin. You wouldn't know how it feels unless you've experienced it."

You're getting pumped up while hunting with your teammates as you share a peaceful conversation. Then, Weed appears in the vicinity.

A silent and frightening atmosphere.

The problem was not the quest nor the monsters, you'd want to leave your party and go there because you were curious about what Weed was doing.

In actuality, it was to the point where it was difficult to count every individual who had been interested in Weed's actions and had died while following him.

"You'd hear about Weed challenging the quests in the Continent of Magic that looked absolutely impossible, and going into places no one had ever gone to before without even a shred of fear."

"But there must've been times when he failed, right?"

"Of course. He probably failed a ton of times. But eventually, he succeeded. Only monster remains were left in dungeons Weed had gone through, the most awesome moments must've occurred."

The records Weed had established in the Continent of Magic continued to spread for a long time.

"So that was Weed."

"The more I hear, the more surprising and awesome it is. It's definitely fun to hear it from a person who experienced it firsthand."

"The strongest in the Continent of Magic, Weed. That person is the one standing right there; Morata's Lord."

The crowd's eyes were filled with respect!

*

Weed folded his arms and looked up. As the movement portal quietly emitted blue light, suspense filled the air.

After excruciating agony and inner conflict, he had won over his temptations.

"Not yet. Taxes have to be raised stealthily. So that people can't

feel it..."

If he suddenly raised the taxes just because there were more people, he would meet great resistance.

'It also needs justification. To make them think the taxes really had to be raised, that there was no helping it, I need a justification they can understand! Without it, they won't even accept a tax increase.'

Having overcome his greed, Weed put his rucksack onto the ground and sat down. Weed was the type of person who placed no value on luxuries. Unlike others, he had never gone to a fancy restaurant or bought a meal for female players. He obtained carving tools or even blacksmithing goods through hunting or gathering and used them self-sufficiently.

The sum he had to invest in Morata to reap a huge profit later was enormous, so he needed lots of money.

MOOOOO!

With a cry, a gentle-looking cow emerged from the portal.

Yellowy was being used as a luggage carrier. Even his back was strapped with countless backpacks filled with japtem, acquired from hunting near the River of Lamentations.

The backpacks he had prepared ahead of time had been filled to

the brim, and the large bags he had made with his Tailoring skill were also full.

"It should be somewhere around here..."

Weed rummaged through his backpacks and pulled out a sword.

A sword sharpened to a keen edge!

"This is not ordinary japtem! I'm selling japtem, as well as clothes, armor, and weapons in small quantities!"

The start of his japtem sale!

It only took an instant for the heavy atmosphere in the square to dissipate.

"Ehh, what the hell, he's selling goods."

"I was alarmed for no reason."

Because Weed had accumulated such enormous notoriety, even Morata's Soldiers and Knights had appeared, creating a rigid atmosphere. When Weed pulled out a sword on top of it all, the crowd held their breaths in alarm.

Now, although their interest in Weed was just as great as before, the grimness had disappeared and the square's characteristic noisy and carefree atmosphere returned.

"Excuse me."

A Merchant who had been doing business nearby bravely spoke up. In front of the movement portal, Weed and Yellowy were positioned in the very middle of the square.

"Yes?"

"Are you really the Wargod Weed?"

"Heh, I'll leave it to your imagination."

Weed did not deny it. However, the Merchant who had asked nodded his head.

"Looks like you aren't him."

"He says he's not, right?"

"Yeah. He's not him."

"..."

That was the judgement the Merchants made on their own. On the other hand, there were quite a few people who believed Weed was the Continent of Magic's Wargod. The people who personally watched Weed's adventure through the broadcast thought differently, and they were also divided based on their judgements of his level or profession. However, the majority of people couldn't decide which side was right and were still on the fence.

The Merchants looked greedily at Weed and Yellowy's backpacks.

"But, ah, you have quite a lot of japtem."

"That's because I hunted diligently." Weed replied indifferently as he laid out his japtem. Customers hadn't arrived yet, and he was preparing to do business.

As he gazed avariciously at the laid out japtem, the Merchant proposed, "Would you be willing to sell all that japtem to me? I'll give you a good price for them."

Weed shook his head. "I will sell them myself."

"But it'll be better for me, a Merchant, to take care of them. Business is not so easy."

The Merchant gave him advice, but Weed didn't need to pay attention to him. He had become skilled at business since he was 10 years old. His learning had started by following a grandma selling vegetables in the marketplace!

"Caltrop Antennas! Black Wild Boar Fangs! I don't sell to just anyone. Since they're not cheap japtem, you can just take a look and go."

Weed began advertising his goods to the gathered players.

"Antennas? Fangs? What kind of japtem are they to be so

expensive?"

The prices they reaped when sold at a general goods store were fantastic.

Weed had hunted and gathered japtem exclusive to the River of Lamentations. Since there wasn't anyone else who had gone to the River of Lamentations through the movement portal yet, it was not an exaggeration to say that these products were first-rate specialties right now.

There were truly many things the crowd had wanted to ask while looking at Weed after he appeared through the movement portal.

About the quest and the Wargod Weed!

However, once he started putting out japtem, the people wanting to buy goods rushed in before the curious crowd could start asking.

Both Merchants and Wizards were greatly amazed when they Identified the antennas. It was a material for a magic staff that could amplify lightning. If it was taken to an Enchanter, the antennas could receive a value greater than their weight in gold.

A Magician shouted out the greatest value that he could offer as soon as he checked the information. "I'll buy them! I can buy the antennas for 350 Gold each. All of them!"

"I'll purchase for 533 Gold."

"539 Gold!"

"I'll buy for 540 Gold."

"I'll purchase with all the money I have, 555 Gold."

The values of japtem were usually fixed. However, Merchants could use their Accounting skills to sell goods they had purchased from players for a better price in stores. They could even receive better offers depending on their Intimacy, public contribution, and the donations they had made for the village's development. Magicians could personally process them before handing them over to a Blacksmith.

"Buy for 570 Gold!" shouted a cheeky-looking Merchant with a huge potbelly.

"580 Gold!"

"I'll buy all of them for 600 Gold."

There was great profit in being the first to sell rare japtem to a store. A sale for the sake of raising Accounting skill and Fame!

Weed ripped off even the Merchants. He successfully sold off all the antennas he had for 620 Gold each, and 320 Gold for the fangs. He was satisfied since it was higher than what he could get from selling at a store.

It was also pricey for the Merchants, but since they could raise their skills and Fame without even selling a specialty item, it was a profit for them.

Weed pulled out another backpack.

"Now, this here is the Embinyu Church Headband. Trophies obtained while doing the Alliance of the Deliverers quest! Those of you who want it as a souvenir, please stand in line. I am selling them for 15 Gold apiece."

They were headbands embellished with the Embinyu Church's mark. Besides +3 Defense, they had almost no other bonuses. However, they were relatively cheap goods compared to the expensive japtem he had been selling just before.

"That looks good."

"I'll buy one."

"Please give me one as well."

Weed sold the headbands like souvenirs to the crowd. 'As expected, I have to sell them off when the crowd is excited.'

He made discounts and a buy five, get one free deal under the pretext of a special customer appreciation sale.

The headbands also sold out in an instant!

"Then the next thing is..."

The goods Weed put out one after another were japtem that fell

greatly in importance! The spoils he had earned from hunting Undead were bones, tattered clothing, and weapons like rusty longswords. Rusted weapons had lowered maximum durability, and they became exponentially weaker if used by Undead.

The Merchants who had been doing business near Weed could only look on in envy at the sight of his goods selling like hotcakes.

"Please wait just one moment, sir."

Weed tidily used his sword sharpening skill and armor cleaning skill to make the exteriors all glossy and smooth.

"These are souvenirs that will draw luck to their owners! This isn't a chance that comes day in and day out. These goods will not be sold after I run out of stock today."

He was selling off items that would never, ever be used as equipment. The leg bone of a Skeleton sold for a whopping 1 Gold!

With the emptied backpacks on his back, Yellowy stealthily left. Then he entered a secluded alley in Morata Square for a secret rendezvous.

His face covered by a robe, a sly man was waiting in the alley.

"You must be Yellowy. I've heard a lot about you."

Mooooooooo!

"Here are the goods. Please tell Weed the profit will be divided exactly 6 to 4."

Yellowy understood and nodded. Then his empty backpacks were filled to the brim with japtem.

The man waiting in the alleyway. His identity was Mapan.

"We can't miss the opportunity to sell off japtem at high prices."

The strategy was to disguise even normal japtem as souvenirs in order to sell and earn more!

Weed even inscribed his name into the bones with his carving knife.

Be happy. Weed.

I wish you happy hunting. Weed.

Remember the fierce battle against the Lord of the Undead; Balkan Demoph, Weed.

To be honest, he hadn't even fought against Balkan. He had only taken the barbarians to subdue a small portion that had broken off

from the vast group of Undead!

*

Topics about the Wargod Weed were posted on Royal Road's forum.

There were a few people showing him respect for having solved the quests on the Continent of Magic. However, there were more people reporting his wrongdoings.

- He killed me for asking how much he bought his equipment for!
- He killed me for cutting in front of him in line at a store.
- At least there was a reason why the two of you were killed. I was killed for being in a dungeon that he was going to hunt in.
- He killed me for yawning.
- He killed me just for being a man.
- I died twelve times. In town, in the square, in the hunting ground, no matter where we met. Later, feeling wronged, I asked him why and he told me it was because he didn't like my name.

- What was your name?
- ShittyIdiotWeed.
- You deserved to be killed.

An enormous amount of Weed's misdeeds emerged.

The forum was centered around Weed. Topics that had always been of interest were buried.

- I was killed over thirty times by Weed. I went at him viciously, you see.

- Thirty times? You're speaking out over that amount? I died over fifty times. There are probably many people who remember the player who bothered Weed until the end; Chestnutt.

- Mr. Chestnutt. You probably never got within a knife's length of him, right?

- Heh. People above, don't fight. No matter how much you all died, is it as bad as me? As for me, I was a ranking player within the top 50 in the Continent of Magic. I even had the rare item Apejan's Circlet. After killing me, Weed took that Apejan's Circlet and equipped it.

- I'm jealous.

- To have gotten an item taken from you by Weed... did Weed use that item for long?

- It was an item he equipped even when he was hunting the Black Dragon. Waah!

Misplaced pride!

Because Weed was such a famous player, there were also many high level players related to him. Players who didn't often reveal their whereabouts in Royal Road made comments. Even players who had risen to the Hall of Fame, posted their experiences from their past days in the Continent of Magic, adding to the legends about Weed.

The record of a former Thief who had followed Weed, undiscovered through dungeon exploration until he died was the highlight.

- Dungeon clearing of the very fastest speed! The sight of him clearing away groups of monsters that surrounded him without fear was enough to give me the creeps. He certainly had fighting ability, but I had never before seen anyone with such efficiency, they didn't even have any superfluous movements. Even while wounded and falling into traps, Weed pressed onward endlessly.

- What dungeon was that?
- What boss monster appeared?
- I don't know it either. I died in the middle of it because I got discovered by Weed.

While wandering lonesomely through hunting grounds, Weed did not bother with right or wrongs. He would simply kill them if they were an eyesore. He even killed guilds that attacked him, and killed those who annoyed him.

His ruthless infamy had accumulated extensively.

*

In CTS Media, massive amounts of funding were laid out to create an information gathering system in the Versailles Continent.

"We can't fall behind in the news. News is far more important than broadcasts about celebrities."

The number of people playing Royal Road was growing exponentially. Not only in the Republic of Korea, but all over the world. People who did not enjoy Royal Road were treated as savages. In Africa, the Middle East, and in South America, the

craze was amazing. There was nothing more to be said since even the royals of the Arabian lands and Brazil's drug dealers were addicted to Royal Road!

It would seem as though the international players pouring in all at once would cause a considerable amount of confusion, but they quietly enjoyed the new world. Only a portion of the populace clung to extreme growth, like leveling up or item gathering. They settled in the northern, western, and central parts of the Continent. There were many players who possessed no aversion to experiencing the new wealth of experience known as monsters or different races.

'Heroes of the Versailles Continent,' CTS Media's primary program, was even translated and broadcasted in countries all over the world. As Royal Road grew, the sales of the related broadcasts were also expanding rapidly.

"Nothing draws attention like news. A leading program can only become news!"

CTS Media made contracts with foreign broadcasters before their competitors and even had much better terms. They used the fact that their parent company was a global multinational corporation, to pull the strings with their personal connections.

Enormous sums of money flowed in through copyright contracts, and depending on the sales, they even received royalties at regular intervals.

It wasn't just the capsules that international players bought and utilization fees; as the broadcast industry expanded, Royal Road was about to become the Republic of Korea's greatest source of income.

Because CTS was decidedly foremost in commercial marketing, they reinvested the money they had earned into Royal Road. They wouldn't even dare to dream of influencing the board of directors by increasing their Unicorn stock share. Not only CTS, but even their whole company couldn't compare to Unicorn in sales or cash income.

Unicorn's status in the worldwide economy was increasing with time, so only those who had held stocks in the early stages had been struck with sudden wealth.

CTS Media dispatched reports and invested in players for acquiring Royal Road information. Including castle lords, they persuaded key players using lots of money.

"It would be nice if you did exclusive coverage for our broadcast station alone."

Most users were easily swayed in front money.

"Is it really okay... for us to take this much money?"

"Of course. And please supply us with information about things that happen within the territory you govern, and please block the

actions of personnel from other stations, if possible."

For guilds that handled regions, they weren't hard requests. It was too much for them to completely blockade the movements of reporters from other broadcasting stations, who moved under hidden identities. However, public coverage acquisition for another station was something that could certainly be stopped. The guilds were only spoken badly for a few days, so it wasn't really a problem.

"We understand, please treat us well."

CTS Media entered agreements with many lesser lords on the Versailles Continent. However, negotiations did not proceed easily with guilds that had greater power.

One area's rulers had many sources of income. Taxes, bribe money from minor guilds, hunting ground fees, and weapon and armor sales were producing much profit. Prestigious guilds were already steeped in commercial activities, so they were actually managing rather sizeable businesses.

"The contract sum is small, I see."

"We do not move for sums of this size."

They had grown to the point where they even ignored calls from station directors. Even though it was a virtual reality, the big lords of the Versailles Continent held enough authority and power. Even broadcasting stations couldn't deal with such lords carelessly. If they were rubbed the wrong way, coverage wouldn't proceed well,

so they had to deal with being in the shoes of the weak. They couldn't even report the misdeeds of huge guilds heedlessly.

"We contacted just about everyone in the Central Continent... how is it going with the South and West?"

"The casting will end for players we have contact information for sometime between today and tomorrow."

"How are their responses?"

"Perhaps it's because there were rumors about trade in the central continent, but they are deciding quickly. I think the casting will end soon because they are many large guilds."

"That's not bad news."

There were many differences between the Western Versailles Continent and the other regions. Powerful centralized nations were positioned in the Central Continent. They were nations that boasted rich lands, mines, and populations. Emerging nations with outstanding potential were positioned in the East, and the South developed magic. There was vigorous pioneering and adventuring in the North. Because the Versailles Continent's area was so large, there were still places where people had yet to set foot in, even in the Central Continent.

The West had a strong nationalist disposition, so it was mostly settled by guilds that recruited native people. In other regions,

even if you started in a specific city or village, you could escape the region's influence simply by moving your hunting ground. However, you could not do so in the West, which had many grasslands and deserts. There were many strong Warriors who were tied by blood to nomadic people, so they boasted strong cohesion. Excluding wanderers in the Central Continent. For the most part, guild issues were decided by the native people. Their strength was inferior in comparison to the Central Continent, but the size and numbers of individual guild territories were not small.

"That's a relief. Who are we contacting in the North?"

The Executive Director was personally heading a meeting in the CTS Media conference room.

"The representative of the North would be Weed's Morata. In the past, we had a business relationship."

"Who contacted him? Who was the person in charge?"

"The President's Secretary, Yoon Na-hee."

"Oh? Why did the President's Secretary herself contact him?"

"There was the matter of the President personally deciding to purchase the Continent of Magic account. The casting for the 8 Heroes program was also entrusted to her."

"It's really such a shame. If we had just kept broadcasting, it

would have been a big hit..."

The 8 Heroes had managed to bring in decent ratings. However, they had stopped starring Weed because the initial response hadn't been good. After that, Weed had then won the battles against the True Blood Vampires, the Undead Legion, and the Bone Dragon.

Because their competitor KMC Media had gotten to broadcast those instead, there had even been an incident where PD in charge had written a letter of resignation. CTS Media's President had inevitably noticed.

"For now, we'll have Ms. Yoon Na-hee contact Weed."

"I will take the steps to do so."

Chapter 2: Blacksmith Of Magic Swords

Kuruso, the city of Dwarven craftsmen, had become famous because of Weed and was being visited by many players. They were impressed when they saw Kendelle's restored water sculptures and went around looking at the cool weapons and armor.

"Hah, I could buy it if I had a little more money... Mister Dwarf, can't you cut the price down a little?"

"Not even one copper."

Haggling players and Dwarves could easily be found. The goods sold by the Dwarves in Kuruso were extremely expensive, even for accessories. People couldn't easily decide to buy. For Merchants, accessories were more valuable trade goods than jewels or gold. They could be sold in any village, and they were good since one could receive a higher price by treating the residents well.

There were Dwarves who liked that Kuruso had become a bustling village, but some Dwarves didn't leave the smithy and were engrossed in their craft.

"Hmmm."

Fabio sharpened the completed sword on the grindstone.

Raasp raasp

The sword has been sharpened to a keen edge.

Sword Grinding skill activated!

Damage has increased by 41%

The Sword Grinding skill!

It wasn't a skill only Weed could use, but a technique that could be grasped by any Intermediate Blacksmith. Of course, since Fabio had never learned Tailoring, he didn't know techniques such as Ironing and Hand Washing.

"It has become quite sharply honed."

Fabio turned the sword back and forth, trying to find flaws. The blade was slick enough to perfectly reflect the bearded Dwarf's face!

The most famous player on the Versailles Continent among Blacksmiths was Fabio. His specialty was perceived as armor and shield production, but he was concealing the fact that he actually made swords.

Whenever one of his swords occasionally went out into the world, they created a sensation. They were to the point where people engaged in searches to find the Blacksmith who made the sword.

Weaponry of an entirely different level from the works of ordinary Blacksmiths!

It was normal to acquire weapons through hunting once you reached a certain high level, but the swords made with Fabio's devotion were enough to incite wars between countless players. Having an excellent blade changed the hunting speed. The obsession for weapons and armor in Royal Road was fearsome.

Fabio made swords and occasionally released them into the world for fun, but he thoroughly hid the fact that they were of his make. He moved so secretly that he could be mistaken for a Blacksmith in retirement.

"The Sword Grinding skill is really quite good."

Fabio set down the sword, satisfied.

It was only temporary, but the skill raised damage. At Advanced Blacksmithing 8 and Advanced Sword Grinding 6, he could even bring up a sword's damage by a maximum of 85%. However, the side effects were severe.

"If the sharpness is raised excessively, the sword's durability falls quickly and it goes bad easily."

Used conservatively, there was no problem with 40% damage or so.

"A finished sword is truly beautiful."

Previously an ordinary salary-man in real life, as soon as Royal Road appeared, he had been immediately captivated. There were many professions, but the one that had moved him was Blacksmithing.

One could say that, in the very beginning, Royal Road was chaos. The majority of the players didn't even know how to fight Rabbits well. The appearance of a single Orc would send them fleeing all the way to the village gates, and instances where scores of players died together were not uncommon.

It was a time when one ordinary longsword brought enormous envy and jealousy.

Fabio decided to choose the Blacksmith.

"It was a good choice."

He couldn't leap into the fray of battle, but he didn't regret his choice. He improved his Blacksmithing skill through concentration after making a decision faster than others.

After becoming the most outstanding Blacksmith in the Dwarven village, there was no end to his work opportunities. As his name spread to the city, customers sought him from afar to entrust work to him.

There was always more demand than supply in the field of Blacksmithing. For the best Blacksmith, there was nothing more to be said. He accumulated money while taking enormous service fees, which he then reinvested into acquiring ores to make armor.

A profession that handled and hammered red-hot iron in front of a blazing furnace! Though it was lonely work, he endured and continued to forge.

With the best materials as a basis, he made contracts with upper tier players and supplied armor to them. As he made appearances on television, his supporters increased enormously. He was an idol figure for beginner Blacksmiths.

It wasn't publicly known, but Fabio was the true leader of the guild called "Iron Road." He managed his guild while making them equipment. With more friends than enemies, he even wielded both tangible and intangible influence. Among players of the Dwarven race, there weren't many who could refuse a single word of his.

"Still, the worth of a Blacksmith is in making good weapons."

CLANG!

Fabio roughly tossed the sword he had just crafted aside. Swords were piled up like mountains around him.

"This time, again, the sword fell short of my expectations. The

ultimate sword that can cut through anything, no matter what it is. I must make a sword befitting of being called the best in the Versailles Continent."

A Blacksmith's hidden skill set!

While walking the path of a Blacksmith, Fabio had learned unique techniques.

Mineral Smelting Advanced 3 (25%): A technique where ores made of various materials can be completely refined without impurities for use.

Can be called a technique that forms the basis of a Blacksmith. Must understand the will of fire, air, and metal.

Among Blacksmith's hidden skills, Mineral Smelting was the very first one he acquired. It was a technique Fabio had learned when he changed his profession to Ironblood Blacksmith.

"Aahh, it makes me shudder even now to think about that process of changing profession."

In order to change professions as a Blacksmith, he had suffered to death in the smithy. Though he could have gone to the Blacksmith Guild like other players did and made a few weapons or armor to change professions, he did not do so.

Wanting to see it with his own eyes and hammer with his own hands before changing profession, he spent more than a month of his precious time doing chores in the smithy during the initial stages of Royal Road.

The profession changing quest he came to obtain through gruesome process!

"I'll never be able to forget the 'Joys, Sorrows, and Tears of a Blacksmith' quest for the rest of my life."

In order to change his profession, he had to busily run between several villages with his short and stubby Dwarven legs to successfully complete requests. Then, he had to be formally employed by the smithy to receive the quests at last.

A Blacksmith could fulfil quests not only in the guild, but also in the smithy. He tried making not just one type, but many different kinds of equipment. He accumulated Fame as he completed quests as they came in and also made money. Through such quests, he acquired the Equipment Enhancement skill.

Equipment Enhancement Advanced 1 (16%): The potential of equipment can be drawn out in the hands of a Blacksmith.

Through countless failures, equipment can be modified.

The skill that made Fabio famous!

He learned this skill around the time when he reached Intermediate Blacksmithing.

There was a saying: "Never show all your cards." If one were to recklessly publicize their full skill on the Versailles Continent, where there were never-ending wars for supremacy, they could easily get dragged into a dispute or lose their life.

Fabio intentionally hid the fact that he could also strengthen swords in addition to armors through Equipment Enhancement. If he had also strengthened swords, he could have made money by the buckets at the time. He made more money in one day than he previously did in one month through armor enhancement alone. Even considering the fact that, besides Merchants, Blacksmiths enjoyed the most lucrative profession, it was an enormous profit.

However, if it was known that Blacksmiths had abilities to that extent, more people would choose to be Blacksmiths.

"My competitors would increase, and they would never let me be."

Fabio only enhanced armor to a sufficient level. After all, what he wanted was not money, but reaching the peak in his Blacksmithing skills and making the best weapons and armor.

After making money with the Equipment Enhancement skill, he was able to use minerals without limit. He went as far as to purchase the Thor Kingdom's mithril, iron, and silver ores in bulk.

His Blacksmithing skill reached Advanced.

And a hidden Blacksmithing skill he acquired through quests and his connections!

Ego Sword Production Beginner 8 (49%): Can infuse a soul into equipment. However, it requires a large amount of Mana and a special soul.

Results improve if made in a graveyard.

Ego swords.

Fabio experimentally tried imparting souls into the swords he had.

Ding!

All the Mana you possess has been used.

An ego has been granted to the sword. The sword's properties have changed.

17% reduction in damage. 65% reduction in durability.

It now has magical properties.

Depending on the Ego Sword Production skill level and the Blacksmith's magic prowess, the reduction to damage and durability will decrease and more magical properties will be granted.

Training Sword

Durability: 25/25.

Damage: 31-46.

A basic longsword. It is well balanced and made from tempering high-quality iron. As a crafted weapon, it possesses characteristics that can only be seen in a weapon made by a Blacksmith with advanced skill.

A work made by Blacksmith Fabio.

Ego Sword. A goblin's soul is sealed within. The soul is in an unawakened state.

Restriction: Level 180

Limited to Swordsmen, Knights, and Warrior professions.

Options: Lightning Attribute Damage +2. Luck +15.

He had great expectations as it was an ego sword. He had expected something amazing, something impressive to come out!

"It's a huge failure." Fabio scowled.

An ego sword possessed its own self awareness and was a weapon that steadily grew through hunting. For example, a sword with a damage of 40 could increase to 70 or 80 with hunting. It could also unleash certain defensive magic on its own initiative.

A skill that exceeded the limitations of a weapon!

However, there were severe downfalls. Compared to a normally made sword, the damage and durability were too greatly reduced.

"The magical property is nothing much either."

As a pure Blacksmith, Fabio invested most of his stats into Strength, Agility, Stamina, and Concentration, since it was important to be able to hammer strongly and accurately. Perhaps because his Wisdom and Intelligence were low, he had an insignificant amount of Mana, and he didn't even learn any magic. Maybe that was why, but a completed ego sword could only unleash basic magic, and possessed a low amount of Mana as well.

And most importantly, the ego couldn't talk or remember previous battles.

That was because his Ego Sword Production skill was low leveled and he lacked magical prowess.

"Still, since you never know..."

As an experiment, Fabio made his daughter sell the created ego sword in secret so he could keep track of the ego sword's growth. However, the sword met the fate of being thrown away after being used to some extent by beginner or intermediate players. Even if it was an ego sword, from the exterior it only appeared to be a magic item with one or two defensive options attached.

One person thought something was strange and posted on the forum.

- Something amazing has happened.

This weapon, which I picked up on the road, has the power of lightning. It has a maximum damage of 31 to 46. It's an item with lightning damage +2, but when I identified it to repair it after hunting for a week, the minimum and maximum damages had both increase by 1, and the lightning damaged increased to 3.

I'm now thinking of switching to another sword, but... what do you think?

The replies to his post:

- Short term memory loss.
- Don't drink too much alcohol.
- That sword, can you show it to me once? I'm not asking you to just give it to me, I'll be sure to return it.
- I'm a beginner without a sword, please sell it for 300 Gold.

"It'll be hard for Ego Sword Production to show any satisfying results if it's not at Intermediate or Advanced level."

Although the Dwarves were a race that naturally excelled at Blacksmithing techniques, he did think the skill didn't suit him since his magical ability was poor. An Elf or Human Blacksmith would have been able to make a slightly better ego sword.

It was really a shame, but Fabio was giving up on Ego Sword Production.

Magic Sword Production Beginner 1 (3%): You can create a magic sword.

The completed magic sword can show a special ability depending on the characteristics of the material. Can only be used if it is imprinted with magic.

The skill Fabio currently had the most expectations for!

"I'll make the sword imprinted with the best magic."

It wasn't impossible. Materials with magic power could be acquired in small amounts from places deep within dungeons or by hunting high-leveled monsters. He was striving to make the ultimate magic sword with those materials.

"A true magic sword is made by a Blacksmith, not a Magician."

A Magician could invest all their Mana into a sword to grant magic that could be used a few times. However, a Blacksmith created a sword imprinted with such magic.

It was a secret skill Fabio had earned after clearing a request he had discovered after finishing a fearsome number of Blacksmithing quests.

Blacksmith of Magic Swords

The secret art of a Dwarven Blacksmith who hated Akryong (Evil

Dragon) Kaybern.

Normal swords cannot wound Akryong Kaybern's hide, and it is foolhardy to fight a Dragon with magic. The Dwarven Blacksmith believed the sole way to hunt Akryong Kaybern was to blast him with magic after piercing him with a sword.

In order to acquire the method of producing a magic sword, a Dwarven Blacksmith must explore the vanished dungeon.

Difficulty: Blacksmith Profession Quest

Restriction: Limited to Dwarven Blacksmiths

It was a profession quest he cleared by secretly leading his guild there.

A magic sword had greater damage than a regular sword, and it also grew by gaining bloodlust every time it absorbed blood. Since it had fewer ego sword-like uses, it could actually be a better method for creating a sword to be used as a weapon.

CLANG, CLANG, CLANG!

Fabio silently hammered the steel.

"An absolute weapon, nearly perfect armor; only with such works

will a Blacksmith be able to stand at the center of the Versailles Continent."

Since other Blacksmiths on the Versailles Continent were hard at work, even at this very moment, he could not rest.

On the extensive Versailles Continent, Fabio was a great figure who was restraining and concealing his true self.

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The Crimson Mercenary Guild.

A guild proudly showing off its force on the Versailles Continent. Only Mercenaries over level 280 were permitted to join. They operated Mercenary guild branches in every kingdom, and the entirety of the wealthy Nemere Lakeside basin area was under their control. They were the rulers of a vast region, possessing 5 castles and 28 villages.

The Crimson Mercenary Guild was meeting in Haryun Castle, the closest castle to the Nemere Lakeside.

"It's Wargod Weed."

"Guild master, shouldn't we subjugate him?"

The Crimson Mercenary Guild's chief, Maren, nodded.

"There's plenty of reasons to subjugate Weed."

The glory of fighting the Wargod Weed and winning!

For the Crimson Mercenary Guild, which sought dominance over the entire Versailles Continent, it was something to be desired.

However, there were some Mercenaries who opposed it while shaking their heads.

"Since the Continent of Magic, he is an idol-like figure for Mercenaries. It's too much for us, the representatives of Mercenaries, to subjugate him."

"There needs to be a justification. If we attack him with no reason at all, how is it any different from thieves who steals from another?"

"How is a justification important? Think about the fame! It's a chance to gain the fame of having won a fight against the Wargod Weed."

"Only time will tell if it'll become fame or dishonor."

20 top ranking Mercenaries were arguing, without budging an inch from their opinions.

Maren, the Chief of the Mercenary guild, had been greedily considering subjugating Weed at first. But, after hearing the opposing viewpoints, he was a little hesitant.

There was glory in it. The title of being the player who had killed the Wargod Weed was very charismatic. On the other hand, they would earn the hostility of the players who revered Weed.

Even former Continent of Magic players didn't dislike Weed. His fame on Royal Road was reaching a peak among general players. As far as fame went, Weed had risen to the ranks of Bardray, whose Hermes Guild was officially the strongest. There was no knowing if striking Weed, who succeeded in impossible quests and was becoming an idol for players, would be profitable for their guild or not.

Naphgel, one of the top Mercenaries, said, "How in the world can you say that bringing out our whole guild and trampling Weed is a chance to gain fame? Is there anyone among us who is confident they can win a one on one fight against Weed?"

"..."

At that, the entire gathering fell silent. Even Maren couldn't say anything in response to that.

Weed had never publicized his level or skills before.

"It'll be tough if we assume he's a normal Sculptor. Who can fight like Weed in the Palrangka battle?"

"..."

No matter how you looked at it, his ability to swing his sword in a battle, with only a meager chance of success, was due to his mental fortitude. Regular players revered Weed because of his courage to throw down everything and take up the challenge.

"Just considering his fighting ability, there aren't many people here who are confident they can win against him. And his real profession may not be a Sculptor."

"Naphgel, you mean...?"

"We can't be off-guard just because he's a Sculptor. With his use of Necromancer magic and the physical fighting prowess he's shown, there's really no telling what his profession is."

Maren was also a ranker within the top 50 of all of Royal Road, but he didn't know his opponents' abilities at all. Considering the fighting ability Weed had shown when fighting the Bone Dragon and the quests he had completed, it was, honestly, daunting.

'We fight as a guild. But honestly... I have no confidence in being able to do a quest alone like that. And, apart from level, his battle sense is at least several times greater than mine.'

There wasn't much information known about Weed.

Being defeated in a one on one fight with many variables would be very damaging. If a ranker of Maren's level died, it would be extremely difficult to regain the lost level and proficiency. He could even be culled from the breathlessly tight competition between rankers. Moreover, a fight with Weed would definitely be put on broadcast, and videos would be posted as well. If he was defeated in such a fight, he had to bear the knowledge that he could also lose his fame.

The image was being drawn in Maren's head!

'He'd tear our guild members apart like tissue paper, and the Ice Dragon, Phoenix, Wyvern... and if he used that uber rare Necromancer magic too, it'd be a big pain in the ass.'

The might of Necromancer magic was publicly acknowledged. There were fierce complaints from the people who actually tried raising a Necromancer about how the class's Stamina was low and that they were hard to raise, but because of the terrifying sight Weed had shown in the broadcast, it was a profession many people aspired to be.

'A Necromancer's magic... his fighting ability is truly nothing short of being called a God of War.'

Weed, laughing brutally and slicing Maren's throat apart in the public eye...

"Ahem."

Maren couldn't take action recklessly.

"I've no thought of losing, but it's a difficult issue, since we can't ignore the 'what if' either."

"And, if we send an expedition all the way to the North, we could be giving the other guilds, who are waiting to pounce on us, a good opportunity."

As powerful as the Crimson Mercenary Guild was, they had as many enemies. They were in a position where they couldn't send out their main force indefinitely.

"Are you saying our guild could be attacked while trying to catch Weed?"

"It's a definite possibility. Our territory will inevitably become vulnerable while our attack force is all the way in the North. From the viewpoint of other guilds, don't you think it's more reasonable to aim for our large, profitable territory than the fame of catching Weed?"

They had many Mercenary guild competitors, and there was no law preventing them from joining forces to attack.

It was an issue with all sorts of worries for the Crimson Mercenary Guild.

*

Weed was left with just a few things after he disposed of all the japtem. He planned to find owners for the Sophia's Greatspear, Large Crystal Gemstone, Jorudia's Signet, the diamonds, and Isuren's Magic Weapon elsewhere.

"It'll be good to sell off the Large Crystal Gemstone to nobles after I process it with sculpting and make it a large ornament... it wouldn't be bad to use it when I'm Light Sculpting, either. I'll have to sell the other items through the auction site or the Dark Gamer's Union."

A dresser and dining table made with the large crystal! They would be hard to sell in the North, but they were luxury goods he could sell at extremely high prices in a Central Continent kingdom.

After selling the miscellaneous items, Weed walked along the streets of Morata with Yellowy.

The residents recognized him and greeted him first.

"Welcome, my Lord."

"My Lord, they say you have successfully completed an impressive request once again... Please be sure to tell us the story later. My son says he wants to be just like you when he grows up."

"Count of Morata, I am a Merchant from Rintle Kingdom. It is an honor to meet such a famous man."

Because of the enormous Fame he had accumulated in the River of Lamentations, even NPCs from the Central Continent responded to him warmly.

"The apples have ripened beautifully in our front-yard. We've saved the most delicious apples for you, my Lord, so please be sure to try them."

A woman handed him apples by the basketful! It was a fruit basket she had taken out to sell to the market, but when she saw the Lord, she had given it to him on the spot.

Weed received the fruit basket and took a big bite out of a ripe, red apple.

"Yellowy, you eat one too."

He threw Yellowy a worm-eaten apple. The bull stuck out his tongue to lick it, then opened his mouth wide and crunched into it.

Weed solemnly proceeded to give it a lesson.

"Yellowy, the way people are, they help each other when times are tough. Don't you think things like these are all because of our

daily actions?"

Yellowy didn't believe him at all, but he just nodded; he was busy eating the apples in the basket.

Morata had become very different from the last time he had come. Mystical figures were sculpted on the sturdy bridge on the crossway to the Lord's castle. Sculptors, Artists, and Painters had come to Morata and were enriching the city.

"We're building a shopping district!"

"I'm a Painter, please take me with you."

"A Sculptor is participating, leave the ceiling to me!"

When a construction quest appeared, all the artists joined in to construct a beautiful building.

With its crystal clear river and lake, Morata's attractions continued to increase.

There was even a sizeable ornament hanging from Morata's spire, visible from the square.

Adventurer Spenson's hair ornament of Ankia!

Lady Ankia's Hair Ornament, City Ornament

Durability: 80/80.

A gold ornament with outstanding archaeological value.

Options:

The entire village's commercial development speed increases by 2%.

Adventure related experience increases by 1.5%.

Spenson was a very distinguished adventurer in Royal Road; the hair ornament he had excavated after coming to the North was displayed in Morata.

Adventurers could arrange or publicize a special kind of excavated item in a town. They sometimes sold such items for very high prices, but the adventurer received a massive increase in Fame if they donated it to a town. There was also the effect of their intimacy with the townspeople increasing instantaneously, and they could also buy goods very cheaply — at much better prices than an average Merchant would get. Moreover, their popularity with the employees at a tavern was the best! The residents would also go out of their way to find the adventurer in order to offer them quests.

Spenson had predicted that the future Morata would grow into the central city of the North and had left his excavated item here.

Returning to Morata after a long time, Weed could feel the vivid liveliness of adventure.

"It's beautiful."

"Aren't you glad we came here?"

"Yeah. The ambience is good."

One of the changes was the sight of many couples swarming like cockroaches in the vicinity of the bridge and buildings, which boasted great views. Ever since beginners began starting in Morata, many couples had formed. Love, which sprouted while hunting rabbits and foxes!

The consumption and sale of lots of goods by beginners became the pivot of Morata's economic development. There was no main cause for the influx of beginners that rivaled that of Versailles Continent's eastern Rosenheim Kingdom, and made Morata overflow with liveliness. It was a common sight to see beginners with their starting equipment and a wooden sword eating 10 pieces of barley bread sparingly while doing quests in the village.

Morata, a delightful city full of vitality!

The growth in Morata while Weed had been away was dazzling. As beginners appeared, the shops also multiplied quickly. They weren't sellers of cheap baubles, but decent, high class stores.

Merchants and people who wanted to build a house had been stingy with artwork at first.

"What help would such a thing be..."

"Just build it quickly, quickly. Make the warehouse a little wider as well."

However, buildings with outstandingly artistic design boasted much better business. Even if they were the same general store, people gathered in the beautiful building, and so in Morata, investing in sculptures and paintings was no longer just a luxury.

Sculptors, Painters, and Architects gathered to make the city incomparably colorful.

"The song that will be played today is called 'A Night in a Goblin Dungeon'."

Every street corner was decked out with a small stage for performances. In a narrow space, about five steps wide, Bards sang songs and played instruments. It was a sight that could normally only be found in the City of Artists, Rhodium.

In Morata, Artists, Bards, and Architects were respected.

It was the result of the haphazard investment of the money Weed

had shed blood and tears for into art by the Village Elder. Other cities or castles spent 0%, or maybe just 1%, on cultural development, but Morata was committing several times as many funds.

There were many beginner Bards, and with the visits of Bards whose names were well-known throughout the Versailles Continent, the lively music became one of Morata's charms.

The tavern, smithery, weapon shop, and armor shop were crowded with beginners and players. There were many players in the streets, as though there was a festival.

"I wonder how much has changed while I away away. Region Information Window!"

Ding!

Morata Region

An area that once belonged to the Niflheim Empire.

This region is the most prosperous in the Northern Versailles Continent and continues to develop. Merchants actively carry out trade, and there are many customers in the stores. Art is spread throughout, attracting tourists. Due to culture, there is an influx of population and the creation of new jobs. The newly arriving population is showing boosts in all jobs.

Military

47

Economy

821

Culture

1,130

Technology

310

Religious Influence

89

Regional Politics

22

Influence on nearby regions

41%

The former Niflheim Empire's influence: 3.6% (Deeply influences areas related to military, economy, culture, technology, religion, population, and quests)

City Development

106

Sanitation

41

Security

69%

The water facilities have been cleaned, and new houses built. However, they are still inadequate to fulfil the needs of the explosively increasing residents.

New residents want a greater investment in security. They want to expand the village's territory to a wider region and increase the number of monster subjugations.

There are residents who vaguely remember the festival that took place a long time ago.

The large number of sculptures are bringing happiness to the lives of the residents. There is a slight insufficiency of paintings. The endless trust and support for Artists is heightening the village's dignity. The residents have become proud of having more artworks than other villages and want to continue to invest in related guilds.

The tailoring industry's techniques continue to be passed down. With the appearance of many new Tailors, the prospects for the future are bright.

Techniques for handling iron are still basic; Blacksmiths producing weapons or armor are very inexperienced.

The region believes in the Faith of Freya. The residents' faith is firm and will not sway easily. Moderate hedonism and fertility are increased as a result of the Church of Freya's influence; the people show a diligent nature.

Specialities

Leather and cloth. Art.

Territory's Total Population

168,101

Monthly Tax Revenue

178,045 Gold

Village Operating Expenditure Breakdown:

Military 5%

Economic Development 32%

Cultural Investment Costs 14%

Requests and Monster Subjugations 9%

Town Maintenance 31%

Freya Church Offerings 9%

The explosive increase in tax revenue as a consequence of the population increase, commercial development, and the influx of Mercenaries and Adventurers!

"Heh."

Weed made a straight face. The corners of his mouth threatened to rise, and the muscles in his face spasmed as he tried to hold back a smile. He was so happy he wanted to roll around on the ground, but he had to maintain his lordly image, especially in times like this, to save face.

"It's nothing much. Tsk, tsk... It's such a primitive and rural village."

Weed, who was rejoicing with furrowed brows and quivering cheeks, revealed a rotten expression!

It was particularly good that the monthly offerings to the Church of Freya had been reduced from 15% to 9%.

"Seems like it was automatically adjusted as the income sum increased."

More was spent on offerings, but the percentage had decreased with the increase in income.

As the budget increased, there were steady investments into culture, military power, economic development, and village maintenance. Since there was also an explosive increase in beginners, Morata could now be called a respectable, mid-size city.

"Granted, I'm still not getting much tax money compared to the number of people..."

Even on the street Weed was on, 86 out of 100 people were beginners.

Low taxes, adventure, free hunting grounds, and the Tower of Light sculpture. Beginner players were skyrocketing thanks to the positive feel Morata radiated.

"The more these beginners raise their levels, the greater the tremendous growth in taxes!"

He had rosy hopes for the future. They were happy thoughts only a Lord could harbor.

Of course, Morata also had many disadvantages.

There were no other churches besides the Church of Freya. It was very unfortunate that players who wanted to become Clerics had a narrow selection.

Technological development was low, and the quality of weapons and armor was low because there weren't many Blacksmiths. Since the amount produced each day was also limited, all the weapon and armor stores were sold out by morning. The beginners had a lot of complaints because even the beginner weapons in stores had to be sold at premium prices. Mapan aimed for that niche market and was mostly importing weapons to earn big bucks.

Weed didn't worry too much. "To deal with the scarcity, Blacksmiths will probably increase later."

To do things like adjust weapons, maintain armor, or reinforce gear, a Blacksmith's existence was necessary! Since Blacksmiths were receiving as much respect as Clerics, there would gradually be more of them.

Despite many shortcomings, the beginners, who loved adventures, were growing while helping each other out.

Weed also stepped outside the village boundaries. In the breadbasket, wheat and barley were growing rapidly. The wheat, blessed with fertility by the Church of Freya Priests, had so many grains that their stems started to bend. There was also a significant number of people who held pickaxes and were going off to mine in the nearby mountains.

"I've got to earn at least a copper."

"We need money to live, dear."

"We can't even hunt as much as we want with the weapon prices this expensive."

"The weapon prices are still better — the armor prices are really unspeakable."

"Phew, maybe it wasn't a good idea for me to choose the defensive Warrior. I'm gonna be hunting with a Freya Church Priest anyways."

Even beginners were carrying pickaxes and were on their way to the mines. Even if one weren't a miner, pickaxing could be done by anyone, especially by Warrior, Swordsmen, or Knight wannabes with robust physiques. Beginners were going to the mines with slumped shoulders in order to earn money.

"This is a highly desirable sight."

The corners of Weed's mouth rose at last. The flawless re-emergence of that rotten smile!

That the exploitation was rolling smoothly was no different from evidence that Morata's economy was healthy.

Chapter 3: The Lord Of Morata

The Lord of Morata

Yoon Na-hee was buoyant with expectation. "It's an opportunity to meet with him in person."

A meeting with Lee Hyun!

They couldn't make a contract with just three phone calls, so this time she was going to take the contract form herself after making an appointment.

Even though she was an employee at the level of working in a President's secretary office, she had never met someone who had made as strong of an impression as Lee Hyun had. Simply thinking of Lee Hyun was enough to make her heart tremble.

"He is someone who thinks of 3 billion (~3 million dollars) as chump change on the street."

In their first phone call, he had brusquely hung up even when he was told his account had been auctioned at a sum of 3 billion, 9 million Won.

Wasn't he truly the ideal specimen of a man that Yoon Na-hee had always dreamt of?! She still couldn't forget the refreshing shock she'd gotten then.

They had shared short conversations together as she took charge of the casting for the 8 Heroes program as well. At that time, Lee Hyun's level had only been 219. Yoon Na-hee was a player of Royal Road as well, and she had actually been at a higher level than him.

But even making light of him lasted for only a moment. The True Blood Vampire quest, the quest with the Immortal Legion battle, hunting the Bone Dragon, and even seizing the Embinyu Fortress!

Yoon Na-hee only saw him through the videos of another broadcaster — the manly, so very dashing sight of him commanding all the Orcs and Dark Elves as the Orc Karichwi! She was such an avid fan that she printed out an enlarged picture of Orc Karichwi and pasted it on her wall.

"Hmm, would it be okay to call him out of the blue?"

Yoon Na-hee abruptly decided to call him offhandedly. She did so because her position in the President's secretary office and looks of her caliber made her welcome to anyone and everyone. However, once she was actually about to have a phone call with Lee Hyun, she was so nervous that it was hard to speak.

Yoon Na-hee prepared herself and dialed in Lee Hyun's phone number. The receiver picked up the call before the bell rang twice.

Click!

"Hello, this is Yoon Na-hee. You remember me, right?"

She began speaking with an intimate, yet meltingly honeyed voice. She worried for a moment about what she would do if the person on the other end wasn't Lee Hyun, but fortunately it was the right person.

- Who is it?

Lee Hyun's curt voice came through the call. The already tense Yoon Na-hee could not help but be overwhelmed.

"That, I am Yoon Na-hee."

Since this was their third call, there was an understanding that he would at least remember her name.

- So what?

"....."

- I'm busy so please don't keep calling.

— Beeeeeeep —

Lee Hyun had hung up.

*

On the hill where Weed had sculpted the Tower of Light in the past, was crowded with visitors even in broad daylight. There were tourists who were looking at the Tower of Light, while going as far as to wait for the evening to come. There were several sculptures Weed had made on the hill, and beginner Sculptors also brandished their skills to make works of art in the empty spaces.

It was worthy of being called an excellent sculpture park. This hill had already become quite famous in the Versailles Continent as the Light Park. Moreover, a fabulous view of Morata village and the Lord's Castle could be seen from the hill! The pretty buildings and the Goddess Freya Statue were visible from above.

Weed went up to that place with Yellowy.

"It's the Lord of Morata."

"Lord? Then he's the Sculptor who sculpted the Tower of Light."

"It's the Wargod Weed."

As Weed went up the hill, the tourists who recognized him shouted out. Weed went right past them, took a position on the hill of sculptures, and pulled out his sculpting knife.

'I have to make something necessary for the quest.'

He had felt his limitations even while doing the Alliance of the Deliverer quest. His stats were higher than others because he was a Sculptor, but his fighting ability fell somewhat short. Even if he were to make up for it with Sculpting Blade or other skills, he was in a shaky situation considering the quest he had in front of him.

'I can't even use the Power of the Deliverer anymore, and if another enemy like Balkan or the King Hydra shows up, I'll lose for sure.'

It was a battle Weed had used all his cards to fight in. He had entirely used up the Power of the Deliverer that had been in the wand, and the Copper Plate of Rest's durability had fallen, so he couldn't issue the Sentence of Death. He had to complete the 2nd and 3rd steps of the quest as well, but all his cards were exhausted.

He had suffered to death completing the 1st step of the S difficulty quest, so there would be nothing more mortifying than failing the 2nd and 3rd steps.

Slice, slice.

Rocks were cut with every movement of the sculpting knife.

There were many sculptures Weed had thought of making. The Church of Freya did not shun other religions. Therefore, he was planning on making a statue of the God of Lugh, who matched well with Freya. The Church of Lugh revered brightness and was the natural enemy of monsters that attacked under the cover of

darkness. It wouldn't be bad to have an Idol of Lugh, even if only to improve public security.

[T/N: Lugh is pronounced as "Lu", he is the Celtic hero of the Sun God.]

'Durability has to be good for a huge statue, so I've gotta make the foundation with stone.'

Weed quickly cut the rock that would become the sculpture's foundation. A sculpture similar in size to the Tower of Light was being made! Statues of Lugh were set up all across the Versailles Continent. Lugh wasn't vague in appearance like Goddess Freya, so it did not take long to sculpt.

"The really important part starts from this moment onwards."

Weed took a deep breath. The materials were so precious that they made him bead up with cold sweat, but an investment in the sculpture was necessary.

He was at Advanced Sculpting 6. If he made just a few more sculptures, he would soon reach level 7.

"It's really a shame, but..."

Weed sorted the metal fragments he had acquired at the Embinyu

Fortress. Excluding the blacksmithing materials with high solidity, he melted the broken metal shards.

"Aahhh, precious things..."

Glowing yellow, the molten gold was completed.

When a Blacksmith improved their skill, they could paint on a thin layer of gold. In technical terms, gilt!

"I won't even be able to paint half of it with this much..." Even after melting all the metal shards in Weed's possession, it was slightly insufficient to paint the entirety of the huge statue. "Should I try mixing in a few impurities?"

Weed shook his head. It would deal a blow to the sculpture if the gold's purity was lowered.

"The gold has to be 24k no matter what."

Weed melted in the ancient gold coins and the gold bars he had acquired from hunting.

"Aaahh, these precious things."

Every time he stirred with a rod, the molten gold was mixed as it let off an indescribable luster. For Weed, who had only ever stirred watery soup, it was a luxury among luxuries.

The tourists couldn't repress their astonishment.

"Is Sculptor Weed making an enormous statue right now?"

"It looks like he's gonna cover it all in gold."

They were curious about how the idol of Lugh would turn out. That was the way things were; no matter what it was, the expectant mentality would amplify right before something was finished.

As it was Weed, the tourists kept on increasing.

"How much tax did he scrape from Morata to be able to invest in a sculpture like that?"

"As expected, Lords must have a ton of money."

"I'm telling you, they're all scammers and thieves. How much money do you think he earned as players gathered in the North?"

There was even the appearance of those who saw him as a millionaire and envied him. However, Weed's fame was enormous.

"Do not criticize our Lord!"

"That's right, our Lord is maintaining a really low tax rate."

"He's the one who emptied his own pockets to make sculptures and raise buildings in the ruin that was once Morata. To such an awesome Lord..."

"You don't even know the reason why he was trying to squeeze out every last Copper when he was selling goods to everyone in the market, right? Sob, sob!"

The female beginners who saw him as kind even showed tears at the criticism directed at Weed as they defended him.

"He's trying to get just one more Copper to invest it in Morata. All for our sakes!"

The players who defended him while calling him a living saint; an excellent Lord who treasured his residents and players!

Weed was so taut with tension that he couldn't even give a shit about the the tourists' dispute.

"I can't spill even a single drop."

He poured all his attention into the business of gold gilding.

He had a background of papering the walls in his house since he was little. They had lasted a winter by pasting the newspapers left

from his delivery onto the walls, layer by layer.

"Papering must be done quickly! It absolutely must not overlap. It'll be tough if there are bumpy raised parts or crooked portions."

He revived the experience of papering to perform the gilding. Of course, there was a considerable difference between the two. In gilding, gold had to be spread thinly and brushed on, so it had a far greater difficulty.

However, he received assistance from his skills to make up for what he was lacking. He had shitty drawing ability, but thanks to raising his Drawing skill beforehand, there was even a slight effect on his brushing.

At last, the head part was all painted on, and the idol of Lugh's head reflected the sunshine, sparkling golden. He put in blue jewels for the eyes. They were azure eyes gazing far into the distance on a golden head that looked like it would sparkle away at any moment.

The statue of the proud Sun God was being made steadily from the head down.

"Oooh."

"It's so cool."

The sight of the statue being completed was broadcasted real-

time on the Internet through the tourists. The golden idol of Lugh made by Weed!

It was completed with a majestic appearance and was even holding a huge bow and arrows. For a normal Sculptor, it would have been too daunting to make just the idol, but Weed had a history of making huge sculptures now. He had kept some spare materials on hand, even when making such a large sculpture, and had even sculpted Lu's equipment.

Ding!

You have completed the Idol of the Church of Lugh!

Yet another major work brought into the world by the great leader in sculpturing, the pious Sculptor Weed.

One of the Gods on the Versailles Continent, the idol of Lugh, who symbolizes the sun, has been completed. Covered in pure gold, this work will be regarded as precious by the Church of Lugh.

Artistic value: A work by the master Sculptor Weed. 9,112.

Special options:

* Those who have seen the Idol of Lugh, will have 23% increased Health and Mana recovery speed for a day when in a bright place.

- * The divine power of Lugh Clerics is increased by 12% for a day.
- * Reduces the failure rate of holy magic.
- * By the power of their faith, the morale of Lugh Paladins will not falter, and Courage will increased to the maximum value.
- * Strength increased by 12.
- * Maximum Vitality increased by 20%.
- * Maximum Health increased by 25%.
- * Item drop rate while hunting increased by 7% for a day.

Effects do not stack with other sculptures.

Number of religious sculptures completed until now: 1

- Sculpting skill proficiency has improved.
- The Advanced Handicraft skill has become level 7. Abilities that utilize hands or tools are further increased by 8%, and a variety of different areas will be influenced.
- Fame has risen by 499.

- Art stat has increased by 35.
- Strength has increased by 3.
- You have made a religious sculpture. Intimacy with the Church of Lugh has increased, and you will receive their favor. The probability of Lugh Priests visiting Morata has increased.
- For making a religious sculpture, All Stats have increased by an additional 2 points.

He had succeeded in making a religious sculpture!

There was only about 17% until Weed's Sculpting skill proficiency reached level 7.

"A magnum opus or two should be enough."

Sculpting growth became slower the more it grew, but the situation was more than enough to make him ambitious. However, since he had sculpted Goddess Freya and the Idol of Lugh, he couldn't make other sculptures of Gods that didn't align well.

"This is enough for a huge stone sculpture."

An idol of Night, the Thief, or the Barbarian would take a long time to sculpt, and they didn't fit Morata. If he sculpted an idol for

Thieves that ended up making the public safety fall and increasing the number of Thieves, it would inevitably be a big problem. An idol of the Barbarian was also out since their robust physiques scared residents unless it was a place where individuals of the Barbarian race lived.

"It doesn't matter. There's lots of things to sculpt."

Weed reversed his grip on the sculpting knife. Since many tourists were gathering to look at the Idol of Lugh, it was now time to cook before it got too late.

*

"Weed is the Lord of Morata!"

Among the players who enjoyed hunting and adventuring in Morata, a considerable number of the hunting parties had a great interest in Weed. They had come to the North from the Central of the Continent for stronger monsters and quests.

Tourists or beginners, who had just started, did not care much about the Wargod Weed. They knew Weed was a famous person, but they didn't have much interest in him.

However, for warriors, Weed was a subject of respect or a rival they wanted to overcome.

"Let's go see Weed."

"Do you happen to know where Weed is?"

The news got out early, but they were late to return because they had gone out on an expedition in a hunting ground that was quite far away, even for the North. A fighting party that had just returned from the hunting ground asked around about Weed's whereabouts in the village.

There was a Merchant who knew about Weed.

"Lord Weed?"

"Yes, that Weed."

"Ah, so you came to sightsee. He is making a sculpture on the rocky mountain over there."

"A sculpture?"

"Yes, it's an extremely time consuming and tedious process, so try going over there the day after tomorrow if you can."

At the Merchant's words, the Warrior, Hon, tilted his head. "He's making a sculpture?"

The Paladin, Billeo, replied in a slightly tense voice. "There is talk that his profession is a Sculptor."

"I heard that the Lord of Morata was a Sculptor too. But him being a Sculptor is ridiculous. At least, the Weed we saw didn't have such a personality."

They had died quite a few times at the hands of Weed in the Continent of Magic. Of course, their levels in the Continent of Magic had been a little over the medium range, so they could at least keep up when fighting with their guild.

The sight of Weed, who had slaughtered enemies with unparalleled efficiency!

Hon spoke in disbelief. "To say he's a Sculptor... unlike the rumors, maybe he's not Wargod Weed?"

The Warrior, Garrick, stepped forward first. "We'll know when we see him. Isn't it useless for us to be talking here like this?"

A hunting party of 7, including Hon, Billeo, and Garrick, left for the rocky mountain.

It was a party that gathered the players at the peak of even Morata! Even the Cleric's level was over 300, and his robes fluttered as he ran.

They had been in Morata for quite a while, so they knew easily

the location of the rocky mountain where the sculptures were. Since the Tower of Light was there, even they always went there when they came to Morata.

"For the Lord of the village that we have been using as a base to be the Wargod Weed, it's really above our imaginations."

"More than that, for us to have hunted while looking at sculptures he made, should we be thankful or something?"

It was as confusing as being smashed by a blunt weapon from afar.

There were many tourists and beginner players on the road towards the rocky mountain. The beginner players were moving towards the mountain with laughter blossoming on their faces!

"Wow, this is really the best."

"Man, it was a really, really good idea to start in Morata. It's probably just us who can hunt while looking at sculptures such as these."

They could fully understand the beginner players' feelings. The village Hon had started in, was a desolate mining town. He had purposefully chosen the sparse mining town in order to grow faster than others. He did go to a big city later, but even there, he had no real memories of seeing artworks. After hearing the rumor that the Pyramid sculpture had been made in the Rosenheim

Kingdom, he had even been a little jealous. For beginners who had lots of insufficiencies, how great of a help would it have been to have the awe of the sculptures at their backs?

"The Tower of Light alone is incredible."

The party, which included Hon, followed behind the procession that was climbing up the rocky mountain. There were many people going up the mountain, and it just happened to be when the sun was about to set. Since the Tower of Light at night could be called the king of specialties, players in Morata never failed to seek it. Magicians didn't stand in line and used flying magic to soar past and incite envy.

Garrick suggested, "Why don't we also fly instead of going like this?"

"Shall we?"

The Magician Easton cast flying magic and the party members floated into midair. At that, players swarmed over.

"Magician sir, can't you give me a little flying magic too?"

"Please float us up too! Magician sir, we beg you."

"Magician sir!"

Easton became popular with flying magic alone. His popularity was no less than a famous celebrities'! Seeing that countless players had gathered around Easton from midair, Hon nodded.

"We'll be going first." They had cleanly given up on Easton. "He'll probably come after us on his own, since he's a Magician."

The party members went up the mountain in midair with the flying magic.

Besides the Tower of Light, yet another enormous sculpture had been completed on the rocky mountain.

One of the party members, a Cleric of Lugh named Hines, couldn't hold back his deeply touched feelings.

"An idol of Lugh is here..."

The sculpture's effects!

Because of the effect that greatly increased Faith and holy magic, Hines' hunting efficiency in Morata would greatly improve. Clerics of the Church of Freya were already enjoying this benefit. Using blessings or healing magic around the Goddess Statue increased the effect to far greater than normal.

The Goddess Freya Party, the League of Male Priests, the Guild of Abundance. It was enough to make many related guilds and parties form within Morata.

"Lots of Lugh Clerics will be coming to Morata."

If the number of Clerics and Paladins increased, it wouldn't be long until a formal temple was erected.

"Where is Weed?"

Hon scanned the vicinity of the Tower of Light. On top of being the shadowy night, there were so many visitors or Morata players that it was hard to distinguish anything.

Billeo pointed his finger over in a direction.

"Isn't he over there?"

Oddly enough, only a place where people were standing in line to eat something was lit up with torchlight.

"Let's go see for now."

Billeo, Hon, and the others flew through the sky and landed there.

A large banner showing food menus was hung up in an eye-catching place.

"Just look at that."

"Huh?"

Dragon Soup

120 Gold

King Hydra Black Bean Noodles

100 Gold

Skeleton Bone Hangover Soup

13 Gold

Grilled Dragon (150g for 1 serving)

380 Gold

Grilled King Hydra (100g for 1 serving)

80 Gold

Place of Origin: River of Lamentations Basin. We handle fresh meat only.

"Whoa!"

Extravagant as prices may be, but the contents of the menu was what threw the party into shock.

"Come, come! It's cheap, cheap! Everyone, you have never eaten meat like this. Dragon meat! This is a spicy soup made with Dragon meat. "

They heard the words of the chef who was advertising.

"But it's too expensive."

"Still, when will you get to eat meat like this?"

"Yeah, it's killer 'cause it's a frickin' Dragon soup. Right?"

Customers were standing in line to receive the cooking. There were no tables so it was a substandard business that ladled soup into bowls brought by the customers.

"Could Weed really be here?"

Hon shook his head to and fro, but unfortunately that speculation was the truth. After Billeo asked some customers waiting in line, he had told them the truth.

"They say that the chef is Weed."

"Wargod... Weed?"

"I dunno about that, but he's Morata's Lord Weed."

"Are you sure?"

"There's a lot of people who knows about Weed."

The residents of Morata had been employed as labor for making the enormous sculpture called the Goddess of Freya. If you put it in good terms, they had participated in the quest, and, because of that, Weed's face was well known.

"He was supposed to be making a sculpture, so why the food?"

"Apparently a shit ton of tourists gathered while he was completing the Idol of Lugh. Morata residents and players came up here to look at Weed too. Isn't it true that an enormous number of players have gathered on the rocky mountain?"

Hon nodded. Even in his eyes, a crowd of this extent couldn't be beaten by a metropolis like the capital of a Kingdom. If there was a throng of people like this in the northern part of Morata, then it really was an incredible deal.

"So they said he's cooking from today onwards to 'receive' the people who came."

"Cooking... who the hell can buy cooking this expensive?"

"Weed tried to sell it cheap, but it seems like players said that he had to charge prices of this extent, at least. Don't be surprised. If you eat 1 kg of Dragon Meat, your Vitality will rise by a whoppin' 20, maximum Health by 120, and Strength by 7."

Hon's eyes widened in disbelief. "Are you bullshitting me? Is something like that even possible with cooking?"

"Apparently there are a lot of people who've already seen the effects."

"If it's the meat of a King Hydra or a Dragon, then you can't call spending this much Gold expensive."

Hon, Garrick, and the others thought it was reasonable. Rather, it was a chance for them to be able to eat precious food. If it raises their stats, they would be able to benefit from it for a long time afterwards.

"Shall we try standing in line too, for the time being?"

"Yeah. When else will we be able to try eating Dragon meat? They said it also raises stats, so if we don't take a chance like this we're gonna regret it forever."

Hon, Garrick, Billeo, and the others stood in line. The greed for stats was intense no matter what your profession was. Intelligence and Wisdom were the most important for Magicians, but they would never hesitate to take a chance to improve their physical strength or Agility. Everyone was the same regarding their bodily well-being, regardless of profession, gender, or age!

In such a fashion, the customers waiting to eat the food were steadily increasing.

A soup that literally had a Dragon swum in it and left! Black bean noodles with sauce made using the King Hydra's incredible meat and noodles made of flour! There was barely any meat in the Skeleton Bone Hangover Soup, but it still raised stats like Strength, Agility, or Vitality by 1 or 2. It was because the effect possessed by the ultimate cooking ingredients, the Hydra and Imoogi meat, were supplemented by the Cooking skill.

Weed reaped excessive profits as he produced an enormous amount of food. It was such an amount that an army chef would be emotionally touched if they came and saw it.

"As expected, business is hard at first. Once it starts doing well, it's crazy because of the customers pressing in."

The greatest trouble for a business was taxes! But in Morata, even if he technically paid the taxes, it would all return to Weed's pocket in the end.

Weed employed Morata's residents to help him with the kitchen tasks. A jackpot restaurant that drew in the customers didn't make food, it made money. As long as it was popular, there weren't many enterprises as profitable as the food business. Especially if you could totally rip everyone off like now!

- Cooking skill proficiency has increased.

His Cooking skill had also gone up twice from Intermediate level 6 to 8. He had worked hard to brew liquor at the River of Lamentation to accumulate proficiency. That had already put him at level 7, but because the King Hydra and Imoogi meat were fundamentally good food ingredients and so precious, his Cooking skill proficiency was still surging up.

The Imoogi meat was even causing a panic, hoarding phenomenon. Because the amount of meat was already fixed, there was an uproar of people trying to buy.

"Weed-nim, please give me just 7 servings."

"I'm buying 12 servings."

The meat frozen by Bingryong was being imported via Yellowy! The meat sold like hotcakes as soon as it thawed. The smoke of grilling meat was everywhere on the rocky mountain because of those who were personally grilling their meat by setting bonfires.

"We also sell Imoogi Bone Broth."

The lightning fast sale of bone broth that didn't even give off anymore grease, as it had been steeped a whole twelve times!

Drinks, which couldn't be left out when selling meat, were also prepared.

"Wangisul at 30 Gold, Baeknyunju at 80 Gold. Quantities are limited, so buy them quickly."

[T/N: Wangisul is a spoof of the popular soju Chamisul, and Baeknyunju is a rewritten form of Baekseju, a rice-based fermented wine.]

The flower girl, who had been captured by the Vampire Torido and turned to stone, Prina, was selling alcohol.

Weed was even selling off all the alcohol he had brewed in this occasion. Because he could get a higher price for restaurant sale than individual sale.

*

Adventurers arrived at the destroyed Embinyu Fortress.

"Hmm, so this was the ferocious battlefield."

"It has an eerie feeling, as if something is going to come out."

Hon, Billeo, Garrick, and the others had moved to the River of Lamentations basin towards the evening. They had emptied their pockets of even their change until their stats stopped rising from eating the Hydra and Imoogi meat.

"I see you are eating a lot. I will specially give you a 20 Silver discount for each plate of meat. Since it is very precious meat, please enjoy."

When they heard Weed's words, they were, of course, so thankful that they were moved to tears. It's not like they didn't think he was cheap, but he was the one holding the knife!

After eating the food, they went to use the movement portal. However, Morata's Soldiers and Paladins were blocking their way.

"You cannot use the portal."

Hon asked politely, "What kind of request must we take? Is there a quest, by any chance?"

At their question that was aimed towards getting permission to use the movement portal, the Soldiers shook their heads.

"You must pay a usage fee."

"A fee?"

"Each person is 350 gold."

Having used all the money they had to eat meat, Hon and the group fell into an embarrassing situation.

Looking at the group, Hon asked, "What to do?"

"What else? We've gotta get the money."

The Magician Easton rummaged through his pockets one by one. He had always had the pleasure of making lots of money through the production of magic goods, but thanks to drinking alcohol while eating meat, his pockets were completely empty.

"There's no helping it. Let's take this chance to get rid of things we aren't using."

"Shall we?"

"Yeah, we might as well organize our packs now."

In Morata, the group sold off things like swords and armor they had used in the past, and ores they had stored separately. They were scraping up the funds for hunting by selling the items they had treasured in remembrance. It was true that the movement portal fee was a bit expensive, but the sum was more than worth a

better hunting ground.

Like that, they moved to the Matallost Church's temple and sought out the Embinyu Fortress.

The collapsed castle walls and tower, piles of skeletons that looked like they would rise at any moment. It was an eerie night since the riverside was foggy, too, but there were over 80 players who had come through the movement portal like Hon's group. With the excitement of starting a new and dangerous adventure, plenty of adventurers had come to the River of Lamentations, and were looking around the Embinyu Fortress battlefield they had seen in the broadcast.

"Selling goods necessary for hunting. Purchasing all kinds of japtem at high prices."

The Merchant Mapan had come to the Embinyu Fortress entrance and set up shop at some point. Since it was business that only dealt with high leveled players, the margin would be considerable.

"Anyone who'll take a Soldier? I'll fight without sparing myself physically."

"I'm Vittese. Only people who know me, please take me along."

Players who had come alone were seeking parties here. Hon's group didn't need another party member, so they were going to

hunt with just their group.

Just then, Weed walked in from the plains. His black mantle fluttered as he walked straight to the Embinyu Fortress. Weed arrived and spoke to those who were looking around inside the ruined fortress.

"Everyone... do you perhaps need a quest?"

"...?"

"I will share the quest I've received. It's a B difficulty request."

It was a difficulty Weed may or may not be able to do. It was underground, so he couldn't drag a bunch of his sculptured life-forms along with him, and there was a labyrinth inside, so it would drain a lot of time.

"What quest is it?" A blond-haired female Elementalist asked in curiosity.

The Wargod Weed. Opinions on him were still divided, but it was the quest of a figure who was believed as a Wargod by many.

"It is the Rescue the Matallost Church's Prisoners quest. It's a part of the linked quest I am doing."

"Really?"

Even if Weed shared the linked quest, the people who joined in the middle wouldn't be able to receive the follow-up quest since they hadn't started from the beginning. If this one quest was finished, it would end with that. But despite that, it was an offer they could not help but be drawn to.

The majority of those who had come here had heard rumors before about the Matallost Church, which was related to the Resurrection Army.

"That's a place related to the Resurrection Army and Daymond, right?"

"Yeah. I think so."

While Weed was stopping the Embinyu Church's plot, the Resurrection Priests had become unable to raise Demonic Spirits with dead ghosts. It wasn't just a fight against the Embinyu Church, but it had been a chance for Weed to grow even more famous as an adventurer. Because of that, the Resurrection Army was currently unable to increase their forces and were maintaining their siege at Fort Odin.

"Where is the quest location?"

"Right here, it is an underground prison."

"Really?"

The players at the Embinyu Fortress, including the Elementalists, hurried to approach Weed. They were going to receive the shared quest since it was a very good quest!

"Please share with me, Weed-nim!"

"Thank you. Please share the quest you worked hard to receive."

Weed smiled as he spoke to those who were thanking him. "However, I will take a fixed participation fee. It's 800 Gold."

"..."

A B rank difficulty quest related to the Matallost Church! Even if the linked quest didn't continue for them, they could receive the reward of other quests, along with EXP and Fame.

Weed, who was making money off endless rip-offs and scam fees!

Chapter 4: 1 Deeply Touching Copper

While the expedition was dealing with the Matallost Church quest, Weed made sculptures. Because the basement of the Embinyu Fortress had turned into an enormous dungeon, it wasn't something that could be resolved in a day.

"There's no end to the world of Sculpting."

Sculpting had developed and changed over thousands of years. Along with drawing, it could be called the foundation of art.

Weed casually created sculptures of animals such as deer, rabbits, sheep, wolves, and foxes.

"They're guys I've made so much that I'm sick of 'em."

He vividly remembered the times when he sold them for just a few Coppers as souvenirs in Rosenheim Kingdom. Those were his beginner days, when he dreamt of making a mountain of Coppers and having fun. Back then, he had just taken the main features and had sculpted them cutely with his basic level of Sculpting.

"The simpler and more adorable they were, the better the souvenirs sold."

It was necessary for them to be light, so the weight wouldn't be burdensome. However, the deer and wolf Weed was making now

were different.

"Now I have to try making a real wolf and deer."

Weed shaped the deer into a form three times its real-life size. What's more, he used precious stone materials such as granite and peridot. He sculpted the deer's simple, innocent bright eyes, round nose, slender body and legs realistically over two days.

Ding!

You have completed the Spotted Deer Statue.

A work imbued with the passion of a Sculptor.

An ordinary animal was sculpted, but it was made with a Sculptor's skilled techniques and sincerity.

It is somewhat regretful that it does not represent a creative idea or a new challenge. However, it is definitely worthy of being called the most outstanding deer among the countless number of deers in the continent. It is such a realistically portrayed work, that wolves will mistaken it for a real deer from far away and come running.

Artistic Value: A work by the Master Sculptor Weed. 72.

Special Options:

Those who see the Spotted Deer Statue will have Luck increased

by 27% for a day. Increases the breeding rate of deer in the vicinity by 350%. Also increases the breeding rate of wolves by 230%. Improves the quality of leather and food ingredients from deer. The intelligence of deer has been improved and can not be easily hunted by monsters. Increases the likelihood of the appearance of large deer herds.

Sculpting skill proficiency has improved.

Fame has increased by 6.

Art stat has increased by 2.

The artistic value of the deer figurine wasn't great because he had sculpted it many times before and it was common. Still, the options were what Weed had aimed for.

"There was nothing easier to hunt than deers during those beginner days."

Deer would stay still even if you got close since they didn't have a fear of people, and it was a beneficial animal that you could even get meat and leather from.

Weed paid a little more attention when he carved the fox and

black bear. He portrayed the black bear extremely fiercely thrashing a tree with its front paws, and the fox was a 9-tailed fox.

The fertility of the black bears roaming around Morata has increased.

The foxes have become more clever and numerous.

The monsters for beginner hunting have abundantly increased.

"The leather and meat will come back to better Morata's livelihood."

With Morata possessing outstanding Tailoring skills, the leather of characteristic animals fetched a high price. That was a very positive development for tight-budgeted beginners!

"Shall I call it a happiness that grows the more it is shared?"

The wealthier the players in Morata became, the more there was to exploit. Weed set up the animal sculptures with that line of thinking. By making full use of the Sculptor profession, he was bringing about an immense change to the city.

Mooooooooo!

The number of cows had increased, all thanks to Yellowy.

Back when Morata was occupied by the Vampires, there weren't even any cows. Far from being able to raise cattle, the food situation was so poor that the Village Elder had to eat by digging up sweet potatoes. Later, the few cows brought by Merchants were raised by players who had chosen professions like Farmer, Shepherd, and Animal Handler. Barns were built, and there was a change in the cows who had grown up eating fresh grass. At night, the cows would mate in the barns. Moreover, if Yellowy went in and out of the barn, the heifers inside would get pregnant 100% of the time! Sturdy and excellent calves were born.

The cows that had roamed the North formed herds and even pressed into Morata. Yellowy was truly the Emperor of Bulls! The prey also increased because the bison and water buffalos multiplied.

However, the sculpture Weed was going to make with his true care and attention was not the animals.

"I have to make special sculptures."

A gigantic sculpture made out of bronze, copper, or mixed metals!

With his Intermediate Blacksmithing skills, he could easily extract raw materials by putting japtem or dirt-cheap weapons into a furnace.

Weed sent a whisper.

Mapan.

Yes.

There is something I want you to procure for me.

What is it, please speak.

Please purchase an unlimited number of weapons, armor, and metal japtem, worth less than 1 Gold each.

That's not difficult at all. But is it really okay for me to get as much as possible?

Yes.

And ah, what about the commission fee?

Mapan brought up the sensitive issue. Though they were on close relations, he couldn't do business for free! However, Mapan was well aware it was not easy to extort money from Weed.

For the fee, I will give you information you can earn money from.

Good information was sometimes more valuable than gold for a Merchant. There was no doubt about it if it was information given by Weed, who even scammed little kids to extract money.

Okay. You can count on me.

Mapan used the stores in his possession to purchase metal japtem. Since japtem could be sold comfortably at a decent price, the beginners welcomed it.

"But why is that Merchant buying this many cheap weapons and armor?"

"Apparently it's a request from the Lord of Morata. The Lord of Morata is doing it for the sake of the beginners."

"As expected. Morata's got low taxes and no territoriality about the hunting grounds. It's really worth calling it heaven, compared to the Central Continent."

Favorable responses towards to the Lord continued to increase.

Mapan piled up the japtem he gathered like that near the Goddess Freya statue at the artificial lake. The japtem was piled up like a mountain, on such an impressive scale that it was enough to remind one of a junkyard or scrapyard from reality.

Weed mobilized Morata's blacksmiths to produce a huge furnace.

Abusing his power as a Lord!

Although there were bound to be quite a lot of production requests for weapons and armor by players, there were no complaints at the rumour that it was for the construction of a sculpture. It was because they knew how helpful a sculpture was once it was finished. There were even a considerable number of people who made requests to make a sculpture relating to their profession.

However, Weed had already decided what kind of sculpture to create.

"I'm going to need a ton of molten metal."

He employed the Blacksmiths to extract the raw materials of the various minerals. Among the raw materials Weed pulled out, he decided to use the brass.

With its low price and nice color, it was a widely favored material for beginner weapons! Actually, it was normal to sell brass weapons at a general store or throw them away when you got to level 20. That was because they had poor durability and damage, so they would often break in the middle of a fight.

"But as far as sculpting materials go, it's a blessing."

Durability wasn't particularly important for a sculpture. A huge sculpture was extremely thick, so there was almost no worry about durability or damage. It was actually better if the color was more beautiful, like brass.

"Dirtman."

"Hail Weed, the man of absolute charisma! I have come at thy call, Master."

As its creator, the earth spirit followed Weed with extreme faith!

"There's something I need your help for."

"Simply command it, anything. Even if this body of mine is broken, I shall follow thee."

The Dirtman had received thorough mental training.

Weed ordered the Dirtman. "Collect mud."

"..."

"You have to get a lot."

The task he summoned the earth spirit for was just to gather mud.

"Yes, Master."

Dirtman acquired an enormous amount of dirt instantaneously. It was mud that was mixed from finely grained dirt and the lake's

clear water. The mud it gathered could even be called a swamp.

Weed went forth with rolled up sleeves.

"Then let's make it."

"How would you like me to make it?"

"We should build up from the bottom. We must properly lay a foundation."

Mud was the material he was most confident about. As a child, he would use dirt to make a house or a dam and play whenever it rained. Playing with dirt could be called child's play for him!

'It doesn't even take any money, I could play with it as much as I wanted as long as it rained.'

The boy who silently played in the mud while getting hit by rain in the rainy season grew up and became Weed.

That work experience also proved its worth in the construction site. He had excellent ratio control when mixing cement, sand, and water! He was able to smoothly apply silicone into the bathroom cracks. They were experiences he had earned through playing in the mud.

"Humans develop all their potential when they're young after

all."

Weed revived his experience to create an enormous mold with the mud. Its height was at the level of a 12 story apartment! It was a form that was made by building up the dirt through Dirtman, packing it in with a trowel, and smoothing it out with the sculpting knife.

The problem was that no matter how cheap the brass was, it would take an enormous amount of money to fill up the entire thing.

"Dirtman."

"Yes, Master!"

"Do you like saunas?"

"What is a sauna?"

"There's something called a clay sauna. And since you're an earth spirit, you won't die from the heat anyway... There's a first for everything, experience is important. Take your friends in there."

Weed threatened Dirtman, and instructed it to fill up the inside of the enormous mold. Then he poured in the brass material.

Pang, pang, pang!

The enormous brass sculpture that emerged once the mud was broken off! It was a sculpture made through the sacrifice of Dirtman.

It was in the shape of a gigantic and nimble lizard. A Black Imoogi with small, atrophied feet!

Since it wasn't complete yet, he had to make the form more detailed.

"It'll be a breeze to sculpt the head."

He sculpted the head delicately while looking at the Imoogi head that he had looted.

"Identify!"

Head of the Black Imoogi, Freykis

Durability 1,671/3,200.

The head of an Imoogi. Retains an unknown power.

It seems difficult to handle carelessly.

Options: Can respond to a special production.

In truth, he didn't know what the Imoogi's head was for yet.

"Because a high level monster like this has almost never been caught before."

It was hard to guarantee victory even when an entire guild went after a level 400 boss class monster. Even if they won, they would incur an enormous loss!

Even the likes of the King Hydra had never been hunted down before, so Weed was the first to have killed a Black Imoogi.

Weed finished sculpting the Imoogi's head, wings, torso, and even the toes with great detail.

An opponent that Weed had personally fought before, he even gave it a vicious and mean appearance. With its wings spread wide open, the Imoogi was twisting up its long neck.

A sculpture that looked down on those below it with its realistic eyes and snout!

Ding!

- Please set the name of the sculpture you've made.

"Hm."

Weed looked at the sculpture for a moment.

The sculpture felt so alive that it made him perfectly recall the fight with the Black Imoogi.

"Very Strong Imoogi."

- Is 'Very Strong Imoogi' correct?

"Yes."

Ding!

A sublime monster sculpture, the Magnum Opus 'Very Strong Imoogi' has been completed!

A Magnum Opus made by an Eternal Sculptor!

A sculpture created using metal. This is a work that will be an excellent example for Sculptors who learn the Blacksmithing skill in order to make sculptures with broader approaches.

The Black Imoogi, Freykis, that was hunted in the River of Lamentation, was sculpted. A work that perfectly restores the

appearance of Freykis in life, the Imoogi that exerted its great wickedness on the Versailles Continent is now left as a sculpture. The sculpture will be a reminder of the Black Imoogi Freykis's might.

Artistic Value:

The work of one who is walking the path of genuine works.
10,921.

Special Options:

Those who have seen the Very Strong Imoogi statue will have their Health and Mana regeneration increased by 31% for a day.

All Stats increased by 15.

Wisdom and Intelligence stats rise by 54.

Spiked increase in the emergence of snake type monsters.

Reduces monster aggression by half.

Reduces the footstep sound of Thieves and Assassins in dungeons by 37% and heightens the effect of the Stealth skill.

Effects do not stack with other sculptures.

Number of Magnum Opuses completed until now: 6

Sculpting skill proficiency has been improved.

Handicraft skill proficiency has been improved.

Sculptural Understanding skill level has risen by 1.

Fame has increased by 912.

Art stat has increased by 17.

Endurance has increased by 3.

Perseverance has increased by 19.

Wisdom has increased by 7.

For creating a Magnum Opus sculpture, All Stats have increased by an additional 3.

"Check Sculpting skill!"

Advanced Sculpting 6 (99%): Can sculpt. A beautiful sculpture

will also sell for a high price.

You can spread your name on the Continent by making glorious sculptures.

Good for buying a woman's affection.

There was only 1% proficiency left until the Sculpting skill went up a level.

"A Fine or a Masterpiece sculpture will be enough to raise it."

Even though the Sculpting skill didn't rise quickly, he calculated that one more would be plenty. When his Sculpting skill, which was very difficult to raise, reached level 7, he would only have 3 more to go until he reached Master.

Weed made a sculpture of the King Hydra using cheap, common copper. A magnificently sized Fine King Hydra was made. Made next to the Goddess Freya statue, it felt distinctive.

A pet of the charming Goddess, it was a guardian creature that looked like it would save her from danger. Or it was a vile King Hydra that was threatening the life of the Goddess! The Black Imoogi sculpture was made on her left, and on her right was the 9-headed King Hydra.

Morata's specialties were further increasing as Weed's Sculpting skill level went up.

Advanced Sculpting skill has risen to level 7. Your sculpting will become surprisingly detailed and delicate.

As your eye for art develops, Wisdom and Intelligence stats increase by 52. Charm has increased by 39.

Sculpting was a skill that had never betrayed him. As he approached Master level, he gained considerable increases every time his skill went up a level. Besides the obvious changes, there were various effects in every field, like his color palette growing more diverse when using Moonlight Sculpting.

"Well, I guess I should just use the remaining metals."

Since they were already melted materials, Weed decided to make huge armors while he was at it. They were armors that could go over the King Hydra and Black Imoogi's torsos.

"I've got to make new attempts for the Blacksmithing skill."

His proficiency wouldn't rise much at all even if he made a simple longsword from the raw materials he'd made from melting the mixed metals. Rather than that, he made armors that huge monsters could use.

"If I need money later, it's convenient to melt it again and sell it."

This was actually a method frequently used by those among the Blacksmiths who were short on cash. They would make a sword or armor and melt it again. Though it seems like a waste of their effort and hard work, it was a way to get rid of something when they couldn't find a buyer or had made a disappointing product with precious materials.

Enormously Sized Armor

Durability 2,060/2,060.

Defense 269.

A work created by a Blacksmith of outstanding talent.

A product made by one with artistic sense. Though it possesses tremendous defense, it's too big and heavy so it doesn't seem like it'll be very useful.

With Silver and Mithril mixed in, it has slight magic resistance.

Restrictions:

1,980 Strength. Large monsters only. Torso circumference of at least 170 meters.

Options:

-210 Agility. Almost indestructible. Absolute defense against

small weapons. +3% Magic Resistance.

- Blacksmithing skill has increased to Intermediate level 4. The attack and defense of created items will be increased by a set value. Siege weapons will have improved accuracy and range.

- While hammering, Strength has risen by 2.

- For making special armor, Fame has risen by 13.

The Blacksmithing skill had finally become Intermediate level 4.

After the King Hydra's armor, Weed made the Imoogi's armor thin.

"The thickness can't exceed 1 centimeter."

It was still thick and heavy even then, but it was for conserving the raw materials.

The mountainous pile of materials that Mapan had purchased was almost completely exhausted. The decreasing pile of japtem was enough to make the beginners, Clerics, and Paladins who came every day to watch him make the sculptures in front of the Goddess statue lose their nerve.

"He used all that japtem."

"A monster, he's really a monster. They say Morata's Lord is the embodiment of hard work; it really is true."

Beginners starting in Morata became determined as they looked at the Goddess statue and the two giant monster statues overlooking the castle walls. The sculptures that had been made using japtem were becoming examples of hard work for the beginners.

Now Weed had finished all the sculptures he'd planned on making in Morata. It was a refreshing feeling, as if he'd done away with the laundry that was piling up. However, he still hadn't gotten a task completion report from the expedition that had gone into the Embinyu Fortress' underground prison. It was a very complex labyrinth and there were many traps, so there were many casualties.

"Then, I guess I'll resolve the request I put off."

The request to make sculpture of a daughter for 1 Copper.

He had paid a whopping 4,000 Gold to the Dark Gamer Union to complete an investigation on the Ritten Kingdom's Mandol and his wife for this request.

"Even if the request fee is 1 Copper, I can't cut corners for this."

Weed planned to sculpt their child with the best materials. The material was the Imoogi and Hydra's leather!

"I won't be able to make armor or a robes with them because of the blemishes anyways."

He used an intact part of the leather to make an adorable girl's doll.

Blacksmithing skills weren't the only ones he used in Sculpting. He made life-like dolls using Tailoring.

There is no limit to sculpting. The source of sculpting was endless imagination.

"I'll put my pride as a Sculptor on the line and make a Magnum Opus sculpture at the very least."

Honestly, there was something else he was expecting.

"The 1 Copper request fee. Huehuehuehue!"

Mandol was a bourgeois player who had even been wearing Mithril boots. That meant he was originally from a wealthy family or had an enormously high level.

"It could even be both. Even if you have the money to buy Mithril

boots, it's an item that can't be equipped unless your level is sufficient."

He was also a family guy who loved his wife and family dearly. Although he had only asked for 1 Copper, there was no way that was all he was going to receive!

If you do good deeds and humble actions, good fortune will come.

Weed was greedy for Mandol's Mithril boots.

Chapter 5: Seo-yoon's Home Visit

The everyday life of Half Sauce Half Fried.

Clu-clu-cluck.

His comb had grown with dignity and he had the great presence of a Korean chicken. He strolled around the yard catching earthworms as a delicacy.

"Seo-yoon, your meal is here."

His life of peacefully living without any threats to his life while sharing Seo-yoon's meal was utterly joyful. The joy of sitting between well cultivated bonsai and drowsing off! With his belly full and his back warm, there was nothing more to wish for in his daily life. As Seo-yoon stroked him affectionately, he even rubbed himself against her.

He was living as happily as a chicken can live.

However, Seo-yoon was always sorry for him.

'I'm sorry I can't be here with you.'

That was because Half Sauce Half Fried was alone when she was in the capsule or at school.

Cluck, cluck, cluck, cluck.

Half Sauce Half Fried shook his head back and forth as he walked around in the hospital's yard.

Seo-yoon thought, 'I will bring... a friend for you.'

*

Midterms, the festival, and the sports meet had ended, and now there were just a little over 2 weeks until summer vacation.

Lee Hyun grumbled endless complaints. "What kind of university is like this. Can't university be shortened to 3 years, or 2 years, like with military service time?"

Seeing as he had to keep paying the expensive tuition for another three and a half years, his future was dark. A convict's feelings about reducing jail time in a concentration camp or prison would be like this.

"Even if I graduate university, it's not like I get graduation pension, it won't guarantee me employment by a foreign company, and it won't provide me with free lifetime medical insurance either..."

An endless reflection on the impracticalities of university was unfolding.

As he looked at the bars, capsule rooms, and the restaurants on the main street in front of the university, he became worried about the education world and the even the nation's future.

"There should only be farmland or a tidal flat in front of a school. When you're hungry, you can help with the elders' rice planting and get a snack to eat, and in the fall you can help with the harvesting as well. A tidal flat... is always valuable food storage. You can hitch a ride on a boat and go pull up the net, too."

On a tidal flat, a single shovel would secure food. You could catch things like fresh oyster and octopus and eat them dipped in chili paste. Since you could also catch fish by casting a net utilizing the ebb and flow, it was killing two birds with one stone!

"There would be no need to build a separate cafeteria..."

It could be called a symbol of rural education. College students enjoying fishing while reading, and friendships that blossomed while boiling spicy fish stew. In front of the university, instead of bars, salons, clothing stores, and nail art stores, a fishing discount mart would do.

As usual, Lee Hyun went to the grass plaza during lunch time and ate the lunch lying on his seat. Seo-yoon was sitting next to him, eating lunch together.

Lee Hyun picked up a side dish with chopsticks and put it in his mouth.

'Yep, it's delicious.'

The lunch that had started from kimbap had extended into sushi, and today it was grilled short rib patties.

'It's warm. It hasn't even cooled yet.'

Lee Hyun didn't even know about the lunchbox being installed with heat rays for keeping the food warm. He was just happy that he could try eating ribs without expense.

'So this is the taste of short rib patties.'

In his middle school and high school days, he couldn't use the school cafeteria because he didn't pay the lunch fee. Even so, of course he couldn't go without eating, so he secretly snuck in and took in a lunch tray. He had passed his school days surreptitiously eating the stealth food that didn't go down comfortably.

How envious he was when his classmates were tearing into lunches that their parents had made with their utmost.

"..."

Seo-yoon slightly bit her lips as she was watched Lee Hyun eating

happily. It seemed like she would briefly smile. Her smiling face could make a person happy, but the chance to see it was truly rare. Still, Seo-yoon's cold and frozen expression, like when he had made the first Goddess Freya statue, had almost vanished.

Seo-yoon had even brought barley tea; she poured it into a cup and handed it to Lee Hyun.

"Mm, thanks."

After taking one sip of the barley tea, Lee Hyun spoke begrudgingly, "Don't just eat vegetables; do you want to eat 1 patty too?"

Nothing is given for free. She wickedly calculated to pretend kindness by pouring him barley tea because she wanted to eat the patties too!

'Though it seems she's become a little nicer recently...'

Unaware that the person secretly leaving the lunches was Seo-yoon, Lee Hyun acted like a person given an enormous power.

Seo-yoon shook her head to and fro. She was full just watching him eat.

Lee Hyun asked once again. "Then two patties...?"

"..."

"Should I give you th-three?"

Just how much was she aiming to squeeze out of him with a single cup of barley tea, she was frowning!

There was once a time when he had shared lunch with Seo-yoon and she had eaten his kimbap at random.

Memories of that time kept popping into his head.

Lee Hyun sighed. 'I'm not a petty person. I should give sometimes too.'

When he was a kid, he had once gone to his friends holding just a spoon and had gotten a meal. As he recalled that plaintive feeling, he was able to understand Seo-yoon's perspective.

"Just eat comfortably. Since I've never eaten much meat... I mean, because I don't like it that much. Eat as much as you want."

Lee Hyun picked up one of the patties and put it in on top of Seo-yoon's rice box.

Seo-yoon carefully opened her mouth and ate it.

It was such a lovely sight that it could snatch one's senses away.

After staring at that sight for a moment, Lee Hyun ate the patties too.

Munch munch.

He couldn't give her much of a side dish as tasty as these patties.

"Why is this so delicious? What kind of meat melts in the mouth, it melts."

The sight of him holding the ribs in both hands and tearing into them after telling her to eat as she wished!

Lee hyun emptied the lunch box cleanly, leaving not even a single grain of rice behind. Of course, he even left behind Seo-yoon's share of one patty at the end. He had finished it off so cleanly that he was pleased with himself.

'She'll have no complaints if she eats three patties.'

Then, as usual, he pulled out the note that had come with the lunch to read it.

"Will she tell me thanks for eating happily today too? Even if I don't know who it is, she is a truly warmhearted lady."

But the words written on the note Lee Hyun pulled out were different from the usual ones.

I have a request.

Do you have time today after class?

It was the summons of the veiled mystery angel who made him lunch.

How tastily had he eaten the food she had cooked. His mouth filled with saliva when lunch time rolled around. Thankfully enough, he had even gotten to eat short rib patties today.

Seo-yoon was observing Lee Hyun's reaction with bright eyes.

"I was curious about who it is, this is good."

With a thankful heart, Lee Hyun wrote his reply.

My class in the business hall on the 3rd floor, room B07, ends at 4. Please come if you can.

*

When class time neared its end, Lee Hyun became a little wary.

"What kind of woman is she really?"

Looking at her cooking skill, she was impressive.

"Her faults are that she uses luxury ingredients too unsparingly and that she only uses a brand-name lunchbox, but I don't think she'll be a bad woman."

Lee Hyun had already created his mystery angel in his imagination.

"Huhu."

Including Choi Sang-jun, Park Soon-jo, and Lee Yoo-jung, others had heard of the mystery angel who packed Lee Hyun lunch. Since she would finally appear today, it was a prime chance to resolve their curiosity.

Choi Sang-jun shook his head knowingly. "C'mon, hyung! Can't you tell at a glance? There's no way a girl who brings lunch like that is decent. That's not normal in the world these days. Yoo-jung, aren't I right?"

"To be honest... it is strange that she hasn't shown herself until now even while putting a lunch box in the same place for over a month. Don't expect too much, oppa."

"Hyung, you heard what Yoo-jung said, right? A mystery angel is something that only shows up in fantasy stories. She could even be a spinster professor or someone who came from a social service community."

Even so, the smile on Lee Hyun's lips did not go away.

That she would make a meal for him had great meaning to him.

"A person who put her all into making a meal for someone else... there's no way that she's a bad girl."

Lee Hyun's personal relations weren't all that normal either. Give as much as you receive. Since she had packed him lunch, he had simply come to the obvious conclusion that she was a good kid!

"Then, good work today. Come back with all your assignments finished."

The professor left the classroom and the students organized their bags one by one. However, there were still students gathered in the area around Lee Hyun.

"What kind of person do you think will really come?"

"Just watch it be an old person. It might even be a student from the physical education department."

That referred to the martial arts students from the PE department who bowed to Lee Hyun whenever they saw him.

The students who were about to leave the area around the classroom door stopped stock still in their positions, as if frozen.

"Hot damn! It's senior Seo-Yoon."

"Huh, does she take her next class here?"

University of Korea's official goddess!

Seo-yoon was entering the classroom. Wearing an extremely gorgeous green dress, she was carrying a lunch box in one hand.

"It can't be..."

The face muscles of the students twisted. They knew that the person who had packed Lee Hyun lunch was coming today.

"Was the Goddess-nim's lunch mercilessly going into that hyung's mouth?"

"This tragedy!"

The shocked and distressed male students!

Lee Hyun also felt like he had been greatly fooled. While frequently meeting Seo-yoon here and there, much of his initial awkwardness and wariness had decreased. They had gone through the MT (membership training) and the festival, and he could even say that they had become friends of a sort while eating lunch together. Seo-yoon did often hit him on the back of the head, but now he could even let that slide with a laugh.

However, for Seo-yoon to be the owner of the lunchbox, he was inevitably tense.

'With what kind of secret design did she...'

Lee Hyun was suspicious from the get-go. He was guilty for not putting up his guard and being defenseless while eating lunch.

'That's right! That was no good. It was foolish, no different from being fooled by a loan company that says it'll let you borrow money for ten days with no interest.'

A fierce self-reflection on his careless blunder!

Seo-yoon approached and extended the note.

You'll listen to my request, right?

Lee Hyun trembled like an aspen. 'So she was aiming for this moment! And for over 1 month...'

Pigs are also slaughtered after feeding them well. She had made him eat many lunches planned on making an excessive request by seizing that vulnerability!

However, Lee Hyun did not want to live with a debt. Interest would grow on the debt, and eventually it would be a quagmire he could never escape.

"If it's a suitable request within feasibility... I'll listen to it."

As if relieved, she pulled out a note she had prepared beforehand.

Half Sauce Half Fried needs a friend.

"Half Sauce Half Fried?" Lee Hyun tilted his head.

Wasn't that distinctive name passed down from the chickens he raised at home?

He soon realized that she was talking about the chicken she had taken at the MT.

"You need a chicken?"

Seo-yoon nodded.

Lee Hyun didn't hide his breath-choking tension and asked again. "A female that can lay eggs?"

Seo-yoon had just wanted to bring him a friend. She hadn't thought of the gender divide in advance. However, since Half Sauce was a male, if it came down to it, bringing a female would be better. Seo-yoon nodded again.

At that, Lee Hyun's eyes trembled. He was forcing himself to resist an incomparably anguished expression.

'A laying female is more expensive... the one we're raising right now in particular is the whelp that ate up half the balloon flower root I picked up in the mountain last time.'

[T/N: Balloon flower root is a common medicinal herb.]

Even so, if he calculated the price of the lunches, a single chicken could be considered fairly inexpensive.

Lee Hyun answered in the affirmative. "Alright. Well... I will bring her tomorrow."

But Seo-yoon was shaking her head.

I want to bring her after seeing her myself.

At the contents of the note that she had prepared beforehand, Lee Hyun thought for a moment and agreed.

"Fine. You can pick her yourself."

He was under the illusion that their relationship lacked trust.

'It seems she wants to pick the best chicken since she's packed many lunches. The most nutritious and expensive chicken.'

The chickens had been raised well to an extremely high caliber. The laying females would even fly around flapping their wings soon after laying an egg. Since they all had about the same value as the market price, he had permitted her to come to his house.

*

Lee Hyun walked with Seo-yoon all the way to his house.

The men who saw her on the street stood dumbly and rubbed their eyes several times before staring at her again. Both men and women were unable to take their eyes off them. They looked like they couldn't believe their eyes as they stared at the far too

beautiful Seo-yoon. Their gazes stolen by Seo-yoon, they couldn't overcome their curiosity and studied the man who was walking by her side.

'Just what kind of lucky person is walking around with a woman like that?'

Lee Hyun was extremely normal, and was wearing a well worn t-shirt and faded blue jeans.

'Why is a bastard like that... did he seize some kind of vulnerability?!'

'He's rich! His family is definitely rich. He's either a wealthy person with thousands of millions of Won at a young age or his inheritance is enormous.'

'The power of love is great.'

Looks of jealousy and envy shot at him, but Lee Hyun stood firm whenever that happened. "Appearance isn't everything in the world. The heart is important." He knew Seo-yoon's true identity. She was vicious, violent, and even underhanded. The worst, as far as her humanity went!

Even if her face was so pretty that it made breathing difficult, it was absolutely no good if you fell for her because of that.

"Even if a woman can cook pretty well, has a lot of money, is

skinny, has a good figure, and is pretty, wears some pretty good clothing, and is smart, it's not necessarily good."

If she was bright enough to get into the University of Korea, then she had to be considered brilliant. Even though they took math together, Seo-yoon solved the practice problems in the workbook way too easily. She was even quick to understand and solve parts that the class was going nowhere with.

"In some ways, it's more regrettable for me." Lee Hyun walked with his head held high.

Seo-yoon was unexpectedly following him well. That she wasn't wearing high heels was part of the reason, but her stride was also quite fast. At the simple thrill of going to Lee Hyun's house, her face was flushed to the point where it was obvious. It was her first time visiting a man's house, and she had happy expectations on what kind of chicken she should bring as a friend.

"We're here."

Lee Hyun went into a secluded neighborhood opened his own house's door lock by lock. There were a whole 7 locks on the front door! A separate password and even a card key were required.

As Seo-yoon approached the doorway, Lee Hyun blocked the entrance with his body.

"I'll say this in advance, but you can't go into my house and just

touch things. I know where everything is, okay?"

Lee Hyun was suspicious and even treated her like a thief! That was primarily because outsiders didn't often come into his house. Choi Ji-hoon had sometimes visited while meeting Lee Hye-yeon, but she didn't bring him that often after the electronics repairs ended.

Lee Hyun was on full guard.

Seo-yoon nodded. "..."

"Come in for now."

Seo-yoon walked through the door.

Woof, woof, woof!

A big dog the size of a calf swiftly ran over, lay on his belly, and barked cutely. His adorable bark didn't match his large physique.

The charm of Dogmeat, the name that Lee Hye-yeon had given him himself!

Lee Hyun explained hurriedly, "He's a dog we're raising. He's an extremely dangerous fellow, so it's safer to stay back."

When Seo-yoon extended a lovely hand, Dogmeat even wagged his tail fiercely.

A dog's sense of smell is 10,000 better than a human's. He smelled the subdued fragrance of the short rib patties and the smell of the previously departed Half Sauce Half Fried on Seo-yoon and was going to be friendly with her.

Just like when dogs become instinctively wary when they see a dog meat trader, when he saw Seo-yoon, he came running in at the good feeling she gave off and was writhing in welcome. He was prancing around Seo-yoon wagging his tail as he enthusiastically marked his greeting of welcome.

Lee Hyun shouted, "Hey, hey! Stop that, Dogmeat, you're gonna bite someone again, right? Just last week you bit someone and hospitalized them. No. Go away!"

Woof, woof.

Dogmeat just wagged his tail and quietly returned to his doghouse. Even after being falsely accused of having bit someone, Dogmeat was utterly docile.

'A chicken is a few thousand Won at the market, but you can get 200 thousand Won (\$~200) for a dog! Not on your life!'

Dogmeat had extraordinarily plump flesh and was exercised, so his muscles were good. They hadn't even sold him when a dog

meat dealer came and offered 350 thousand Won (~\$350), so there was way too much of a shame to give him to Seo-yoon.

"..."

Seo-yoon approached a wire meshed enclosure with hasty steps. Within the wire mesh, rabbits were hopping around.

Seo-yoon quickly wrote on a note with a pencil.

Can I touch them? This is my first time being this close to a rabbit.

"Go ahead. Ah yeah, be careful 'cause it hasn't been long since the rabbits gave birth to babies."

"They're inside the pen."

Seo-yoon looked at the rabbits in fascination, like a kid eating a hamburger for the first time.

Lee Hyun was OCD about sanitation, so the inside of the mesh was very clean and in good shape. There was a generous heap of grasses for the rabbits to eat, and baby bunnies with bodies about 2 or 3 fingers wide were wriggling in a shaded corner. Even though they were just babies, they had long ears and their hind legs were moving as if to hop around on the ground!

"Aahhhh."

As if she were singing, an exclamation flowed from Seo-yoon's lips! It was like a pretty and clear whisper.

She clung to the rabbit hutch, peering in with sparkling eyes. Unable to touch the babies because they might get scared, her expression was one of extreme regret.

"You can touch them."

"..."

However, Seo-yoon was unable to readily touch them.

"It's okay. They're babies who haven't even opened their eyes yet."

That wasn't why Seo-yoon was worried, but Lee Hyun put his hand through the mesh and pulled out a baby.

"Here."

When he lowered it onto the back of Seo-yoon's hand, the baby bunny kicked weakly as it wriggled. Seo-yoon embraced the baby bunny as if it were precious and stroked it. But she soon put it back into the rabbit hutch, because the baby bunny might feel anxious.

Even afterwards, Seo-yoon didn't leave the rabbit hutch and squatted there to no end.

'Surely she won't ask me to give her one!' Lee Hyun became increasingly alarmed. His little sister hadn't returned from school yet. 'Alone at home with a girl... I absolutely must be careful!'

A guy and a girl.

It was a preposterous situation.

Lee Hyun said firmly, "Let's hurry and go see the chickens!" He did his utmost to make his intention to pull her away from the rabbits clear.

Seo-yoon wanted to keep looking at the baby bunnies that hadn't even opened their eyes yet. She had fallen in love with the adorable sight of them curled up with the mommy rabbit. The sight of nonchalant mommy rabbit with its cheeks stuffed with carrots! However, Seo-yoon left behind her great regret in order to let the rabbits rest comfortably and went to the backyard where the chickens were.

Clu-clu-cluck.

Cock-a-doodle-doo!

The Korean chickens were going up trees and flying around like birds. Chicks were toddling about on the ground.

As soon as Lee Hyun and the never before seen Seo-yoon came, they rapidly fled into a corner or above the trees. It was a sight of wholehearted wariness. As they hid in the corners, poked out their heads, and examined the movements of the humans, they didn't intend to come out.

However, through Half Sauce Half Fried, Seo-yoon was familiar with the habits of the chickens. She tore the short rib patty she'd prepared into small pieces and sprinkled it on the ground.

Clu-clu-clu-clu-cluck!

The chickens leapt out of the trees and from the woods like savage beasts and pecked down the pieces. Even the chicks dove in with their small beaks and were tearing into the ribs.

Seo-yoon patted the chickens and chicks. Despite the fact that she was a stranger, they had quickly become friendly through the patties and stuck to her side like burrs.

'They're taking a liking to me.'

Not knowing what to do, Seo-yoon petted the chickens with joyful eyes.

Lee Hyun was distressed. 'The same short rib patties that was in the lunch I ate...'

A life where he had come to eat the same food as a chicken! Even so, at the sight of the nearly expressionless Seo-yoon really having fun being with the chickens, he followed suit and felt good.

She, a girl who had silently stared without being able to approach, was being touched so deeply while being with the chickens that tears were welling in her eyes.

Even Lee Hyun was getting choked up for nothing. 'This feels even stranger than the first time I fried a chicken for my little sis.'

He knew that Seo-yoon wasn't a very bad person. However, that was not easy for him to acknowledge. 'Whether she's a bad person or a good person... she can't be close to me.'

Realistically speaking, they were living in circumstances that were too different. Lee Hyun could roughly estimate how expensive one of the clothes she wore was well enough. 'Even the brand name clothes that show up on television are over 100 thousand Won (\$~100)... with fabric that good, a brand called Dior, and the design, it must be at least 150 thousand Won!'

There was too big a difference in their household situations. A girl like Seo-yoon would like a great guy who Lee Hyun couldn't even compare to. 'A qualified guy will show up.' It was the same with Jung Hyo-rin and other girls.

Lee Hyun made a big decision. "Just pick one. And if there's one you like... you can pick two."

Having been petting the chickens in bliss, Seo-yoon looked back at him with happy eyes. Eyes that asked if he really meant it!

Lee Hyun gazed far off into the distance as he spoke. "Something like a chicken... two or three are nothing."

Unusually enough, Lee Hyun was showing great generosity. That was because trying to make up for the lunch price with a single chicken still made him feel indebted.

Seo-yoon chose three chickens.

Every time she picked a chicken, Lee Hyun's face became bloodlessly pale. 'That one's a laying hen... and Boiled Chicken, and even the plump chick that shows promise for a great disposition later!'

A laying hen was of course a valuable creature. He intended on catching it when his little sister married and brought home a husband in the future. But the chickens would keep reproducing until then, and there were two other laying hens left, so it was okay... Even so, the moment Seo-yoon chose the laying hen, he felt a sadness and pain that broke off a piece of his heart.

Lee Hyun spoke mournfully. "I'll... package them for you."

To make it convenient for Seo-yoon to take them, he tied the chickens' legs and necks with string and connected them to each other. Looking like a chicken sled, it couldn't be any weirder, but

Seo-yoon took the string.

She wrote on a note.

I'm truly grateful. Thank you so much for listening to my request even though it was excessive.

"It's nothing. This much is meh. If necessary, one more..." Lee Hyun hastily revised his words. "Next time you can take one more chick."

"..."

Seo-yoon, who wanted to take one right away when he said she could!

As Lee Hyun conversed via notes, he thought it was a little strange. 'Why doesn't she speak?' He'd originally thought that she was hiding the fact she could speak on purpose to fool with him, but she wasn't. In the MT and the festival, he hadn't heard her speak even once. Even as they ate lunch together, she didn't speak. To be honest, that they conversed through notes after she left a note in the lunch box could be called a tremendous advancement.

'She spoke just one word in Royal Road, but her voice was extremely nice on the ears... it's probably something like her actual voice is really dry, right?'

When Lee Hyun was about to leave the backyard to see Seo-yoon

off, Dogmeat approached while whining. Seo-yoon also seemed to think Dogmeat was cute because she wasn't able to move away.

Lee Hyun spoke with a trembling voice. "D-do you happen to like this dog?"

"...?"

"Do you want to... take Dogmeat too?"

Lee Hyun's shocking transformation! He would even give Seo-yoon Dogmeat, who he had cherished and raised for the days of summer.

[T/N: Summer is a popular time for eating dog meat, which is said to energize and revitalize. As a reminder, this is a cultural difference we hope everyone will understand.]

Can I really take him to keep?

"You can. Because it seems like this dog likes you."

More than anything else, Seo-yoon looked delighted beyond measure at the words that it seemed the dog liked her. Surprised and touched, she went as far as to drip tears.

Lee Hyun spoke in a low voice. "This rascal eats a lot, so it's good to feed him often. He'll overturn a food bowl that's too small, so prepare a big one for him, and let him go play in the backyard on rainy days. Don't tie him up at night. He hunts things like mice and weasels. He takes about a 2 hour nap, but if you want to play with him just call his name. He'll wake up. He likes radish and carrots, so give him some now and then..."

Every single word of his explanation was like sending off his lover.

'It feels like my heart is being ripped out.'

Even as he suffered intense agony, Lee Hyun didn't retract his decision.

When giving a gift, you mustn't show a reluctant face. Giving properly was the way to bribe!

'The second and third S-rank difficulty quests... honestly, I think it'll be almost impossible for me to complete them.'

He was grinding to raise his Sculpting skill. However, he couldn't guarantee quest success.

'With the alliance with the barbarians, the Power of the Deliverer, and the Sentence of Death, and also a lot of luck, I was able to finish the 1st step of the quest.' He couldn't hope to have

always such luck in the quest. 'The 2nd and 3rd steps will be even harder.'

From here onwards, he would be in a desperate and lonely position where he had to go up against the quests with nothing.

'If we could do it together...'

If Seo-yoon participated in the quest with him, it would be much more reassuring for him.

Luxury foreign cars had parked in a line in front of Lee Hyun's house at some point, unbeknownst to him. Seo-yoon's bodyguards had come and had been on standby. Bodyguards wearing black suits opened a car's back door. The chickens and Dogmeat boarded the back seat. The chickens and dog were enjoying the luxury of boarding a car worth hundreds of millions of Won that even came with escorts and a chauffeur!

Lee Hyun put a false smile on his lips that concealed his bitter inner feelings as he saw her off. "See you. Come play again next time."

At that, Seo-yoon halted from getting in the car, hesitated for a moment, and wrote something on a note.

Can I really come play again?

"..."

Lee Hyun realized that this was exactly what it meant to be 'lost for words.' Didn't that mean she still wanted more even though he had given her so much!

'Surely she won't come again. It's probably just something she's saying out of politeness, like a common saying.'

Lee Hyun nodded. "If you have time, come whenever you want."

Thank you. See you next time.

Seo-yoon got into the car and left with her bodyguards. Lee Hyun, who had been standing still in front of the door, blew out a sigh after the cars left.

He recalled the feeling he'd gotten when he met his wicked bosses while doing various jobs after dropping out of high school.

"Those who have the means are really too much." He had gained a valuable lesson. "Meeting women is really no good."

The expenses of dating! When you meet a woman, money is spent doing this and that. He hadn't bought Seo-yoon a meal or coffee, and it wasn't like they went to the amusement park together.

However, there was the price of the chickens and dog!

"A woman is the enemy of saving money. Enemy."

Lee Hyun ground his teeth. Animosity towards her was kindling again.

*

Seo-yoon's hospital room was reminiscent of an animal farm. Dogmeat was stretched out after eating warm food and meat, and the chickens were freely flying around as they crowed. Even the yellow chick went around the room cheeping.

"..."

Seo-yoon sat on a chair and read books.

"Food Dogs Like"

"A Dog's Lot is the Life of Comfort"

"A Dog Barks for a Reason"

They were guides for raising a pet dog.

Not only did Seo-yoon's hospital room have a private exercise room attached, but it also had 4 rooms, a study, and was even

equipped with a home bar where she could drink simple beverages. For Dogmeat and the chickens, it was no different from heaven.

Bark bark!

Dogmeat even barked while looking out the window. Though it wasn't big, he had lived in a house with a backyard, so he needed the fresh air outside.

Seo-yoon prepared to go out. 'The book 'A Dog's Lot is the Life of Comfort,' said you have to walk the dog regularly.'

Seo-yoon put a dog leash around Dogmeat's neck. Dogmeat obediently stayed still as he stuck out his tongue and licked her hand. He was promising his faithfulness to the owner who had dramatically changed his fate as a summer meal!

The nurses looked at Seo-yoon as if it was hard to believe.

"It seems like... she's become much brighter than before."

"Indeed. It feels like her complexion has really blossomed, huh? She was truly beautiful before, but now she could even make a girl fall for her."

The nurses hadn't known that Seo-yoon, who had been closing the doors to her heart despite their countless efforts, would suddenly become better like this.

Cha Eun-hee also had to acknowledge Lee Hyun's qualities on that point. "He's a truly kind man."

The teammates she hunted with in Royal Road didn't spare praises of him.

"His warm heartedness probably thawed Seo-yoon's frozen heart, right?"

She had also heard a lot about Lee Hyun from Jung Il-hun. How many men were there in the world who would be so dedicated to their families! That was why the fact that he spent his life engrossed in Royal Road couldn't be seen as only a fault.

"Seo-yoon forced herself to go to school, but now she's enjoying it. She's really much better."

That she was raising chickens and a puppy was a very positive sign. Cha Eun-hee guessed that if she was pouring out love while raising pets, the day her heart would completely open up wasn't far. Now Seo-yoon had risen to the level of readily expressing herself with notes. There just needed to be a decisive opportunity that would spring open the gates of speech.

"Is it finally time to report to the chairman?"

Cha Eun-hee had to contact Seo-yoon's father. He was always receiving reports about his daughter through her bodyguards. If he

heard news that Seo-yoon's heart would soon be healed and that she would even be able to speak, he would definitely be happy.

Chapter 6: Sculpture Of A Chil

"Weed-nim is truly a genius!"

Mapan was driving 20 large wagons past the River of Lamentation basin. He was moving the wagons to trade in the Barbarian village.

"Kyaaaao."

"Fresh human. You are prey."

Even though a great number of monsters followed the wagons, they were annihilated by Bingryong and Phoenix.

Mapan dragged the carts and safely arrived in the village of the Vejague Tribe. Vejague tribesmen and women of all ages gathered.

"Hurry up and buy! Cheap and reasonably priced goods for sale. Nothing will left if you are late. Buy lots when they're going cheap!"

The goods that Mapan had brought were weapons, armors, leather goods, and foods that had been made in Morata!

A young Vejague Tribe girl grabbed copper earrings that she seemed to like. "How much is this?"

Mapan made a severe expression. "That is very expensive."

"I know. It seems expensive. I only have leather. Or fangs ..."

The fangs and leather of the Black Wild Boar-- they were goods that could net a good several hundred Gold in Morata.

Mapan shook his head as if it were preposterous. "But you can obtain those any time if you hunt in this area."

Mapan, who was showing an example of a wicked Merchant!

The sparsely haired Vejague Tribe lass was on the verge of tears. "Hnng, but I really want to buy it..."

"Then, I will sell it to you for 3 leathers."

"Thank you, Merchant oppa!"

Mapan traded with the uncivilized barbarians to buy up leathers and material. As the first person to trade with them, he was reaping an enormous profit.

The method of extorting the uncivilized barbarians that he learned from Weed!

The leathers he obtained here were a very precious material. They would be treated as a speciality back in Morata because they were leathers that came from the around the River of Lamentation. In addition, splendid robes and armor would be crafted once they were processed by Morata's excellent techniques.

*

Weed sewed in his private room in the Lord's Castle in order to make a sculpture for the 1 Copper request. He bleached Imoogi leather white and made a child's body.

"Though a person's skin isn't white..."

He was stressed starting from making the skin color itself because of its dull color!

It was too much to consider Weed a real tailor, because although his ability to handle leather or cloth was quite outstanding, he had paid almost no attention to dyeing.

"Before, it was fine as long as the utility was good. Because color isn't that necessary!"

Even though the design was an important element for clothing, it sold quickly as long as the defense or a different option was good. Dyeing could also be done by buying the clothing and taking it to another dyer.

Because of that, it was difficult starting from the task of making the child's skin color.

"I don't have to make her too young."

A newborn. A child not even a hundred days old would just make them recall their sadness more easily.

"Some time must've passed, so let's make her two or three years old."

It was the age when they would start making trouble.

"Just seeing their face will make you want to give them a rap with your knuckles, and you also regret having the child, only to suffer... even so, it's the time when you love them most."

Since this was a sculpture he was making for the parents to sort out their feelings and say their final farewell to the child, a cheerful expression would be good.

Not a sculpture that had simply artistic value, but one that could move the heart. It should have a warm feeling rather than detailed expression. He needed a sculpture that could show warmth.

"Even though I don't have that kind of skill..."

Weed had learned by experience that in the end, something he wanted to forget or sadness were all made into memories by time.

To Weed, it was too much to expect a marvelous sculpture that would embrace all their pain and longing. He may be a truly remarkable sculptor, but even though he could express beauty, he couldn't erase sadness.

"What I can do is pave the way for them."

Weed attached eyes made from crafting obsidian onto the doll.

When his sister was little, she had enough toys to not be envious of others because of the dolls he made in the factory. If she were a little boy, she would have wanted all sorts of toys like planes, boats, cars, and robots, but she had cute tastes since she was a little sister. She was boundlessly happy when she saw a stuffed animal.

"She liked teddy bears to an extraordinary degree."

Children liked dolls because there was something about them that stimulated their minds.

"Not only a sculpture of child ... I'll have to make more dolls. "

Weed thought it was lonely for the child to be alone. He planned on making a Magnum Opus sculpture at the very least, but something would really feel missing with that alone.

They would have to share an eternal farewell parting, so if there was just a doll of a child, the parents' hearts would be torn with sadness.

"A sculpture that'll be rimmed with plenty of children's dolls. Looks like I'll have to make all sorts of things as long as children like them."

He would make all the things that a little girl would like. He would decorate it prettily with candles and could somehow even make a snowman.

"I can just peel off a bit of Bingryong's skin dust!"

Sculptors were surprisingly capable of doing many different jobs.

Imoogi Leather : Durability 30/30.

An item related to the production skill, Tailoring.

The ultimate Tailoring material, it is an exceedingly valuable item for making clothes or equipment. Imbued with the power of Mana, it grants resistance to poison and amplifies darkness related powers.

Imoogi Leather can not be handled with ordinary Tailoring skills or tools.

Only a Tailor who has risen to the ranks of a Master Craftsman will be granted an incomparably precious experience and the opportunity to create a masterpiece.

Traces of battle are left on the leather, so its value has been slightly compromised. In order to manufacture it into a product, it requires additional repair.

It is a top-grade Tailoring item.

Options: Amplifies darkness related powers. Increases maximum Mana by 20,000. Has poison resistance, so will not be easily poisoned.

Very light material.

He was using an ultimate Tailoring item to make a mere doll. A material that could net tens of thousands of Gold despite their holes and blemishes if it was made into a tunic for an Adventurer or a Magician's robe was cut without hesitation and reborn as a doll.

Ding!

You have created Rabbit Plushie.

A new challenge by a Sculptor, who brings out beauty with his hands!

Rare leather was used as a material to make a rabbit doll.

Weed, the creator of a new revolution in the field of sculpturing, will not stop his challenge.

Artistic Value: A work by the great master Sculptor Weed. 309.

Special Options:

Possessing the Rabbit Plushie increases jumping ability by 5%.

Showing the plushie to children is enough to raise intimacy.

Can increase friendship with the Giant Rabbits.

- Sculpting skill proficiency has been improved.
- Tailoring skill proficiency has been improved.
- Fame has increased by 12.
- Art stat has increased by 3.

- Luck has increased by 1.

The Giant Rabbits hadn't been discovered yet. Like the Yetis that were said to live in the snowy region, they were a tribe that only existed in the legends passed down the generations!

By making a sculpture with a plushie, his Sculpting skill proficiency went up by a whole 0.9%.

"I didn't think I'd be able to get this much proficiency even by making a Fine piece after my Sculpting skill level rose to 7..."

It seemed like concentrating on large sculptures or stone sculptures was a mistake. Sculpting could only develop by constantly attempting new changes. Themes or works you wanted to make would pile up so much that you'd have to make them without rest-- such was the world of Sculpting!

As a human, the sculptures Weed made were determined, to some extent. He tended to make sculptures he was familiar with, and he was gradually straying away from making new attempts. After making Seo-yoon sculptures for a while, he had switched to large sculptures, but there were limits to sculptures made out of habit.

Weed completed about 30 stuffed animals with tender and friendly expressions and laid them out neatly. Wild beast plushies

like lions, elephants, bears, cheetahs, and rhinos were in cute poses.

"Though a doll is best made with evil looks and gleaming eyes..."

They were severely mismatched with Weed's tastes, but they were for children anyways.

Out of the dolls he made from leather, 5 Fine pieces emerged. As dolls made by attaching cloth and leather with the involvement of the Tailoring skill, the degree of completeness was considerable.

Weed's craftsmanship boasted tremendous durability. He created plushies that would remain fluffy even if a real elephant were to come and trample them; they would even be perfectly fine if they were burnt with fire magic. They were at a level where children playing with them unawares would be rendered agape with astonishment upon seeing the plushies that remained unscathed even as they burned in a fire!

"The bias that a doll shouldn't be sturdy has to be disposed of!"

As Weed made even more stuffed animals, he learned the basics of doll production. He also displayed imagination that truly went outside of the box. Leather squirrel plushies were turning a millstone to crush a big acorn-- they were going to make acorn jelly to eat. Rabbits made carrot soup and were swimming around in it.

"For the piece name, 'Squirrel and Rabbit Cooks' will suit it."

It was a Fine piece. If he used his Cooking skill later to make real acorn jelly and carrot soup and added it, it would be perfect.

Monkey plushies were peeling bananas, singing, and dancing in a group. They lit a bonfire and cavorted in a dizzying and sensual dance that would seduce monkey lovers. He even staged the comical scene of the playful monkeys falling over and slipping on the banana peels below them.

"The piece name will be 'Cheeky Monkey Festival.'"

This time, it turned out to be a Masterpiece. The sight of the monkeys handling instruments carved out of wood was adorable.

"Next will be..."

Animals, animals, animals.

If it was for a little boy, he would be able to make sculptures like cars, boats, and planes. However, they had to be sculptures for a female child.

"Because little girls like stuffed animals!"

He made so many stuffed animals that it was ridiculous. He had an immunity to hard work, so he didn't tire even after making hundreds of them.

"So I can completely fill up one room with dolls... I have to make it so the child will feel that she was happy and never unfortunate."

The dolls he was making right now were merely side accessories. He had to make a special doll for his ultimate work, a greater magnum opus than any other works Weed had made. He had to make a true masterpiece.

*

Trivan, a village close to Morata, was recorded as a territory that had been ruled by a viscount in the days of the Niflheim Empire. It had been a blessed domain that produced a lot of silk and cinnamon, and had even possessed an expansive granary region.

However, after the harsh winter of the North passed by it, all that was left was a wasteland and ruins. There were also many monsters, so the village was often plundered. After an attack by the likes of wild dogs, there was hardly any food supplies left in the village.

The Styrene Guild settled down here.

"Dig up the ground! We have to take out the rocks and plant the seeds, so we've gotta hurry."

30 guild members under the command of Styrene were working

with pickaxes. It was so they could clear the earth and plant seeds.

"Dammit, at least in Norman Kingdom, even beginners recognized you if you said you were part of Styrene Guild... what the hell is this."

"There's no helping it since there aren't any residents to do the work. They're all earning in Morata right now."

Styrene Guild had settled in Trivan Village about 5 months ago in Versailles Continent time! Around the time when the North's pioneering was booming, Styrene Guild had moved their base early.

The villages and territories in the North were currently being governed for the players and guilds that were migrating over extensively.

When the Styrene Guild was choosing a village to settle, their conditions hadn't really been that picky.

"Real estate is all about location. Fertile land? Broad fields? Or terrain next to a mountain? They're all unnecessary. It just has to be close to Morata."

At that time, Morata had been rising as the North's famous village. Its future looked bright, even to Styrene.

"The benefit of being the center of the northern continent...

Merchant trade is flourishing and players are gathering. In the future, Morata will become the North's hub."

It was as Styrene predicted. Morata developed at a frightening speed from the Lord's bold investment and the influx of people. Every time the Styrene Guild went to Morata Village to purchase goods they needed, they saw a world of differences in the changes.

Where there had only been the Tower of Light and a few sculptures, the ruin that had been Morata Village was paved with roads nice enough that a carriage could speed along on them and new buildings were built. Though it wasn't fancy, a wide central square with a fountain also formed. In the square, Warriors, Magicians, Knights, and Adventurers sought party members to quest and hunt with. As they looked at the Merchants who packed around the fountain doing business, Styrene was so envious that tears sprang to his eyes.

"Our Trivan Village will... definitely also become like this later."

Since the Lord of Morata's profession was Sculptor, there was hope.

"The sculptures will have the effect of drawing in people at first. But once our Styrene Guild publicizes the hunting ground information and stuff, they'll all come to our side."

Styrene Guild excavated a dungeon and publicized monster information. They meant for many players to come hunt and settle in Trivan.

"Wow, so this is Trivan Village? We found it properly."

"Let's hunt!"

Fighting parties visited in swarms. They were able to come quickly on horses because Trivan wasn't that far away from Morata. However, once night fell, they returned to Morata.

"Let's go look at the Tower of Light."

"I'm a bit hungry. Let's go to Morata and eat."

That was the nearby city's limit. The players made money from the dungeon and hunting ground and went to spend it back in Morata.

"Let's sell our japtem in Morata, too."

"Yeah, there are lots of Merchants in Morata so we can get a good price."

They didn't even sell off their japtem in Trivan Village.

Styrene's village operation suffered a loss, but they weren't frustrated and didn't give up. "It's the development of a village, so... we expected this much difficulty at the beginning anyways."

They spent an additional 100 thousand Gold to invest. They built new houses and even made a square so that there were no discomforts. However, players still didn't come, so it was no different from a ghost town.

"It's probably because it's not known. Let's go to Morata in person and try advertising there."

Styrene went to Morata Village with Duma, a guild member.

"Seeking people to live in Trivan Village. It is a village that the Styrene Guild is peacefully governing. We will support you with various conveniences and even provide you with a fixed resettlement fund."

They found other guilds that seemed to be in similar circumstances, as they were tearfully advertising.

"We welcome adventurers to come to Home Village. It still has many inadequacies, but our Faroe Guild will..."

"We invite everyone to Keatu Village!"

When Trivan Village had improved a little, Morata had grown in the number of buildings and people. The Goddess Freya Statue was completed, and an artificial lake appeared. The Lord personally expanded the tavern and even set up battle guilds. As it even became a starting city, the Morata region was growing bigger day

by day. The expansion speed was so tremendous that the shops and houses were built on the empty lots beyond the Lord's Castle, village, and the stone castle walls. It was a shantytown that overwhelmed them on their first visit to Morata!

"Eurgh, it's really incredible."

Even then, Styrene was optimistic. The fact that Morata was developing meant that people's interest in the North was also growing! If Morata was getting better, Trivan Village would also gradually grow in residents.

"That's how a city's development is. If one place is intensively developed, the areas around it will also benefit."

Having learned things like city organization and administration before, Styrene decided to think positively.

Morata wasn't only a village with a Lord's Castle, but also an extremely large land that included the neighboring regions.

"The Lord doesn't even rule the region himself and he entrusted it to the elder, so that lack will probably show up somewhere."

Through Styrene's personal connections, he was clear to some extent on the situations of other guilds ruling castles and villages. The town's representative didn't leave his position unless there was a serious issue. That was because if you entrusted the administration to the elder or another noble, the expenses on

useless aspects were severe. Morata's expenses in the field of cultural art were great enough that they were unimaginable in the central continent.

"Good. Even Morata has a hole to it. If it's investing in cultural art, then the waste will be severe and it'll collapse soon."

Styrene pulled together the guild's astronomical funds to increase the number of smithies and develop the related techniques, investing a whopping 780 thousand Gold. He was developing the town tremendously as a city for Blacksmiths. Building a battle guild and even a magic guild, he strove to draw in players.

"There's no place in the North that has a higher technological development level than Trivan Village. In time, this place will also become as big as Morata and grow in people."

Styrene and his guild mates simply waited for that day to come. They were so excited that they couldn't even sleep properly at night. While they were waiting, as culture developed in Morata, people began to enjoy the town. People tired from hunting, sightseeing, adventure, and quests comfortably enjoyed songs, sculptures, drawings, and art.

Culture didn't even take much money. There were keepers making bunnies act cutely, performers, and even players who displayed their japtem and boasted. Morata's players were happy.

Ding!

- 35 residents from Trivan Village are moving to Morata.

The complaints of the residents are intense.

The residents came complaining to Styrene.

"Why is our village failing to thrive like Morata, my Lord?"

"There's nothing for the village children to play with."

"Even after finishing hard work, I have no enthusiasm for life. I think this town is too desolate."

The residents were deeply dissatisfied over the lack in culture. Morata's residents were continuously growing, but Trivan Village's population of just 3,000 was continuously falling. The loyalty of the town soldiers also fell, and work efficiency didn't rise, either. As the residents decreased in number, silk production fell and the fields they had cleared with difficulty remained empty; they couldn't even collect resources from the mine. Following the decline in residents, there were even cases where quests naturally disappeared. Players would come after struggling to finish a quest, but the store owner who was supposed to give them the reward had gone and disappeared. Plunged into a shocking situation, the players asked the residents but the reply was really the last straw.

"The weapon shop mister? He moved to Morata the other day. It

won't be easy to set up a new shop there, but they say it's a village that people really want to live in. Me? I'm going to Morata soon, too. If you want to fulfil the work that was entrusted to you, go to Morata."

Ding!

- 23 Trivan Village residents are moving to Morata.

The residents want a religious establishment.

"I want to see Goddess Freya. Thankfully there's a goddess statue in the village next door, so we will spend the rest of our lives there."

"How happy must our Morata friends be as they receive the blessing of faith? Going to Morata will bring one closer to the goddess!"

The residents continued to leave. Wanderers visiting the North had been settled in Trivan Village by giving them money and food, but they moved away. As a result, the village's population was just barely 3,000 and didn't grow.

Until now, Lords had worried over economy, technology, and military power. They viewed culture with scorn and paid no attention to it. If many Bards visited, they were even treated poorly for being noisy and annoying. What use was a rise in

culture! Investing the maintenance fees or construction costs of culture-related facilities in other places was considered far more profitable.

There was no change in that way of thinking in other places in the continent, but Styrene was currently feeling an acute lack of culture. To make matters worse, he even received news of the issue he had worried most about.

"Guild master, they say Morata's Lord Weed has returned."

At the guild member's report, Styrene's head began to throb painfully.

"You're saying he returned without going off somewhere and dying?"

"Yes. Apparently he's making a Statue of Lugh now."

"Ugh...making another sculpture!"

Styrene shook his head. No matter how he thought of it, there was nothing as reckless as competing with a Sculptor in city development. But even if he were given a fortune, there was no other alternative. There were just no Sculptors as outstanding as Weed in the Versailles Continent; the whole area was impacted every time he made a sculpture. As a neighboring Lord, it was like hell for Styrene.

"But there's also a recent piece of news."

"What news?"

"The Lord of Morata's true identity is Wargod Weed."

"What?!"

Wargod Weed!

It was such a feared name that it sent shivers down their spines.

Styrene was also a player who had grown up in the Continent of Magic. He had personally experienced the Continent of Magic Weed's wicked charisma. He killed, stole, and was absolutely ruthless. Like looking at a mountain that could not be climbed, Wargod Weed had filled him with despair.

"Are you saying he's really Wargod Weed?"

"We can't be certain, but they say that possibility is sufficient."

"Did he say it himself?"

"Apparently so."

"..."

"Several news channels on broadcast are saying there's an almost 100% possibility that Wargod Weed is Morata's Lord."

Styrene was silent for a while.

Wargod Weed's nature was extremely brutal, and he didn't condone those who challenged him. He was a figure who would be furious even after razing everything to the ground by the simple fact that there was a territory in Morata's vicinity.

Styrene had fled the rough wolves in the central continent, but he ended up next to a tiger's den.

He was about to recall nightmares from the Continent of Magic. However, his guild member said something that was somewhat comforting.

"A rumor isn't always true. And there are also many opposing opinions."

"What are they?"

"First of all, he does have quite a few connections to Wargod Weed, like the evidence of the Ice Dragon and his relationship with the Freya Church. However, it's not certain whether it's actually him or not."

"Then..."

"Even if he's really Wargod Weed, there's not much he can do. Could he dare to challenge our guild alone?"

They were the welcome words Styrene had been waiting for.

"Right. There's nothing to fear even if he's Wargod Weed. And if his profession is really Sculptor, then we could even see it as a blessing and a stroke of luck, right?"

"There's a chance for us."

Styrene harbored grand ambitions concerning Morata. He would develop Trivan Village, draft soldiers, and seize Morata by force with his guild members! Styrene Guild had over 600 high-level players settled in the North altogether. If they acquired mercenaries from the central continent, they could field an army of about 2,000.

They were planning to take everything Morata had.

"Even if it's Weed... this time, it won't go as he pleases. His record from the Continent of Magic will end here. And if he isn't Wargod Weed, then it'll really be over for him."

"That's right, guild master!"

"Then hurry and go to Morata to lure in some residents so we can enact the plan."

"..."

*

Weed developed his Tailoring and Sculpting skills as he immersed himself in making dolls.

"Dolls can also be called a field of expertise, after all."

He could earn a lot of proficiency or Fame if a work he made for the first time exceeded a certain level. However, he accumulated professional experience after making several of them, so the effect on his skill level or proficiency grew as well.

It was like how it was awkward for a Swordsman to use magic, and how Blacksmiths couldn't make tons of different kinds of weapons. Of course, a Sculptor was the profession at the very peak of hybrid characters that could combine all of those.

"A doll of a child..."

Weed tasted failure dozens of times. He couldn't make a perfect magnum opus, a work that looked like it was carved from the light of the heavens. He could only dream of it because he knew his own

humble skills well. However, it wouldn't do if there was an aspect that he found lacking.

"A young little girl. A doll of a lovable, bright, and peaceful child."

Weed tore at his hair. The King Hydra and Imoogi leather that had been stacked like a mountain was shrinking. If bronze or iron had been used as materials, then he could melt them down again and reuse them, but for the most part, he couldn't recycle the leather materials and had to discard them.

"It's hard enough making a child that's flawlessly bright, but darkness follows brightness."

In the eyes of the parents who couldn't have the child, such brightness would be pain that would chip away at their hearts. Even so, their sadness would be infinitely greater if he made a child that was shrieking as it cried.

"Magnum opus. I need to create a magnum opus..."

Weed fell into confusion. His worries on what kind of work he should to make were growing even more severe.

"Should I guess how Seo-yoon looked when she was young and make that?"

Escaping from reality!

He thought it'd be easy to sculpt Hwaryeong or Irene in their youths. However, Weed soon saw the error of his ways and shook his head.

"The player named Mandol believed in me and entrusted this to me. I can't just do a rough job."

It seemed like doing the quest would be way easier than agonizing over something that was so difficult to resolve.

The proficiency he accumulated while making dolls also amounted to 36% of level 7. Even if his skill level and expressiveness grew with experience, it was no good if he couldn't decide on the right subject.

"I'm not being too greedy... I just want to sculpt the best little girl that I can."

Weed's worries kept deepening.

Since there was no word from the expedition that had gotten the shared quest and had left for the Embinyu underground prison, he just kept sewing dolls. As he repeatedly experienced countless failures, he was trying to make that something.

Dolls, dolls, dolls, dolls!

"Gaaaaah!" Lee Hyun kicked away his blanket and stood. It was such a big issue that he couldn't sleep. "I thought I'd never have to suffer because of a doll again."

The dolls of young girls wouldn't leave his mind.

"Should I just make it as a bronze statue? If I make it using gold or silver, then..."

He came up with ways to escape, but he didn't want to run away from it like that. Such an action would be completely betraying the trust he had gathered in sculptures thus far.

"I can't just forget about it without even being able to make the requested sculpture."

It wasn't his way to give up because it was hard. No matter what, he just had to find the method!

Lee Hyun went to the market to cool his head. The dawn market was overflowing with liveliness from the people buying and selling things like vegetables and meat. But even within that liveliness, he couldn't think of the right sculpture for the young little girl.

"Should I try going to the maternity ward or a preschool?"

He could see little kids there, but it wasn't like he didn't know what a child looked like.

"They're sleepy little devils that get hungry and you have to frequently change their diapers."

No matter what kind of little girl doll he made, he wasn't pleased.

On his way home, Lee Hyun passed a photo studio. Photographs for the first birthday celebrations of little kids and wedded couples were on display.

As he looked at those photos for a long time, Lee Hyun gained enlightenment.

"For a sculptor, the subject can be felt and seen in the finished work alone. That's probably very different from a parent's perspective."

There was a life to a child even in an ordinary photo, and to a parent, that one photo would be a truly precious work.

Lee Hyun tried thinking of saying farewell to a little girl from a parent's shoes.

Just what was he supposed to do about a parent's breaking heart as they parted with a doll of a newborn baby!

"Making a doll of a child was wrong from the very beginning!" Lee Hyun suddenly shouted.

If he thought about it from a parent's perspective, then he already had the most definite answer.

Chapter 7: A Girl's Life

Weed brought out the King Hydra and Imoogi leathers. Even after making stuffed animals and failed dolls of children, there was still quite a lot left. The very best of the leather was left, too.

For works of art, the first one made wasn't always the best, and the last one didn't necessarily have a high degree of finishing. However, a sculpture that didn't move the emotions wouldn't be able to impart any emotions to the opposite party.

He had saved the best materials in case he came up with a sculpture that he really had to make!

"I should be able to make 40 dolls. It's a shame, but this should be more than enough."

Weed cut the leather and started from making a sculpture of a newborn baby. It was a little girl who had just been born. Her skin was wrinkled, and she looked like she was about to cry, as if she had truly come into the world for the first time. She was small enough to be held in one hand.

"A living being within a few hours of being born. This is a baby that has made her first contact with the world after coming out of her mother's womb."

Having already received information about Mandol and his wife, Weed took a little of their features when making the doll. Even so,

however, there wasn't a particular characteristic to the newborn babe.

"Alright. The first one is done."

Weed laid down the baby doll and raised the leather again. He needed to make the second doll now.

As he made the doll, Weed's hands were very careful. "It's a newborn baby. In her first year, she'll start toddling, and changing her diapers will be awful then, too. From a parent's perspective, it'll be a time when they can't help but be worried all the time."

Imagining the future of the little girl that Mandol's wife would have given birth to, Weed made the doll very tensely.

"She needs clothes, too."

He had covered the newborn baby doll with clean cloth, but now he used Tailoring to clothe her in baby clothes.

He completed the doll of a little girl gurgling into a laugh at her first birthday party!

"Now she knows her mom and dad... it's the time when she's growing up like that."

The doll he made next had grown a little more. She was taller,

and her fingers and toes had grown longer. She also had hair in cute pigtails.

"The age when she'll learn how to speak and start acting mischievous."

He clothed the fourth doll he made in a kindergarten uniform. It was a doll of a young student wearing adorable clothes and even a backpack.

The fifth doll had grown up quickly; it was time for her to go to elementary school.

She had just been a baby-faced and cute kid until now, but from the sixth, she began to have a slightly feminine charm.

"The neighborhood boys will really want to flip up her skirt, and she'll have grown into a girl with a pretty smile."

The little girl who made mischief and ran around like the queen of the neighborhood would grow up charmingly. Her eyes would be as playful as before, but brighter, and she would be taller.

Every doll he completed after that was taller and had longer hair. The hairstyles also changed several times, ranging from long straight hair men preferred to a lively pixie cut.

"This is also pretty hard work."

He had to go buy hair from the sculpting material shop and sew them all in; even so, he didn't tire because his efforts were making something.

From the fourteenth doll, she had already graduated high school and had become an adult.

She had grown into a woman who seemed very energetic and talkative. As if she was going to suddenly bring her boyfriend over to introduce him to her parents, she had rosy cheeks and charming expressions. He even made pretty accessories like a hairband and necklace with through crafting. She only needed a book bag and a uniform in her high school years, but she was now a college girl. He had to make her a bag and heels, which were like the lifeblood of a woman.

"But luxury is still a no!"

He compromised with reasonably priced rabbit leather for the goods she carried around. Even so, she still gave off the feeling of a refined college girl. They were accessories that suited her expression, clothes, overall feel, and perfume. Like how a parent treasured their child, they were crafted with his utmost; the female student was as lovable as a real person.

It took an extremely long time to make the sculpture, but Weed was concentrating so much with every ounce of his effort that he didn't realize it.

From the seventeenth doll, as if no one could capture the passage of time, the small newborn baby that had to be cared for had found a job.

The eighteenth doll even went into volunteer work to help people in difficult situations.

In the nineteenth, she brought home a boyfriend, and in the twenty-first, she finally got married. He even made a reliable and thoughtful husband with her; they were a couple that matched each other like lovebirds. He made the wedding guests with materials like deer or rabbit leather, and they celebrated the couple's future.

The twenty-third doll even had a child, and she lived in a happy home. She did the dishes with her husband, the laundry and cleaning, and went to work as she lived happily.

Every time a doll was completed, the woman would age, and the passage of time became apparent as wrinkles appeared in her lovely visage.

Dolls that raised children and lived with her husband.

"It's too fast; they say that a person's life goes past as quickly as a growing sprout and can't be turned back, but even so, it's too regretful."

Past the young and immature days that had sparkled like jewels,

the time that the doll experienced accelerated. From the thirty-sixth one onwards, the doll spent more time alone; her children had grown up, found jobs, and married. She became a grandmother and took naps, read books, and made yarn scarves for her grandson and granddaughter.

The Imoogi and Hydra leather that had been so abundant began to run out.

The forty-first doll happily and quietly closed her eyes. She was in a place with her family.

After making all the dolls, Weed sat still in deep despondency. The leather had completely run dry, and there was nothing more that he could do.

- Please set a name for the sculpture you've made.

The message window popped up when Weed stood still without moving his sculpting knife.

The sculpture that covered the lifetime of a doll was finished.

Weed weakly shook his head. "I will not set a name."

He didn't want to attach any name to the sculpture right now.

- If a name is not specified, then the name of the Sculptor might not be known and it may also be left as an unfinished work. Is that alright?

"It doesn't matter. This was a work that I was not qualified to make."

Ding!

Unnamed Mythical Sculpture

A gift thrown into the world by a Sculptor possessing talent and effort at the level of amazing a God!

The entire process of a human's life, from birth to death, has been expressed in a sculpture.

The Sculptor's perfect skills can even be felt in the meticulous needlework-- absolutely perfect needlework, without even a single loose stitch or missing hair.

It is not known what Sculptor was able to make such a magical work of art.

Artistic Value: A blessing to sculpting. It will become an opportunity to develop the continent's sculpting a step higher.
24,610.

Special Options:

Those who have seen the Unnamed Mythical Sculpture will have their Health and Mana regeneration speed increased by 32% for a day. Increases maximum Health and Mana by 30% for a day.

Strengthens the effects of blessing magic for a day.

Increases All Stats by 20.

Increases Agility and Courage by an additional 7%.

Increases movement speed by 30%. Can shorten the time taken because the farther one goes, the faster movement speed becomes.

Increases birth rate of the city or region where the statue is located by 100%. Reduces the violent tendencies of residents. It will be a very big help to security, but the natural increase of warriors and soldiers will decrease.

Permanently increases Health by 500.

Permanently increases the Wisdom and Intelligence of the Human race by a maximum of 15.

Effects do not stack with other sculptures.

An unfinished Mythical work.

- Sculpting skill proficiency has greatly improved.
- Handicraft skill proficiency has greatly improved.
- Sculpture Comprehension skill level has increased by 1.
- Because the artist who made the work was set to be unknown, Fame has increased by 2.
- Art stat has risen by 89.
- Perseverance has risen by 41.
- Charm has risen by 26.
- Wisdom has risen by 10.

In return for creating an unfinished mythical sculpture, All Stats rise by an additional 5 points.

A blessing to sculpting. For making a work about birth and death, stats related to combat will increase by 8% for one week. Maximum Mana and recovery rate will be increased by 65%.

The reward was enough to make Weed's mind go blank. It seemed that he would have to completely throw away the prejudice that a Sculptor wasn't as good as a Swordsman or another profession now.

"Check Sculpting skill!"

Advanced Sculpting 7 (65%): Can sculpt. A beautiful sculpture will also sell for a high price.

You can spread your name on the continent by making glorious sculptures.

Good for buying a woman's affection.

At the level of being able to lead the Versailles Continent's artistic community. It is regretful that there is no successor who can match the skills of this unique Sculptor.

His Sculpting skill proficiency had increased by a whopping 29%.

Thanks to putting in his utmost, Weed had ended up making a work that even he couldn't understand.

"I just made dolls..."

Weed came to a deep realization. There was a reason why children and women liked dolls.

It was their instinct to find goods with value!

He had made the dolls for a request barely worth 1 Copper, but there was still a fault. The number of completed dolls was considerable. He had made them inside the roomy space he was using as a workroom in the Lord's Castle, but he had to move them to another place so that Mandol and his wife could look at it comfortably. He could use an empty room in Morata Castle, but he didn't want to do so.

"There has to be a separate space for the child."

Weed mumbled quietly. "Whisper, turn off chatting restriction."

Ding!

- Whisper restrictions have been released.
- Guild chat restrictions have been released.

He opened up the whisper and chat functions that he had shut off while returning to Morata. With the restrictions turned on, he didn't see or hear the guild chat, and when someone whispered him, he could only hear them if he gave permission. It was a

measure that he'd set up because there were so many people looking for Weed.

Sabrina: Hurry and hit it!

Edwin: It hasn't been hit quite enough.

Pin: It's resisting a lot, how annoying.

Edwin: But I think we've almost got it.

It seemed the Travelers of the Wilderness Guild was in a special hunting ground.

Weed ignored most of the guild's talk, because although the chatting restriction had been turned off, there were still as many lurkers as ever.

He sent a whisper to the Architect Pavo, who he'd met in the Northern Expedition. It had been a really long time, but he never forgot players that he could use.

'He was of a considerable level as an Architect.'

Pavo was the Architect who had been busy making even the stairs

that were good for viewing for the Goddess Freya Statue in Morata.

Pavo hadn't forgotten Weed either. Since he was the Lord of Morata, of course he couldn't forget.

- Where are you?

- I'm in Morata. I heard the rumor that you returned and are making a statue. I couldn't go see you because I was setting up a store in the square.

- Are you almost done with your work?

- I just need to put up a door for them. If I hurry, I think can finish in an hour.

- What about Mister Gaston?

- He's working with me. Right now he's painting a ceiling fresco; he's finishing it.

- That's good. I have a request to make; I would like you to build me a house.

- The Lord of Morata needs a house?

Pavo looked like he didn't understand it very well. There was no reason for Weed, who had the Lord's Castle, to need a house. For things like item storage or resting in a bedroom, he could just use the Lord's Castle, after all.

- Actually... I need a space to leave a sculpture.

- Really? Then can it be a house with a large warehouse attached?

- Rather than a warehouse, I'd like you to build a house that isn't shabby so it can be displayed in a room.

- That's not hard, where are the sculptures?

- They're at the Lord's Castle. I will instruct the guards to allow you to enter the place where the sculptures are.

- Got it. I'll go there tonight at around evening. We'll decide on the request fee after I see the work.

- Thank you.

Around the time when Weed finished his conversation with Pavo, he received a whisper from a player named Hon.

- This is Hon of the underground prison expedition. The dungeon exploration is almost complete.

- Have you found the prisoners of the Matallost Church?

- Yes. We've found one for now, and the other prisoners are said to be in the vicinity.

- You've worked hard. I will also go there soon.

It was time for Weed to go to the underground prison for the quest.

*

The River of Lamentation basin that was connected to Morata by the movement portal! The second S-rank difficulty quest and the Rescue the Prisoners of the Matallost Church would take place there. When Weed returned to the River of Lamentation again with Yellowy, he could see people gathered in groups nearby.

"That person is Weed..."

"He's the person called the God of War?"

"Shh! Talk quietly. He might hear, so be careful!"

They were people who had heard the news that Weed had stopped making sculptures and was leaving for the River of Lamentation from their friends in Morata and had been waiting in advance to look at him.

A considerable number of high leveled players in the North paid the toll fee and were hunting near the River of Lamentation. Considering its distance from Morata and the level of the monsters, it could be said that there was no better hunting ground. There were occasional cases where a party bravely ventured deep into the North, but instances where the entire party was annihilated from a slight mistake were numerous. Since help could be found from the surroundings at any time, the River of Lamentation was a fine hunting ground.

Weed looked around at the players with cold and frosty eyes. 'There are lots of people.'

In Morata, he had been a simple Lord who had sold food and japtem, but he couldn't be that way in the hunting ground, too. There were already quite a few figures who were staring at Weed with challenging eyes. If these high leveled players came at him all at once, then even Weed wouldn't be able to avoid death. He was even more sensitive because he had ultimate Unique items like the Necromancer's Magic Tome, Talrock's Armor, Ancient Shield, and Kolderim's Daemon Sword.

'This isn't Morata.'

In Morata, people couldn't even dream of challenging Weed because of the Soldiers or Knights. If someone raised a sword at the Lord, then they would either be subjugated by the Soldiers or the Freya Church's Knights would thoroughly destroy them. However, anything could happen in a hunting ground. He could meet murderers and even drop an item.

In order to not be looked down on, Weed feigned nonchalance as he looked at the people.

"Pieces of trash everywhere."

"..."

The crowd was silent.

The Wargod Weed they had imagined— it was an arrogance befitting of the strongest player in the Continent of Magic.

"Did they wait here without hunting to look at me? Though there are monsters everywhere... tsk tsk."

Weed tsked as he insulted them outright. Even people who had purchased food or sculptures from Weed in Morata couldn't conceal their shock at his completely different attitude.

The thoughts that occurred to them then!

'This might be the true Weed...'

'Is he acting politely to beginners or individuals alone? We're gathered in a group and he's actually criticising us... he might be a wolf in sheep's clothing.'

There were over 200 high leveled players gathered here, yet he disdained them all outright. A player's pride originally went sky high once they passed level 300. Their personal connections built from various places and the force they showed while hunting would become the object of envy. The number of players was immense because the Versailles Continent was expansive, but the higher you went up the ranks, the less players there were. A level 300 was at a level where they wouldn't be disdained anywhere. At that position, they could join a prestigious guild and speak out some in a smaller to medium guild. The pride and ego of high level players was as high as a mountain, but there was no one here who would dare to interfere with Weed. They might attack him if they were alone, but it wasn't a mood they could go forth in because the other people were staying put. Weed had dominated the atmosphere with a few composed words.

"How pathetic."

"..."

The people couldn't even say a single word in reply. At some point, it had become natural for Weed to speak like this. He was friendly in Morata, but he revealed his extremely arrogant nature

before the gathered high level players. It was the might of the absolute strongest, something they had dreamed of since who knows when.

However, a few people harbored resentment towards the continuing disdain. Having become stronger while wandering the hunting grounds, their competitive spirit flared at Weed, who was acting like an almighty maverick. It would be an honor even if they died, and they felt like wanting to challenge him.

A subtle change in mood was flowing in the repressed crowd.

Just then, Weed burst out with Lion's Roar, "Bingryong! Phoenix! Why haven't you come to greet me even though I've come!"

A sound spread like lightning!

At Weed's call, Bingryong and Phoenix spread their wings wide and flew over from far away. With a size that rivaled a Dragon with his torso alone, Bingryong was fearsome enough to give people who were seeing him for the first time get goosebumps. Bingryong and Phoenix let loose a round of cries into the sky before coming down to sit on the rocky mountain.

ROOAAAR!

SCREEECH!

Cracks formed on the mountain's stone and sand was falling.

"Master, I came at your call."

"Master, I have come."

Bingryong was good-looking-- he had heft like a Dragon, refined eyes, and a deft snout! With an air of indifference characteristic of a bird, Phoenix was cold, yet explosive power that seemed like it would burn everything lay dormant within. That Bingryong and Phoenix courteously lowered their heads to Weed.

"Ooh."

"Incredible."

The crowd felt some kind of wall separating them from Weed, who had tamed and was pushing around those two seemingly wild divine beasts. The constantly complaining, timid and fearful Bingryong and Phoenix, who was so very stupid that it caused accidents! Unaware of their relationship with Weed, who enslaved them with frustration and bullying, the people could only see it as amazing. There would be no one who could challenge Weed even after seeing Bingryong and Phoenix bowing their heads to him.

"You idiots. I get angry just seeing you guys." Weed furrowed his brow.

Bingryong and Phoenix looked like they were accepting it without any resistance.

'What kind of dirty tantrum is he going to throw now...'

'Let's just ignore it. There's probably something we did wrong.'

Weed said, "Incompetent and useless bastards."

Bingryong and Phoenix rolled their eyes in pointless guilt and sorriness as they looked around. Every time Weed insulted them, there was some kind of decisive reason. If they talked back and snapped at him, this frustration and insulting would go on for much longer, so they didn't ask for the reason or argue. They decided to do the same this time, too, and just waited.

Weed shook his head towards Bingryong and Phoenix as if it was annoying. "I don't even want to see you pieces of crap, so fuck off!"

Thinking it was their liberation, Bingryong and Phoenix unfurled their wings and flew away. They had to get far away from him before Weed changed his mind. They fled so quickly that the rocky mountain shook and harsh winds blew.

The crowd's spirits sank even further. They were giving him looks of envy and respect rather than competitive or fighting spirit. With this much disdain towards Bingryong and Phoenix, whose matches were hard found even in the Versailles Continent, they were thinking that the disdain directed at them was somewhat natural.

Weed strode towards the direction of the Embinyu Fortress. The Rescue the Prisoners of the Matallost Church-- monsters were gathered in hordes along with an enormous labyrinth in the

underground the Embinyu Fortress.

'Two people are better than one for clearing a dungeon like this.'

Because of concerns regarding poisoning or curse magic, it was beneficial to have one or two teammates.

*

Holding a shovel, Pavo walked to the black castle with Gaston.

"Have you come to fulfil the Lord's request?" asked the guard watching over the Lord's Caste with a spear.

Pavo came to the Lord's Castle quite often because of his Architect license and had accumulated intimacy, so the guard had recognized him.

"Yes, I have."

"The Lord has asked you to build a house to store a work. I will guide you to the place where the sculptures are located."

"Thank you."

Pavo and Gaston followed the guard into the Lord's Castle. It was

the Lord's private space, where people normally couldn't enter. Not even a single simple decoration was hung on the walls, and they couldn't even look at things like the valuables.

"There's nothing special," said Gaston with disappointment.

As a Painter, his Art stat or insight would rise if he appreciated impressive artwork. It was due to their natural ambition that art professions wanted to appreciate many works.

"This is the room."

The guard opened one of the Lord's closed chambers.

At that moment!

A brilliant light poured out from within the room.

You have discovered a Mythical sculpture.

Birth and death!

For the first time, you have discovered a work whose craftsmanship will be envied by Dwarves and kings will want to acquire even by going to war.

The Sculptor who made the work did not reveal his name.

- For a discovery that will cause a sensation in the world, Fame has increased by 1,290.

-You have acquired the title of Mythical Sculpture Discoverer. If you tell the story of discovering the sculpture in a tavern, you will be able to drink and eat unlimited food and alcohol for free. Nobles and royals who love beauty will welcome your visit, and they will want to hear your story in detail.

As soon as the door was opened, the Fame that was so hard to raise went up by over 1,000.

That was before Pavo and Gaston were able to come to their senses.

You have seen Unnamed Mythical Sculpture.

The flower of artistry, this work is worth being called a marvelous work of art.

An unknown Sculptor made the sculpture with birth and death as the theme to demonstrate his skills. Those who see his sculpture and understand will celebrate life with him.

Health, Mana, and Stamina regeneration have increased by 32%.

Maximum Health and Mana have increased by 30%.

All Stats increased by 20.

Agility and Courage have been further increased.

Movement speed has quickened by 30%. The effect will be even greater when moving long distances.

Having enjoyed the joy of being alive, Health has permanently increased by 500.

It is difficult to understand this work due to low Wisdom. Wisdom and Intelligence have permanently increased by 2.

You need to look carefully and frequently in order to understand this work.

Architects were a profession that required surprisingly high Wisdom. That was because they needed to know how to use simple magic in order to construct a building. However, even his Wisdom and Intelligence were insufficient to understand this work.

That was it for Pavo, but Gaston was as shocked as if he'd been hit by a lightning bolt.

- For appreciating a Mythical sculpture, Art stat has risen by 47.

A massive increase in the Art stat!

In the case of magicians, an apprentice who learned from a teacher could grow much faster. However, artists could only prove themselves with their works alone!

The dolls displayed in the light looked so realistic that it was unbelievable that they were leather dolls. The clothes they were wearing, especially the buttons, were made precisely; not a single thing was out of place.

"To think that these sculptures are Weed's true skills..."

The Sculptor who made the dolls was unknown, but who else could have made them but the Lord of Morata, Weed? They were sure of it because Weed had asked them to build a house for works that were in the Lord's Castle.

Pavo sent a whisper to Weed with a trembling voice.

- A-are you are busy right now?

Weed's answer returned quickly.

- It's okay. Please speak.

- There's one thing I'm curious about.

- What is it?

- Why didn't you publicize your name after making this sculpture? Though we were able to get discoverer's fame thanks to that...

It was something that Pavo and Gaston really couldn't understand, despite being grateful for it. If he had made a sculpture like this, of course he should boast and let it be known.

If Gaston had painted a Mythical work, he would have gone around running his mouth everywhere.

- Because I was ashamed.

- Ashamed of what?!

- I was too embarrassed to reveal my name because my skill was too lacking and faulty...

- Choke

He was too embarrassed to attach his name after making a Mythical sculpture like this!

Weed's modesty was enough to make them choke.

Chapter 8: Encounter With Da'in

Pavo had great ambitions as an Architect. He was now skillful at constructing houses and buildings for business.

There was quite the variety of preferences for houses in Morata. In other affluent kingdoms, you had to be a high leveled player or have a lot of money in order to own your own house. That's because they had to build a villa or some luxury residence in order to not be inferior to others. But in Morata, there was a representative style of house.

The shack!

It could be built easily, and it cost almost no construction and maintenance fees. The shoddy shack could only block the rain and wind, but there were so many of them that there was no reason to feel ashamed all alone.

Since even beginners could build one if they acquired lumber, they would prepare a house at just level 20 or 30. They could easily realize the precious dream of having their own house. After preparing a house, the beginners would leave equipment or goods they weren't using inside their houses and even call their friends to throw parties. Morata was their hometown and they even had a house; that was the main reason why beginners couldn't leave Morata even after growing.

Normally, permission to construct shacks wasn't often given

because public safety and health would drop severely if many of them were built. The price of land was also high in other cities, so building a house took tons of money. But Morata's land was on the cheap side, and public safety and health were quite good as well. The Lord had made an expensive waterway and established a vigilance corps, and relief for the poor went on smoothly due to the Freya Church's influence, so there were hardly any thieves.

"No village idealizes the shack more than this one does."

Pavo had built a considerable number of shacks. The shacks he built were popular because they were sturdy and the inside space was also well designed. A shack that had just been built had a charm of its own. It would deteriorate after a long time, rotting or breaking and leaking, but it was more or less worth living in a shack that was like new.

Adventurers, Merchants, and wealthy players who crossed over from the Central Continent wanted high-class residences.

"Please build me a house on a place that looks down on Morata. You have to make the warehouse big, and please use expensive materials, too."

There was also a lot of demand for high-class houses or business buildings, so Pavo worked hard. The thousands of shacks, hundreds of luxury villas, Morata's bridge, and business buildings that he had personally built became landmarks.

"The Designing and Construction skill haven't been growing well

these days."

The proficiency from shacks was paltry. The Fame he acquired and his proficiency growth from completing a business building or villa were also decreasing.

"I'll have to make a really awesome work."

Pavo's affection towards Morata was extremely high. Since he had built many buildings that were being used by Merchants and residents, as an Architect, he was as fond of it as if it were his own city.

"Let's try making a proper building."

With perfect timing, Weed's request set the fire of challenge blazing in him, as an Architect. He needed to make a work of construction for the sculpture about birth and death, as well as the countless dolls.

"Intermediate Designing!"

Ding!

The blueprint popped up as a translucent 3D image in front of Pavo.

By using Mana, he could try setting up walls, columns, and even decorate the interior, as if he were actually making a house. The beginner Designing skill had a limit to the overall size, and you couldn't use diverse materials either.

The Construction and Designing skill were inseparable. The materials and new styles that were applied in Construction were able to instantly influence the Designing skill and develop it. Things like the arrangement of furniture and the structure of the house were completed through Designing. After making a blueprint, you could even give instructions to laborers.

Pavo's Designing skill was Intermediate level 3. It wasn't at the level of being able to construct a castle, but he could certainly make a fairly large building and garden.

"They're the skills that made 3 deluxe villas at once."

Pavo made the blueprint with an enormous structure.

Weed said he had made the dolls for some child.

"That noble aim... I can't disappoint it."

Weed had permitted a budget of 1,980 Gold! It was just enough money to barely make one house. However, Pavo planned to invest in materials unsparingly for the construction.

"Let's bring in good trees and flowers from the continent to

decorate the garden. We'll make the garden about one and a half acres, and the area of the building has to be at least 8 acres."

Envisioning the ultimate landmark building, it had a size and design that he had never made before. He intended to make use of his fortune as an Architect, the profession that was said to have the most money after a Merchant, to try making a building that was worthy of emblemizing Morata.

"As an artist, it's ridiculous that Weed didn't have a single space worthy enough to display his sculptures."

He would make it so that Weed's sculptures could be put on display, allowing the residents and adventurers to see them.

Pavo began construction. He dove right into production because the work was so tremendous.

*

Pale was in the middle of hunting with his party in a dungeon when a whisper came from Weed.

- I have to hunt in an underground prison. It might be a little dangerous, but please send me one person or so.

The Embinyu Fortress underground prison was very complex. There were parties hunting and countless monsters everywhere. Since there was apparently a monster that used poison as well, it was tough to fight recklessly.

After ending the whisper, Pale spoke to his party. "Weed asked that we send one person."

"Shall I go?" Hwaryeong stepped forward at once, as if she'd been waiting for it. There was no way she would miss an opportunity to be with Weed for the first time in a while.

"Of course Weed would welcome you, Hwaryeong, but he says he needs someone who can cure poison. Irene, do you want to go too?"

"What'll you do here if I go?"

"We'll figure it out somehow. It's fine since we have Da'in, too."

Pale's party fulfilled very many requests from Morata. They were hunting and doing quests side-by-side while getting the book possessing the 'Secret of Manufacturing Ancient Breastplate.' Even though the quest they were currently doing had a difficulty of C, it was dangerous dungeon hunting where they were attacked by monsters with very high damage.

"Won't it be dangerous for the people left behind if both Hwaryeong and I go?"

"Maybe. It depends on how long Zephyr can hold on, but it'll definitely be a bit dangerous, huh?"

As a party that lacked a Warrior or Knight, it was true that they were uneasy whenever they did a dungeon exploration. Even though Zephyr took charge of defense, it was tough when there were a lot of monsters rushing in. Hwaryeong harassed the monsters with her Confusion Dance or Seduction Dance, so if both she and Irene were gone at the same time, it would greatly impede the exploration.

"I will go." Holding a cudgel, Da'in stepped forward.

Shaman was the profession that could be called the jack of all trades! She had striking power, but it was also her specialty to soundly beat up the monsters when they went crazy.

As she swung her cudgel, Da'in occasionally murmured to herself. "Flogging has to be done by hand after all. There's no fun in hunting without the taste of giving a beating."

The most popular Shaman in Morata, she had been helping out in Pale's party.

Zephyr nodded. "Miss Da'in can be relied on since she can detoxify and even cure. Looks like Hwaryeong and Da'in can go together and help him."

After they decided on the people who would go to the

underground prison, Yurin drew a picture based on Weed's explanation. In the picture, Yurin, Da'in, and Hwaryeong were standing next to Weed at the entrance of a dark prison. The advantage of Picture Teleportation was that multiple people could be moved at once. Granted, the teleportation of an absurd number of people was impossible since everyone had to be drawn on one sheet. They also couldn't teleport too deep underground due to the Mana limitation.

"Picture Teleportation!"

Yurin, Hwaryeong, and Da'in disappeared, as if they were sucked into the drawing. Then, as if swaying into being, they suddenly appeared in the place where Weed was waiting, the entrance to the underground prison.

MOOOOOO!

Yellowy greeted them with a gentle face, as if glad to see them. He was a male, and as the special characteristic of an art creature, he liked beautiful people.

"Ohh, what a handsome and dashing bull."

Hwaryeong gently stroked Yellow's neck. It was a happy moment for Yellowy, who went slack-jawed with a naive expression.

"Oppa, how much does this fella weigh?"

"He's a top of the line Korean cow. I added a little more to the special parts, like ribeye."

"He looks tasty. Oughta be pretty good if you slow-cooked him and ate the bone broth mixed with rice."

Yurin, who was joking because she was in front of Weed! Yellowy's complexion lost all color.

In the meantime, Weed and Da'in saw each other.

Da'in's face had become hard to recognize due to the aftermath of the curse she had received in Morata. She could get rid of the curse, but she had left it in order to see how Weed was getting along.

Da'in bowed lightly at the waist first as she greeted him. "Hello. I heard much about you."

She greeted him while hiding her complex feelings from meeting him after a long time.

Weed introduced himself briefly. "I'm Sculptor Weed. So you're the Shaman introduced by Pale."

"I'm Da'in."

A spark flashed through Weed's eyes. Ever since he heard that

there was a Shaman named Da'in in Pale's party, he'd thought it was a strange coincidence.

"Da'in... and you say you're a Shaman."

"Why?"

Weed shook his head as if to clear something from his mind. "It's nothing. It's just that I recalled an old memory for a bit."

"What kind of memory was it?"

"It's just... a memory I keep to myself. Now is not the time to share a long story." Weed spoke coldly because he had remembered the bittersweet memory from Lavias.

Lots of people were gathering in order to sightsee after hearing the news that he had arrived at the entrance to the underground prison. There were also people who had followed him from the Matallost Church's temple. It would be better to take the mercenary Smith and get to the objective quickly.

"Let's go into the underground prison first and chat later."

Weed pulled out his sword and advanced. He had used Sword Grind and Armor Polish in advance, so there was nothing holding him back.

Da'in swung her cudgel as she chanted a spell. Weed was encased in the effects of a spell that amplified Strength, increased Agility, movement speed, and attack speed, and even hardened his skin. The effect was to the extent that it was unbelievable that she was a normal Shaman. Weed's Strength increased by over 230, and his movement speed also became very fast. His whole body overflowed with strength, like he had dropped off heavy luggage. With his Stamina and Agility increased, he felt like he could run like the wind and leap from cliff to cliff. He felt as if he could run like a cheetah!

'She's an incredible Shaman,' Weed thought to himself.

One of the finest Shamans in Morata, the proficiency of her skills was far from average.

*

"What a tremendous underground dungeon. I didn't think it'd be this deep."

The Warrior Hon looked around himself. The Embinyu's underground prison boasted a massive size, as well as a complex labyrinth and various test subjects. The level of the monsters was also on the high side, and the traps were numerous too. The Thief players in the party tried to disable all the traps, but it still took them over twenty-five days of struggling on the path to the place where the priests of the Matallost Church were tied up.

There were over 40 players who had received the 'Rescue the Prisoners of the Matallost Church' quest together, and their levels were fairly high as well. They were only able to comb this vast dungeon all the way to this point because they had the help of players like the Explorer and Elementalist.

The Paladin Billeo said, "Because it's an underground prison underneath the Embinyu Fortress... it truly wasn't a normal dungeon. About when do you think Weed will come?"

The Magician Easton lit a bonfire idly as he replied. "We heard he left Morata, so won't it take him about five days or so?"

Gallic looked unconvinced. "That fast?" He meant that was too quick compared to how much they themselves had suffered.

"We told him the path. Since we also got rid of all the traps, he should easily be able to get here in four or five days. Though it might take longer, y'know."

Hon made a decision as the party's leader. "Then since we can't waste our time either, let's hunt in the area while we wait."

"Shall we?"

"Look around you. The others are all hunting too."

There was a considerable number of monsters in the underground prison. Because it was a place where light didn't

shine in, it was inhabited by hideous demons or creatures that had been cursed by the Embinyu. They were also at a pretty high level. For the most part, level 350 monsters emerged.

"He should be able to get here within five days if he hurries."

*

Weed closed in on the Dark Knights guarding the entrance to the underground prison. Since he was appreciating the effects from making a legendary sculpture and also had the Shaman's skill on him, he moved as fast as if he were flying.

"The enemy we have to face is fifteen Dark Knights."

They were the gatekeepers of the Embinyu Church. An excommunicated priest of the Demeter Church was also helping the Dark Knights, but they absolutely had to be taken down in order to enter the underground prison. It had only been a short amount of time, but it was common for people to fight the gatekeepers when a certain number of parties hunting in the River of Lamentation basin gathered. They needed at least 20 people in order to fight the Dark Knights at ease!

Weed was going to fight them with Hwaryeong, Da'in, and Yurin.

'It'll just be cumbersome if there are too many people.'

There were a lot of times when he also hunted alone, so he thought this many teammates was more than enough. If there were more people, he even had to distribute the japtem; the agony he would feel then would be indescribable!

"What, is he going to go hunt with just those people? Is he crazy?"

"You saw in the broadcast. He's super strong."

"He succeeded in the quest because there were a lot of barbarians who helped him."

"He'll only be able to go into the underground prison if we fight with him..."

"Let's just wait and see for now. He'll probably ask us to help if he needs it."

The God of War Weed. Without concealing their excitement at being able to become his teammate, the watchers looked on from afar.

Of course, they would leap up right away to help him if he called and would be able to show off their strength. That was because being in the same party as Weed was a tremendous honor.

Hwaryeong spoke as if worried, "Around what level are the knights?"

"In the early 330s. The Elite Dark Knights are about 380." There weren't any Elite Dark Knights here, but Weed explained for now. "If the knights have firm wills, the Seduction Dance probably won't work well on them."

Hwaryeong's Charm was enough to make Yellow wag his tail. Besides the Charm skill that was vital for her as a Dancer, with the combination of her clothes and accessories, there was no man who wouldn't fall over if she flirted with her flashy and evocative dance.

"It's just that my Health is low. I'll die pretty quick if I take a hit from a monster at the level of a Dark Knight; do you think it'll be okay?"

"I'll draw their aggro first, so please dance after that."

"I'll only believe in you, Weed."

The Dark Knights recognized Weed and reacted.

"Our church's enemy!"

"He's the conspirator who destroyed our religion's headquarters and caused the High Priest's death."

"The vicious guy who lured in the uncivilized barbarians with his

cunning tongue and challenged us, the followers of a sacred purpose, has come."

The Dark Knights charged with fierce rage.

The charge of knights!

There were many cases where knights insisted on single combat. Because they had honor and pride, knights did offer to fight one to one. However, such a regulation didn't apply to Weed. He had become an enemy who could not coexist with the Embinyu Church.

Clink clink clink.

Rushing in with the sound of their armor joints clattering, the charge of the Dark Knights was tremendous. A charge of the knights had been enough to deal a wound even on the former King Hydra's thick body. Because they carried the weight of their great armor, Vitality and Health would fall even if the charge was blocked with a shield. Cases where you were paralyzed from the impact were also numerous.

But Weed had a defense skill as well.

Close Eyes Tightly!

It was a Warrior technique that raised Perseverance and Toughness through the restriction of vision.

That wasn't all; he hardly used it, but the Moonlight Sculpting Blade was a skill that integrated attack and defense. When he used it as an attack skill alone, he could ignore the enemy's defense and deal a lot of damage. It was thanks to the characteristic of a Sculptor, who carved into actual materials, and the technique that was capable of handling light. It was also possible to use light to blind the enemy's eyes or to surround himself completely in light to use it for defensive purposes. There were the disadvantages that it couldn't block a physical blow as well as a magic attack and consumed Mana quickly, but the results Weed had gotten from experimenting with it had been fearsome.

His entire body covered in light and his wings spread out, he had penetrated the clump of monsters. A precise swordsmanship directed at the monsters that were approaching at rollercoaster-like speeds! He could have also shot out light and hit them, but the Mana consumption was too severe if he did that. Even when he tore them apart by swinging his sword himself, it only took a moment to reduce the monsters to ashes. 7 Caltrops! A battle against them would have taken a while if he fought normally, but they had been annihilated boringly in just 30-40 seconds with the Moonlight Sculpting Blade. Granted, he had to rest for a long time after ending the battle since he used up almost all his Vitality and Mana.

He could also use the Wings of Light that had been granted life to bypass monsters or assault them from behind. The fighting methods he could use were endless.

However, there was almost no occasion where he had to fight to the best of his ability. The biggest fighting opportunity had been

when he was seizing the Embinyu Fortress, but the summoned Balkan, King Hydra, and Imoogi had fought better than he had expected. He tried to reveal his true skills for a bit when cutting the King Hydra's necks all at once, but he was so tired that it had ended all too blandly.

"I'm fed up with hunting, it's boring."

Following his own growth, Weed was at the point where he was bored of most battles. He couldn't raise Perseverance or Toughness in a fight where he had to do his best. For the ultimate hunting efficiency, there were things he needed to sacrifice out of necessity.

The underground prison was said to have monsters everywhere. Since he expected that the fighting would go on continuously, he couldn't rely on a skill that consumed Mana.

"Dirtman, turn the ground around me into mud."

The earth spirit was summoned in the blink of an eye. It was fresh since Weed had made it himself, took little Mana besides the summoning, and it was an obedient spirit. In his current state of very accelerated Mana recovery, he could use as many spirits as he wanted.

"I came because I received the command of Weed-nim, the most handsome man in the Versailles Continent. I will make the earth into mud right away."

Other spirits were arrogant and wasted a lot of time in responding to a summoning. Even with high intimacy with the Elementalist, it was rare for them to be obedient. However, Dirtman popped out as soon as it was called.

The ground the knights were charging on soon transformed into a mire that came up to the ankles. The armor wearing knights scattered and struggled on the place that had become bog-like.

"What's that spirit?"

"Is it an earth spirit? It appeared so quickly!"

That was the surprised reaction of the people who saw Dirtman.

"Hooray for Weed-nim, the being of absolute charisma! I have completed thy command. Do you have any more work for me? Please call me for anything."

Weed spoke as if being generous. "You may fight with us too."

"Thank you, Master. I shall not forget this kindness. I will treasure it deep inside my earth."

Dirtman raised a mound of dirt and attacked the Dark Knights. There wasn't much damage to speak of since it was dirt, but rocks were cleverly hidden inside so the Dark Knights had no choice but to fight it. Dirtman also didn't use much Mana, considering it was a spirit. Since Weed currently had overflowing Mana, there was no

need to be stingy.

"Dirtman, you may use as much of my Mana as you want."

"I am honored, Master."

BOOOOOM!

Lines of dirt flew into the sky like arrows.

Weed ran into the bog that where the Dark Knights were in mud up to their thighs and being harassed. The ground before his feet became firm, so there was no discomfort to walking.

"The foe of the Embinyu Church!"

"It's good you came; I shall rip you apart."

Even while being very preoccupied due to the mire, the Dark Knights swung their swords at Weed.

They were big knights, but their heights were about the same as Weed's because their legs were sunken in the mud.

The Dark Knights madly swung their dirtied swords. The sword Weed swung rang out with a beautiful sound as it flowed on the swords of the Dark Knights in succession.

Claaaaassh!

As if a blizzard was being split, a path was cut through the flock of Dark Knights.

"Bone Cutter!"

"Sharpness Blade!"

"Illusion Sword!"

The swords of the Dark Knights shined as spells were cast. A damage amplifying skill that cut through the opponent's bones! A skill that penetrated by concentrating strength into sharpness! The Dark Knights even used a skill that divided a sword, turning it into five.

The Dark Knights surrounded Weed and unleashed their attacks. Weed turned violently . He avoided the Bone Cutter that would deal a fatal wound if he took a direct blow to his bare body, and he twisted to the side to avoid the sword that came straight his way. After narrowly dodging them, the sword that was divided into five attacked him.

Weed's eyes flashed. 'There's always a weak point to skills like this.'

The decisive disadvantage that strength and damage would be dispersed!

"Sword Dance."

Weed agilely moved his feet as he swung his sword to parry all five of the attacks.

"Arghh!"

It seemed the Dark Knights felt great shame that their attacks had failed. That was because even though they had put away their high pride to try a combined attack, they hadn't been able to kill Weed.

"Bone Cutter!"

"Keep attacking!"

Among the Dark Knights, Weed sped about like a bog eel. After leaping into their midst, he used his enemies so they couldn't use their skills and moved in a range that was close enough for their skin to touch.

'Close combat can be called the ultimate fight.'

Swordsmen used their skills from the very beginning. They unleashed their swordsmanship without hesitation, and even used long-ranged attack skills like lunges. With flashy effects, they displayed as much might. The Swordsman was a profession that had more awesome damage the more high leveled they became. There was a reason why they took the center stage in hunting.

On the other hand, Weed believed in the single Sculpting Blade and made do with his body for most of his fighting. With the least Mana consumption, he had grown through close combat, which could improve his skills and Toughness. Though the knights were quick and sharp, he was experienced and could avoid them fairly well.

'And... they're much slower than the sahyungs or master's sword.'

One could roughly predict where an attack would land just by looking at the foot movements. Weed stored the placement of the Dark Knights and their attack directions in his head and moved amongst them.

'If you're fast and smooth, you won't fall apart even when fighting greater numbers.'

His sword flowed and burrowed in while parrying.

The Sword Mastery skill that had risen to Intermediate 7 became Weed's foundation in battle. As his Sword Mastery skill was higher than the Dark Knights', there were many cases where his opponent's attack skills were nulled when he beat them at a precise strike point.

"Triple!"

Weed used only the bare minimum of skills as he sliced past the Dark Knights as if sweeping through. He hid his Sculpting Blade, which could be called his patented move, in order to avoid the attention of the onlookers. That was because not showing a considerable portion of his skills would be helpful in a nasty situation. Sculpting Blade was effective when facing a monster that was much stronger than a normal one and it was particularly optimal for tearing apart Knights or Warriors.

"Ack!"

"He got through."

The Dark Knights groaned heavily, but they didn't fall. That was because they had immense defense and Health from wearing full plate armor, the reason why knights were so tricky to face. However, the damage didn't end with small wounds, due to Weed's sword, the Daemon Sword that was said to have cleaved the devil.

- Daemon Sword's Freezing Curse.

A part of the body has frozen, so Strength and Agility will fall greatly.

Will reduce Health by 35 every second due to the damage of the ice attribute.

- Daemon Sword Cracked Rock Curse.

A crack has formed in the equipped armor, causing the durability to fall continuously.

Decreases defense.

- Daemon Sword's Nightmare Curse.

Evil spirits will rush in to cause optical illusions; after willpower has been weakened, they will rapidly disintegrate the body.

The Dark Knights fell into chaos from Weed's intrusion. Hwaryeong used the instantaneously created opening to push into the knights.

"Seduction Dance!"

The sensual bubi bubi, which could only be seen in a club or a night stage!

[T/N: For those who may have forgotten, this is a dance that involves grinding and generally sexy movements, leading to the name, bubi bubi, which translates literally to "rub rub" — it is not derived from "booby booby".]

When Hwaryeong's body grazed past, the Dark Knights froze in their tracks. They drooled with hazy eyes and even lost their minds. Hwaryeong had grown enormously in the time while they had been apart, so as she danced, a butterfly flew around and flowers were strewn about.

"A dancer must always be graceful!"

She was even using the Flower Scattering skill!

As Hwaryeong danced, she left an inviting fragrance in her wake. Over 10 Dark Knights were charmed and lost their will to fight for an instant.

"Arrrrghhh!"

Weed easily hunted down the Priest with weak defense first. Killing Priests didn't take long since their Health was low even if they were high leveled. By the time he got rid of the Priest, the Dark Knights attacking Weed had decreased by three thanks to Hwaryeong's work.

"Too easy."

Weed and Hwaryeong were perfectly in sync.

Weed slipped past the attacks of three Dark Knights with ease as he unfurled an aggressive counterattack.

- A fatal blow has been dealt.

The accurate blows that fell every time he did so!

Weed effectively used Kolderim's Daemon Sword, cleaver of the devil. The Daemon Sword allowed his skills to take flight. It was important to land fatal blows with Strength and damage, but he dealt many small wounds. He killed the Dark Knights after weakening them severely through the 7 overlapping curses of the Daemon Sword. Weed was moving so fantastically that even the armor he was wearing felt like a uselessly heavy load.

The jaws of the onlookers fell open.

"What the hell?"

"How can a person move like that? Is he seeing the attacks of the Dark Knights?"

"That's not something you can do just by seeing the attacks. He's striking the sword he's swinging in the center to change their directions."

Scenes they couldn't believe even after rubbing their eyes were

cropping up one after another.

Beginner Warriors or Knights fought while getting hit by most of the attacks, trusting their Toughness, skills, and armor. Even if they accumulated a certain amount of skill, they were only at the level of using their shields or putting their weapons up front to block. Weed dodged the enemy's attacks by a finger's width, pierced the vital points, and slipped out. If they had known that Weed was restraining a lot of his skills, the people might have even fallen into severe self-doubt and frustration.

"Even the videos of famous Swordsmen on the Versailles Continent weren't at this level."

"Still, does he have no sense of fear at all? How can he run in front in a situation like that?"

"I recognized him when he fought riding the wyvern. A fight like that is really too natural for Weed!"

A battle on par with what the onlookers had thought of was unfolding before their eyes. They could only be fascinated by Weed's natural movements alone. They wouldn't have been this surprised if he had a high level or fought while using skills, but the movement of his body itself was a work of art.

Scenes of a fight that looked as if he was enjoying battle and controlling every movement!

The players knew how incredible Weed's current actions were.

"His stats and skills, all of it is optimized."

"He's putting everything he has into battle."

The ordinary standard for high leveled players was using their character's techniques well. They decided on various attack skills to match the situation and fought to win.

In comparison, like a person born for battle, Weed showed precise judgement and movements.

Even if the characters were the same, their performance in battle could only be different based on how they fought. In a brawling game, it was like the difference between heaven and earth even if characters with the same ability were used to fight.

A normal human wouldn't leap right into the middle of the Dark Knights swinging swords, and they wouldn't even try to strike those swords to slip past. No, they wouldn't overdo it by fighting the Dark Knights in the first place and would choose to safely gather more teammates.

When onlookers who had rushed over without reserve saw Weed's battle, there was something that made their blood boil. It drew them into wild excitement, and they were absorbed in the battle.

"There were over 10 Dark Knights, but he's really hunting them with 4 people. It ought to be possible if they were a party in the late 300s, but..."

"Just look at that Painter over there! She's wearing a tunic with a level 30 requirement."

"Is she really under level 50?"

"Her profession is a Painter. She's not even joining in the battle, just doodling."

Yurin was drawing the overpowering Dark Knights wearing the formal, solemn armor as no-good cavemen. With bushy beards and nose hairs sticking out, they were wearing elastic tights rather than armor.

"The weapon the Shaman has equipped isn't good either?"

"She's an extremely famous Shaman in Morata. I was in the same party as her once before, but... she's not even level 250."

"You mean she's hunting Dark Knights even so? It's ridiculous even if Weed is there."

"The Shaman is impressive too, and I've never seen a Dancer getting so aggressively involved in a battle. If only I could also dance with a charming Dancer like her..."

When the onlookers were spewing praise, Weed's expression was apathetic.

'This is boring.'

The ability of the Dark Knights was impressive. They were knights, and they rained down heavy and substantial attacks, so you couldn't be careless. If he was level 300 like before, he would have hunted with great excitement since they were monsters that were objectively stronger than himself. But since Weed was now level 370, he could defeat them fairly comfortably. Having grown while struggling in disadvantageous situations, opponents that were perfect for others merely made Weed sleepy.

'Too weak.'

Even after hunting several Dark Knights at once, he thought of this much as insignificant.

Even after entering the underground prison, Weed easily slaughtered the monsters. He was able to hunt the monsters so simply that it was futile since Hwaryeong put them to sleep. That was also because he couldn't take hits from the Dark Knights on purpose in order to raise his Toughness since there were many onlookers. Because this was after he made the sculpture, his Health and Mana recovery speeds were at a tremendous level, so he would be slow to tire even after fighting and fighting.

Monks of the Embinyu Church appeared before Weed. They were

a very strong and rather quick mob that used punches or kicks as their main arsenals.

Weed overlapped another skill onto Sculpting Blade. It was a possible attack because Sculpting Blade was a technique that applied purely to Sword Mastery itself.

"15 Chain Strike."

Ba-ba-ba-ba-ba-ba-ba-ba-ba-bam!

He ran in without reserve and mercilessly beat them up with his sword. He had absolutely no mercy, and made no allowance for generosity, either.

"Hammer Fist!"

When the Monks were barely able to extend their fists, he stood and took that much. Weed's equips were considerable, so taking a few hits from the Monks' hits was fine.

"Did you hit me just now?"

Weed's eyes twitched. His Perseverance or Toughness didn't even rise from taking those fumbling hits. He didn't really need to bear it and get hit when his stats didn't even go up!

"15 Chain Strike!"

Pa-ba-ba-ba-ba-ba-ba-bam!

He violently beat up the Monks. He beat them here, beat them there, chased and beat them, and beat them once more because it was a waste to use a skill right before they died. His sword rampaged as he mercilessly thrashed the Monks. It was to the extent that the onlookers felt sorry for the Monks of the Embinyu Church.

His Mana recovery speed was so fast that it quickly refilled again even if he used a skill.

"Weed! For you to come this far...! I heard much about your dirty crimes. I will take the Embinyu Church's revenge."

The Elite Dark Knight approached him in the underground prison with his mantle fluttering. If it were someone other than Weed, an exciting and tense atmosphere might have formed.

"Elite Dark Knight, you did well to show up as well. Sword Kaiser!"

He dodged the Elite Dark Knight's attack and activated his ultimate attack skill head on!

"Argh!"

The Elite Dark Knight was flung to the opposite wall insignificantly.

- The Elite Dark Knight has fallen into a state of panic from a great shock.

Weed raised his sword and thrashed it.

"Then why'd you show up, hurry and die. Die! Die!"

The Elite Dark Knight dropped a shoulder guard and lost its life in vain.

"Equipment!"

Weed licked his lower lip with his tongue. This was a situation where he was wetting his lips with greed and thirst was rising in his throat.

"While you're like this, I guess I'll gather some Sword Mastery and attack skill proficiency!"

Babaaam!

Crunch! Boom! Whaam!

"EEEK!"

Powowowow!

Engrossing himself in just hunting without thinking of raising his stats for defense, all that was left were the gruesome remains of monsters.

The onlookers following him from behind drifted further and further away.

"Euu..."

"So this is why they say the places where Weed has gone through are sucked dry of monsters.

"To think his personality was this dirty. He isn't saving even a single one and just beating them again and again and again."

"Did you see just now? He hit a monster that already died another three times before it hit the ground."

"I've never seen a hunting method that kills monsters like that."

"His notoriety wasn't just false rumors."

The onlookers backed off quickly, fearing the human who was

hunting with such a dirty nature! Even though they backed off a distance, they could still hear Weed's words. It was a conversation he was having after wiping out five mobs of Dark Knights and disciples of the Embinyu Church.

"Let's fight faster."

"How?"

"Angry Pebbles, come out."

Eight premium fire spirits were summoned with his overflowing Mana. The spirits with blazing, red-hot bodies went on their hands and knees before Weed and raised a fiery show as they acted charmingly. It appeared that Weed's control over the spirits had reached it's height.

"Did you call, our creator who is the most outstanding being under this sky!"

"You guys, go play with fire a bit. From the end of the passage on this side, set everything on fire in order."

"Understood, Master."

Weed knew about the blocked paths of the complicated underground prison from the expedition. There were traps in the passages and monsters were teeming as well.

"Make sure that you check and only choose the places without people to set on fire," Weed warned. If a place where parties were hunting was set on fire and they happened to die, he could become a murderer.

"We shall devote our lives to fulfil thy command. It is a great honor that you did not forget us and entrusted this task."

Dark Knights and monsters were piled up in the blocked passages of the underground prison.

"Rawr."

"Kekeke."

The dry air in the passages where the monsters were became hotter and hotter.

"RAAAGGHH!"

Spittle went flying as the monsters suffered! Once the flames rose explosively from the blocked passages, they screamed in anguish as they scrambled out.

"It's the harvest. 15 Chain Strikes!"

Weed killed every flaming monster that emerged.

Like a skilled farmer wielding a sickle, he precisely aimed for the throats, heads, and vital points of the monsters.

"This is the taste of hunting."

Monsters fell in swathes in front of Weed. When japtem and equips dropped as monsters turned to grey light, Weed sorted the expensive ones and put them onto Yellowy's back even in the middle of fighting. His hands moved with unparalleled business.

"Wah! That's really ridiculous."

"Is it even possible to hunt like this?"

The onlookers had never seen hunting like this. A normal hunting party would hunt camped out in one corner of the passage or clearing. They would also chat, make food to eat, and take breaks. If the speed of the monster appearances was slow, they would move while doing more hunting. When they did so, the party leader would entrust matters to a Thief, Adventurer, or Assassin, since they had to look for traces of monsters and chase them. Finding monsters well while considering the party members' states was the leader's responsibility. Therefore, knowing the geography and being aware of the characteristics of monsters while raising hunting efficiency was the standard.

However, Weed was different. His hunting range wasn't fixed in a narrow passage or a single spot. He took the characteristic of this enormous underground prison, this dungeon, into consideration

and put the entire area around him into his hunting range.

"His EXP must be rising really damn well."

"Just look at the japtem. His hunting speed is fast so tons of items are also being dropped."

The onlookers could only be extremely jealous!

This was a hunting method that Weed could only show because his Mana recovery speed had quickened. It was Weed's way to fight while managing his Vitality and Mana well, but there was still an obvious limit. It was also comfortable since he took care of the tricky monsters that were daunting to deal with after Hwaryeong put them to sleep with her Seduction Dance. Thanks to Da'in having impressive skills as a Shaman, she gave very effective support in battle. His Agility increased and his Strength grew as well, enabling him to nullify the attacks of the Dark Knights more precisely. The fighting became comfortable and much easier thanks to Da'in.

*

One of the parties that had been hunting in the underground prison was taking a break.

"Phew."

A Warrior wiped the sweat dripping on his forehead. "The level of the monsters here is enormous."

The Cleric also plopped down without even thinking of smoothing his crumpled robe. "I've got to boast to my friends when we get back to Morata. We're seriously hunting in this underground prison."

"We oughta be able to hunt even better if we brought teammates..."

"Pft. Don't even say that, 'cause there shouldn't be many people who are hunting while raising their EXP as nicely as we are."

"We fought a whole seven times in 2 hours. That's an incredible combat record."

"It's the fastest battling I've had all year. Lots of monsters come out, so it's a really good spot for hunting."

"It is a bit lacking since we only have 7 party members this time. Next time, let's add another high damage Swordsman and Magician each and try a proper hunt."

They were chatting while taking a break when 11 vicious Heretic Hunters of the Embinyu Church approached them from the passage.

The party members took up their weapons and rose from their

seats.

"They're not giving us a chance to rest."

"What should we do? There's still some distance between us, so should we run?"

Just when they were worriedly sharing their opinions, a huge creature and people approached the location of the Heretic Hunters. A man equipped with jet-black Talrok's Armor, helmet, and gloves ran in speedily. After him, an old mercenary and three ladies came riding in on a large and brawny black cow.

"Seductive Dance!"

A Dancer who got off the cow distracted the Heretic Hunters as she danced. The Shaman used magic.

"Wavering eyes, amplify horror to make them see what they do not want to see most."

The willpower of the Heretic Hunters was very vulnerable, and they were men, so their gazes were easily stolen by Hwaryeong's dance. Da'in's high-proficiency magic was invoked in that opening. Da'in didn't even come down from Yellowy's back.

"Embinyu God, hast thou forsaken me?"

"I am a heretic. Judge me!"

While the Heretic Hunters were screaming, Weed brandished his sword. "15 Chain Strikes!"

His swordsmanship didn't back away or halt. With swordsmanship that added to his strength as he advanced, he precisely sliced only the weak points of the Heretic Hunters. His Strength, Agility, and overall fighting ability were amplified due to Dain's buff magic.

"15 Chain Strikes!"

He used effective skills for group hunting without reserve as he bore down on the Heretic Hunters. The Heretic Hunters braced for battle and swung their weapons, but they were helpless. They were cursed every time Weed's sword sliced past, and their bodies burned in flames, insects crawled over them, or their hair turned into stringy snakes. At the end of the battle, Yurin got down from Yellowy and simply picked up the japtem.

"Run!"

Having cleared the Heretic Hunters in an instant, they ran off to their next destination. The party's appearance, hunting, and movement happened like a flash of lightning! Monsters collided with each other as they were ran over from afar with a wave of heat. The party headed towards that group of monsters, fought them in an instant, and went off to yet another location.

The people who had been hunting there originally muttered dazedly.

"What the hell is this?"

"For them to defeat the Heretic Hunters so fast... did you see the swordsman's footwork? Even if it's a skill, how can he run in at the enemy at that angle? He went around to the enemy's back way too easily and knifed 'em, though he did get hit a few times."

"Didn't it really seem like he was just letting himself get hit because it was annoying to dodge?"

Not 5 minutes since they had left, a swarm of people tumbled in from the passage in the direction where Weed, Yellowy, and the others had appeared. They were the onlookers who had been following since the River of Lamentation vicinity.

"Excuse me."

"Yes?"

"Did Weed and his teammates pass through here?"

"Weed?"

"Wargod Weed. He didn't come this way?"

A young Warrior spoke urgently and anxiously, as if he had missed something important!

"I don't know such a person... Ah, a party that came in riding a black cow did kill Heretic Hunters and went past."

"Heretic Hunters!" The other onlookers who had also come asked, "How many were there?"

"11 of them."

"11 of them! How many minutes did it take to defeat them?"

"Huh, how should I say how long it took... it really happened in a brief moment."

"Please tell us anyway."

"Roughly about 2 to 3 minutes?"

"So fast!"

The spectators cheered as they ran off to where Weed and Yellowy had disappeared.

"What was that just now?"

"Maybe... was Weed that Weed? Wargod Weed! He's hunting in the underground prison!"

*

As she breathlessly followed Weed, Da'in was able to feel it.

'He's really... grown a lot.'

She had offered to party together with the Sculptor she'd met in Lavias because the sight of him hunting alone without teammates had been pitiful. Despite the limitations to the Sculptor profession, she had been able to feel a strong will from him as he fought monsters with all his might. The Sculptor who had raised his Perseverance by going as far as to take hits from monsters on purpose now wielded Blacksmithing and Tailoring skills. He had made food for her in Lavias as well, but his Cooking skill had also risen to Intermediate in their time apart. He even dragged a bull named Yellowy along with him.

"This slow-witted cow."

Moooooooooooo!

"Yurin, if you have any paint left over, paint him yellow."

Moooooooooooo!

While they were resting for a bit after repeated battling, the sight of them squabbling with the sculpture lifeform named Yellowy was also cheerful. Yurin and even Hwaryeong played while chiming in.

"Oppa, he's gonna be eaten anyways, so why dye him?"

"They say the black pigs of Jeju are very nutritious and tasty; just leave him black."

[T/N: Jeju is Korea's largest island, known for its tourism, scenery, and apparently its pigs.]

MOOO!

Yellowy wailed sorrowfully and pitifully. However, he wasn't always treated unkindly. When mealtime rolled around, Weed gave him very nutritious hay, even though there was no knowing when he had gotten it. Yurin fed him herbs that she had on hand, and kind Hwaryeong got water and washed his face and body.

*

The second day of hunting in the underground prison!

In the wee hours of the day, when others had gone to sleep, Weed

woke up early and was logged in. As he moved deeper into the dungeon and logged off, the spectators weren't able to follow him any longer. Weed was practicing the handling of a light sculpture using the time away from the people. Da'in had also logged in early, so it was just the two of them.

Weed was silently engrossed in the light sculpture. There was a heavy mood between the two of them.

'This is a chance to talk with him.'

Da'in started speaking first, with difficulty. "Excuse me."

"Yes?"

Weed's response was blunt and rather guarded. He had been the same way when she had met him for the first time in Lavias. He was suspicious from the start, as if wondering if she was going to steal his japtem even though they had simply met by chance in the dungeon.

"What sculpture are you making now?"

Colorful lights matched every movement of Weed's hand. He wasn't using just one light, but diverse colors intertwined and mixed as they brought about countless changes. They grew when he flicked his arm, and the lights scattered brilliantly when he bent his wrist.

"It is nothing, just for practice."

The sculpture Weed was making was gradually taking the form of a person, like a mannequin. Da'in sat still next to him and only spectated the use of light sculpting. Since Weed was trying to make a shape by utilizing strands of light, it was no easy matter. There were countless colors, so it was also try to make them suit each other.

Da'in couldn't handle the heavy silence that followed the halt in the conversation and spoke up again.

"Is there a girl that you like?"

After asking that, she worried inwardly. She had asked something that she'd always been curious about after seeing that he had made the Goddess Freya Statue in Morata based on Hwaryeong's face. Da'in hoped that he would say that he still liked her.

Weed shook his head. "There isn't."

Stifling her disappointment with effort, Da'in replied, "Ah, is that so. Please excuse me for asking something unnecessary."

"No, it's fine."

Weed absorbed himself in the sculpture again. Though his concentration was strong and he made a sculpture even in his

break time, his attitude was strangely different from usual. When there was another person with him, he had never ignored someone who tried to have a conversation. However, distressed by the words Weed had spoken, Da'in didn't realize that.

'We've already said goodbye once, so it's fine if he doesn't like me.'

Da'in contained her pounding heart and spoke up again. "Then... is there a girl you liked in the past?"

Though she sometimes acted unexpectedly and had many strange sides to her to the extent of healing monsters like Ghouls, she mustered an immense amount of courage to ask that question.

Weed's fingers stopped for a moment, trembling a little and tense. However, he soon suppressed it and replied.

"There's no girl that I used to like."

"Goodness!" Da'in smiled with an effort. "Then you've never told anyone that you liked them, not even once?"

"Yes, because there was no one I liked."

Da'in bit her lip. To think there was a guy who would discourage a lass so coldheartedly.

"I see. There's something I have to do for a bit, so I'll be leaving now."

Weed didn't even look at her when replying. "Please do so."

"Then..."

Da'in logged out.

"Phew."

Weed collected the light sculpting. The lights that had dazzled his eyes disappeared, and the dungeon became dark. There was only the crackling of the bonfire he had lit to boil water and prepare the food as it burned.

"Yellowy."

Mooooooooo!

Sitting on the bare ground, Yellow raised his head and replied.

"Do you know who the girl was just now?"

Mooooo!

Yellowy slapped his short tail on the ground as he tilted his ears.

He might get a ton of nagging if he pretended to ignore Weed.

Weed spoke calmly. "My first love."

The first love that a man could never forget. He couldn't forget the memories made with his first love even with the passage of time.

"Her name is Da'in... her profession is Shaman. I met first met her in Lavias."

He hadn't been able to recognize her at first sight, as her appearance had changed greatly due to the curse. However, she was the one who listened to the other person well and had been so enjoyable to talk to that he had spoken to her about everything. He got the feeling of her from just her greeting and the few words she spoke. As a Shaman, the skill proficiency that could be called unequaled and the order by which she used various support magics were the same. She had simply cast her support magic in the order that was comfortable for her, like a habit. But from the perspective of Weed on the receiving end, he was able to distinctly realize who she was in the instant that she used the support magic.

"Da'in. It was her. How could I have forgotten someone so important?"

Those were Weed's inner feelings, which he hadn't betrayed when the girls had been present.

"I was glad to see her since it's been a while. Just that she is alive is... but does she want to forget the past since she finished the surgery and is living a new life? I don't know why she pretended to not know me, but there must be some situation or reason."

Yellowy stared at Weed with clear, large eyes. Reflected in his innocent eyes was the sight of one man being sad with his shoulders slumped.

Chapter 9: Lonely Wanderer

The SwordNoobs divided and got employed as Training Hall instructors for the Orc Village and Rosenheim Kingdom. The salary was low, so they were able to easily get the position because no one wanted to work there. After getting employed, the SwordNoobs were completely entrusted with the Training Hall's management.

"Those who want to learn the sword, come to the Training Hall!"

However, the majority of the players reacted indifferently.

"Training Hall? That's just a place to hit scarecrows."

"Why would you do something so annoying to learn Sword Mastery? If you just go out and fight, you'll learn it anyways."

The SwordNoobs were sneered at by even the beginners! Still, there were quite a few curious beginner players who sought out the Training Hall. They had visited the Training Hall because they couldn't leave the city and village for 4 weeks when they first started.

"You hold the sword like this, and... rather than swinging it powerfully, you must swing it accurately. Don't just blindly put your sword in front of you; you must watch the monster's actions and attack their gaps in their defense."

As they had a lot of experience from the dojo, the SwordNoobs taught the beginners with ease.

"If you go to the Training Hall, they teach you how to fight."

"Is there a need to learn?"

"It's definitely better if you do. People who've learned are completely different from people who haven't in hunting."

It was enough to change the cries for recruiting party members in the square.

"Recruiting Swordsman. Only taking a person who has learned from the Training Hall for at least a day."

It was true that the combat ability of the majority of the beginning players was lacking. There was no reason for them to have experienced intense physical activity or fighting, and it was easy for them to panic at speedy monsters. Once they learned how to use the sword from the SwordNoobs, hunting was definitely easier. Since the SwordNoobs taught them how to deal with facing different kinds of monsters, players even sought them from other kingdoms as well and waited in line.

Every time the SwordNoobs held a lesson, people gathered in swarms. There was news that 500 to 1,000 beginner players would sit and watch the demonstration of the SwordNoobs.

"The sword is sharp, isn't it? You don't have to be afraid of it, because a properly learned sword will protect you and your teammates."

SwordNoob501's lesson was smooth. He had his own charm because he was nearly the youngest in the dojo, and he knew how to serve his older brothers properly. To adults, he was like a nephew, and to the young students, he was as friendly as an older brother.

"So cool."

"He looks a bit intimidating, but I think he's a good person."

A man looked the coolest when he was devoting himself to his work!

As they committed themselves to swordsmanship while soaked in sweat in the dojo, the masters and disciples were sufficiently attractive. It was just that the women hadn't had a chance to see that.

Working as an instructor in the Orc Village, SwordNoob419 showed a demonstration as he swung his sword. He had to move slowly so that the beginners could follow him.

"Chwiik. I can't do it right, instructor."

The movements weren't easy for the Orc females due to their characteristic sloshing stomach fat and rumps. Whenever that happened, the trainee instructors went right to work.

"This part like this..."

They would lightly grip a waist or hold a wrist and draw out the trajectory of the sword. Naturally occurring skinship! Satisfied smiles appeared on the lips of the SwordNoob disciples who were acting as instructors.

"Instructor, you're so reliable."

"If you have time, could you come hunt with us? Chwi chwit."

They readily accepted requests from female Orcs.

"Of course."

As they fought together, the instructors taught them how to fight.

"I'm Leiachwi. Chwik. Could we learn again next time?"

"I'm SwordNoob419."

Even the friend requests that the SwordNoobs had wanted so

dearly came along smoothly.

"Can we come visit the dojo while you're on break?"

"Let's, have a date at an amusement park."

Due to the aggressive female players, there was even the birth of disciples who went and had their first meetings. Having bravely finished their dates, the disciples spoke of their heroic exploits.

"I went to the amusement park with her, and... huhu. Sahyungs, colleagues, don't be surprised! I grabbed her hand first."

[T/N: Sahyung is the polite way to address an older brother in training.]

"Noob419! You crazy? What'll you do if you get slapped for that..."

"Do you think I would have done that on purpose? We were looking at the fountain when our hands somehow touched, and she stayed still so I held it."

"She stayed still?"

"How should I say it, it was like I got the strange feeling from her that it was okay if I took her hand."

"There's something like that? It's not that you get slapped for just holding a girl's hand?"

"It's like, a feeling you can only know once you've experienced it."

The masters and disciples burned with their dreams of dating as they received the teachings of their dating seniors.

Female players weren't the only ones who learned swordsmanship from them. There were as many men as women who learned how to use the sword from them in masses. Women and men of all ages crowded into the Training Hall. It was because ever since their Sword Mastery skill rose to Advanced, there was a change in their ability as instructors. If they taught while showing swordsmanship demonstrations, the beginners would copy that swordsmanship. Even with that alone, the beginners' Sword Mastery proficiency grew rather quickly.

Beginner players who thought of themselves as disciples flocked over.

"Please teach me, instructor!"

"I want to hunt. Please lead us to the right path."

"At what time is today's lesson?"

*

At the news that the SwordNoobs would raise your Sword Mastery skill, tons of people gathered. Even people who had left the village after 4 weeks and had been hunting returned to the Training Hall. There were also a considerable number of middle-range players who were over level 200. The Training Hall where scarecrows were set up was changed into a learning ground for actual martial arts by the SwordNoobs. It was annoying for the disciples because there were more people, but they received people as their students as long as there was an enthusiasm to learn. Even though the complete beginners had no money, they were taken in as students.

"The admission fee to become an official disciple is 9 pieces of barley bread."

"Ack!"

"You cannot become a true fighter if you do not know hunger. Hunger awakens the fundamental strength of a human being."

The students of the SwordNoobs, men and women of all ages, were spreading throughout the Versailles Continent.

Their robust shoulders and piercing eyes, as well as the tacit conversations they held amongst themselves, circulated through Rosenheim Kingdom and the Yurokina Mountains.

A group with a sword inscribed on the left sides of their chests looked for teammates in the square.

"It's a pleasure."

[T/N: The speech from here on out is in a very manly, archaic style.]

"Long time no see. I believe I saw you once at the Training Hall. Shall we go hunting?"

"Sounds good. But how old are you?"

"Nineteen."

"We're the same age. What is your lineage?"

"My master is SwordNoob385-nim."

"I received the teachings of SwordNoob417-nim, sahyung."

The SwordNoobs were being called teachers of the sword in Rosenheim Kingdom and the Yurokina Mountains.

The SwordNoobs didn't forget their aspiration of hunting the

strongest monsters on the Versailles Continent, either.

"We have honor to upkeep, too. Shouldn't we catch something like a Bone Dragon or Imoogi within one month?"

They occasionally hunted even while instructing, and they also strove to raise their Sword Mastery skill. The Sword Mastery skill could be raised pretty quickly if you fought and overcame monsters stronger than yourself. The SwordNoobs didn't even pay any attention to weak monsters that they could easily kill. Most of their Fame went up purely through hunting. Even a steep cliff was absurdly turned into a flatland if just two SwordNoobs got together.

"Sahyung, I'm bored; would you like to go up here?"

"Looks fun."

The SwordNoobs heightened their concentration as they climbed up the cliffs of the Yurokina Mountains. It was a chance for them to gain the precious experience of going through difficult, dangerous terrain on purpose. SwordNoob4 and SwordNoob5 went up along the ridge of the cliff, where it was difficult to take even one stride.

"Noob5."

"Yes, sahyung?"

"Would we die if we fell from here?"

They were so dizzyingly high up that there were clouds on the mountainside. SwordNoob5 looked down from the ridge and shook his head.

"We would live. We could grab the branches of trees growing out while falling and use the rebound to bounce up. Then should be able to lodge a short sword in the rock and slide down."

"Hm, we wouldn't die from this much after all, eh?"

"Of course."

"I'm bored, so do you want to try jumping down from here?"

They readily said words that would astonish others if they were to hear. Even though their skill proficiency would be reduced, their level would fall, and they could even lose equipment they were wearing on the one in ten thousand chance that they died, they had no qualms. SwordNoob5 took it in as if it was nothing as well.

"That seems like it'd be fun?"

"I'll jump first."

It was a short distance to the edge, but SwordNoob4 leapt off the

ridge at full speed.

They were living as freely as the wind while having tastes of challenges.

*

After entering the underground prison, Weed arrived at the place where the prisoners of the Matallost Church were being held within four days. He would have been able to shorten the time far more if he had focused solely on breaking through. However, he sucked the area dry of monsters as he advanced, so it took longer.

It would have taken a little longer to destroy that many monsters with Weed's damage alone, but Yellow's participation in battle was a big help, too. When they were on the plains, there were many times when Weed mounted him and used him mostly like a horse because it was the innocent Yellowy. If he fought while speeding about like a horse, that alone would raise EXP and running proficiency. In a dungeon where there wasn't much space to run, Weed used Yellowy mostly for gathering japtem. But this time, Yellowy found a valuable use for himself. He would unleash a powerful kick with his hind legs on the Dark Knights that Hwaryeong had put to sleep with Seduction Dance.

A bull's back kick!

When he kicked them powerfully with his tremendous strength, the Dark Knights went flying brutally. It was as good as a Sword

Kaiser attack. Having received an enormous blow, it was powerful enough to make the Dark Knights die in an instant if Da'in and Hwaryeong just stabbed with a cudgel or shortsword. As the girls started taking care of the Heretic Hunters, Disciples, and other monsters with Yellowy, their hunting efficiency improved even more.

Mooooooooo!

Like a fighting bull, Yellowy savored his victory whenever he struck monsters with his hind legs.

"Well done, Yellowy."

When Da'in stroked his head, Yellowy enjoyed it while slapping his short tail. Weed had spoken a little of his sad woes regarding Da'in, but Yellowy didn't pay any attention to that and got along well with Da'in. There wasn't a proverb saying that speaking into a cow's ear was like knocking at a deaf man's door for nothing.

Weed briefly assessed that the battle speed had become faster.

"He's finally worth the cost of his grass." Weed was infinitely stingy with his praise! Since Yellowy was earnestly carrying around a bag and even taking part in battle, even slightly positive words came from Weed. "What's the market price of Korean cows these days? Before a person who'll buy meat at a high price shows up, it'll be better not to sell him."

Breaking through the underground prison! It was a very large labyrinth, but Weed didn't even struggle in the middle of it. It was a dungeon that others had already explored, so he had determined the overall path through Dirtman and had run over with precision.

The priests of the Matallost Church were emaciated and wearing robes black with dirt.

"Who are you?"

"I defeated the Embinyu Church and came to bring you back." Weed showed them a relic of the Matallost Church. Only then did the priests believe him.

"Why have you come only now to save us?"

"Dang, I thought us old guys would be locked up here forever and just die."

They were actually irritated that he hadn't saved them quickly. If you didn't go through a quest earnestly, these kinds of complaints would come up.

Weed also had much to complain about. 'I came here as fast as I could after making sculptures, selling japtem, and selling off the quest. I did the best that I could.'

He had pride that allowed him to justify himself in any situation! Other players would lack the patience and could've even gotten

angry at the old priests for being so unscrupulous, but Weed wasn't like that.

"I apologize. It was because I was trying to convey you safely, as remnants of the Embinyu Church may have been hiding. For now, please come out with us." Since the old priests were also his clients, he didn't forget to put on a friendly smile.

"In any case, thank you for coming to rescue us."

The priests rose from their seats. Weed was able to easily release them from the shackle-like apparatuses on their ankles even though he wasn't a Thief. He used his Blacksmithing skill to get rid of them altogether. There was no way he would miss out on a chance to get good iron material.

"Please release us, too!"

Many other prisoners were tied up in the place where the priests of the Matallost Church had been held. There were 35 people from Dwarf, Elf, Barbarian, and hunter races who were scattered in the North on a small scale. Weed released all of them as well.

At around that time, the people who had received the Rescue the Prisoners of the Matallost Church quest and had been hunting in the area gathered.

"What, he's here already?"

"How did he come so quickly?"

The participants of the quest that had dumbfounded them hadn't thought he would arrive so quickly, even if he was Weed.

It was now time to leave the underground prison. The path out of the prison wasn't very difficult-- they were able to leave quickly because the spectators who had followed Weed in were hunting in the important points of the underground prison and the players who were participating in the quest cleaned up the monsters.

"We give you our thanks for saving us."

"I simply did what I had to do."

"There is something we must do as soon as possible, so would you wait for a moment?"

"Yes. If it is a righteous deed, I will wait however long it takes."

Under the watchful gaze of Weed and the quest participants, the Matallost Church's priests went to the temple, cleaned, and lit torches. Then they performed a ritual that appeased the vengeful spirits of the River of Lamentation.

SWOOSH!

Then the stagnant and murky waters of the River of Lamentation

flowed smoothly downstream.

Ding!

Rescue the Prisoners of the Matallost Church

The River of Lamentation has been revived.

The river that flows with the tears of the souls who suffered unfair deaths!

The priests of the Matallost Church will repent their errors that sprung from greed and resume the work of guiding souls.

- Contribution to the Matallost Church has increased by 2,700.
- Level has increased.
- With the purification of the River of Lamentation, Fame has increased by 320.
- Faith has increased by 37.
- Luck has increased by 4.

It was quite a considerable compensation. The reward was from the Matallost Church that guided with death becoming active again.

Weed hadn't explored the underground prison to save the prisoners. He had left most of the annoying tasks to other players, but even so, his level went up by 1.

Yurin, Da'in, and the other players went up 10 to 20 levels thanks to the huge EXP they earned as a reward.

"Yahoo!"

"This quest is the best!"

To those who had participated, it was a quest that had given them a big reward that was tough to swap with any kind of treasure.

Weed didn't get butthurt over the level ups of the others. Naturally, you would get stronger if your level went up. However, stats or skill proficiency were more important than that. If you only raised your level quickly, then in the end, your stats would fall short of your raised level. That would make your growth lag, so it was actually faster to backtrack quite a bit.

As the change from the completion of the quest, the

contaminated River of Lamentation that had been murky with yellowness slowly became clearer.

- As the River of Lamentation has gradually come to perform its role, the seed of unrest in the Versailles Continent has decreased.

Health will decline due to death and the chance of misfortune decreases by 13%. When raising Undeads, Necromancers will need a little more Mana.

The old mercenary Smith spoke heavily. "So this is what happened. The Matallost Church... I thought it was a church that had only harmed the Versailles Continent..."

Ding!

Old Smith's Second Curiosity Completed

The old drunkard Smith has come to know the truth about the Count Savoid's true identity and the Matallost Church.

The very curious old mercenary was able to resolve one of the not-quite-right memories of his past.

- Fame has increased by 260.

- The prerequisites for the Agent of the Niflheim Empire quest have been completed.

The A-rank difficulty quest was resolved. He had taken Smith and had proceeded with the River of Lamentation purification and the fight with the pursuers of the Embinyu Church. It wasn't just the resolution of Smith's curiosity about Count Savoid; it had to be regarded as the resolution of a part of the entire chain quest as well.

The old Mercenary Smith said, "Then come anytime to the tavern where I was. Since it's you who gave me lots of alcohol, I should be able to buy you a drink. I know quite a lot, so ask if there's anything you're curious about anytime."

That was the poor Mercenary Smith's absurdly scanty reward. How much wine and brandy had he gulped up until now... However, Weed didn't argue. He had received many unreasonable quests because of his uncontrollably high Fame. There were times when the reward was big, but there were also times when it was small.

He tried to be understanding with an open mind. 'Looks like I'll have a nightmare tonight.'

In exchange, he resolved to write a ton of insults about Smith in his journal.

"I gained many experiences because I was able to do this with you, elder. It is a pity that we cannot travel the Versailles Continent together anymore."

The Mercenary Smith laughed, revealing the gaps in his sparse teeth. "It's time for the old me to return to the tavern. It's enough that I did adventures when I was young. Even if I do have a curiosity, I don't think I'll be able to move in person anymore. That's right, I shouldn't need my mercenary card anymore, either. I'll give it to you."

- You have acquired an S-rank Mercenary Card of the Proam Alliance Guild.

Weed wasn't one to refuse a gift or bribe given to him.

"Identify!"

Proam Alliance Guild Mercenary Card:

Durability: 30/30.

A mercenary card made with bronze.

Grade: S

Option: Can carry out all Mercenary guild quests as desired. Can receive 200% more for request fees.

It was a mercenary card, which could be called a precious treasure for Mercenaries; even if they weren't Mercenaries, many people used the Mercenary guild to receive quests.

'It should be good if I sell it off.'

Considering the scarcity of mercenary cards on top of that, he would be able to get an enormous price for it. He could tell from the just fact that the players who had gone through the Rescue the Prisoners of the Matallost Church quest with him were all astir over it.

The old Mercenary Smith gave him another gift. "Take this as well."

Weed took it as he was told again.

It was an antique seal that had a stamp made of jade and a golden dragon crafted with gold that could be used as a handle. A very old item, its color wasn't like that of goods these days. A part of the jade stamp was also broken.

"Identify!"

Unknown Seal:

Durability 3/20.

This is a very precious object made by an extremely exceptional sculptor.

It is an item that the old Mercenary Smith didn't sell despite his alcohol tabs that accumulated.

Having gone through war and a long period of time, there is slight damage to it.

Option: Grants special good luck.

Weed raised his head. It occurred to him that this was a remarkable item.

"What is this?"

"It's something I picked up in Count Savoid's mansion, back in my Mercenary days. I've been treasuring this seal because it seemed like good luck was coming my way after getting it, but... you can use it now."

"I will receive it gratefully."

Weed put the seal into his pocket.

Ding!

- You have obtained an imperial treasure of the Niflheim Empire.

It was as he expected beforehand. 'Looks like the Agent of the Niflheim Empire quest will happen with this.'

If he wanted to find out the exact origins of the item, he needed a slightly more powerful identification.

'There's something I have to take care of first.'

Weed looked around. There were many players who were fascinated while watching the transformation of the River of Lamentation. Since it would cause a historical change on the Versailles Continent, it also wasn't hard to see someone busily sending a whisper.

"My level went up by 4. I got a lot of Fame, too."

"Really? Damn. I should've taken the quest too. I heard the hunting in the underground prison was pretty good?"

He could also see the players who had gotten the Rescue the Prisoners of the Matallost Church quest being happy.

Weed spoke to them. "Everyone."

"...?"

"The quest did not end with the rescue of the Matallost Church prisoners."

"It was a chain quest?"

"Then will you share another quest?"

Like a generous man from the countryside, Weed put a big smile on his face as he nodded. "Of course. It's a quest we started together, so shouldn't we see it to the end together?"

Matallost Church's chain quest!

The priests of the Matallost Church were walking towards Weed.

"Though we have been relieved of a great anxiety, there are too many things that must still be done. We also have to pick out new devotees in order to right the church..."

"I get the anxious feeling that there are still those who follow the Embinyu Church in this area."

The Destruction of the Embinyu Church 11th Sect and the Matallost Church's Long-Cherished Wish requests were still left.

'The remnants of the Embinyu-- there ought to be quite a powerful group left over, so they'll probably have to be completely defeated. And for the Matallost Church's Long-Cherished Wish, they'll likely want to take in a lot of devotees and prosper as much as any other church.'

He could roughly tell what kind of requests were left from their names alone.

It wasn't bad for Morata, either. The Matallost Church was a militant group with considerable holy power! With the heal, blessing, and holy offensive magic they had shown when escaping from the underground prison, there would be quite a lot of people who would want to become devotees. If he allowed beginners to use the movement portal to the River of Lamentation as well, the revival of the Matallost Church would be good for Morata, at least! Even if it was a chain quest, the sweetness of the quest had been sucked dry after destroying the Embinyu Fortress and even rescuing the Matallost Church prisoners. Weed planned on sharing the quests to the others here instead of fulfilling them himself.

"WOAH!"

"The Lord of Morata, Wargod Weed will share the chained quest."

"Hooray for Morata's Lord!"

The people who had been unable to hide their jealousy while

looking at the River of Lamentation gathered quickly.

"Please share it with me!"

"Me! Me first!"

They were like baby chicks who were opening their beaks to receive a worm that the momma bird had caught!

Weed spoke. "However, a fixed participation fee of 998 Gold..."

"..."

"..."

There was a calm silence.

Weed's words just spread far and wide. "This is a chance that comes few and far in between. I will cut 30 Gold for those who have brought at least 2 friends or teammates. If at least 7 people apply, I will even give a group discount."

This was unmistakably a rip off.

Like making excessive profits at a beach in the summer holiday season, it was a rip off they really couldn't refuse!

Only Hwaryeong was smiling prettily as she rejoiced. "How awesome! Weed-nim is even sharing a quest that he got with difficulty to others; he is kind to a fault."

Chapter 10: III-Fated Relationship With Bardray

Destruction of the Embinyu Church 11th Sect was a B-rank quest.

"Woaah!"

"Are we gonna fight the Embinyu Church's fighting force?"

"Won't it be too dangerous?"

"Seems really fun."

Weed sold off the quest and made a whopping 130,000 Gold. He sold to the people who got word from Morata and came late until evening. An exhaustive cash business!

Yellow swayed his pendulous rump happily.

Mooooooooooooooooo!

If his Master was rich, Yellowy hoped that Weed would allow him to chew a stalk of mugwort.

[T/N: Mugwort is an herb used as an ingredient in many dishes.]

However, Weed was heartless. "Even barley bread is expensive, so you'd only be able to pick up some crumbs on a holiday or something... but mugwort? I can't afford to give it to you. I'll mix it with your meat later. Korean cow with mugwort, veggie bibimbap!"

Yellow blinked his big eyes sorrowfully, but that happened every day. Even so, Weed always prepared hay for him, and he got fed herbs from Yurin or Hwaryeong, too. He had no other complaint, but purposefully acted limp, as if he was hungry and had no strength from hunger. He'd been forced to do so much work with his robust physique and strength right after gaining life. Even Yellowy was gaining wisdom about life.

"Looks like it's time to identify this now."

Weed pulled out the seal he had received from Mercenary Smith. He could basically tell its use from the appearance. It was probably a seal that verified Lords or Nobles as themselves, like Jorudia's Signet. Weed rubbed the dragon part as he examined the unique points of the sculpture.

"Identify!"

Unknown Emperor's Royal Seal

Durability 3/20.

A precious royal seal that has weathered the history of the Versailles Continent.

It was made by a sculptor whose limit of skill is hard to estimate.

It is damaged and not in perfect condition.

Artistic Value: 39,600

Options: Dignity +60. Charisma +25.

50% resistance to all magic harmful to the owner's body.

Can intimidate nobles and knights.

Ding!

For examining the Unknown Emperor's Royal Seal in detail, Art stat has risen by 49.

Weed was also a skilled Sculptor who had made many Masterpieces and Magnum Opuses. Every time a sculpture of his was completed, it noisily shook the Versailles Continent.

"Cough!"

A work so incredible that it could even make such a Weed go into convulsions!

The broad stamp made of jade and the golden dragon that looked like it was flying in the sky possessed liveliness and beauty.

"It's old... and feels worn because it's been touched very much, but it's an extremely outstanding work."

The parts that hands could reach were severely grimy, and much of the pattern had also disappeared. With the long passage of time, its natural dignity had grown.

Jade and gold. The seal had been made with a perfect understanding of the characteristics of the material.

The parts that weren't damaged were detailed and made with a level of skill that even Weed wouldn't have been able to achieve. It looked like a dirty golden dragon from afar, but up close, it felt as if it would come to life and move at any moment.

"I knew it wasn't a normal work, but who could really make such a sculpture?"

There was one person who vaguely came to mind.

If it was an emperor's royal seal, then it didn't need to be said

more than once that it would be treasured preciously. Even so, the royal seal had endured so much time that it had become this worn.

A video of some kind began to play for Weed-- it was a memory kept within the sculpture.

An old man wearing ordinary cloth attire was sculpting.

In a huge royal palace, knights and magicians were lying prostrate with extreme politeness.

Slice, slice.

The form of a dragon was being made under the old man's sculpting knife. The knife moved slowly, as if time itself was holding its breath.

He shaved the places needing to be shaved and added to the places needing to be added. Only normal movements of the hand could be seen, but the golden dragon that was being created possessed such nobility that one could not tear their eyes away from it.

Whenever the sculpting knife moved, there was a worry that he might possibly make a mistake that would ruin this great work. However, when the sculpting knife sliced past, the figure was transforming into statue steadily nearing completion with such surety that the nervousness was laughable.

A treasure! A golden dragon and stamp that seemed as if they would heighten even his dignity with their radiant beauty!

It was the birth of the royal seal.

"May this be the item that symbolizes me," declared the old man who made the seal.

The knights and magicians then cried out. "We accept the will of His Majesty!"

It didn't end there. There were countless sculptures across the royal palace! They were similar to the humans, but the sculptures with superior physical conditions, the animal sculptures, the bird sculptures, and sculptures that looked like monsters all opened their mouths at the same time.

"We accept the will of our Master!"

*

SwordNoob let out a deep sigh.

"I'm really too old. Even meeting a woman is difficult because I'm old."

The instructors and disciples were meeting Orcs, Dark Elves, or

Humans and more or less getting along. They made girlfriends and also hunted in parties.

"I heard even SwordNoob16 held hands with his girlfriend."

"When?"

"Within thirty-seven days, apparently."

"Woah, that's fast! Is it okay to progress so quickly?"

"The truly fast one is someone else. SwordNoob401 already went arm-in-arm to the movie theatre."

"Damn, all the way to the movie theatre! He's a fellow who unusually disliked things like movies, isn't he. Didn't he fall asleep snoring while watching the movie?"

"I'm told he watched an action movie. After the movie ended, he showed his girlfriend brick smashing and a two-tiered roundhouse kick and she liked it, calling him reliable."

The legend-like love stories that came from among the disciples gave them hope, though there were also many cases where couples didn't meet very many times and dropped contact, friend registration was cancelled, or were sent a text that said sorry.

"Phew, those things all happen when you're young."

SwordNoob envied the passion of the disciples. If he had just been at the age of the instructors or so, he would've been able to meet a woman somehow. After all, becoming an oppa from a mister took no time at all these days.

[T/N: Oppa is an informal way to call an older male, used for both familial and external relationships. "Oppa" indicates a lot more closeness than "mister."]

However, because SwordNoob was a seasoned middle-aged man, he was very awkward with young girls and women. Granted, his fighting ability was fearsome, so despite being only in the late 200s for level, he was welcome in any party. If SwordNoob just went to the square, everyone tried to recruit him.

Only, it was just that the atmosphere was difficult in the hunting ground.

"Um, SwordNoob-nim."

"..."

They would regularly use honorifics with him. The young and youthful party members used informal speech with each other and got along intimately, but it wasn't easy for SwordNoob to fit in with them. SwordNoob tried to find a woman in the same age group as him.

"It shouldn't be hard since all kinds of people gather in the world of Royal Road."

There were many in their early 30s or 40s, of course. They were very commonly seen in a city or village. If the men fished, the ones that looked like their wives would make spicy seafood stew for them.

"Honey, please eat some spicy stew before continuing."

It was a very heartwarming sight.

There were also cases where they set up a shop and conducted business, but their young children would occasionally come to buy a weapon, armor, or miscellania.

"Son, can you buy arrows from us for 20 Gold?"

"Mom, what kind of harsh joke is that?"

"Honey, our son says he's leaving the house."

"Alright. As his parents, it's probably our duty to at least call over a mover, right?"

There were affectionate scenes of children getting daringly ripped off by their parents.

SwordNoob went around cities and towns as he roamed. He massacred monsters that came at him in the wilderness, and also leapt into nests of monsters whilst holding one sword.

"When I was young, I did things like this so often."

He held a sword in his mouth and leapt into the river water. When he got hungry, he skewered fish in a deep part of the clear river. It was truly difficult to overcome the water's flow and strength and swing his sword to catch fish. However, SwordNoob actually succeeded easily. That was because he didn't push forcefully, but followed the current's flow to catch fish.

Ding!

Sword Mastery skill proficiency has improved.

His Sword Mastery skill went up even while catching fish. They weren't high leveled monsters, but it seemed he could gain Sword Mastery as a characteristic of the location. Like Sculpting, the Sword Mastery skill grew on diverse experiences.

"While I'm like this..."

SwordNoob floated to the top of the water, took in a big breath, and went into the river again.

Swiiiiisshh!

The sword he swung in a single breath slid past the body of a fish.

Swordsmanship that was thinly slicing sashimi!

The fish was become sashimi while blinking its eyes, alive. And while underwater, as well!

Sorriness filled SwordNoob's eyes. 'Looks like I can't do this because it's cruel.'

It had been a long time since he had properly shown off his swordsmanship skills. After that time when life and death had been separated by a second, he had never done his best. Even Royal Road was simply entertainment. It was so that he could try testing his still-honed swordsmanship, but he was sorry for the fish. SwordNoob almost never even hunted herbivores like rabbits, squirrels, or deer in the Versailles Continent, either.

'Something I can't even eat... there's no need to take their lives pointlessly.'

Feeling sorry, SwordNoob wrapped the fish in bandages. They were still alive, due to his marvelous swordsmanship.

"Gasp!"

Then he rose to the top of the water and moved downstream. It wasn't that he determined his destination, he was just wandering randomly.

There were people downstream the river. He heard a conversation of a middle-aged man raising a fishing pole and his wife.

"D-dear."

"Hm?"

"We just... caught sashimi!"

A live catfish with its bandages almost fallen off had bitten their fishing pole's bait and was coming up.

"The world is truly difficult."

SwordNoob sat down under a large old tree.

His Sword Mastery skill was Advanced level 6 at 89%. With growth at an unbelievable speed, it was at a stage where Master level of Sword Mastery was not far. But what worth was there in raising his level and polishing his Sword Mastery skill?

"This is the vice of an old dog. Might there not be a middle-aged

woman wandering around alone?"

Even trying to start a conversation with pretended friendliness with a woman he'd never seen before was awkward. A husband coming to take her away while he was observing and agonizing over whether it was fine to talk to her had happened to him a couple times, so he didn't even have the will to try anymore.

When SwordNoob was condemning himself, a girl who looked to be in her late teens approached him.

"Mister, what are you doing here?"

"..."

SwordNoob didn't reply and flicked his hand as if to shoo her away. Looking like a player, the human girl was considerably cute and pretty.

'She'll probably just ask me about the hunting ground.'

Normally he would answer her kindly. It wasn't because he wanted to do something bad to the adorable and young girl, but so that he could give her at least a little help.

'Zephyr also gave advice. It's important to have lots of conversations with women.'

Actually, a girl starting a conversation with him only numbered a few times in SwordNoob's life. He was big, so his appearance was one that women couldn't easily approach. But more than that, his eyes and spirit were on a different level from normal people, so even gangsters avoided him.

Right now, he wanted to be alone because he felt like wanting to quit it all. However, the girl sat down in front of SwordNoob with no intention of leaving.

"Hey mister, are you alone?"

SwordNoob only slightly nodded his head. 'Seeing as she's intentionally asking on, is she a merchant who's trying to sell something? Or does she want help? Guess I should give her a roughly useful weapon if I've got one left.'

The girl hesitated for a moment before asking again. "Would you like to hunt with us?"

At the words that differed from his expectations, SwordNoob was a little curious. "Are you inviting me to your party right now?"

Towards his disciples, he stuck to a short and stern way of talking. He tried not to alarm the girl, but his voice was even more low and grave because he didn't have much experience with talking to the opposite sex.

Spurred on by his not-adverse reaction, the girl's voice gained

strength. "Let's hunt together, okay?"

"Maybe. It's a pain... if you'd like a hunting ground recommendation, I can do that much for you."

"We came all the way here from Rosenheim Kingdom. It's a little too much for us to hunt on our own, you see."

"Huh." In the end, SwordNoob couldn't refuse this cute girl's request and rose from his seat. 'Alright. I've got nothing else to do, so it won't be bad to hunt with them for a bit.'

Even if the girl had come acting friendly on purpose because she wanted help, he planned to let that much go.

SwordNoob asked without much thought, "Your other companions are?"

"There are two people, my mom and youngest aunt. Mom's profession is Elementalist and Aunt's profession is Summoner."

Women often picked those professions because the spirits or summoned creatures were cute.

'Elementalist, Summoner. And is this child a Magician? I guess it would be hard for the three of them to hunt.'

Even as they walked to the party, the girl kept chattering. "Dad is

busy from work, so he can't play with us. My youngest aunt still doesn't have a boyfriend from graduating from college and studying abroad." For some reason, the girl was describing the youngest aunt in detail. "She's an accountant. She's thirty-two this year, but she's never dated 'cause she drowned herself in studying. She's pretty, skinny, and also has a good personality. There's a big age gap between her and my mom, so she also played with me like a sister since I was young."

"I see."

"But her standards are high, so... she went on a few blind dates, but she said she didn't even see most men as men and left right away."

"Her standards must be high."

SwordNoob listened to her words impassively. Then they reached the location of the girl's party. There was a calm-looking, middle-aged woman with a big dog-like spirit, and a lady with a graceful face in her early 30s.

The girl grinned as she said, "My aunt likes macho men. She also likes martial arts."

"...!"

*

The Assassin Steer was in charge of information gathering for the Hermes Guild. Using contact groups spread extensively, his task was to keep an eye on the trends of the Versailles Continent.

"There's a high possibility that the Lord of the North's Morata is Wargod Weed..."

Steer considered this a matter that needed to be reported to his superior.

Bardray was currently in the Ziubellin Dungeon of Haven Kingdom. It was not an exaggeration to say that the hunting ground poured out monsters. Not only in Haven Kingdom, but no matter where you went on the Versailles Continent, it was among the worst hunting grounds for players. Turning off his whispers and even the guild chatting window, Bardray had declared that he wouldn't come out before he hunted the formidable sorcerer named Ziubellin.

"What should we we do, Steer-nim?" asked his subordinate in information.

Bardray spent most of his time inside dungeons with his teammates. Nobody knew when their hunt would end.

Steer sighed. "We have no choice but go ourselves. Send a request to the guild corps. We'll enter the dungeon in order to meet guild master Bardray-nim."

Steer and 30 members of the Hermes Guild entered the dungeon. They were all over level 360, but the level of the monsters was too high in Ziubellin Dungeon, so they couldn't help but shrink back. After many complications, they finally reached the place where Bardray was at.

Bardray was resting and maintaining his weapons with his 12 Elite Guard. Monster corpses were lying around the place where they were resting, exuding a foul smell.

"Bardray-nim."

"For what matter did you come all the way here, Steer?"

"There is something I must report."

Bardray looked interested. As befitting of him, who dominated as the strongest in the Versailles Continent and was completely equipped with ultimate items, he had overflowing composure.

"It's about Wargod Weed."

"Weed, you say..."

Bardray nodded his head. "If it's about him, then it would be worthwhile for you to come find me all the way here."

"Weed's identity has been exposed. I believe he is the Lord of Morata. Though of course, there are still many parts about him that I still cannot understand."

"And those are?"

"It's estimated that he's a player who started in Rosenheim Kingdom, but it's that it hasn't even been a year and six months since he started Royal Road. That doesn't make much sense. And the more shocking thing is that he is sculpting as a side job."

"Side job?"

"Considering his fighting ability, you'd think that he wasn't actually a Sculptor. Even so, he made a Magnum Opus with the sculpting he did as a hobby, and he's good enough to shake the continent."

He had judged that the Pyramid, Light Tower, and the Goddess Statue were sculptures made as a hobby!

"Ohh, isn't that amazing?"

"Sculpting was a side job? Yikes! I was completely in awe after seeing a sculpture made by him."

Bardray's teammates all said a few words each.

"Come to think of it, if it's Weed, we could even call him our junior."

"Ah, in the Continent of Magic?"

"Since he became the best about 6 months after we left, y'know."

"We were once the best in the Continent of Magic. And for quite a long time, too."

The Elite Guard conversed gladly. They had known each other since the Continent of Magic. They had been noble lords ruling over famous castles in the Continent of Magic! Bardray had also been the best lord in the Continent of Magic.

"I do miss those times."

"Well. I don't really wanna go back; I don't want to lose the merit of this Versailles Continent's clear air and being able to fight while directly moving your body."

"I don't want to go back either, but... they were still really fun times."

The castle lords who gone through thick and thin with small wars and dispute heard of the creation of Royal Road and gathered in one spot. The popularity of Continent of Magic had passed its peak and was obviously in decline. As rulers of one region, they felt that very distinctly. An enormous amount of items and gold

actually funneled to the castle lords. They earned sums that normal employees wouldn't even be able to imagine. Most of the lords were Dark Gamers who were raising their profits while maintaining their organization. They came to a conclusion through a meeting.

They would move to Royal Road.

The lords took their forces directly into Royal Road. That was the inside story of the birth of Hermes Guild.

"Weed became extremely famous after we left."

"He conquered quests and dungeons that even we gave up on, right? You don't know how surprised I was after hearing the news that he'd even gotten through Ivan Porte Island's labyrinth."

"He's a truly incredible player. Though of course, if Bardray had stayed in the Continent of Magic, he wouldn't have given up his spot so easily."

Bardray only smiled as he listened to the conversation of the Elite Guard.

The system of command that accompanied Hermes Guild's pecking order was strict, but it didn't apply to the Elite Guard. Bardray and the former castle lords, the Elite Guard, were the founding members of the Hermes Guild. Through their agreement, they decided that the very strongest among them would be the

leader and govern the others. Their law was that if someone among the Elite Guard became stronger than Bardray at any time, they would then become the leader.

As such, the leader of Hermes Guild had changed a few times in the early stages of Royal Road. For both Bardray and the Elite Guard, it became an opportunity to become stronger faster through well-intentioned competition. Of course, there were also castle lords who completely fell behind during the competition. In Royal Road, you must directly move your body and possess very fast judgement and keen senses. The lords who became stragglers maintained the influence of the guild through deputies.

Hermes Guild was the best guild that originated from the Continent of Magic. They were also acquiring information about Weed through various pathways.

"The Continent of Magic and Weed..."

Bardray's face became lost in thought. Such an expression could not be found on him often.

"Steer."

"Yes, Leader-nim."

"Continue keeping an eye on the North."

"Understood."

"But there is no need to make it a bigger deal than necessary."

"That means--?" Steer's head jerked up.

Hermes Guild normally gruesomely crushed any opponents who showed even a little speck of defiance. They dispatched assassins to either kill or bribe the key people. They also didn't hesitate to commit cruel acts, like sending out the battle forces and setting a village or castle on fire.

"There's no need. Even before we step forward, he'll be caught and eaten by hyenas seeking prey first."

Surtr thought for a moment and nodded. "You're right, Leader-nim. The Resurrection Army led by Daymond will also go North soon."

The Resurrection Army's force was greatly weakened. They weren't able to take Odin Fortress in the end and decided to retreat; their territory in the Central Continent was rapidly shrinking. The Resurrection Army wasn't able to hold out in the Central Continent any longer. There was no strong kingdom in the North yet, so they were withdrawing to aim for there instead. They also had a hostile relationship with Weed, because through the quest of the Matallost Church, it was he who achieved the great service that stopped the Resurrection Army.

Bardray said, "Weed is indeed famous. However, once he suffers a defeat, his fame will disappear as quickly as it came. Ruin takes but

a moment."

The increase in skill and level through hunting, as well as power expansion! Bardray thought of those as the only things that should be shown in quests and broadcast appearances. That was because a high level and power made other players fearful and submissive to his commands.

After finishing the hunt with the Elite Guard, Bardray became deep in thought about the subject during his break time.

"The Continent of Magic, hm."

He had left the Continent of Magic with the lords who were of the same mind as him. They had to make their characters and prepare in advance while acquiring information about Royal Road early on. However, sometimes he secretly logged into the Continent of Magic as a pastime. It wasn't hard, since his character was still right there.

The Continent of Magic was the game that he had dedicated his youth to. It was on the decline, but he was deeply fond of it, so he couldn't quit. Then he encountered rumors about Weed in the game, a rumor that he had ascended to the position of the strongest after Bardray left.

"The God of War Weed. That Weed is currently the best on the Continent of Magic."

"Is he just having an easy time 'cause Bardray isn't logging in?"

"It's the opposite. We've got to see him as being way more outstanding than Bardray. Not only did he single-handedly catch a dragon that Bardray couldn't hunt, but he also explores dungeons alone."

"You mean by himself without anyone's help?"

"It's something Bardray could never have done."

Bardray's pride was wounded. He let it pass since he wasn't one to just believe a rumor, but it still felt nasty. And then, not long afterwards, he met Weed while hunting alone in a dungeon, like a joke of fate. When Bardray saw his equipment and name, he had a hunch that it was the Weed of the rumors.

In the Continent of Magic, speaking had to be done by typing on a keyboard.

"Are you We—"

Even before Bardray finished typing his question of whether he was Weed or not, his opponent activated an attack skill. Because it was Weed, who attacked ruthlessly if he met someone in a dungeon!

Bardray had to hastily use defensive skills and flee. He was barely able to escape with only about 300 Health left.

That was a day of shame that could absolutely never be washed away for Bardray, who had reigned as the strongest.

After fully recovering his Health and Mana and even cleaning his best equipment, Bardray challenged Weed again.

"I am Bardray. Weed, I shall cut your throat."

He quickly inserted the speech he had typed up beforehand, but there was no reaction from his opponent. That was because he didn't know who Bardray was, nor did he even care.

Weed just activated an attack skill, as per usual.

In the fight that started in that manner, Bardray felt a wall he couldn't put into words. It felt like facing a fortress that was so tall and thick that the current him would never be able to defeat.

Weed slipped past all the chain skills he used. There wasn't a big difference between their equipment and level, but the skill management decided it. No matter what kind of attack Bardray tried, he responded rapidly and unleashed a counter attack. Amidst despair that was like facing a boundless ocean, Bardray experienced defeat.

Bardray couldn't accept this fact.

His pride as the strongest on the Continent of Magic had been shattered. Even though he'd taken a brief break, with his history in the Continent of Magic, he had thought that there was no way he could lose.

Bardray secretly chased Weed and fought him again five times.

But the result was the same every time. Even when he changed his skill management or fighting method, he was destroyed so very easily.

Weed's level gradually went up, and his equipment was better every time they met, even though hunting monsters with severe differences in level gave you almost no EXP.

He surpassed the level that Bardray had considered the limit and pioneered hunting grounds on his own to achieve the ultimate stage.

"I will completely stamp you down. Not just you, but everyone you know as well, so that you can't even get a foothold again in the Versailles Continent!"

Book 18: War Negotiations

Chapter 1: Ahreupen Empire's Sealed Memories

“Ahreupen’s seal!” Weed obtained the seal that the Ahreupen Emperor, one of the master sculptors, had created as a reward for the quest. The first emperor to create a unified empire in the Continent of Versailles.

The Seal of the Ahreupen Empire!

Weed wiped away the small tears in his eyes. Rather than the tears that he usually had when he was yawning, these were tears of joy.

“They say heaven helps those who help themselves. The words hold true to their meaning. I did not think I would get a reward this good.”

It was one of the few century old antiques to have appeared from the Continent of Versailles.

The Ahreupen Imperial Seal had more than one option on it, it was a coveted item that anyone would want to get their hands on.

“It took so much work and its still not in a complete state...”

As of now, the sculpture was at least a hundred times more

valuable than jewelry.

Everyone wanted sacred items that had magical properties. He managed to repair the Ahreupen Seal to a nearly perfect condition so now its true power will be revealed.

Ttiring!

- The Ahreupen Empire appreciated buildings from the Classical Era. As a sculptor and the owner of this province, you can now construct buildings from the Classical Era. Buildings from the Classical Era were known to be very solemn and elegant, as well as big enough to accommodate large populations. The construction costs are very high but they give an effect of increasing fertility.

-You can now build special buildings.

Imperial Palace of the Ahreupen Empire At least 8 million gold in construction costs.

Only one can be constructed on the entire continent.

Political influence extends to the whole continent.

Loyalty and morale of knights will soar.

Reduces the likelihood of betrayal from the nobility.

It has a lot of maids.

You will need a very large territory to construct.

If the Imperial Palace is constructed on farmland, then discontent from the civilians will increase dramatically.

Has a special effect over the city:

Increases the likelihood of wandering knights to pledge their

loyalty.

Diplomatic effects.

He had gotten the skill Sculptural Memories from the quest. He could see the historical buildings of the Classical Era and build them. He was not expecting such a reward. Weed did not think about building this at all. It even had a cost to hire workers to pull weeds out of the castle gardens.

Large Colosseum At least 300 thousand gold in construction costs.

A place for gladiators.

Watching the fierce battles will relieve the stress of the citizens.

Admission will increase the city's revenue.

The Lord's reputation will increase when built.

The Colosseum will create a lot of brave gladiators.

Special Effects:

Gladiators will come to test their strength.

Rapidly increase the training of soldiers.

Rock Fort At least 500 thousand gold in construction costs.

Can serve as a citadel for the city.

Can be build in mountains and high cliffs.

Has essential shops and housing for soldiers.

Depending on the terrain, a number of blessings can be granted and it can be used as an outpost against monster raids.

The number of quests available to fight against monsters increase significantly and materials gathered from monsters will become available on the market.

If the fort falls, then the Lord's reliability to provide the residents safety drops sharply.

Special Effects:

Expansion of territory.

Special Ahreupen Grainery. At least 40 thousand gold in construction costs.

This is a very special building.

A very large building towering towards the sky!

The Ahreupen Empire created multiple layers inside the grainery to store large amounts of grain.

Can store large amounts of grain, alcohol, and fruit underground for very long periods of time.

Reduces the number of starving residents and stabilizes the price of food.

Residents will not need to worry about food and children like to look at the large granaries.

When the continent was united under the Ahreupen Empire, this was the most essential building for safety, fertility, and the economy.

City wide festivals can be triggered.

Special Effects:

Neighboring residents will immigrate because they will not need to worry about starving.

Mysterious Fairy Pond Construction Cost: 1000 gold

A small, quiet natural ponds with clear water is a favorite for Fairies. It is difficult to find a place to build it. Once the pond is built, then fairies will come to play around. In most cases the fairies will not pull malicious pranks. The Fairy Queen may present unexpected gifts.

Special Effects:

Increase nature affinity and mysterious events may occur.

Ahreupen HousesConstruction Costs: 2000 gold.

A four story building made out of stone. Sturdy and does not break easily. These middle class houses can house many generations of residents together. It will become more popular if built next to a lake or a river. Increases public security and the satisfaction of the residents.

Special Effects:

Increase the resistance to natural disaster and reduces damaging to the structure.

Sculptor's Cave ComplexAt least 30 thousand gold in construction costs.

A place for sculptors to gather and learn new sculpting techniques.

Helps to develops the city's culture.

Castle RuinsAt least 70 thousand in construction costs.

To build this structure the city's culture, art, and technology must be evenly developed.

A special building from the Ahreupen Empire that spirits live in.

Spirits like to play tricks on young children.

Spirits can not be caught.

Spirits reduce the number of children attacked by monsters.

This building increases the development of magic.

Ahruepen Merchant CenterAt least 25 thousand gold to construct.

The Ahreuepn Empire preferred artists and merchants.

Independent free traders can rest here.

Built in places with good public security so their wagons can be stored here.

It is possible to increase bargaining skills and the movement speed of wagons for a few days after resting here.

Tilted Leaning Tower At least 150 thousand gold in construction costs.

Questions will be raised as to the nature of the Leaning Tower
Raises elemental affinity with mages.

Special Effects: Raises elemental affinity based on the nature of the surrounding area.

Leather Production Center. At least 1200 gold in construction costs.

This place will sell leather and leather products.

There were as many as 300 buildings from the Ahreupen Empire that raised military, economics, or education. They required large amounts of money and stone by default as well as some needed jewelry and other precious metals.

Seeing as the large amount of materials that were required for construction, Weed as the Lord thought that they didn't have much value because the levels of technology, culture, and economy were low. That meant the construction would be mediocre.

The Ahreupen Empire Imperial Palace required a monstrous amount of precious metals.

Weed looked through the list again.

- The Ahreupen Empire gathered information on blacksmithing skills to make weapons and armors. The Ahreupen Empire was in a ceaseless war of conquest. They had to fight humans for territory

and hunt large monsters.

Despite their low skill levels, the Ahreupen Empire used padded leather to make heavy weight, high defense armors.

You can now make clothing and armor from the Imperial Knights and Guard.

-You have acquired the sewing skills of Ahreupen Empire clothing. Clothing such as the wizard robes, royal clothing, the imperial chef, the palace maid, and a variety of other clothing.

-There are still things unknown to the Sculptural Memories skill because the Seal of the Emperor could not be read completely. There are still parts of the sculpture that is damaged that require restoration.

It was true that hard work cultivated art!

Since Weed learned the Sculptural Memories skill, he could not earn more money.

He had learned the sewing methods for a large number of different types of equipment for his Sewing skill.

Weed had a twisted smile.

“Ah..to think that in this world that you can achieve things without having to give up on life.”

You could not go wrong living a life of hard work!

The Seal of the Emperor was a very old historical item so there

were still things unknown about it. Even so, he still managed to get a way to earn a wide variety of income.

That much was going to be obvious!

“Kuheuheuheu!”

A crazed laugh came from Weed’s mouth.

Even more than the laugh when he found a sword or armor from hunting!

“If it’s this much then it’s going to be much better than the Demon Sword or the Ancient Shield.”

That is what came out when he finished his calculations.

For such a treasure to come to a sculptor was like a lifeline to increase the art stat.

However, somewhere along the line, the Ahreupen Kingdom collapsed.

He needed to restore the rest of the sculpture if he wanted to read the remaining memories.

Weed’s Sculpture Repair skill was significantly low since he

hardly repaired sculptures!

“I need to break a few sculptures and repair them.”

He needed to raise his skill to finish the S rank quest but he expected a good reward.

“Well, I better go.”

The old mercenary that was with Weed finally left. In the River of Wailing, he drunk a lot of expensive alcohol. He would even sing while he drank. It was hard taking care of him and now he was finally gone. He had gotten the Imperial Seal from the mercenary. Now the mercenary was going back.

Weed's eyes became sharp.

‘It was tough to obtain.’

Of course it was going to be difficult to contact the mercenary now. He could just check up on him some other time of course. Weed grasped both of the old mercenary's hands.

“It was an honor. So it's goodbye until we meet again? Try not to eat or drink too much. Here's some snacks you can eat.”

He was pretending like it was a regretful parting that was both tender and heartwarming.

“I’m sorry to burden you, be sure to take care of yourself now old man.”

“Not at all, it was a good experience.”

“I better hurry back to the kingdom.”

“Send me a letter sometime. There’s still a lot of things about my life as a mercenary I haven’t told you about.”

The story of the mercenary’s life was surprisingly accurate. It was a realistic look at the history of the Continent of Versailles and a lot of it was connected to Weed’s quest.

“Huhuhu.”

The mercenary was comfortable so he chuckled.

It was a little bit of intimacy he got from talking with the old mercenary.

They got to know each other to some extent.

“Come by my place sometime, you’ll always be welcome. I’m going now.”

“Next time, I’ll let you meet my nephew.”

Weed looked around after the mercenary left.

Around the River of Wailing were the tribes that fought against the Embinyu Denomination.

Turn in the quest!

He collected his rewards so he could return to Morata.

Weed had the reputation as the best sculptor in the entire Continent of Versailles.

So he understood wanting to hide the sculptures he had made in the past.

“Wyvern. I’m disappointed that I didn’t make them correctly.”

He hurriedly made them to get them in time for the fight against the Undying Legion. He had undoubtedly brought them to life one after another.

“Still, I sculpted them myself...”

There was a lot to be desired of the Wyverns from Weed.

They were the first sculptures that Weed had given life to.

They had a sharp angular face so they had a lot of wind

resistance.

Nevertheless, they were had a strong pride and they would follow his commands but they were arrogant.

“Hey, what do you think?”

“Where is the master?”

“Gone. We’re completely free!”

The Wyverns would seem like they’re betraying Weed, so he needed to teach them. Since he gave them life first, they had a duty as the eldest. There was a time to play and eat to get fat, but in the north they were now hunting and growing faithfully. Weed summoned them at the mountain to go back to Morata. The six wyverns lined up side by side and they looked like they just had a bath since they were glistening.

“Hey...how are you?”

Weed said in an apologetic tone.

He usually mobilized them for war so he didn’t think about them that much.

“Master we have been well.”

“Happy.”

“Unfortunately we could not see the master as often as we would want.”

Gyarurururuek.

He went ahead and rubbed Wah-1s face.

While he was doing so he could hear in on the Wyvern's secret conversation.

“Why's he being so nice to us?”

“There's got to be a catch...”

“Be careful.”

Weed continue to stroke Wah-1's face.

“Guys. It's good to see you guys after so long.”

Weed was speaking gently now.

“I wanted to see your faces for such a long time.

“...”

The Wyverns remained silent.

Weed allowed them to spread their wings and enjoy flying around in the sky in his presence. Then Weed followed up with.

“You guys seem a little weak. I got some good food while I was hunting that you guys can try.”

The King Hydra and the Imugi meat that he was saving!

He split it up between the Wyverns the Geumini.

“I love you master.”

“Thank you.”

Wagu wagu.

The Wyverns ravenously tore through the meat with their mouths.

Geumini gracefully took out a small knife to slice it up and eat it.

After eating such delicious food, there was not part of the Wyverns that wasn't satisfied. It was like a child that was proud of its parents.

“A few days ago we took down a bear centaur.”

“Bear centaur?”

“It was far away from Morata. We ate them. I wanted master to have a taste too.”

That meant that they were a humanoid species.

Even with expeditions, there was a large part of the north that

was not detail and only known roughly.

There were many such places.

There were stories about these places too.

“How strong are you now?”

“Level 376.”

The Wyverns were over level 370.

When Weed gave life to them, they were only level 300 since they were only fine pieces.

It was Geumini's turn after his meal.

“Master!”

Geumini was more difficult for Weed.

That was because he felt it was a waste to make him out of gold.

“I would like to thank you for the delicious meal.”

He was hungry and Weed was being nice today.

Geumini was very shy but he had excellent combat skills.

He could run fast and wield swords in both hands.

Weak monsters would be slain instantly and he worked well on top of the wyverns with his bow shooting arrows with archery.

A sculptural masterpiece!

He was made with a 20% bonus to his level so he was an elite at level 420.

It was the first superior statue that the had given life to.

Rover and Phoenix that he had made from rock were barely level 400.

“Master, I have passed my goal of level 446.”

“That’s good, you put in a lot of effort.”

While the Wyverns were out playing, Geumini went in dungeons alone and hunted. He did not take breaks so that he could help Weed how had given him life.

“I went to hunt the monsters in the mine when you were gone.”

The abandoned mines nearby Morata!

Since Weed did not develop the mines, they became monster lairs. Geumini hunted the monsters and then mined for minerals with a pickaxe.

Since he had ownership of the minerals, it went into the storage. Weed could use it to build buildings or as minerals to make items.

“I learned a new skill. Golgolgol.”

“Ohhh.”

Weed thought it was worth raising one of his own to be like this.

To think that Geumini would be this praiseworthy?

‘It’s too bad since all a sculptor would need is a hundred guys like Geumini.’

Mining skills were very useful to the economy.

Mineral discovery and pickaxe skills were useful skills.

“What is the skill?”

“Master do not be surprise, it is magic.”

“Magic!”

Geumini had high intellect.

Since he was made using blacksmith skills there were the properties of fire, water, and metal.

The other things weren't bad but he was thrilled that he was able to learn magic.

“Well done Geumini, but let me check what kind of magic that you got. Geumini skill window!”

Weed was able to access the skill windows of the sculptures he made.

Beginner Level 9 Sword Mastery (26%): Sword wielding skills. The higher the level, the stronger the power. Intermediate Level 7 Archery (88%): Has long range and increases the accuracy of arrows. You can reload quickly.

Intermediate Level 4 Fire Control Mastery (16%): Can create fire. The power is unlimited but too much heat will dissolve the body.

Level 3 Fluid Conversion (15%) – Can use heat to liquefy the body. Useful for repairing the body. However, some parts of the body may be lost permanently.

Geumini had ingenious skill with archery and sword-fighting. As he expected, magic skills had appeared!

Beginner Level 6 Jewelry Destruction Magic (69%): Can draw out the magic potential power of jewelry. The magic power depends on the caster's ability and the value of the jewel. Magic consume a certain amount of jewelry every time.

Jewelry magic power.

It was a more comprehensive power than magic since it's casting speed was extremely fast.

There was the decisive disadvantage of consuming jewelry.

Geumini was level 446 and he had high physical stats like strength and agility as well as wisdom and intellect. He had high potential as a wizard. He had developed an ability to use magic using his own body's characteristics.

It was a very luxurious skill that defined him!

It was a skill that was suitable for Geumini, who was worth 17 thousand gold.

"Do not use it."

"What? Golgolgol."

"You can use this skill or Fluid Conversion in the future. But if you do I'll melt you down into gold."

If he was melted down he could not use any skills. That meant the only thing he was good for was to be sold.

"Master."

Geumini couldn't help but lament.

Geumini had the appearance of a bright and handsome young man, which was pretty impressive but not to Weed. Weed thought that the golden age of youth was in high school where young girls with money would eat tteokbokki, a spicy rice cake. Weed ignored Geumini.

Wah-1 came out and took one step forwards.

Of course he was doing something other than defending his younger sibling Geumini.

“Master.”

“Yea.”

“The situation in town is alarming.”

Then Weed's voice became serious.

“What is it?”

While hunting in Morata, the Wyverns scouted their surroundings.

Weed had invested a lot of money, 300 thousand gold, in Morata as well as making a lot of sculptures. The Church of Freya had been appointed for a duration but that was not a reason to let the

pressure off. They scouted the surrounding area because they could not simply rely on the Paladins of Freya.

“The quarry near the town has been getting more crowded recently.”

Wah-1 began to explain.

It was hard for them to understand what was going on because of their age.

But Weed could understand.

“It appears that there’s a large increase in soldiers.”

The construction of barracks and the conscription of soldiers.

There were not many residents near Morata. Immigrants would come to settle up in the north but not in such large numbers. Mercenaries and other conscripted units were a different story. There was a lot less prey to hunt because there were a large number of people that had to hunt nearby.

Chapter 2: A Man's Journey

Ahn Hyundo said.

“Who will go with the youngest?”

Ahn Hyundo was trying to get someone to go.

When he was young, he had wandered through many countries. He had spent a lot of his life traveling throughout foreign countries.

The atmosphere of the meeting was rather good because they was going to meet women in Royal Road.

The masters knew but they kept silent.

In the course of mastering the sword, they had traveled around to learn about the world.

It was disadvantageous to be the first one to speak so they all remained silent.

They just remained in their sitting position with their strong chests and wide shoulders.

Their kept glancing at each other as if they were begging.

Ahn Hyundo looked into the eyes of each of the instructors.

Chung Il Hoon looked like he was a stoic person but he had generous and benevolent qualities.

He was extremely competent and the best disciple to further develop the dojo.

‘If he goes then the amount of work is going to increase around here.’

Ahn Hyundo thought that it was a better idea to have the instructors teach. He did not want to remove them and waste precious time that was needed to operate the dojo.

He wanted to see the woman that he met recently in Royal Road and go to the beach again.

‘It shouldn’t be him either.’

He quickly decided against having the fourth instructor go.

Roi Lee was the youngest of the instructors and had many prominent accomplishments in the way of the sword. Royal Road’s virtual reality was as expected.

It was the thing that they were looking for in order to gauge their

development.

The willingness to fight, the feelings of weakness within themselves, or learning the way of the sword.

They had lived by the sword and the world of Royal Road was formidable.

A world of magic.

A moment of carelessness will lead to a surprise attack from a horde of monsters in the night.

They could face a number of challenges in Royal Road and revive shortly after suffering the despair of failure. It was a place where they could they could train their determination through struggles.

‘Sang Bom has a lot to do.’

Ma Sang Bom spent most of his time training the other practitioners so having him gone would be a large obstacle to the dojo.

“Jong Bom Ah.”

“Yes Master!”

“This time you will take the youngest.”

“Okay.”

That concluded the discussion in the dojo.

The mission was entrusted to one of the Geomchis.

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“The plane tickets have already been obtained and the rest will be provided at the location. It should be sufficient for the trip.”

“When do I start?”

“Tomorrow.”

“What should I say to the youngest?”

“No need to tell him the truth, just be moderate and tell him it's going to be Jeju Island.”

“I will be going!”

The Virtual Reality Department was famous for the challenges that they issue every year during vacation. He was not aware of this fact. Lee Hyun was busy with his semester finals for his major. Lee Hyun solved the problems furiously.

‘This is the third time. That’s a problem. The subject of the thesis on Royal Road that was written by a professor..

Aside from the subject, he did not even remember the name of the professor.

Many professors from Korea University had published several papers on Unicorn Corporation, but the thing that mattered was not the names but the content. The people that could remember that part could easily solve the problem.

‘I don’t know this. It’s been three times with the other two I couldn’t answer.’

He did not spend much time answering.

His answer was very short and it only accurately explained as much as necessary.

Lee Hyun told himself.

‘I didn’t do any of the assignments but I have good attendance. It’s not going to be bad since I impressed the professors during the MT so I must not get an F in this class!’

Satisfactory enough to not receive an academic warning.

The plan was even if the grade was bad, as long as it was not an ‘F’ he wouldn’t need to retake the class.

‘I only need to graduate.’

That was the purpose that was placing him in a difficult situation!

Lee Hyun solved the test questions within the time limit.

It was the last major test and then there would be vacation.

For students, summer vacation was more than two months long.

‘In that time, I’m only going to be doing a single thing!’

He was going to play Royal Road earnestly to level up.

Lee Hyun put his writing utensils into his cheap backpack.

Then the classroom door open and Professor Ju Jong Hoon came in with his assistant.

The assistant was bringing in a lot of equipment, most of which were digital camcorders.

They were equipment that were used to shoot scenes to save as a movie!

With the development of digital media devices, the memory could record up to ten days of footage.

Professor Ju Jong Hoon walked onto the podium and said.

“It’s time for this year’s summer vacation homework.”

The students looked pedantic since they were looking forward to summer vacation after the final test.

“Oh, what a bother....”

“Another challenge? Is it going to be a challenge on some complex mathematical formula, or something like releasing something out of some sort of engine using physics?”

A lot of the students began to voice their concerns.

Lee Hyun began to worry.

‘An unexpected challenge has appeared.’

He didn’t do any assignments that were for the class. However, this assignment seemed to be extraordinarily different from the rest.

Professor Ju Jong Hoon began to demonstrate how to use the camcorder.

“You know that in order to create a cool virtual reality you need to have to know what it is like to live in reality right? This year’s challenge is to record with the camcorders how your life is during the holidays. You can go to the swimming pool, find a part time job, travel. Anything is fine. Be sure to record with your camcorders during your vacation.”

“...”

The lecture room became dead quite.

Lee Hyun noticed after a few moments.

‘Do you really not care?’

The student’s began to guess at what Professor Ju Jong Hoon was indicating.

“In order for you to know each other more, the department decided this summer vacation challenge to be required this time. You enrollment of classes for your major will be canceled should you not complete it.”

In order to graduate safely, this challenge had to be completed!

It was a very, very difficult task.

Other than going to the dojo to keep up his physical strength, Lee

Hyun did not think of doing anything else outside of Royal Road.

The people around him quickly began to talk to each other.

“My family is planning to go to Phuket...so I could record there.”

“We’re planning on going to the South Sea Resort to rest.”

“I was planning on taking a modeling class so I could take it there.”

The students were already planning how they were going to spend their summer vacation. As a first year college student at the age of 20, they would not spend their first summer vacation poorly.

Then it was time for the long awaited vacation!

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Weed felt like a baby chicken that was going to be fried.

“The break that I was waiting for is finally here.”

He did not need any fancy vacations.

He was going to spend his time on the Continent of Versailles to raise his level and skill masteries while exploring.

“I was going to restore the rest of the seals...”

In order to repair the Ahreupen Imperial Seal he needed to increase his skills. He needed to create masterpieces and deliberately destroy them so he can repair them.

It was a difficult skill to train since it required accurate memory and skill!

Weed had to devote his time to creating fine pieces.

“I have to gradually break it and fix them little by little.”

Restore Sculpture skill was considered a subskill. Even though it was cumbersome, the skill level would grow quickly. Weed’s goal was the intermediate level.

“By then I should be able to repair the Ahreupen Seal. But...”

Weed had an uneasy feeling in his chest and could not concentrate on his work to repair sculptures. Since it was a quest from the church about the lost artifact there was little chance of others ruining it. He had attempted to repair it once but it did not work.

“Yesterday, in town, when I was on the bus there was there a guy that was scratching a lottery ticket? Of course not. It was the guy

in the bathroom with a button up jacket with a fire designed on it...”

Then he suddenly had a good idea!

“Come to think of it, it’s almost time for the Church of Freya’s protection to end isn’t it?”

Since it was going to be a few years it was supposed to feel very long, but it was only 4 months in reality.

“I’ll have to take a look....military status.”

Weed opened an information window.

Military Force of Morata Province

Beginner Knights: 10Average Level: 219

Soldiers: 1187

Average level: 45

Loyalty: 98%

Training: 79%

The level of knights is very low. Strict discipline is needed to keep knights from leaving. Morata’s soldiers have high loyalty but, with the exception of a few soldiers, their level is poor and they must seek the help of the police and vigilantes.

There are no siege weapons.

City Walls are in perfect condition.

The promised period of protection from the Church of Freya ends in five days.

In just five more days, the protection from the Church of Freya would expire. Because of his public contribution, Weed was able to meet with Alveron.

“I would like to meet with His Majesty the Pope Candidate.”

There were times that called for proper respect. He had significant intimacy with Alveron from the quests he had completed. To him, Alveron was like a friend. But it was because of his public contribution that he could meet with Alveron.

“To think that Weed nim would seek a priest such as myself. What can I do for you?”

“This is Morata isn’t it? The place where Alveron and I save the people by defeating the vampires right?”

It was a good thing. Under the pretext of suffering under a quest together their intimacy would increase.

“The goddess Freya has left her invisible mark on the province of Morata, a beacon of hope that brings the land prosperity and peace has it not? To Morata, The goddess Freya is the Goddess of Hope.”

“Weed nim, I am very grateful that you think so.”

“It’s a bit cumbersome to say so let me speak more directly. Please extend the protection of Freya over Morata.”

Weed wanted to say a bit more. However, Alveron spoke before he could.

“However this is not in the South is it not? Even as the Pope Candidate Alveron, the distance to Morata is too great...”

He couldn’t help trying one more time.

“We have fought and spilled blood together have we not?”

Kinship.

“The church of Freya has much to teach about life.”

Teachings.

The Republic of Korea had an inseparable bond for dragging things out, so Weed used teaching as an excuse! Especially since the overly honest Alveron would never accept a bribe.

“I’m sorry. The Goddess Freya would more than want to help. However there are people that are suffering elsewhere in more difficult situations so the Knights and Priests must leave at the promised date.”

They had eaten together as friends but it was like he had asked him to go buy rice without giving him any money and had refused, an unavoidable situation.

“To keep the protection of Freya on Morata for a longer period of time would cost the achievements that you have with the church.

Depending on the level of public contribution, he could get equipment or rare treasures. Weed felt it was a waste but it was his last resort. Morata had high development but very weak military force. It did not have enough soldiers and knights to fight a real battle. Alveron made the sign of a cross and bowed.

“There will be no problem if Weed nim since he has devoted so much to the Church of Freya but there will be some difficulty even if I ask. How much longer do you wish for the protection of the Church of Freya to be extended?”

Ttiring!

Public value points with the Church of Freya: 13290For the protection of the Church of Freya, 110 public value points are consumed a day.

He could not help using a large amount of public value points to have the Church of Freya dispatch their tremendous forces of clerics and paladins to Morata.

Weed's eyes began to moisten. He had been planning to use those public value points to buy high level weapons and armor from the church.

“Alveron, I would like the Church of Freya for as long as possible... to protect me.”

He needed to buy it!

“Do you wish to have the Church of Freya to protect the Province of Morata using your public value points?”

“Uh. Yea.”

“The Templars will remain for another 120 days but since Weed nim is asking me personally I will ask them for an additional 30 days.”

Alveron gave him a courteous bonus of 30 days!

Weed gave him a hug.

“My brother!”

The Church of Freya will keep away the other military forces.

But the time was approaching.

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The next morning Lee Hyun began to prepare and put the camcorder in his bag.

“Jeju Island...the island of dreams. The best resort! I can’t believe that I’m going to Jeju Island.”

Ahn Hyundo had given him a phone call. They opened a new dojo in Jeju Island and he wanted him to go to see it. It was a good thing for Lee Hyun.

“I was worried about what I should be recording during vacation but to think that it would be Jeju Island.”

Jeju Island, even when compared to other people, it would not fall short.

It was a natural environment with the clear blue Halla Mountains with horses and the beach that he could record.

“This is such a success. Not everyone can go to Jeju Island. I better get my passport.”

Lee Hyun put his passport in his bag.

Ahn Hyundo said that he needed his passport to get on a plane at the airport. To he had the written documents and photos taken care of for him for the overseas dojo. Usually one would feel suspicious when they think about it but he did not have the slightest bit of suspicion.

The airfare, lodgings, and meals were all free!

“Oppa, take care.”

“Yes, I’ll be sure to bring back souvenirs.”

His sister went to see Lee Hyun off at the Incheon International Airport.

Stewardesses were busy running around and showing foreigners where their luggage was.

“Indeed...”

It was a whole new world for Lee Hyun.

He came thirty minutes ahead of the appointed time for Jong Bom Ah to arrive.

“So you’re here.”

“Yes sahyung, I came early.”

“Do you have your passport?”

“Passport?”

Lee Hyun was puzzled.

He didn’t understand since it wasn’t needed unless one was leaving Korea.

“You need a passport to go to Jeju Island?”

Jong Bom Ah quickly answered him.

“We need to ride a plane.”

Lee Hyun only roughly knew what it was like to go on a plane.

One would know what it was like if they see a drama or a movie.

“I see, so it’s different from public transportation like a bus and I can’t just ride it.”

“This is a plane.”

Lee Hyun and Jong Bom Ah did not have much luggage other than a small bag. Lee Hyun checked the tickets that he had and they said Cairo, Egypt.

“Sahyung!”

“What?”

“This plane is going to Cairo?”

Lee Hyun roughly had heard about Egypt once.

“Isn’t this plane going to Southeast Asia?”

“ ... ”

The look on the faces of the other passengers was priceless.

‘How does he not know?’

‘Does he not even know where Egypt is?’

“As you know we are going to Jeju Island.”

“Exactly.”

“The plane directly to Jeju Island is expensive.”

“So you’re saying that... It’s like taking a bus and stopping in the middle.”

This sounded far too absurd to the other guests at the boarding gate.

To say that Jeju Island was a stop along the way to Egypt!

However, Jong Bom Ah looked very rough and had intimidating eyes so no one had the courage to tell the truth. So Lee Hyun took the flight to Cairo.

After the plane took off, a flight attendant began to walk around

and pass out food and drinks. They simply passed by where Lee Hyun and Jong Bom Ah was. As soon as they got onto the plane they had fallen into deep sleep. The two of them crossed the sea past Central Asia and were on the plane heading to Cairo.

*

Cairo Airport.

Summer was hot in Korea, but it was incomparable to Egypt.

The hot air and scorching sun caused sweat to run down their foreheads.

There were not traces that this was a Korean airport since there were only Egyptians wearing turbans. He was not stupid enough to believe this was Jeju Island.

“Sahyung! I think this is the wrong place.”

There was deep suspicion in Lee Hyun’s eyes.

He had fallen asleep on the plane thinking that he would be in Jeju Island.

Then along with the other foreigners, they went to the immigration procedures.

Jong Bom Ah said.

“That was only part of the truth...it’s a tradition of the dojo to have its members go out to see the real world.”

“ ... ”

“We deliberately planned this trip a long time ago.”

To think that he would be somewhere like this. From how it was explained, he could not be mad at Jong Bom Ah. There was more to learning the sword than just the physical part. Every cell in the body had to be alive in order to wield the sword.

Traveling overseas in order to properly learn the way of the sword! Even after leaving on the trip, despite the other troubles, there was nothing to regret.

Moreover, it was traveling abroad. He did not have any chances to see the world out of Korea.

Lee Hyun asked to confirm.

“This is...free right?”

“Of course it’s free.”

“Whew.”

Lee Hyun let out a sigh of relief.

Even if it was annoying and cumbersome, since it was free he could not be angry.

“Everything is free so just relax and enjoy. Kuehahahaha! It’s a journey and others are paying for you, enjoy!”

“Where do we go now?”

“For now, we get on a helicopter.”

A helicopter was waiting for them at the Cairo Airport.

They flew past the dry air and sand of the Sahara Desert in Egypt to see charming buildings of brick and stone.

*

North Africa.

Two four wheel drive jeeps were ready for Lee Hyun and Jong Bom Ah.

The jeep was opened on the roof and had a leather tent that could be opened and closed easily.

“Youngest.”

“Yes, Sahyung?”

“Do you know how to drive?”

“I have never driven before, but I have ridden a motorcycle a bit...”

He did not have a driver’s license. He had driven a motorcycle to deliver food for a chinese restaurant once.

“Do you have one?”

“It doesn’t matter since there are not traffic police, just don’t hit anything.”

Jong Bom Ah threw him the car keys.

“Go start it.”

Lee Hyun sat in the driver’s seat in the car. He put the keys into the ignition.

Kua aaaaaahhahahahahang!

The car’s engine started with a cry. An off road, four wheel drive vehicle for crossing the desert!

Even if it didn't look like much, the jeep had tremendous power.

Behind the driver seat was filled with food, water, oil, a tent, and other materials as well as a book about Africa. There was also white medicine boxes piled up.

“Well, let's get started!”

Jong Bom Ah started his engine and went out first into the desert.

The car's wheels kicked up dust.

“I will!”

Lee Hyun slammed on the brakes.

The car did not move correctly!

“Was the accelerator on the left or the right?”

Lee Hyun released his foot and stepped on the right accelerator. The car bounced and went forwards.

It was a fantastic place for a novice driver.

There were no lanes and you could park anywhere you want.

They passed by many piles of sand, desert scorpions, and even an oasis.

The wind was mixed with the sand as the two cars moved forwards side by side.

Taaaaang!

Dodododo.

Groups were riding on horses and shooting guns.

Lee Hyun came riding along with Jong Bom Ah in a Jeep.

Lee Hyun asked on a transceiver.

“Sahyung, who are they?”

- They're either bandits or the militia.

“Would they attack us?”

- It's okay. The dojo has contacts in this place. They're not going to carelessly attack a marked car.

Lee Hyun's car had come with a red painted patterned flag.

The armed horsement did not attack as Jong Bom Ah said, but they did get closer. The two jeeps traveled along the desert and they saw travelers on camels. Lee Hyun took out the camcorder to record the ride in the car. Houses were built with mud and straw in the first town where he met skinny children. The children had black skin and they were playing with a ball, he could feel lack of vitality in their expressions! Lee Hyun and Jong Bom Ah went to see the doctor of the village to deliver books and the boxes of medicine.

“Good... sign here.”

“...”

The doctor thanked them when he received it.

An old lady walked by and gave them a necklace made out of wood and stone for helping.

Lee Hyun asked.

“When did this start?”

“Master came on a tour of Africa about 15 years ago.”

“How many people will these boxes cover?”

“About 600 people maybe?”

“That much?”

“In Korea, almost absolutely all drugs come in a bottle, but here there are children dying everywhere.”

In the small hospital tent there where children lined up.

All the children in line that received a vaccination shot thanked the doctors.

Children from the next town over would come for vaccinations and then return.

Then the second village and then the third.

In the village, the other villages received hospitality as they shared the medicine.

There were people on the lookout for intruders but not many outsiders come since for a very long time they had lived on the high cliff.

“Sahyung, the desert’s land is very hard.”

“Rocky terrain is very broken and its very much like the desert sand of the Sahara Desert. It’s not much compared to the width of the entire region.”

Jong Bom Ah knew about the world.

The sand of the Sahara desert was different from expected since it was a endless sea of sand. But the land was covered by sand. They would not sink very deep since there was gravel and stone underneath. There were a lot of large trees nearby and bushes as well as rocks the size of houses in the distance. A single visit to Africa could save thousands of lives!

Three days after they began, they went back into the desert and they were escorted by the armed militia. As the car passed over the hill, he looked to the horizon and then his body began to shake violently. At night the temperature suddenly dropped so he needed to very several thick layers of cloths. Lee Hyun put water to boil in a bot as he turned on the burner. Under the light of the Milky Way, he drank a cup of coffee in the desert!

“A few tablespoons of sugar.”

Lee Hyun turned on the radio receiver to listen in.

There was a talk show in an unknown language and soon music began to play. He had heard it a couple times in Korea and it was Jae Lynn’s song ‘A Dialogue of Eyes’ in English.

Chapter 3: Wings

They went past the deserts, rivers, and meadows of the south.

In order to cross the border of Africa to other countries, you had to pay an entry fee to pass which was quite expensive. At the border of the desert there were two rivers flowing of which animals came by to drink water. There were all sorts of creatures from the animal kingdom such as antelopes, zebras, cheetahs, jackals, buffalos, monkeys, and deer. The sky was filled with flocks of various colored feathered birds. Jong Bom Ah said to Lee Hyun.

“This is pretty amazing. It’s like a small zoo.”

Animals in the dry wilderness!

Lee Hyun nodded.

“It’s just as you say.”

Sparrows sitting on a telephone pole could not even begin to compare to the animal spirit he felt from the animals such as the pink flamingo. The jeep was safe from animal attacks since it was made of reinforced steel, but they still had to be careful of the vehicle being turned upside down.

Lee Hyun drove down a rough road with Jong Bom Ah. They could not get tired of looking at the animals.. Most of the animals

in Korea were trapped in cages, but here there were herbivores grazing everywhere. There were giraffes that were looking around with its long neck for nearby dangerous wild beasts. Hungry lions looking for prey were wandering about. Crocodiles were swimming in the river.

At night they would sleep inside the cars.

Kuuueng! Kuuueng! Kueng! Kueng! Kueng!

Kihaaaaah!

It was shaking because of the wild animals running about crying noisily. Nights in Africa were dangerous.

They went to deliver medicine to African villages in the Prairie. They went to larger cities to deliver the supplies to other places. Lee Hyun would probably be pleased with what he was doing but there was something that was on his mind. The land was very beautiful, as were the animals, but he noticed the true painful nature was how deeply rooted poverty was in the people. Africa was the world's largest ghetto and no one knew how many children were starving in a place like this.

A pair of shoes bought in Korea would be enough to save the lives of 10 children in Africa.

‘I, however, did not suffer anything. I have to reflect on this. From now on I need to put more effort and work even harder.’

Rather than complaining about his past, his real motivation was for the future.

Life, nature, fate, and dreams.

From seeing life in Africa, he took time to give it some thought.

The world was not fair.

While some people were laughing while watching TV, there were numerous people out there sick, hungry, and dying. Elementary school, middle school, high school, college.

They did not receive an education and could not dream of doing anything as adults.

Travel!

At first he did not want to go anywhere, but now he did not regret going.

It had been four days since they had been in Africa.

At the end of the day, they would finally reach the city of their destination.

Lee Hyun took off his face mask that was covered in sand. There was dust in his hair and all over his entire body.

“Sahyung, where is this?”

“This is the heart of Africa.”

In the heart of Africa there were many large buildings and shops. There were many tourists so there was a stable economy and the city dealt in multinational trade.

“We’re done delivering all the medicine so the rest of the day is free time.”

“I’m going to take a bath.”

Lee Hyun and Jong Bom Ah went to a hotel to clean themselves with a bath.

Then they toured the African city.

There were black people entering and hanging around the alley of the slums.

Travelers from all over the world could be seen here in Africa.

The city had very good security but people were careful not to come too close to Lee Hyun and Jong Bom Ah. From the way they looked and dressed, they looked like a group of desert bandits.

The next day they took a plane.

They went north of Africa into Europe. So they had to cross the ocean.

“Where are we going now?”

Lee Hyun asked Jong Bom Ah who was carrying a parachute backpack.

“We’re going here.”

“Yes?”

“Every real man should try skydiving once right?”

Lee Hyun looked out the window of the plane.

The houses in Europe looked like small dots and the road was drawn as if it were a blur.

“I’ve never skydived before.”

“You’ll get the hang of it.”

They recieved a small briefing from a French instructor on how to jump.

Fortunately the man had also learned the sword from the dojo so

he was able to explain it quickly in Korean.

“Open!”

The hangar door of the airplane opened, causing their whole bodies to shake from the wind blowing on them.

Jong Bom Ah yelled.

“I’ll be going first!”

Jong Bom Ah jumped out of the hangar door fabulously and began falling towards the ground. Running as hard as he could, Lee Hyun jumped out of the airplane’s hangar.

At that moment.

He was in the middle of the blue sky.

He could feel the wind flowing past his body as he descended to the ground.

It was like when he descended from the City of the Sky, Lavias!

With his entire body in free fall, he felt like he had the freedom to go anywhere.

A five star hotel in Paris, France.

Lee Hyun and Jong Bom Ah were staying in a penthouse. After they checked in with the bellhop, the hotel staff gave them strange looks. They were being misunderstood since there were a lot gay people in Korea in comparison to Europe.

“Let’s drink!”

The hotel they had in France was equipped with a wine room.

Jong Bom Ah threw his backpack aside and took out a hand-knife and stabbed it into the high quality wine. He was not interested in using a corkscrew. Then he poured the cool wine into a cup and drank it.

“Ah, so refreshing! Is there any whiskey or soju here?”

As a typical Korean man, he enjoyed drinking his soju.

“There’s nothing like drinking soju!”

“Yea. It’s good to be honest! Aren’t there some middle school and high school students that drink wine? Soju is the best.”

They could not understand the taste and smell of wine.

It was just bitter!

For Jong Bom Ah, he could not enjoy drinking wine since it was distasteful.

“I don’t understand why its so expensive. Its the worst kind of drink.”

They had insulted all the wine lovers of the world!

Soju on the other hand was good with food like pork and together with friends, as well as creating a more sociable atmosphere.

“A bottle of soju is good in any country.”

Lee Hyun and Jong Bom Ah went to the terrace that was overlooking the Eiffel Tower as they briefly drank two cups of alcohol. Both of the men enjoyed their alcohol even more because it wasn’t costing them anything. Outside of the window was the Seine River and the historical buildings of Paris.

In Europe there was a saying that Paris had the most beautiful streets. In the hotel lobby there were statues and bright, colorful paintings in every corridor. Even the alcohol from the ice chest had a exotic feeling to it. Jong Bom Ah spun the bottle of liquor around as he said.

“Instead of feeling cooped up and watching TV, why do we take a night trip and walk around France.”

“All right.”

“Get a parachute.”

“Yes.”

There was a movie that was playing on the TV that was popular in Europe and the United States. The five star hotel also had Chinese and Japanese broadcasting, but the variety of entertainment did not have the many professional Korean broadcasts. Lee Hyun took his camcorder along with his parachute. Everything will be recorded by the camcorder!

“Huhuhu.”

Jong Bom Ah did a nasty laugh in front of the camera as he walked over to the terrace.

“You were promised that you would get to stay at a five star hotel. Come on, let’s go.”

They did not need elevators. Jong Bom Ah dramatically jumped over the terrace. It looked as if he wanted to commit suicide. The only other thing was the night sky of Paris.

“So these kind of experiences are a part of traveling.”

Lee Hyun quickly followed him. He climbed over the railing and jumped to the ground. He expanded the parachute immediately

and he descended slowing to the ground in the night sky of Paris. The hotel they were staying in was very tall so he could view a little bit of Paris's scenery. However, he was gradually getting closer to the ground! Because Jong Bom Ah was more experience with using a parachute, he had arrived at the ground first. People were looking at them since they had suddenly fell out of the air. Then a French beauty approached them. She asked in her native language.

“Tu es d’ou (Where are you from)?”

Jong Bom Ah did not know French. Of course he didn't know English either.

He made a glance towards Lee Hyun, who was the same.

“ ... ”

They were now stuck with a frozen expression.

In order to enter a university, GED required to have basic proficiency in English.

They were Korean and didn't learn any foreign languages so they could not understand the French woman. Lee Hyun decided to ignore her.

“Sahyung, let's go eat hot dogs.”

He came to help Jong Bom Ah out of the situation.

“Sure. How about over there?”

They ignored the French beauty and instead went to a hot dog stand.

Clap clap clap!

Nearby passerby began to clap at them.

They wanted to congratulate them for having parachuted down.

They went around like ordinary tourists for the rest of the day.

They went to the Palace of Versailles, Luxembourg Gardens, Place de la Concorde, and the Bastille Opera House. Using the attractions as backgrounds, Jong Bom Ah struck a pose and revealed the muscles on his forearm.

“Ready. One, two three!”

Click!

“Now you go and do it.”

“Yes.”

“Okay. Now let’s go.”

A typical photo shoot trip!

They would ask some French people or other travelers to take one of two pictures with them. They would then be busy eating hot dogs in the elegant streets of Paris.

“The hot dogs are good in Paris.”

“It’s very delicious. How about we eat some pork chops in the evening?”

“Yea, pork chops sound good too.”

After a hearty meal in the evening, they went to Germany. The dojo had went ahead and rented them motorcycles.

“Let’s see the capabilities of the German produced Autobahn motorcycles.”

Autobahn motorcycles!

“There’s a highway rest area around here right? Eating noodles and baked potatoes sound good.”

Then they went to the Netherlands to ride high speed motor

boats and then they went diving into the sea. They explored the ocean floor and saw some fish. Then they went across the United Kingdoms to watch soccer games. There were many Koreans travelers and students that they heard from time to time. On the Croyde Beach in the United Kingdom as strong wind blew from the storm.

“This is good weather.”

“This weather is a good thing?”

There were dark clouds in the sky and it looked like it could rain any minute. It was the kind of weather where you would not be surprised if lightning struck suddenly.

“According to the Master, I need to take you surfing.”

Lee Hyun and Jong Bom Ah changed into swimming clothing. On the beach there were a lot of people watching the waves. Every time the storm hit, the waves would suddenly increase in size. The storm that was blowing was apparently a strong one that came once every ten years. Large and high waves were going to the beach accordingly.

“Have you never surfed before?”

“Yea.”

“It should be comfortable even if it's your first time. Think of it like taking a dip and you should be able to do it like other people.”

There were few people trying to ride the waves. Jong Bom Ah and Lee Hyun tried to memorize their behavior and actions into their mind as they walked carefully. Walking down the beach were two Asians holding a surfboard. Usually one would wear a surfing suit to reduce the amount of water resistance. However they left their upper body completely exposed. The only thing they needed was their muscular upper body that they had developed earnestly. It was quite eye catching for the British people to see an Asian like Jong Bom Ah.

“Go first.”

Jong Bom Ah spread out his surfboard onto the sea and tried to surf. However the waves that kept hitting made him unable to. The sight of Lee Hyun following in gave the crowd greater courage. Swimming was one of the Republic of Korea’s favorite past times. Everyone knew how to do some basic form of swimming! He spread out his board and began to move his body, arms, and legs furiously.

“To think I would be doing this in the United Kingdoms!”

Severe wind and light rainfall began to create waves against his body. Waves that were a few meters high would catch him and his board every time causing him to be submerged into the salty sea. In fact, it was hard to move from the water pressure of the ocean waves. As soon as he got a hold of the board, another wave would strike him. This repeated twelve times as the meter high waves kept at him brutally.

“Damn.”

Lee Hyun was upset.

“It’s like the time I had a bath in the neighborhood reservoir on that stormy night!”

As a kid there was not many games that he could play without spending money. As a child, he would spend his time trying to catch frogs and crayfish from a ditch and as he got older he would find try to find better things to eat.

The nearby reservoir!

It was a notorious place because roughly 3 to 5 people drowned there a year. In the pouring rain that day, Lee Hyun went and tried to fish with his bare hands in the reservoir so there was no way he would give in to the UK’s sea.

“In the Republic of Korea more than 100 thousand people are swimming all over the country! British waters are not big deal.”

He went forth to challenge it once more!

Lee Hyun tried again and again.

The waves kept getting bigger but it never returned him back to shore.

“How dare the waves do this...I am Jong Bom Ah!”

Jong Bom Ah’s eyes burned with his willpower as he stumbled.

At first he was trying to enjoy the waves but now it was a challenge. His upper body muscles were wet from the water and greasy from sweat. He used his power to grab the surfboard and jumped. He repeated his to try and get into the waves. Through his failures, Lee Hyun realized the concept of it.

‘So it has to do with being balanced despite the confusion.’

The big waves would push against the board and disrupt the balance even if you were successful. You had to try and reverse the flow to stay on.

‘So instead of trying to push to waves...it might be better to ride it?’

So he had to get it floating without upsetting the flow of the waves.

‘I can do it. Think of it as if I were riding the Wyverns...’

Lee Hyun’s survival senses.

Compared to the fast speed of the Wyverns in the valley, the waves were more normal. You need to get the hang of nature in

order to succeed. He had to adapt. He remembered his flight on the back of the Wyverns. Fighting on top of the Wyvern's backs. Lee Hyun began to climb on top of the waves with his surfboard and tried to get balanced. Then he stood on top of the wall like waves with his board.

“Kya hahahahahahahah!”

Lee Hyun laughed out loud.

Then he finally came to a stop.

“I am one who has conquered the storm!”

Lee Hyun began to yell out loudly and repeatedly. He was completely immersed in it. Jong Bom Ah was gifted with athleticism and well trained so he was already riding a wave. These guy were riding the waves in the storms of the UK! There was a British woman on the beach holding his camcorder and recording the scene. Before Lee Hyun was riding the waves he had given her to record it. After some time at night, they had a beach party with beer in a shop.

“European hot dogs are good.”

“Sausage is delicious too.”

Lee Hyun and Jong Bom Ah began to drink beer heartily and went to sleep.

“Time to go to another part of Europe to go skiing.”

The two of them rode to the Alps in order to go skiing.

There was a ski resort that was officially opened but no one had gone because it was a reckless challenge! That was because the people that went could not find their way back to the hostel. Then they visited the Red Square.

“So this is the Red Square.”

“All sorts of people have been here.”

They had a brief moment of appreciation for the historical sites. Then they took a transcontinental train to Moscow and then China. Then after a short visit in China, then planned to return to Korea by plane.

“I bought some eggs...where’s the kimbap?”

Boiled eggs were an indispensable necessity for train travel. They went into an open place to sleep. They looked on past the frozen tundra and the surrounding area. Lee Hyun looked out the window and was at a loss for words.

He had met all sorts of people from Africa to Central Asia. The hot sun, the sand, the wind, and the waters of the East. European culture and the historical buildings were great. The sculptures and paintings gave out lifelike feelings. To think he only lived in a small town and that such a big world existed was a huge shock to

Lee Hyun.

‘This spacious land.’

The Republic of Korea could not compare to a country like Russia. The real estate prices near cities shot up from the economic boom.

‘To think that there would be a place like this on earth...!’

Chapter 4: The Architecture Of Ahreupen

After 23 days, Lee Hyun managed to return home from his trip to Europe. There was no one home since his sister had went to the library early in the morning so he began his daily cleaning of the living room and other rooms.

After he was done, Lee Hyun was tired so he laid down on the floor.

‘I don’t understand why people bother to go travel if it’s so tiring. I would rather loiter around at home.’

It was incomprehensible why foreign tourists would come every holiday season. He would rather relax at home than suffer outside! His idea of a comfortable summer vacation was to eat rice for breakfast and lunch with sweet and sour pork and chicken respectively, then go to sleep with an electric fan plugged in.

“Oh...if only I could lie around all the time.”

He was a little dispirited. No matter how fit he was, there was no way he wouldn’t be tired after he went all around Central Asia, Europe, and Africa. But he could not rest when there was money to be made. The golden age of summer! He had to dedicate himself fully in order to catch up to the level and skills of his competitors. There was a significant amount of money he needed to earn for the

household and he was not going to let there be a month where he ran a deficit.

“There may be some changes in the Continent of Versailles and in Morata...”

23 days in real life was a tremendous amount of time in Royal Road. Considering that the time differed at a rate of 4 times, a total of 92 days have passed in Royal Road. This was the part that he was worried about during his travels.

“I don’t know if Morata is fine or not. Surely it is as I left it and its not in ruins.”

Lee Hyun opened his luggage. Then he poured out his souvenirs. They were items to prove that he had been to Europe.

Cyan Bell Hotel

Hilton Hotel

Paris Hostel

He had taken the towels, toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, and shampoo from the hostels! He also grabbed a couple blankets from the plane so the inside of his bags were overflowing. In another bag was filled with French and Italian clothes, necklaces, handbags, and other things for his sister. For the sake of his sister, he went ahead and purchased all of these items. Lee Hyun did not forget to buy anything.

“90 euros you say? No, no, no no. 40 euros.”

“No deal goodbye.”

“40 euros. 40 euros. 40 euros!”

He did not hesitate to haggle in the shops. Lee Hyun was able to determine the value of items based on the description of the material. Even after considering the high labor costs in Europe, he persisted at 40 euros until he got it down to a reasonable price of 52 euros.

“The world is full of crooks.”

It was more expensive for foreign tourists to buy stuff. Because of that, he could not help but be a pushy in a poisonous environment. Lee Hyun’s hands would tremble uncomfortably as he finished paying them.

“Konichiwa!” -(he’s saying hello in japanese)

This was the pride of Koreas that travel!

Other than for his sister, he also got gifts for Oh Dongman, Choe Jihun, Jeong Hyo-Lynn, and the rest.

“It’s alright as long as I give them something.”

Luxurious European branded T-shirts!

He bought them in Europe as well as a mountain of stuff from Chinese markets.

He spent a total of 800 thousand Korean won with the most expensive thing at 60 thousand won. He checked every item over fifteen times before he began to negotiate over a fair price.

That was a real taste of shopping during a trip! Lee Hyun roughly organized all the items before he sat down and turned on the television. He was just in time for the broadcast about the continent of Versailles. He was watching in order to find out the current events in Royal Road.

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“Oh Juwan-nim, do you know if the Kingdom of Haven has gone to all out war with the Kallamore Kingdom yet?”

“That is true. I have news that they have stopped the Kallamore Kingdom’s knights advancement. They are now waiting for the enemy soldiers inside the fort to surrender or else they will face an army of 20 thousand soldiers and the fortress’s supply chain has been cut so now it seem unavoidable.”

Lee Hyun had not known that the Kingdom of Haven had finally waged war against the Kallamore Kingdom. The Kingdom of Haven had a significantly high number of powerful users. There were an enormous amount of users on the central continent. That power had been strong enough to defeat the Kallamore knights which were said to be undefeatable.

Other than the Hermes Guild, the other large prestigious guilds were not mentioned. The Kingdom of Haven and its guilds were severely damaged when the Hermes Guild decided to not go to war. They were trying to find someone to point their finger at and blame. Of course there was no one else but Bard Ray. Even if it wasn't known to others, Bard Ray was secretly the leader of the prestigious Hermes Guild. Even since he started Royal Road, Bard Ray had been strengthening his influence over the guilds. Since then, it has always been one of the strongest guilds.

“The Hermes Guild. Is it irresponsible to say that the Hermes Guild represents the Kingdom of Haven?”

“The Hermes Guild is not to blame. The other guilds are doing the same.”

The blame was distributed to all the prestigious guilds of the Kingdom of Haven. He did not know that the Kingdom of Haven had occupied the Kallamore Kingdom's territory and that their army was getting stronger every day.

“There aren't any enemies that can defeat the Kingdom of Haven at the moment.”

Bard Ray had made the decision to go to war. It was not a command of the Hermes Guild but an arbitrary decision that he had made. During the fight, Raybard ambushed the Kallamore Kingdom from behind with his group. The Hermes Guild troop assaulted the enemy food supplies and wagons. Afterwards, a video

of them looting the food and then selling it in a nearby town was uploaded to the Hall of Fame. Users that were part of the Kingdom of Haven celebrated whenever a video was uploaded.

“There’s no one stronger than Bard Ray.”

“The Guardian of the Kingdom of Haven!”

There were hundreds of thousands of comments posted on each video. Since users were watching the broadcasts, Bard Ray’s reputation as the strongest on the Continent of Versailles were further increased. The strongest, highest level swordsman in the entire Continent of Versailles could not be ignored.

They were showing off in response to Weed’s actions in the Immortal Legion as Karichwi and the fight with the Bone Dragon. The other prestigious guild, the Lancashire Guild was also involved but it could not compare. The Kingdom of Haven blocked the Kallamore Kingdom’s supply routes and then began a two pronged assault, leading to a difficult defense. The Kallamore Kingdom was forced to retreat to their fortress. Bard Ray and his unit played a crucial role in the war between the two nations. However, the Hermes guild handed down a punishment to Bard Ray.

Because you did not follow the decision of the Hermes Guild, Bard Ray and his colleagues have been suspended from the guild for 200 days.

The representatives of the Hermes guild handed down a punishment causing tremendous complaints from the users of the Kingdom of Haven. The Hermes Guild website was filled with

complaints and insults protesting to cancel Bard Ray's punishment. On the other hand, the opinion of the ultimate user Bard Ray on the Continent of Versailles was rapidly getting better.

“On another note, there is a lot of interest in the high level user Chase that went on an adventure with a lot of people into a dungeon, which is contributing to the kingdoms.”

“The news just keeps getting in. The price of velvet has increases significantly. What do you think this will do?”

“Shin Hye-Min, did you know that tailors can create items from velvet?”

“Oh, that's possible?”

“After beginner level 6, its possible to combine materials such as fabric, wool, and velt. So its a good material for tailors to use.”

The Continent of Versailles had various types of news. The newsworthy ones were about the development of the kingdoms that had a lot of users so the news had to be varied. Then they opened up with a professional broadcast news about Royal Road.

“From the looks of it, the users in the northern region need to be very careful.”

“Oh Juwan, is something going on in the north?”

“The news in the north has been becoming increasingly more tense. There are mercenaries from the central continent being recruited to the north.”

Shin Mye-Min had a worried look.

“So a war is going to take place in the north?”

“Morata will be subjugated.”

“It seems that the God of War, Weed is governing Morata.”

“The north has become a center of trade and adventure. The Lord has been gone for a long time so it was bound to happen. Switch screen to the video.”

The TV screen switched to the northern villages. One thousand, two thousand, countless trained soldiers in units with blacksmiths creating weapons. Over 10 guilds were in an alliance and they were having the blacksmiths forge siege weapons. It was a magnificent thing to see the leaders training and commanding their knights. They had joined forces to take down the large city of Morata. Lee Hyun turned off the television.

“To think that they would mess with Morata!”

He turned off the television normally since this was not the time to be angry. Not to mention conserving the electricity bill! It was unthinkable for him to throw the remote or punch in the wall.

“How dare you try to take away my bowl of rice...”

He could not tolerate it. The Morata he had invested a large sum into was going to be taken. They were going to stain what is rightfully his. Even if there's a cute and gentle looking chihuahua, the owner was not going to be the same. Lee Hyun was going to get his spoon into his bowl before anyone else!

“I'll beat them up and then...they better be prepared for the damages.”

Weed stood and looked out the window of his castle. He looked from the users in the central square to the lakes and the statue of Freya. This was a good place for beginners and it was getting more growing even more every day. He saw young calfs lying leisurely on the side of the road. From the looks of it, they looked like they were Rover's children.

“I put my blood and sweat into making this town.”

Weed had created a lot of sculptures and put in enormous sums of gold in order to get the city to develop quickly. Aside from everything else, there was something different. There was another building.

The Morata Center for the Arts!

It was constructed recently and it was filled with vitality. There was a large garden with flowers and trees. It was a source of pride for such a large building to be build and it could be see from all over Morata.

“Its the first time I’ve seen this place as the Lord.”

Weed had not been in this place for a significant amount of levels. There were a significantly increasing number of people that come to the north to adventure. There were people of all levels. As more users came, the developmental levels would increase. It was like the wonderful smell that came off when cooking. It would be a shame to put an end to the developing Morata! Weed thought of his country as a bowl of rice where the loyal knights and soldiers were all his.

“To think they were dare to take away my bowl of rice while I was on vacation...”

Weed had a total of 390 thousand gold. It was all earned from hunting the King Hydra, selling off weapons and other items. He never bought any expensive foods such as rum and never bought any precious metals. He was going to invest that large sum.

“Internal Affairs Mode!”

-The screen will now switch to the internal affairs of the last twenty weeks. You have the ability to govern Morata.

Resources will be available immediately.

Military: 51 Economy: 989

Culture: 1512 Technology: 338

Urban Development: 121

Sanitation: 41 Police: 65%

Corruption: 3

Reserved Funds: \$518,642

Morata was constantly expanding. To expand their land, they needed more money. Cultural and technology augmented economic development so a considerable amount of money accumulated. It was a region without much commercial corruption thanks to the people's characteristics to be hardworking.

“View income history.”

Morata's monthly income (units in gold) Residential Tax: 12,116

Housing Tax: 918

Sales Tax: 22,889

Merchant Trade: 57,901

Tax on Merchants and Mercenaries: 3,051

Land taxes: 6,373

Mining Supplies: 9,230

Store Supplies: 49,749

Food Sale Revenue: 35,461

People are constantly coming north to Morata.

Low tax rates for travelers.

Insufficient skilled craftsman(Blacksmith, Cooking, Sewing, etc.)

20,000 people are jobless.

Houses around the central plaza is extremely crowded. Low property tax.

Sales for cheap goods are growing explosively.

Production and merchandise sales are not good with only 9 stores staying open late.

Center of commerce for the Versailles continent if going by percentages.

Importation of low quality cheap stuff, but a very large variety.

Morata's specialty of fibers/fabrics sell for higher price.

Morata is very attractive for merchants and mercenaries.

Merchants will buy goods from Morata and sell them to the rest of the north.

The central plaza is very cramped and crowded.

Good quality iron ore is being mines and copper and silver mines quality is increasing.

Morata need to develop more mines.

Pubs and inns business is booming.

Weapon Shop, Armor Shop, Smithy not doing much business.

Due to the high number of users in Morata, the economy is healthy and growing. Weed decided to invest all of his gold.

Ttiring!

A large scale investment in Morata.The count of Morata has

invested an astronomical fund into the area.

Productivity has increased by 45% for two months.

The area around the town will expand.

Population growth has improved.

He has now invested over 900 thousand gold into Morata.

“First, I need to develop the mines and farmlands so that they can expand.”

He injected a total of 320 thousand gold!

He was planning to develop the infinitely expanding agricultural area and the mines in the nearby mountain.

- The land has been cleared.
- Thanks to the knowledge of the Ahreupen Empire, the amount cleared has increased by 13%.
- Bulls have been cultivated for agriculture
- Workers and miners have been dispatched to 3 mines.
- Morata sends scouts to the nearby mountains to survey the land.

With the blessing of the Goddess Freya on the Continent of Versailles, Morata could produce food in three months. It was useful to have more people have jobs as farmers.

“That is the key to the economy.”

With grain and mineral production increases, monthly income would increase significantly. Weed preferred this strategy to making money than others.

“Money will not betray you.”

Unconditional money and resources!

Instead of spending money on luxuries, he would rather strengthen the infrastructure.

Morata had a lot of residents and money was going to grow exponentially. The villagers also gave out quests. Residents were dedicated to farming or business so economic activity grew. Even if the users left, the inhabitants of the Continent of Versailles could still hunt and make money. There were all sorts of quests that were given and the rewards varied. The wealthy people give higher quality quests and was vital to economic health. Fortunately there were a number of residents in the north that gave hunting quests and a large variety of information. Artifacts from the fall of the Niflheim Kingdom were common place. Thanks to that, there were a large quantity of high quality quests. The Lord had to consider the needs of the city for its growth.

“Construct a wizard’s tower.”

The price for a Wizard’s Tower was a whopping 100 thousand gold!

He had not build it before but now he had the money to build it.

“This is the cold north instead of the center of the continent so I need to decide on an Ice Wizard Tower.”

Ice Wizards gained more benefits in the cold. Weed sought out a good spot. Wizard towers were very beautiful. The location had to be good for the sake of the city’s beauty. In Morata Square there were many houses and businesses. The statue of Freya on the banks were more isolated.

“There we go.”

Weed was in Internal Affairs Mode so he could see the users near the Statue of Freya.

Weed built the Wizards tower near the Statue of Freya.

Ice Tower!

An inverted icicle of a height of 20 meters was constructed.

“This is!”

“Morata’s Lord has returned!”

When the Wizard’s Tower was completed, there was much

cheering from the users and residents. Morata's missing lord had returned. The residents and users had much respect for Weed, the god of war.

“Now to invest a bit more after the Wizard Tower.”

The number of jobs that beginners could choose in Morata were limited. Now with the tower mages could be selected as a profession. However many people were hoping for the Elemental Shaman class. It was a very popular class for those that were not very familiar with the game. Beginners chose Morata not because of its variety of classes. In order to change this, the elemental shaman guild was necessary.

“Elemental House construction!”

A screen appeared in front of Weed for him to choose a spirit.

There were dozens of popular spirits!

The arrogant looking spirits stood apart from each other.

“Next. Next...”

Weed skimmed through the spirits. Alone in the corner was the Fire spirit playing with fire and the Earth spirit scratching the ground.

“I’ll make houses for those two guys.”

-Depending on the nature of the spirit, the construction costs are at least 20 thousand gold. What would you like to spend on the budget?

“20 thousand gold.”

-House of the Fire Spirit has been completed.

-House of the Earth Spirit has been completed.

The sculpture spirit that he had shaped could now have a comfortable resting place. The characteristics of the building depended on the spirit. The stone spirit would have a stone house and the fire spirit would a cozy house.

House of Spirits increases the affinity based on the spirit within

A spirit can relax and play...but the effects are sensitive based on the size of the building. Contracts can be formed with the spirits.

A number of different types of buildings passed through his eyes. Considering the spirit he made he was going to be very frugal.

“Elemental Shaman Guild Construction!”

Elemental Shaman Guild was established

It cost 80 thousand gold but now beginners in Morata could start off as shamans. Elemental shamans choose an affinity and could summon spirits such as wind and water. But if there was a spirit house, then they could form a contract.

“With this, those guys will be able to enter into a lot of contracts.”

Spirits had difficult personalities and didn't work well with other spirits. They were extremely moody, they pick fights, and they would ignore the Elemental Shaman and refuse their commands. They would waste a lot of mana in those situations. Understandably if there were going to be problems with disagreeable spirits. However his spirits were more docile. Elementals like these could not be found anywhere else.

“Its good that I made them.”

Even if they were not the best spirits, they still wouldn't lose in power to other spirits.

Do not deny any contracts.

Treat all guests like kings.

Under Weed's commands, the spirits could be contracted and summoned frequently. They would increase their strength through vigorous activity. Since the contractors could hear the spirits they could build familiarity. Weed wanted to take care of the spirits he had made.

“Now, only for the necessary investments...”

Now all was left was the special building! Of course he was not thinking of making the Imperial Ahreupen Palace. That would require too much money and precious metals and even living in it would be a luxury that he could not afford.

“Construct special Ahreupen Granaries.”

- Construction of the GranariesStore large amounts of grain.

Reduces prices fluctuations of food, and contributes to the economic development and child birth rates.

Economic power has increased by 7.

Hungry villagers will now migrate to Morata.

Next to the Elemental House, there was a large grain warehouse.

The stone building was like a towering skyscraper.

It was much larger than Morata's largest building, the black castle.

A magnificent building made of 95% stone was built as a grain warehouse.

“This is a building?”

“What is it?”

People were gathering around the Elemental Shaman guild and the spirit homes. Everyone began to have high spiritss since shamans could now form spirit contracts in Morata.

“There are going to be a lot more Wizards and Shamans.”

“If I knew this was going to happen I would have waited before I chose a class!”

There were visitors in the spirit homes. The stone and fire home had unique appearances. The spirits were in a good mood.

“I will serve with absolute loyalty.”

“I can bury as many as 34 enemies into the ground.”

The spirits were soliciting users to visit them!

Suddenly the Ahreupen Granary was built next to the House of Spirits.

“Ahreupen Imperial Granary?”

“Where was the Ahreupen Empire? Its filled with grain. There’s other food too.”

It was the first building of its kind to be seen on the Continent of Versailles. It could hold food supplies in warehouses in enormous quantity.

“Did Lord Weed make this building?”

“Now this is going to end up on the forums!”

“News is that new buildings have been popping out of the ground

in Morata like crazy.”

Morata was already considered the most beautiful city on the continent. Tourists often visit it because of the Hall of Fame. The photos of the scenery were all over the Internet. The grand appearance of the granary was a hot topic to the users.

“Construct Magical Fairy Pond.”

- The fairy’s pond has been constructed. Fairies will come to find the pond.

Just as he finished the construction, it was time to log off. His sister was coming home now and it was time for dinner. There was less than an hour until she was home.

“She needs to hurry up and find a good man.”

*

Lee Hayan could be seen coming home from the window.

“Oppa is back today.”

It was a big event for her since he went to Europe. Lee Hayan was walking through the streets with her handbag that had a newspaper in it. It was good to be aware of current events and it was impressive that she kept track of it.

‘It’s better to know things. At least I won’t be sorry that I didn’t.’

There was a period of time where Lee Hayan did not go to school. There were dozens of times a day where loan sharks would visit the school and she felt suicidal. Rumors spread quickly throughout the school. Meeting with her friends began to feel shameful. She did not want to born and live in such an appalling household. After the debt was cleared, it felt like they had finally caught a break. She chose to go back to school one day when Lee Hyun going somewhere.

‘Where is he going?’

Lee Hayan secretly followed after him. The place Lee Hyun was going was her teacher’s house.

“I’m sorry. I will make sure that it will not happen again.”

Lee Hyun had to bow and apologized to the teachers. Since school was a waste of money, he dropped out to find work despite his sister’s pleading. She did not forget the situation that her brother Lee Hyun had been through. She had a change of heart, stopped being a bully, and was studying to be a good sister. When she came in the front gate of the house she heard the sound of music. It was a cool feeling, not jazz but a song by a group of women in a music dance group!

So pretty. Cute. Adorable.

Should I wear a short skirt for you?

I would wear sleeveless shirts to show to you.

I'm your girlfriend forever.

It was some sort of song!

In his small yard he set up and began to cook. Lee Hyun had eaten a lot of food in Europe so he wanted to make something from the ingredients that were there.

Pasta with red wine!

In essence, it was a combination of South Korean and Italian tastes.

Chapter 5:the Establishment Of The Grass Porridge Cult

After Lee Hyun came back from his vacation, he began to play Royal Road earnestly. After making breakfast and lunch for his sister, he devoted the rest of his time to playing. He had to make up for the time that he spent in Europe and submerged himself into Royal Road. Of course he was very unhappy that Choe Jihun was meddling in his little sister's life.

“It may see childish...but I will not leave this alone. That is my right.”

First, he made contact with a number of the kids in the neighborhood.

“Contact me if they meet and leave with each other. Let me know immediately if he tries to put his arm around her shoulder.”

With those words he managed to get the young children on his side. Kids these days were not so easy to persuade. But with a small bribe of 1000 won and a little intimidation, he managed to get the kids to be his spies.

“If you refuse my request...it will be difficult for you to live in this town. Don't you know about the ones known as sixth graders?”

The faces of the young children would turn pale white.

“Think of what would happen if I told them your names.”

He used another simple technique at the dojo.

At the dojo, once he bought four hot dogs for some of the elementary students so he could get them to do as he wants. He told them about several locations such as the library, the Movie Theater, hotels, and karaoke and showed them the picture of the two.

“Call me immediately if you see these two.”

A total of 500 thousand won spent.

With this in mind, he sent Choe Jihun a text message.

‘If you do anything, I will not let you live and kill you. I will kill you. I will track you to the end of the earth and kill you.’

With all of this in place, Lee Hyun could comfortably access Royal Road.

“This is because it’s my sister’s life. I want her to go out and be happy with a man that she will love!”

News of the Ahreupen Imperial Granaries spread throughout all of Morata. They were the only buildings that existed from the Ahreupen Empire, the only empire that unified all of the Continent of Versailles.

“When did Weed perform the quest for the Ahreupen Empire?”

“That quest...perhaps it was really a quest about the Ahreupen Empire.”

“Does that have anything to do with the King Hydra being summoned? Usually no one would even think of bringing such a monster... when it was summoned there is no way that anyone could hunt it alone.”

The number of rumors constantly grew!

The number of rumors that appeared increased because of the specially constructed Ahreupen Imperial Granaries that Weed had made. In fact, many broadcasters had live conversations about that very topic. All sorts of people brought it upon themselves to satisfy their curiosity about the Ahreupen Empire.

Legendary Moonlight Sculptor.

If Weed released the fact about the Emperor of the Ahreupen Empire, it was obvious that it would heat up all of the Continent of Versailles.

However, more people would know then.

It was because there were not supposed to be any other professions that are supposed to know about sculptures. Among all the high level users, there were many that did not want others to know the secrets related to their class.

“Why did he decide to build the special granaries?”

“Maybe there’s a lot of money in it? Perhaps it has something to do with a quest.”

There was a lot of users chatting and speculating. The stone consumption was very large so he could not build such another large building.

Weed activated his intervention mode.

“Construct a scholar’s school.”

Wise men will sit down and study in this place. Increases the city’s intellectual level. The wisdom of wizards will permanently increase by 5. Will trigger the creation of the Scholarship Guild. Technology and culture has increased by 3.

Weed moved on the area near the square that had the portal that connected to the River of Wailing. In Morata, old wise men usually came to chat or sleep here.

“Construct the Astronomical Observatory.”

A precise stone building. You can observe the night sky. Advanced study of the climate can be helpful in the development of magic. The discovery of a constellation will bring good luck. Morata's astronomers can detect bad luck. Technology has increased by 8.

All the stone was finally depleted! Buildings of the Ahreupen Empire consumed large amounts of stone. Now he could only construct buildings made out of wood.

“Construct the Ahreupen Merchant Center.”

A facility for Merchants Enables access to more trade routes and controls the prices of goods. Will be able to provide foods targeted towards wealthy merchants. Actively involved in the art of trade.

“Construct Leather Goods Center.”

Specialized in the trade of special leather products. Leather and skins can be made into common household products and traded. Increases the number of skilled tailors and develops tailoring industry. Morata's sewing in relation to economy has increased by 10. Technology has increased by 15.

“Construct Ahreupen terraced gardens, fruit trees, wells, and wagons.”

He spent more than 500 gold on intensive construction.

The buildings of the Ahreupen Empire were not the only things that were going to make Morata more prosperous.

“Open an accessory store, open a small theater, open a jewelry

store, open a furniture store, open a winery, open a chicken farm, and open a sheep farm.”

He did not forget how lucrative users were in Morata.

“The money spent will eventually come back to me.”

He was building all sorts of facilities to extort money from the users. The creation of wineries will provide good wine and the chicken supplies will help towards the sales of pubs and inns. Aside from farming and mining, these were core industries and an important source of income. Of course he had to be careful of running a deficit, but it was worth it to extend its operations all over Morata.

“The square seems a bit narrow...”

From the influx of users and buildings, there open space now felt a lot narrower. In the fountain there was the merchant center and users went around obtaining quests and parties on a day to day basis. Morata was growing exponentially such that users had to wait in lines at store.

“This time I’m going to expand Morata to be larger.”

Weed began to build four more squares at the outskirts of the town.

“Construct the Wyvern Square, construct the Bingryong Square,

construct the Light Tower Square, construct the Rover Square.”

It cost 40 thousand gold to have a square built with a fountain but it was a decent strategy.

Gravel was evenly spread along the spoil but it was still very spacious.

It was a much larger area compared to Serabourg, the capital of the Kingdom of Rosenheim. The Statue of Freya was surrounded by five squares in the shape of a diamond.

“Connect them so that you can make your way from one to another...”

He gave instructions to the building of roads through commercial buildings and residential areas. The city was now five times larger than it was before!

Looking from the sky, he could see the five squares surrounding the statue.

“Buy the land now and as the lord I will get money from all of them in the future.”

Reporters from each broadcaster were dispatched to the North. The reason was because there were no movements in the war between the Kingdom of Haven and the Kallamore Kingdom. Because of this, they focused their attention to the clouds of war

that were stirring in the Northern region.

“This time, the God of War Weed will taste bitter defeat. It is reckless to think that he would be able to fight against several guilds.”

“Is that so. Are the various guilds of the north truly united? They have temporarily joined in an alliance in name but it will be hard for them to work together.”

Challengers appeared to counter Weed's large quest.

Public interest was concentrated on the north from the broadcasters and the Internet. They were all thinking about who was going to win the upcoming war in the live broadcast. Many were anticipating seeing the God of War Weed commanding his troops and defeating the unified alliance of guilds. A female adventurer from the CTS Media spent four days interviewing over half of the villages. More than five villages were shown training their soldiers in preparation.

“Is the Styrene Guild really going to invade Morata?”

“Of course.”

The Styrene Guild Master replied confidently.

They were constantly training their soldiers and purchasing weapons and armors from the central continent. They had also

gathered enormous funds to sign up several mercenaries and Dark Gamers. CTS Media had millions watching the new because they wanted to know what was going on in the world. At the time, the biggest news was the users and their guilds aiming in the North for Morata.

“May I ask how much preparations are being made?”

“We have roughly armed all of the soldiers and contacted a blacksmith in the Central Continent to create siege weapons as well. After the Protection of Freya ends, we are going to invade Morata.”

The Styrene Guild was preparing enormous amounts to war. Over half of the towns were dominated by the Styrene Guild and almost all of their troops were being used for the goal of occupying Morata. More than 100 thousand troops were being prepared to overwhelmingly occupy Morata.

Pale was maintaining his bow while Surka was looking over her gloves. Zephyr was checking his rod to see if the line was working well. They were hunting in Morata and they could feel the surrounding atmosphere.

“A big war is coming.”

Pale calmly said.

Archers had the opportunity of playing a significant role in the

war. They did not fall as quickly as warriors since they did not make confrontation. Pale and the rest of the party fought in the battle against the invasion of monsters. He ran around the walls shooting arrows, aimed at the back of the heads of medium sized monsters. Because of this, Pale had a lot of combat experience and a high level. Hwayrung was checking out her dresses and accessories.

“I think this is going to be a big stage!”

Romuna said.

“This time, I’m going to sweep them all away with my magic!”

For the siege, a lot of money went towards hiring mercenaries to fight. You could drop dead, lose a few levels and items, but if you win then there was an opportunity to earn a lot. However, for Pale and his party, such a thought did not exist and they just wanted to protect Morata. This was because Weed was their friend. They were not even afraid if it was going to be a difficult fight.

“So how you think it’s going to go?”

“I’m sure Weed has something in mind...probably.”

“By the way, where is Mapan?”

Irene asked, to which everyone could only shrug their shoulders.

“I don’t know. I saw him trading near the River of Waling and didn’t see him much after that.”

Merchant Mapan ran a number of profitable stores. She probably knew where he was but didn’t reveal it.

Weed was left with a mere 260 thousand gold left! Morata did not have any defense facilities and could not recruit an army like the other guilds.

“I’ve been trying to live a good life but then you try to touch my rice bowl...”

Weed wet his lips as he said.

He did not know how to use this boiling rage!

At that moment he made a difficult decision.

“Open a military camp.”

On the outskirts of town, he spent 70 thousand gold in order to construct a professional military camp. It was a camp that was made to train infantry, archers, and spearmen. With training, soldiers could increase their levels. There could also be a center to train horses and cavalry. However that cost an enormous 200 thousand gold!

“Heuheuk this is better.”

Weed was alone in his room bitter as he tried to sooth himself.

At that moment he made his most heartbreaking decision since he had become a sculptor.

“Draft 8 thousand people as soldiers.”

He conscripted a total of 8 thousand soldiers.

Forced conscription of soldiers raised dissatisfaction amongst young people. It would also lower the morale of the soldiers that are drafted. 10 gold was consumed per drafted unit. There was also a monthly salary of 3 gold.

“Huuk huuk.”

Weed had to rest from shortness of break. Breathing became difficult from the high levels of pain and suffering.

“Now, I’m out of money.”

It cost a lot to upkeep soldiers. Each soldier costs 3 gold to upkeep and a wizard’s salary was at least 600 gold. To arm four horsemen cost 3000 gold. Intermediate level cavalry cost 10 thousand gold apiece. The military camp cost him 70 thousand gold and the draft

cost him 80 thousand! He had to give money to hire soldiers otherwise the people's complaints would rise. This cost 100 gold per household for each soldier. It was not easy to raise so much money. Knights required horses and they needed to train soldiers to be loyal to their lords. With an increase of soldiers and knights, the lord had access to greater power and influence. However Weed could only think of the costs.

“My lord has asked to recruit soldiers.”

“Come and join. Protect Morata with your own hands!”

In the Intervention Mode, he could observe the situation of sturdy young men running up to the camps to provide their services. The loyalty of the people was considerably higher than normal and the draft period ended quickly. But Weed still did not expect very much. Even with proper training, they did not have enough time to train and were only there to increase the headcount. These soldiers would drop very quickly in the war. Of course if the commander was excellent, then the deployment could alter the fight in their favor but that was different since 8 thousand soldiers was not much. However more additional unexpected situations occurred.

Peroyi armored infantry, a total of 160 residents, have come as support.

There are 197 archers in the town that offer their bows. Do you wish to enlist them?

In Morata there are 451 Hunters that have heard about the danger and wish to help.

People began to volunteer in large scales at the military camps for a total of 2680 people!

It was like exploiting human resources. As if he wanted to eat chicken and the chicken has shown up in front of him already plucked, seasoned and holding a lighter!

“Nevertheless, their lives will not be in vain.”

Weed gladly accepted them all.

“All of them are Morata’s authorized soldiers.”

Morata’s soldiers have increased by a total of 10,680. Average level: 17 Training: 12%

There is some difference between the new soldiers based on their experience of combat experience.

The recruits that were assembled were just like a house that has nastily cut corners like the windows were made out of leather clothing. They had better training than the other villages but their behavior was different. Morata had lower morale, training, levels, and weapons in all areas. The Protection of Freya over Morata ends in 36 days!

“Where do these soldiers’s hearts lie...”

He still had some time left, but Weed could not be relieved yet.

The other guilds had many high level users.

Even after recruiting, the soldiers were no different than scarecrows.

They could be picked off by arrows over devastated from an enemy magic attack. Without the Order of Freya, the number of soldiers, weapons, and armor were not reassuring.

“Call Death Knight Van Hawk!”

The Death Knight appeared in black smoke as he summon.

“I answer the master’s call.”

“I need you to go get your hoobaes(juniors)”

“Hoobae?”

“Kolderim. Go to Kolderim and use all of my contributions to bring the Kallamore Knights here.”

The kingdom of Kallamore had the best knights and they were known as invincible in the battle against the Kingdom of Haven. In the end, he got 23 thousand contribution from saving Kolderim in the Kingdom of Vampires.

“With Kolderim here, then the soldiers will grow a little faster.”

In effect, it was killing two birds with one stone by having Kolderim here.

“Take Wah-2 with you.”

“I will leave immediately.”

While Weed was in intervention mode, aside from building more buildings, he set up a new position in the castle.

“To take care of the department of taxes and financy, Geumini will represent the agency on his behalf...”

He could think of no other than the expensive life sculpture Geumini.

Wah-1 was the Deputy tax officer, Wah-2 was the tax collector, Wah-3 was the Bureau, Wah-4 was the Secret Service, Wah-5 was the special Tax Bureau.

“Bingryong will be the Minister of War. Phoenix will cooperate and be the deputy minsters of war.”

Rover was appointed to the department of Commerce. He appointed himself to the Agency of City Beautification. It was not

an option to distribute the power.

He kept all the key positions in Morata to himself.

Morata had exceptionally small guilds.

It was rare for beginners to rent a shack, much less start a guild office.

Morata's dawn!

There were many wandering the streets. In the distance, the light tower sprinkled the moonlight faintly. Morata at dawn was more beautiful than it was during the day.

“Soreuban, are we almost there?”

“Yes Huteo, it's just up ahead.”

They were a novices that were wearing rabbit leather armor. It was made from sewing together a bunch of different pieces. Morata had the advantage that armor made from sewing skills was very good for low level users. Clothes that were sewn by craftsmen were usually expensive so it was probably used.

“No one's following us right?”

They stopped with an uneasy feeling of being robbed.

“Stop turning around to look. Even if we don’t check, they will.”

“What do you mean?”

“Look at the shack.”

The roughly built shacks had their windows open.

Within the windows was the glint of sharp eyes!

They would catch anyone that was following secretly.

The Soreuban said to the other in a whisper.

“Do not say anything of what goes on today outside of this place. One wrong word and then for me and you...we will be done for in Morata

Gulp.

Huteo swallowed his saliva from the tension of the meaning of those words.

“Of course, you said that you will never talk about the meeting or the place?”

“Yea, if we said it then it will spread and we won’t be able to get into parties or hunting quests.”

“You have to be careful of what you say in Morata.”

“Not only in Morata. Their power is becoming more and more widespread. It might as well be in all of the Northern part of the Continent of Versailles. In the worst case scenario then we may need to quit Royal Road!”

To be robbed of the charm of playing Royal Road.

Most people played Royal Road at least once a day. As newcomers they did not have the benefit of starting over.

“It’s such a powerful group. That the...”

“Shh, this is not the place where you can speak that name freely.”

“Oops.”

Huteo was urgently made silent.

Soon the two of them reached their destination without a word.

The destination was on top on a hill on a dense field of shacks.

Even though it was plain, there was in fact a basement that opened up to an incredibly wide area.

Hidden dungeon!

This Morata's shack was originally a dungeon.

It was a large dungeon and with the contributions of a particular group that hunted down the monsters within.

At the entrance they had to perform a simple entrance test.

“Chwiik.”

The toll to get in by a user was to respond with a larger nasal sound.”

“Chwiyik!”

“Chwek!”

“Go ahead.”

Suddenly at the back of the dungeon there were a lot of people. There was a maze of shacks and a large number of people in them.

“Thank for letting me in. So...”

The two of them went around the dungeon. There were more than 20 thousand people gathered here. It much was evidence to the secret society in Morata.

Torches covered every wall.

“Here is the meat from the dragon slayer.”

“Oh, the dragon!”

“Here is your change.”

“Keep the change. Keep it.”

There were a bunch of people talking passionately. Most of them were beginners but there were also many high level users. They were the ones that were envious of Weed from the Continent of magic. He was as free as the wind but as destructive as a volcano. He did not tolerate the oppression of the big guilds. There was a large range of his supporters. Weed, from the Continent of Magic had built up a reputation and Morata was a good place to live so high level users were attracted there. That is how the underground society was formed. In the corner there were people that were handing out food for free. It wasn't much so the people were eating it sparingly. The identity of the food they were eating was grass porridge. The group that Huto and Soreuban had joined was the

Grass Porridge Cult. They had a total of 320 thousand members. The person that started the Grass Porridge Cult in the North was a user called Lemon. Lemon was a Saint from the Kingdom of Rosenheim. She had encountered the grass porridge for the first time during the construction of the pyramid.

“Oh cool.”

It was delicious.

Beginners did not eat much because they could not cook. In addition they were always hungry because of the huge physical labor they performed. When this happens, drinking the delicacy of grass porridge was exceptional. She had transported stones thirty nine times during the construction of the Pyramid and Sphinx.

She would never forget that emotional moment.

Thanks to the fame from the quest, it was a big help to her as a novice in and outside of Rosenheim. Lemon then began hunting and arrived in Morata. She remembers Weed exactly. He was an unscrupulous employer that exploited workers without any better treatment but there was the potential for compensation at the end! After the completion of the Statue of Freya, grass porridge spread through Morata like a wildfire.

New players would be given grass porridge to drink and then follow the group with respect. They would drink grass porridge after hunting. They would endure their problems with the Grass Porridge Cult. There were many advantages to grass porridge since

it did not require many ingredients and it was filling. There was no need to eat at fancy restaurants since they had improved the grass porridge with sugar, ginseng, and moderates amounts of meat. There was plenty of it to eat and it tasted good.

Beginners faced a period of suffering. However, those that had participated in Weed's quests formed close friendships. Lemon and the other players from the Kingdom of Rosenheim handed out free grass porridge to hungry players. Thus the Grass Porridge Cult formed with the shacks as the base which alleviated the sufferings of the beginners. Once it came to be known that Weed, the sculptor, and Weed, the God of War, were on and the same, then high level players started joining in Morata. They were disgusted with the unjust actions of the large guilds. Weed, the God of War was a symbol of power and freedom to them. Thus the Grass Porridge Cult grew rapidly in Morata. There were over 312 thousand low level users over level 50 and 8000 high level players!

Even if they left Morata for a quest, they would never forget their alliances to the province of Morata. The goal of the Grass Porridge Cult was to blindly follow Weed.

“In a moment, we will see a video of Karichwi.”

“Ohhhh!”

The atmosphere of the secret meeting became even more enthusiastic. Instead of an unorganized rally speech, it was more like a festival. There were cooks that were making delicious grass porridge. In the center there was a bonfire with people dancing.

“Oh, there’s bamboo in it.”

“To think that I died once from eating poisonous mushrooms.”

The Grass Porridge Cult members were so happy from eating that they could die.

They were complete novices but they could still share their joys with each other.

After a lot of time, the sun started to come out.

In the center of the event a voice yelled out. He was wearing a thick robe on top of his head.

“Gentlemen, as you know there are many northern forces that intend on invading Morata!”

The atmosphere of the group was like a glass of cold water being spilt.

Beginners could only express hostility and anger from their eyes.

“They have spent a large sum of money on buying mercenaries to take over Morata. However, it will be like any other city. They will raise taxes.”

In order to regain their investment, they were bound to raise taxes. Especially if the guilds occupy Morata. Because of their greed to attack other cities, Morata was going to be caught in the vortex of war. The beginners were not deaf nor blind so they understood the situation. It had become very worrisome.

“We will lose our shacks. There will be a need to get licenses to hunt rabbits. This stops now. Let us protect Morata with out power!”

“Wooooaaah!”

The beginners lifted their rusty swords and shouted cheers.

“Let’s sign up more members to the Grass Porridge Cult. Let us increase the number of people in Morata that believe in freedom and justice!”

To overcome the crisis, the beginners began to assess the situation. The eyes of the man that started all of it lit up.

‘To think...that the technique that Weed taught me would work.’

Inflame the Grass Porridge Cult!

The user’s identity that conducted the event was Mapan.

Weed had handed over the production of fabrics to the Grass Porridge Cult for the duration of the war. With a minimal investment he would reap an maximum effect. Weed had concocted war preparations from behind the scenes.

“Hmm.”

“Ahem.”

“Cough.”

In a large clearing, Geomchi was sitting awkwardly. They had made a meeting with a group of female orcs. The one that organized it was Seechwi.

“This is Meru.”

“Please call me Meruchwi, chwiik!”

“I am called Geomchi.”

“My name is Chilcwhi. Chwichwit.”

“What a lovely name. I am Geomchi3.”

The Geomchis were busy introducing themselves to orcs. Favorable rumors were spreading amongst the orcs about Geomchi

so the atmosphere was very friendly. After they came to a meeting, Geomchi132 sent a whisper.

-A war is going to take place in Weed's Morata. We would like permission to go fight the invaders.

Geomchi's thick eyebrows twitched since he was the representative of the group.

-What did you say?

-We would like to help with Weed during the siege.

-Siege? Are you sure that something so interesting is happening?

-It is. It's all over the television about how they're going to finally attack.

-It's broadcasted on the television?

Geomchi jumped up from the spot.

"I'm sorry something urgent just came up. I'll have to be going back now."

"What...did I do something wrong. Chwit!"

“No, its just that the youngest is getting in a fight so can I have your contact info?”

Fighting a war was the most fun in the world. He had the opportunity to participate.

“Chwichwit, please just whisper me.”

Geomchi got up from the meeting with the orcs to gather everyone else.

“Is going to be on the television?”

“I was already on the television during the dragon fight so are we going to be on again?”

Geomchi opened his mouth to say.

“I have not seen a siege yet. Is it really awesome?”

“I saw one once before.”

“What happened?”

“It was like a movie. At the end we will have to bear with endless incoming enemies.”

“Keueu.”

“That makes me feel better about going to Morata now.”

“In what way?”

“Half of them are girls.”

“There are so many girls?”

Even if the orc woman look like pigs, he would still want a woman. In Morata, over half of the novices were woman. Geomchi50 said.

“After the battle with the dragon and dying, Geomchi16 got a girlfriend.”

“It was a very memorable day.”

The first Geomchi to have gotten a girlfriend was a great event. Since then, the Geomchis have been completely looking for their chance.

“It happened because he protected a woman against the dragon.”

Geomchi3 hit his knee. How could he not be excited.

“Come on and let’s go!”

“For the siege!”

The Geomchis from all over Rosenheim Kingdom and The Yuroki Mountains. They heard the news and headed to Morata on horseback. The disciples amongst the Orcs came along as well.

Chapter 6: Weed's Song

Freya's protection over Morata has ended.

The Styrene Guild, the Puren Guild, and the rest of the guild alliance gathered their forces onto the plain. The users in the rest of the army were waiting to depart in the other villages.

Northern Alliance.

A total of 128 thousand units had been gathered. Of these units, more than 90 thousand were NPCs. They had been training in the north with swords, bows, shields, and other weapons for the war. They had prepared 40 armored units to siege the walls.

"Let us depart to Morata. We shall take it over."

"Looting is allowed. First come, first serve."

"We shall have the fertile land of Morata. Raise your swords!"

The Guild Masters were trying to boost the morale of their army. In such a large scale war, the morale of the NPC soldiers were factors that could not be ignored. The Northern Alliance were only 8 hours away from Morata.

KMC Media, CTS Media, and the CHN were the stations that

were going to film the war live. The forums were packed with posts that were related to it.

-Everyone, its time for the show about Weed's war!

-I've been waiting for this.

-Simply been waiting for it to start.

God of War Weed.

Because of his huge reputation, everyone was gathered in front of their televisions trying to supress their tension and excitement. They were going to show Weed fighting.

-The Northern Alliance has some really awesome power, don't they? It's not uncommon for such a large scale battle to happen in the central continent.

-How will Weed fight on such a magnitude?

-I honestly expect Morata to be defeated. Without the Church, no matter how many soldiers Morata has, they will all be low level.

-I was a mercenary in the Continent of Magic and the large scale wars in Royal Road are on a whole another level. It's going to be the Northern Alliance's unconditional victory.

-Doesn't Weed have a lot of experience with war? I remember seeing him conducting the Orcs and Dark Elves on the video.

-Having war experience does not constitute victory. I'm sticking with the army to win. You know about the Continent of Magic don't you? Weed never joins any guilds.

The war over the Internet had already started. With Weed's reputation, it was hard to think that he would lose. The war against the Undying Legion was a big shock. Weed had, by himself, conducted a war using the Orcs and Dark Elves on a never before seen scale. However the broadcasters believed in the overwhelming victory of the Northern Alliance.

"According to the information, Morata only formed a number of soldiers recently in small number and poor quality."

"This is the first time that anyone is going to beat Weed on such a large scale."

In real life, there were a number of high level users that gave their own unfavorable views. However, in reality, the greater burden was placed on the users of the Northern Alliance.

God of War Weed!

Weed had already built a reputation on the Continent of Versailles as the absolute fighter. Even though it was only one person, he had solved impossible quests and he had Bingryong, the

Wyverns, and the Phoenix. It only made sense that the Styrene Guild was very tense.

"We have to watch out for Weed. We need to catch Weed. If we do, then we will surely win. We have power many times greater than that of Morata. You do not need to worry about the others. You will be able to drop them in one hit."

"Wooooaaah!"

"Do you think Weed is scary? It's just a big monsters! Hunting large monsters is what large experienced guilds like us do. Just think of it like hunting. Simply catch the large monster and take its loot."

The Northern Alliance advanced!

Soon they came within the distance to see the Light Tower and the Statue. It was just a short 30 minute walk away.

The 11,867 armed forces of Morata were waiting. The Knights of the Kallamore Kingdom were nowhere to be seen.

"Over there. Ready your weapons!"

"Ooooh!"

The Northern Alliance had prepared weapons to siege the walls

with so they were going to go to another location. They were going to do this because they thought Weed had experience with war. The siege weapons slowly approached. The opponents thought that Weed was not anywhere nearby. That was because the gates to the walls were still slightly open.

"Go and attack the gates. Once we get the gate then its our victory!"

The full force of the Northern Alliance charged forwards. Then the gates opened wide. With the sounding of a trumpet, Knights galloping on horseback could be seen.

Shippuuwoooyu!

Coming out of the gate were the Knights of the Kallamore Kingdom!

Leading the charge was the Knight Kolderim.

"That, that crest."

"That flag with a shield on it...its the pattern of the Kallamore Kingdom!"

The Knights of the Kallamore Kingdom had been seen various times in the war broadcast of the Kingdom of Haven. Each of the Knights were at least level 350 and the named ones went all the way up to level 450! According to footage, each knight could beat

high level large monsters on their own. The group of a the knights led by their leader began their assault against the siege units. The siege units were being handled by users. They were confused because they were divided into various different guilds. Those from the weaker guilds that saw them coming got scared and fled from the battle.

"Run!"

"I didn't know that there were going to be Knights from the Kallamore Kingdom here!"

The Northern Alliance, in their shock began to shoot arrows and cast magic.

"O Hot Flame, Burn Thy Enemy. Flame Blast!"

"Triple Shot!"

"Chain Lightning!"

A number of randomly aimed attacks poured out against the sudden attack.

"Scatter!"

The Kallamore Knights scattered into groups of 50. With their quick speed they were far away from the magical attacks to be

damaged.

Kwakwang kue kwa!

The lightning struck, the earth shook, the flames soared.

The wizards that were planning to use their magic sparingly to destroy the walls used all their magic! Below the power of the attacks that had destroyed the ground could be seen. Since they had overlapped their magic in the same area, the Kallamore Knights had avoided it. The 150 elite knights of the Kallamore Kingdom that put all of the Kingdom of Haven into terror continued their charge. The mighty knights were wearing full plate armor that was capable of absorbing magical attacks without breaking. Weed did more than just that to make sure that the Knights did not fall helplessly. Every time the seasons change he could enact the Blessing from the Goddess Freya! Thanks to that, the Kallamore Knights were all blessed. The 150 Knights charged with their horses and instantly took down 130 people.

"Charge!"

Kolderim gave a command.

They had prepared magic attacks again for the fight, but they had not known that the nightmare of the battlefield, the Kallamore Knights would have appeared.

"Gahhhh! Help!"

"Hurry and avoid."

The enemy Kallamore Knights were so fast that they could not resist. The large armored knights appeared in the battle with the utmost majesty. They were being taken out miserably. The wizards of the Northern Alliance began to prepare their spells again.

"Water Storm."

"Triple Gravity!"

"Incinerate!"

They used their spells near the allied forces. The wizards of the guilds did not take into account the location of the Kallamore Knights and did not hesitate to use their magic. Wizards were useful in war because they could use magic to dispatch large groups of enemies crowded together. Because they were getting experience and fame, they did not hesitate to use magic. The leaders of the Northern Alliance were being brutally hit by large scale magics.

"Crazy Mages!"

"Stop it!"

But the wizards did not stop their magic.

- Level up-Level up
- Magic has inflicted severe injury on allies.
- Allies have been killed.
- Infamy has increased by 350.
- Level up.

They were leveling up tremendously!

Users that were part of the Northern Alliance averaged between level 250 to 300. They still had to be concerned about the Kallamore Knights.

"Eternal Guardian!"

None of the Kallamore Knights died. Their weapons and armor had magical blessings stored on them that would trigger. Each of the group of 50 knights would rush and then scatter. Using their high mobility, dozens of knights would rush in and kill a single person instantly. In fact, many of the users had not been prepared to fight to the death. Instead of trying to fight against the knights, many were trying to escape the explosions. Multiple guilds were part of the alliance so it was hard to stop the mages from casting magic.

"Don't run away!"

"I didn't know that the Kallamore Knights would show up all of a sudden!"

The battlefield of the Northern Alliance was a mix of screaming and dying. There was not a command system set up and the wizards were blindly attacking while others fled. The Kallamore Knights would rush in between the dust and flames as if they were Reapers of the Battlefield. However the situation would change for the Northern Alliance if enough time passes. The Knights would get tired eventually and then the enemy would aim for a counterattack. They could not imagine that a large enough army would appear from Morata's castle.

"Move! Advance! Keep marching!"

"Let's go! We can protect Morata with our own hands!"

They were wearing leather clothes and wielding old iron swords. The beginners began to enter into the war. The prestigious guilds were the revolting scum of the earth with their oppression and tyranny. They advanced to stop them and they would never give up Morata to them.

The Continent of Versailles was a harsh and rugged place to travel in!

Hunting a deer was like a boss monster to beginners. There was also the heart pounding feeling of wandering around a field and discovering a dungeon. People say that the central continent was a good place to hunt but they never got the chance to hunt. In various areas, beginners had to bow their heads to the prestigious guilds to avoid offending them. They had to pay money if they

wanted to hunt. They couldn't say anything even if the hunting toll increased. A single dagger would have a 50% tax rate, and even a severe 70% tax rate. They wanted to have their freedom. Their reasons for traveling the continent were different. But now was the time for them to fight. They only had leather armor, a sword, and some barley bread that they ate sparingly as they traveled to the north.

Then a story passed through the beginner community a few weeks ago. Various beginners put their experiences together and shared information since they had all undergone the same tearful pains of trying to earn money from rabbit leather. These beginners began to read some posts. Here were some of the rumors.

-Grass Porridge Cult recruiting unlimited number of beginners at no cost!

-It's a organization that is secretly sponsored by Weed.

-The Lord does not exploit the Tower of Light, The Statue of Freya, or any of the beginners of their jobs or rights.

In the scale of four weeks, they gathered an enormous number of beginners from all over the Continent of Versailles in Morata. Tens of thousands would be fighting scarecrows since then.

"We can fight."

"Get up and defend our freedom!"

The city of Morata led a bitter battle atmosphere as they charged ahead. The people of Morata had absolute loyalty and supported each other. Beginners would have their leather clothes repaired for free as well as free packaged food. They had become stronger from relentlessly beating on the scarecrows. The Geomchi sword masters began lectures aimed towards beginners. It didn't matter if they had spend weeks of training. They had been waiting for this moment to fight.

"Let's go!"

"It's time to fight."

An army of beginners poured through Morata's gates!

Ten thouand, twenty thousand, thirty thousand...

Tens of twenty of waves poured out. They continued coming out of the gates without any sign of decline. Morata was the place that beginners gathered on the Continent of Versailles. There were people that had walked all the way from the central continent to those that started in Morata. They were lined up all the way to the castle. The entire area was filled with beginners! In the midst of the Northern Alliance getting attacked by the Kallamore Knights, the army of beginners suddenly attacked. Mapan rushed around giving commands.

"Do not let the front line break! Support as much as possible. Shoot to kill! Do not hesitate to die because the 1.2 million other

Grass Porridge Cult members will avenge you."

The Grass Porridge Cult began to move in groups of 32 members to fight. The power in their beginner swords were very humble. They were barely wearing any armor unlike the Northern Alliance members. These common soldiers were formidable opponents. Their levels ranged from 30 to 50 but they did not have any regard for their lives. They were still complete beginners in the field of fighting.

"Get them in the chest!"

"Attack their legs."

"Chuck axes at their heads!"

Every time there was a successful attack a beginner would scream out in death! It was clear to them that they were dying. However, the users began to panic. The number of beginners did not stop coming. There was a severe level difference of 100 so it was not hard to kill them. However, once you kill one, then two would show up and then after than three more would show up. In such a large crowd they could not relax for a moment. The Kallamore Knights had the power of about half of the Northern Alliance with the exception of the ordinary soldiers. In the crazed battle, the organized beginners pushed them back with their insanity.

"Grass Porridge! Grass Porridge! Grass Porridge!"

"Kill the invaders."

"Our lives are worth nothing. We can do nothing but benefit from killing them and taking their items that drop!"

Beginners began their frantic full body assault!

In the air there was a large number of units all over the wall. It was a frightening thing to see. There were a large number of containers filled with arrows!

"Shoot the arrows!"

Even though they were novice archers, mages, and clerics, arrows were still a big threat. The users with low defense would not be able to defend themselves in the confusion.

"Fireball!"

"Ice bolt!"

"Fireball!"

Novice mages magical attacks!

Mages all over Morata's wall began to ruthlessly rain down magic on the enemy units. The novice mages magical power could not be

ignored. The elementalist started to show up as well.

"Faithful stone servant come forth and defeat my enemy."

"Shake the ground and churn the soil!"

They rained down stones that lowered the durability, defense, and attack of swords and armors. Archers also had their bows cracked and broken. Frequently, the ground would crack and swallow up the users of the Northern Alliance. Of course they could climb back up but the stamina consumption was huge. Moreover, the spirits listened to every command that they gave. Suddenly the earth changed into a swamp and an arm appeared dragging ankles into the soil. The users of the Northern Alliance began to curse.

"These beginners are getting cheeky."

"They're garbage. Slice them apart!"

"Just because you have all gathered together, what makes you think you can do anything?"

The difference in levels could not help much so around beginners would drop like leaves. It was difficult to kill 1 to 2 people of the Northern Alliance. However, it turned into a battlefield in other parts of the Northern Alliance. Not all of Morata was low level users. The prestigious guilds from the central continent did not pay close enough attention! The high level users fought together in

the north. They had mobilized large numbers of beginners to hide themselves. They then began their assault alongside the novices. The users fought together in Morata to tie down the enemies. Even the Geomchis were mixed among the beginners.

"Why are there so many openings?"

Geomchi150 would appear everytime the beginners would launch an attack. He could precisely see the gap in which to stab his sword into.

-You have struck a fatal blow!

The users of the Northern Alliance would angrily wave their swords at Geomchi150 but they never even reached him.

"They need to learn how to swing a sword from scratch."

-You have struck a fatal blow!

Pale's party was also make moves.

"Hey what's up?"

Hwaryung approached and smiled as the users' eyes widened. She was wearing a dazzling purple dress that revealed her charming legs.

"Enchanting dance!"

Hwaryung began to use her fascinating dance move to free the users where they stood.

'No way.'

'You can't do this!'

It was unfair. While they paralyzed they could not help but be extremely angry. They didn't even get to keep watching her dance. Hwaryung left behind a faint flowery smell as they were forced to stand there. Pale and Maylon fired arrows at these enemies.

"Poison Arrow."

It was a sniper skill. They were moving everywhere while shooting arrows with extreme accuracy. She deliberately took the day off in order to participate in the battle.

-This is KMC Media's Shin Hye-Min in Morata!

There was equipment in her capsule that linked everything she saw to the relay stations.

"Please call me Maylon here."

-Yes Maylon. Can I transfer this onto the broadcast?"

Maylon said while pulling her bowstrings.

"Of course!"

With her permission, the images from her capsule were transmitted to the station. People could see KMC's broadcast of a female Ranger pulling her bowstring. The tip of the arrow left the bow like a snake. You could see the weight of the arrow as it hit the forehead of a user. The user lost a lot of health and turned grey instantly.

"Twenty nine! Did you see that?"

-Are you having second thoughts now that you're involved in the battle?

"Yes. I need to keep fighting on Morata's side."

Aside from the two of them firing arrows, there was a storm of fire. Romuna was successful in casting a long powerful spell from memory. After a while black clouds formed over her head. She quickly moved out of the way to dodge it.

Crackle crackle kwagwa bashhaa!

Thunder bolts dropped from the sky simultaneously. A wizard took off his hood to see if the attack was successful. Maylon continued to fire her bow off. Her arrows shot into the upper torso of the wizard.

"Thirty! This time I didn't miss the wizard."

The breath of everyone that was watching was taken away from the sudden events. Multiple stations were broadcasting live at Morata. This was the advantage they needed to get higher ratings than the other stations.

Of the Northern Alliance there were many warrior and paladin users with high defense, but they did not hunt like the Geomchis. Boss monsters that Knights would not be capable of kill the Geomchis could hunt! The users of the Northern Alliance stopped panicking and grasped the situation. However, they could only realize the number of disadvantages there were. The guild chat was so congested that no one could find any decent information. The Kallamore Knights were still stronger than a high class boss monster as they engaged the field of carnage. Level 50 beginners, though small, was still something to be worried about. Users were going along with the beginners and hunting enemies as assassins. Because they were low level, the beginners pressed on fearlessly.

"Morata's army!"

Morata's soldiers jumped into the war. They mainly focused on shooting arrows from a distance to intercept the Northern Alliance. Then there was a scream!

Dung dung dung dung puaaaa!

Music could be heard from all over Morata. Bard began to play all

at once. Bards could help with aiding allies by replenishing their stamina. The bards gave a performance about the Morata Lord's might.

"Let the power of our souls play!"

The bards started to blow a horn. Soon the mood began to escalate rapidly. It felt as if something was going to show up!

"Keurwalalalalalala!"

Then they heard a huge roar. The soldiers and generals of the Northern Alliance began to feel weak at the knees as they collapsed onto the floor. The Peerless Dragon causes weak creatures to die. The aura began to fill the bodies of everyone in the Northern Alliance.

"What?"

"What has appeared?"

Looking up into the sky, at the castle the giant Bingryong could be seen flying around. He was too large to have good agility or stamina, and he was weaker than usual but the intimidation that he gave off was real.

"Its Bingryong!"

"God of War Weed is here with Bingryong!"

Weed was sitting on top of Bingryong's head. The Wyverns were flying around as escorts with the Phoenix.

"Weed!"

"The God of War Weed has descended!"

The users that had participated in the fight began to shake with fear in their eyes. Due to Weed's charisma, the users of the Northern Alliance were suddenly affected.

"There is no way we could have won against a famous adventurer like him."

"Weed was able of catching a dragon. We can never win."

Weed had colossal fame and fighting spirit that caused the enemy soldiers to lose morale. Morale was recognized as an important power on a battlefield. Weed smiled satisfied.

"This is a wonderful hunting ground."

Tens of thousand of people in the war!

If he won the war then he, the lord, would get a lot of fame and a

title but that was not what Weed found interesting. Why would he risk himself if he could get more fame from a quest. He had struggled with an S rank quest for his class. Weed wanted the equipment that was worn by the Northern Alliance. On the item trading site, he could get 75 thousand, 90 thousand, 1060 thousand, 2.9 million and higher up to 10 million won for the items. There were a lot of users that were equipped with swords and armor.

"Alright. Alright. This is great."

He did not know how many Kallamore Knights and beginners were left since the fight had already gone on for 2 hours. Now that the Northern Alliance was exhausted and lost a lot of vitality it was now time for him to strike. He still had to be careful of the mages that were meditating to regenerate mana.

"Keulkeulkeulkeul."

Weed smiled and let out a wicked laugh.

From the very beginning of the war he had been waiting for this very moment. It was cowardly but he fought nonetheless.

"I can see the items that I'll get from killing."

It was not an exaggeration that Dark Gamers got a special bonus payment at least once a year. There was a jackpot all over the area. In this one battle he would be able to get a lot of equipment. Weed cleared his throat now that he was ready. The bards continued to

play their music. It was to indicate the joy of the start of the song of war! Weed began to yell violently at the top of Bingryong's head.

The music of the battlefield flows

Follow me now

I'm singing to the brink of death.

Weed had not practiced the lyrics beforehand. Weed turned his eyes to the floor.

There are four warrior helmets.

Time for you to die.

Is that a knight I see over there.

Are you exhausted?

I'll give you twenty seconds to rest

I'll be taking your armor

Those are some very nice thing that you have

I'd like to have them!

You have such luxurious items.

I, Weed, will fight you.

While looking at the floor, he came out with improvised about looting items live on the screen. There were quite a few users in the mid-300s that he could sweep up. Last night he had spent a lot time to give life to two sculptures. The King Hydra and the Black Snake. The effects were not worth it to Morata but he gave life to them since it was an emergency. As a result Weed's art stats dropped and he gave life to a level 429 and a level 441 super monsters. Even with Weed's charisma and leadership, it was very tough to control these new creatures.

Chapter 7: Defending Morata

The complaints from the King Hydra and the Black Imugi were piling up and they seemed ready to explode. The sculptures were not even tired. However ever since they were given life they had only been told to wait even after the battle had started.

'Must wait until I can eat.'

'To become a true dragon I must eat these guys. But I can not move because of the command of the owner.'

The King Hydra species characteristics were brutality and voracity. When the Northern Alliance drew near, the King Hydra's eyes would enlarge.

'I want to eat. I want to eat.'

'Want to eat them.'

'We have seven heads to eat with.'

'It smells so, so delicious.'

Thick saliva dripped from each of the King Hydra's heads. The acidic saliva from the statue mixed into the nearby lake, killing the fish. The Northern Alliance still had not noticed the presence of

the King Hydra because of the ongoing battle. However, once Weed showed up, the King Hydra reached the limits of its patience.

"Kaaaaaaaaa!"

The King Hydra splashed across the lake and ate up the users of the Northern Alliance. With its heads, it swallowed up 9 users into its big mouths.

"It's a snack. Snacks are delicious. A delicacy."

The sound of the crunching of users! The Black Imugi prepared to attack elegantly by summoning a Fireball. The large fire magic was poised in the air, ready to attack. The King Hydra and the Black Imugi were not the same as the ones during the fight against the Embinyu Cult. They were similar, but their levels were far lower and much more vulnerable than before. Their magic was weaker, their vitality was not infinity, and they were weaker. They were lacking in all aspects, but the users of the Northern Alliance could not make such a calm judgement.

"Come on!"

The Knights of the Kallamore Kingdom were causing the users to panic. The King Hydra was randomly eating users with its heads and the Black Imugi summoned and dropped Fireballs. Instead of fighting, the users tried to escape from the King Hydra that ate dozens of people. The Black Imugi dropped its fireballs causing the genocide of more than 100 people. The flames spread widely around the debris. The wizards tried to cast protective magic and

the archers tried to plan a diversion. However, more people thought about trying to run away to save their lives. The users of the Northern Alliance had not had any experience in performing a siege. Although, even if they had experience, it would not help them in such a situation. Furthermore this was not a normal fight about power that one could predict. With the fear and anxiety, the once powerful Northern Alliance was rapidly dismantling. Some of the guilds began to launch magic attacks at Weed.

"Fire Burst!"

"Frost Circle!"

"Thunder Storm!"

The spells were cast and attacked the ground. Powerful knights charged towards Weed. Archers fired their arrows. Their goal was Weed! They wanted to hunt Weed, the God of War.

'Either way, the winner of the battle does not matter'

'It only matter that I can become famous after killing Weed.'

The users that were over level 300, the core power of the Northern Alliance, launched their attack on Weed. There was a significant amount of users that were conserving their mana in order to aim it at Weed.

"Kaaaaaa."

The Phoenix flew forwards Weed, dedicated to protect the owner's life. There were magical and physical attacks from over 37 people were met with the Phoenix's wings.

-Burst Fire has been absorbed.

-Ice Circle has decreased health by 4269.

-Phoenix's body has failed to absorb Thunder Storm. 3210 health is gone.

Ice and water magic ate away at the Phoenix's health but the fire magic restore it. Arrows also stuck into its body. The Phoenix managed to stay strong in the face of the magic and physical attacks.

"Kieeee!"

Phoenix was suffering horrible pain. Even with his huge level and high health, the consecutive powerful strikes caused a heavy amount of damage. The continuous attacks could have possibly been fatal. He lost health until he was at 24%. Weed immediately started blaming him.

"This ignorant bastard!"

"Kieeg?"

"Nevermind, all birds are the same. Even if they have a head they don't know how to use it!"

If he had been hurt then he would have started to nag at the Wyverns and Bingryong.

That was prevented because of Phoenix.

'That was good.'

'He is able to take care of the owner better than myself.'

'That's our junior.'

The sculptures of life wanted to live a good and selfish life!

Weed did not want the last Phoenix to die. It was also the same for the other sculptures of life. Even if he won the war, if he lost a sculpture of life then it would be a big loss. To give life to another masterpiece or a bunch of classic pieces would cost him at much as 10 levels. He had told this to the Wyvern and Bingryong several times already.

"Do not die."

Weed's voice sank and sounded slightly moist and sweet. Bingryong began to have frozen tears forming at the corners of his

eyes.

"You have yet to break even."

"..."

"You need to work for the next 20 years to cover the losses I made on you, at the very least, right? Do not make any risky actions or you'll be wasting my money like this."

Even if you want to die, then you cannot die until you have made a lot of money.

"Let's prepare the magic attack again. Weed is still in the sky."

"Let's all attack at once."

You can not afford to give your enemies an opportunity on the battlefield. There was a dense number of users in the Northern Alliance so Weed could not miss an opportunity now.

"Phoenix, Bingryong. Start now. Do not lose against the youngests."

The Black Imugi and the King Hydra that Weed had made were already going around and attacking. The newly created sculptures were powerful but there were a considerable amount of level 300 users that were dangerous. He did not know about the Kallamore

Knights and the Geomchis, but the King Hydra and the Black Imugi would be surprisingly easy to kill.

"Kiyaaaaa."

Phoenix began flying to the center at full speed. Everywhere he passed by a rain of flames fell down. With the Phoenix's power of fire! As the rain of fire fell, the knights and soldiers began to rapidly burn as the fire attached itself to them. Fire damage was limited to an individual but now it was on an incredibly large range. The ground was covered in flames. The flames could be removed with water related magics from wizards or from priests. But the flame rained down on such a wide range all over the area. This meant an enormous amount of damage accumulation.

"Take care when fighting Wyverns. Do not be too greedy!"

"Alright Master."

The Wyverns were much weaker in the early level 300 so a group of 10 wizards could easily defeat them if they were single targeted. They needed to avoid being defeated by magic and falling to their deaths. Luckily wizards were very difficult classes to level up. In the Northern Alliance, there were maybe only about 500 wizards and most of them have already exhausted their magic.

"Geumini, go help the Wyverns."

"Alright Master."

"I'll lend you the wings for you to hunt with."

To let Geumini fight with the Wyverns, he lend him the wings. He did not want the precious gold ingots that Geumini was made of to fall to the ground and disappear without a word.

"Bingryong, be sure to fight well. Help the Wyverns out."

"Leave the Wyverns to me."

Weed jumped off of Bingryong. The people that were watching his every move cried out. They wanted to kill the God of War!

"Weed fell."

"There he is!"

There were paladins, warriors, mages, thieves, assassins, and swordsmen. Weed checked the number of melee classes that were being engulfed by the flames and were running away. Weed fell into the Northern Alliance and hit the ground, smashing into a dwarf.

"This guy is!"

The dwarf yelled!

With Weed's weight, there was an enormous amount of damage done to the dwarf's health as well as inflicting confusion status. The users that were around Weed were greatly surprised.

“Sculpting blade!”

Weed took the life of the Dwarf with his sword easily. He quickly looted him as he turned grey. Loot! The feeling as something instantly enters into your possession!

‘Got it!’

He did not have time to check his message window. It was the feeling of robbing a place and not having the time to check in the jewelry was authentic or not. Enemies were everywhere.

"High Priest Blessing!"

He blessed himself with the Freya's Ring of the High Priest. He had prepared himself earlier with sword grind and armor polishing skills. There was a 20 minute time limit on the blessing.

"Heraim Fencing."

He continuously moved forwards without stopping with the sword skill! He had gotten the ancient sword skill at the fourth floor of the Hero Tower. The continuous increase in attacks raised

strength and agility. Weed ran like crazy.

'Chest armor look a little cheap. Sword's cheap. The maximum level of that equipment is 210.'

He passed by those immediately.

'He's wearing a good helmet. The other stuff looks about the same. Around level 250. There a lot of armor so he must have high health but the durability is a bit worn out. There's a high probability of dropping.'

Weed used his sword to strike him.

Puuk!

The sword pierced into the seams of the armor.

-Two continuous attacks have been successful.

40% increase in Power.

His blacksmith skills he had learned were useful. Armor did not have defense equally in all locations. There were seams and thin sections that did not have much durability and were be penetrated more easily. Weed, as a hobby, was able to instantly tell the overall level of users through the equipment that they were wearing. The Dark Gamer's Union Board of item information as well as the

auction sites were now working here! The user turned grey as Weed gave the finishing blow to stop him from recovering. He began to single out users. Archers! He overwhelmed the bow users. There was a Blue Magic Bow among the archers!

-Three continuous attacks have been successful.

Agility has increased by an additional 40%.

It was possible for Weed to use Heraim Fencing up to eight hits. With each successful attack, power and agility was raised greatly. Royal Road was a reflection of reality. Increasing the strength stat would slightly increase endurance. Raising the agility stat would improve accuracy and response time. Weight and speed made a difference when it came to running 100 meters. However raising 100 power stats did not unconditionally raise the 100 damage. There were many variable when it came to maximum attack damage. Of course these would show if a sword was not wielded properly. The weapon could slip and the damage would not fully be used against the opponent. More was needed than just strength and agility. There was no point if the body only had high agility. There was also no point if the body was too big and heavy that it was difficult to fight. Bingryong had huge damage output but required a lot of strength to just hold up his body. This was a disadvantage. On the other hand, the dwarves did not have much body weight so they did not keep up well in battle. They made up for the lack of power by using weapons like axes and hammers. Weed killed three more people with four more attacks. All that was left was a Knight! But the knight was using a good sword. That sword was an amazing weapon with strong penetrating power. It was a very expensive weapon for a knight to use! It was a good weapon to use against enemies.

"That's mine!"

Weed used the Heraim Fencing to attack. He struck the knight like lightning. The mighty sword fell down in a line. However, at that moment Weed was mistaken. A sword came from behind as the knight began to swing towards him.

"So it seems that knights are not so fragile!"

The valuable items!

He repeated the Heraim Fencing again, this time more powerful. The last of the eight attacks was 3 to 4 times more powerful than the first. Sometimes it would exceed the durability limit of the armor and weapons and break often. Weed jumped with his full power forwards. Heraim Fencing improved not only power but also agility. Thanks to his high agility, he could twist his sword and change his attack into any direction.

"Yes!"

Then he saw another knight. In the middle of his attack, he confirmed a weak point and changed the direction of his blade in a very short time period and stuck it into the knight. It was a big challenge for Weed to change the direction of his attack based on the situation because of his high attack speed and power. However, he naturally grasped the weight of the sword and spun his body into the air. The Heraim Fencing was still in effect. He spun to make his attack stronger to finish off the Knight's life and

defenses!

Kwaaaang!

The sword swung accurately into the knight's side. The Knight didn't even have time to scream before he turned grey and died.

Syasyasyag.

Weed used his left hand to sweep up the items. Even if it was only one copper he would use his fast and accurate hand movements.

"Ueueu...."

"It's really Weed!"

The nearby users did not dare to move. The knight that had just died was one of the stronger users. The rest did not have time to react. None of the melee classes were holding up to Weed! The knights on horseback and other users began to step up. Even though they had good sense, there was no sense of unity and they had pathetic organization. Weed decided on another target.

'I have seen that ring before. It has a property that increases maximum mana.'

He had the talent to identify the item's characteristics! It was a very good item. He could not miss out on getting such an expensive

item from the enemy.

“Call Death Knight Van Hawk!”

Death Knight was summoned. He summoned Van Hawk because he was going to start fighting a large number of enemies and knights.

"I'll take this one Master."

"Heraim Fencing!"

He did not hesitate and did not stop his attack. Weed kept moving forwards the enemy. He had fell into the middle of the Northern Alliance and there were enemies everywhere.

"Weed is mine!"

"Take my sword. Lightning Sword!"

The enemies did not waste time and used their skills without hesitation. Weed took the offensive against the enemies that were between level 200 to 300. He killed the ones that were exhausted or heavily injured. After using up Heraim Fencing he managed to kill five people. However that was not enough.

"Sculptural Destruction! Convert into Force!"

-Sculptural Destruction has been used.

The grief from destroying a fine piece! The grief!

Five art stats have disappeared permanently. Fame has decreased by 100.

Art stats have been converted into Power.

His bodily muscles were boiling with strength! It was too big of a waste to use a masterpiece so he only used a fine piece. Even this much was a waste.

"Return me 15 times my amount!"

Weed cried out, screaming at his enemies. His increased strength with his accuracy further increased his lethality. Thieves and assassin neglected to use their ranged attack skills and they had pitiful defense. So the assassin and thieves, as well as other classes were easy to attack. Weed jumped and killed 25 enemies. Then a strong looking knight came running over with ten other people Weed could not overlook this!

‘That’s at least level 340.’

They were the core of the Northern Alliance's power. He could usually use Heraim Fencing to kill users in one or two blows and now a strong knight was approaching him. He tirelessly moved his sword towards his enemies.

-Four continuous attacks have been successful.

Power has increased by an additional 40%.

Kkwagwagwang!

The sword gave off deafening bursts as he struck the knight's shoulder armor. The knight was surprised by the power of the strike. Even with high vitality, the user was forced into a state of panic. Because of the high level armor and shield he had high enough defenses to not die in a single hit.

-Five continuous attacks have been successful.

Enemy is now confused.

Reduces enemy fighting spirit.

Agility has increased by an additional 40%

-Six continuous attacks have been successful.

Power has increased by 50%.

15% of the damage is dealt in a shockwave.

Seven continuous attacks have been successful.

Agility has increased by an additional 30%

Power has increased by an additional 20%.

1500 mana has been spent.

A Knight was killed!

After he killed a knight, he killed three more knights.

The last knight took a total of eight hits to defeat.

"It's a strong skill. Don't block! Avoid!"

The Knights began to scatter. However, even though the knights quickly escaped, they were still within the range of his attack. Weed caused the weak players to run! His sword caused high amounts of damage but it ran out quickly because of its mana consumption. However, he could conserve mana and raise his skill proficiencies higher. Due to his sculptural destruction, he could deal high damage to the enemy's health and cut through their defenses. Weed was still surrounded by knights and other professions so he was in an unfavorable situation.

"Isn't this a little extreme!"

Weed did not lose his concentration as he looked around at his enemies. In the meantime, he was gathering the items that were dropped by the ones that had died!

“Ueueu...”

"I can't believe this. His level is too high."

The users were tired! After the magic attack and the arrows, more than 100 users would swarm at them each. Weed had jumped in after the arrows and spells were shot and used Heraim Fencing at the knights. The surviving wizards gathered to use their mana to cast a spell to attack Weed. He could not avoid a magic attack that attacked everywhere indiscriminately. He had lent the wings of light to Geumini so he could not escape into the sky. He had also sent Geumini to fight in a place that wouldn't attract attention but now Weed was exposed to be attacked.

"I wish my class had a few more combat skills to use....Moonlight sculpting!"

Weed's eyes were watering. He had learned this skill after getting advanced sculpting. The light sculpting! It required a consumption of mana but it covered the entire body in light and could act as a defense.

Cheuchyuchyuchu!

Everywhere Weed fired off multi-colored light. Each of them

were an absolutely beautiful hue. Various magical attacks and arrows bounced off and changed direction. However, his skill level was still low so it could only do so much.

‘Am I going to die like this?’

Weed felt fearful. It was not certain that he would live if he was hit with magic of this magnitude. He still had the option of reviving by the Refuse Death skill. In that moment he could show the true power of the undead in a place like this. However, if he died then he would drop equipment and skill levels. The Moonlight Sculpting was not high, but his sculpting and production skills were really hard to raise! Weed had learned a large number of skills and the skill drop in each of them would be evident. He instinctually prepared for an unavoidable death. He wrapped as much of his body in Moonlight as possible. After he revived as an undead, he would have no need for mana.

"Cold Eyes!"

Weed increased his defenses by using the Cold Eyes skill.

"I will protect you, Master."

Death Knight Van Hawk blocked the front with a shield. The magic enveloped the area.

Chapter 8: War Negotiations

Explosions ripped the land apart and ice pillars formed and collapsed repeatedly! After the smoke and dust cleared, the Northern Alliance could see the results of their actions. In the area that was thoroughly devastated by magic, there stood Weed and the Death Knight. Only that one area was fine. Thanks to the Moonlight Sculpting, the trajectory of most of the magic was changed slightly. Thankfully none of the magic had been aimed at Weed directly when they exploded. Due to the different properties of the various magics, the result was quite destructive. The arrows shot by the archers had lost most of their attack power because of the aftereffects of the magical attacks. Even so, in the center of the explosions, it was a miracle that Weed and the Death Knight managed to survive. It was thanks to their vitality, endurance, defensive skills, armor, and the protection from the Moonlight Sculpting! With the Death Knight, they managed to prevent dying by dividing the damage from the explosion. However, the durability of the Ancient Shield fell by a staggering 25 points. It was not an exaggeration one of the best, unique shields but it could not be repaired. The durability of his Tallock armor had dropped severely and was now in rags, but thankfully he was lucky that it was not fully destroyed yet.

"My Ancient Shield..."

His precious Ancient Shield that he only wore sparingly! The durability had dropped by 25 and now only 261 was remaining. He felt unbearable anger that its price would fall. Weed was really angry.

"I would have rather died!"

He would earn back his skill experience but he could not get the durability that the Ancient Shield had lost back. Weed had 33% health left and 46% of his mana. Even if he wanted to cry, he could not stop now since he needed to break even. He had managed to survive the magic explosions.

'As for the items....'

Weed had been ambushed by the Northern Alliance. Naturally he did not forget to take the items from those that had died.

"Heraim Fencing!"

At the moment, he began to fight those that were left. Weed was the hero of the battlefield. Everyone was watching him as they were intent on killing him. The Death Knight began to act and strike down enemies. The wizards and archers began to attack but it was not as threatening as the first strike.

"Let's fight against those that wish to harm Morata with Weed-nim."

"Kallamore Knights, let's go!"

The Kallamore Knights were still fighting against the Northern Alliance. All of the high level users that went to fight Weed had died in the magical attack. Many of the leaders of the Northern

Alliance had already died.

"Kill them!"

"We beginners will fight back against the oppressors."

Geomchi and the beginners began to break apart the enemy. The King Hydra, Black Imugi, Phoenix, Bingryong, and Wyverns were earning him a lot. Weed to focus his attention towards making the Northern Alliance crumble from within just as he had hoped and intended for. A single death does not lead to a significant lead to victory. Since he killed and looted a lot of the enemy leaders, the army was disorganized.

"Beat them!"

"Kill them all!"

The balance was destroyed and could not revert back to normal. The Northern Alliance was stuck in a situation like that of a wildfire. They could no longer trust their allies after having been attacked by their own magic.

"I give up. Help me!"

"It is own defeat."

"I apologize for declaring war on Morata."

The Northern Alliance users began to drop their weapons to show their intent to surrender. There was speculation that once Weed had begun to sing that there were already people surrendering. Once the soldiers of the Northern Alliance put down their weapons, the siege came to an abrupt, expected end. The beginners lifted their rusty swords and their wooden shields and began to cheer.

"Uwa, we won!"

"Morata wins. Hurrah!"

Weed shook his head.

"You started this war so you can not be the one that gets to decide when it ends!"

He used to mana to give off a Yell. This was not the end of the war. He had spent a lot of money to recruit soldiers and other expenses that would mean an economic loss. Of course, a defeat in war was the side that had substantial damages and could ransom prisoners of war, but that was not enough for Weed. He had not earned enough money from equipment. There were still the Kallamore Knights, the beginners, the Geomchis, Pale and the rest of the party against 30 thousand weak and tired users. There was money and experience scattered all over the floor! To say that you wanted to end the war was nonsense. It was like donating all of your money to charity after having won the lottery!

"Uwaaaaa!"

"We won!"

"The Northern Alliance declared defeat!"

To the beginners that were giving off their victory yells, they thought that Weed was just being proud to show his pleasure in the situation. Weed yelled back.

"These enemies dare to invade and destroy Morata! Do not leave a single person alive, kill them all!"

The beginners had to be stirred up. Without them there was no telling how much damage the Sculptures of Life and the Kallamore Knights as well as Morata's soldiers would take. With the number of beginners they could exhaust the members of the Northern Alliance. The Geomchis would ninja in during the confusion and cut down enemies while the Kallamore Knights charged in unexpectedly. The shouting that the beginners gave off worked to lower the spirits of the users from the Northern Alliance. Weed the God of War had given off his infamous war cry and wanted to wipe out the Northern Alliance. The users of the Northern Alliance raised their hands.

"Praise to Weed!"

"He is indeed the Count of Morata. We admit clear defeat and will not attack Morata again."

"It is an honor to lose to Weed the God of War. We had learned from this. Thank you!"

Because it was so interesting, stations were broadcasting the war in Morata.

"The Northern Alliance seems to have entered Morata's territory. Haseungtae-ssi, what do you think will be the outcome of this war?"

"It can't even be called a war. The Northern Alliance has mobilized over 120 thousand units. The victory will definitely go to the Northern Alliance. The majority of the Northern Guilds had formed this coalition and it was successful."

CHN Media decided that the Northern Alliance would win.

"The scale of the Northern Alliance is amazing and they have generously spent on military efforts to take over Morata."

"There are a lot of siege weapons. Viewers are going to see the city of Morata covered in flames today."

"Will Weed's invincibility as the God of War end?"

"Unfortunately that is so."

CTS Media came outright and said that Morata would lose. Weed would suffer bitter defeat and the Northern Alliance would win so that their viewership would increase. KMC Media took a different stance.

"The Northern Alliance, despite having a massive force, does not mean much to Weed."

"Oh Juwan-ssi, what do you mean? Are you saying something like the Northern Alliance is not enough to Weed?"

"That's right. It is because he is that much of a threat that the other guilds target him."

"What do you think will happen in the war?"

"It looks like the Northern Alliance's victory may seem obvious, but that is unknown until the war finally starts."

"So you're saying that Weed can win this war."

"At this point it is difficult to say, but from the quests so far performed by Weed the God of War, there is no saying that he would definitely lose."

Oh Juwan was watching the fight carefully. Morata was not expected to win, so KMC Media as Weed's contractor would get reduced viewership. Still the Director was a dedicated fan of Weed and maintained his stance despite what others said. Then the

stations showed the Kallamore Knights appear. There was not a single person there that did not understand the might of the Kallamore Knights!

"Do you think Weed brought them? Weed does travel a lot but I did not know that he had gone to the Kallamore Kingdom!"

"Kolderim is leading the knights. Kolderim is the Knight that directly leads the knights of the Kallamore Kingdom!"

"Is there some connection between Weed and Kolderim?"

The host of the station urgently raised his voice. Other than Maylon, the others did not know that it was Weed that had liberated Kolderim's soul and were surprised. The Kallamore Knights were battle knights that could take any role in combat and had the power to stop any force. They would ruthlessly wield their maces and swing their swords like lightning while maintaining maneuverability so they were like undying demons. The Kallamore Knights were very dashing, so much that there was significant increase of aspiring knights. The Kallamore Knights assault made a huge impact on the Northern Alliance users. The fear could be seen in their eyes. They had seen the Kallamore Knights' destructive power on the television but now they were subject to it themselves. With the sounding of a horn, the Kallamore Knights charge in rapidly. Many chose to flee from fear. Then the Knights began to dodge the wizard magic that led to allied damages, and then Morata released their large number of beginners. A level 300 high level users could simply kill 100 beginners. However, as the slaughtering continued they would get more physical exhaustion. Even if they killed a few beginners, they were still surrounded on

all sides. The Kallamore Knights would finish them off quickly or a high level Geomchi would briefly appear. The Northern Alliance users had already abandoned the idea that they were in the advantage. Mixed among the beginners were Morata's mid and high level users. In the battlefield, the experience and melee combat skills of the individual were important. Weed then appeared with the King Hydra, the Black Imugi, Phoenix, Bingryong, and the Wyverns! It was true that the famous Weed the God of War would sing before a fight. They had all noticed it in the battles with the Orc Karichwi.

'The real war begins now.'

'This is Weed's war.'

The song was about looting the items that the high level users of the Northern Alliance were wearing! That was exactly what he was singing about. The battle then progressed and magic began to strike Weed! It was an intimidating sight to see him survive that magic explosion. The Northern Alliance lost their motivation to fight and began to surrender to avoid further sacrifices. However the Northern Alliance was a coalition of builds rather than a guild under a single person so they did not have military efficiency. Due to the fact that it was a coalition of many builds, once one guild surrenders then the whole alliance collapses.

"..."

"So what happened to the war."

"Morata won."

The hosts were at a loss for words. It was difficult for them to explain what had happened once the beginners had begun to pour out. There were enough posts on the Internet community to cause the massive lag. Once you posted our own comment, you had to check 20 pages to see it.

-So the God of War did not lose today.

-I didn't think the Kallamore Knights would show up.

-He had the power to bring them.

-The Northern Alliance could not be called the main powers on the continent. It could not compare to the central and south eastern forces. However, after seeing the events of the war I am now unsure.

-How is Morata growing so rapidly? Last time I saw it was only on the level of a small village.

-Don't forget to keep watching the broadcasts.

-They don't see the broadcasts too often. Morata changes on a weekly basis.

-I started as a user in Morata. It's a place where art, culture,

adventure, religion, and commerce co-exist in harmony. The church of Freya can't be ignored. The North isn't lacking in anything. But they just keep growing.

-Weed is more than qualified to be Lord there. The Northern Users were just bad at developing their towns. He had built many huge sculptures and now isn't there the Art's Center Building? If that's completed, I would be glad to stay there.

-I just finished eating my sandwich. Also Weed! He did not disappoint at all. It was a shame that he didn't get to fight much but he fought well didn't he?

-I am leaving with my friends to the North. There's no point in trying to take over Morata anymore.

-Wait a minute, I'm coming too.

The moment the war ended, a window popped up for Weed to see.

-The enemy has surrendered

-Loyalty of citizens in Morata has increased by 3.

For showing off the city's power, military influence in the area has increased by 15.

Theft will disappear and bandit invasion will be reduced.

Security has increased by 13%.

Consumption will temporarily rise in Morata. People will not spare money to celebrate this victory. Morata's victory celebrations begin voluntarily.

-The Sculpting Guild will now produce souvenirs of this victory. 5000 gold has been consumed.

The Bards Guild will now hold a music making competition in memory of this war. The prize will be 4500 gold.

-Morata's fame in the Continent of Versailles has increased by 75.

Current reputation: 469

The higher the reputation of the region, the more famous the ruler is.

Victory or defeat in war, as well as produce, trade, quests, expeditions are factors that work towards local reputation. With high reputation, users can get high quality quests and fame in Morata. The trading pose will purchase goods at better prices.

-Increase in the fame of Morata's specialties.

-Reputation of Morata's textiles and leather industries increase, Freya's blessing and agriculture will increase local specialties.

-Morata will become famous for wine if there are more wineries.

-Morata has formed a speciality for superior cattle.

-89 Teuriban villagers migrate to Morata.

-85 Noroma villagers migrate to Morata.

-3600 northern residents have switched faith to the Church of Freya.

-Skilled craftsmen migrate!

The craftsmen will come to the Northern town of Morata and teach children their trade.

The children of Morata have great potential for the future.

-The Ekoban's town residents will now protest for 20 weeks.

They blame their incompetent ruler for not being like Morata.

If this condition persists, then Morata will become the lord of these towns.

Due to the defeat in the war, each of the towns were facing large scale resistance. It depended on the culture of each town and those that were defeated had to pay a huge penalty. Tears fell from those that were held in captivity.

-The warehouse manager hold the prisoner keys.

Their families will want to come to Morata to see them within two weeks.

Each of the lords had the responsibility of maintaining the morale in their forces. However, the Northern Lords did not see that and suffered huge damages.

"Half of the town has already deserted."

"Kerala doesn't have any culture. All the farmers have left the harvest in the ditches and ran away."

"Well, that much is evident."

"Bankchester guild is barely holding their own."

"Your town?"

"Us? There's nothing to buy. Who knew that culture and are are things that were actually important?"

There was not much unrest in the continent since there were cultural centers. Each town and city fulfilled the basic need of cultural level so that they could maintain hostilities with neighboring kingdoms. Morata had exceptionally great culture. Lords did not understand the meaning of culture and people satisfaction or a sense of art. So the Northern Lords reduced art as much as possible. They did not think they would lose so much from the war.

"Do you think that this is because we failed to raise culture?"

"This is where the real frightening part begins..."

The war negotiations were not over yet. Weed had gathered the lords and the guild masters into a building to discuss war negotiations. Basically it was reparations for the war. The number of prisoners from the Northern Alliance was perplexing. They had taken over 70 thousand prisoner. Of those there were 14 thousand users. The war reparations was bound to put them at a significant disadvantage.

The Styrene Guild took the first move.

"Morata lord, Morata is a well respected place. I have admired Weed-nim since the Continent is magic."

The beginners and POWs could witness the negotiations that were going on. With the amplification of sound magic the conversation could be heard from all over Morata. The stats were

also covering the conversation live. They tried to smoothed over things politically. Weed saw that some of the players were on the Hall of Fame and were trying to make themselves sound professional. The Northern Alliance was at a huge disadvantage. However the Styrene Guild continued at Weed.

'This much is just?'

There was a need to understand the personality and taste of the other party. So they tried to praise him as much as they could! They wanted to start the negotiations off with elegant lines of praise.

"The monsters of the Northern part of Morata are scatter out, this must be because Lord Weed is dependable. However, have you seen the extent of damage on the other villages?"

"..."

The Styrene Guild mention the loss of their culture and art.

"Even though we invested a lot of money, our villagers keep migrating to Morata which is a big loss for us."

The Lords of the Northern Alliance nodded in unison since they were all sympathetic to the words being said. They did not have the kind of money for this and wanted to escape this suffering.

"The damage is done now and we will agree to no longer invade

Morata. The defeat is ours and we would like our inhabitants back. So the point is, could you please consider this agreement and we will not attack Morata again."

After the Styrene Guild finished, they finally noticed. Weed was the notorious God of War known as the worst of the worst. In the Continent of Magic, he would kill anyone that made noise in the dungeon and even those that ran away. Weed had no sympathy or compassion. He was burned into history as the unscrupulous user that kills and takes all! Weed had his arms crossed with narrow eyes. That much could show his attitude that he was not at all pleased.

'I didn't get all the items...I have lost more than I got. I can not sleep well tonight.'

Weed's face was contorted like a demon.

'Have to move on from the bitter memories and live the rest of life. I have to go on day by day. It's like an only man that's suffering from painful memories as he separates the trash'

Mapan went on Weed's behalf.

"That is your position as the Northern Alliance, but from Morata's perspective there is no reason to look at a single side of the war."

"But we don't have any money to pay."

"No, but that does not mean that the war reparations are done now does it?"

"..."

"Are you saying that you want to leave the war negotiations?"

Mapan gave them a suggestion. After a war negotiation are given up, the surrendered prisoners are given a trial. Of course the one that makes the judgement is Weed and the people that he appointed. Users that kills Morata's soldiers are usually thrown in jail and imprisoned. The penalty that had to be paid was by no mean trivial. If there was resistance, then that meant death. Even if the users was safely negotiated, the soldier would resent their Lords. Their side had to accept the painful reality of defeat in war.

"Weed was one of the contributors to the Dragon Hunt and created this warm climate. What about his adventure to reclaim Morata? Weed had to go to a number of achievements in his adventures to find out a number of towns want to invade once the Church of Freya's protection ends because they had gone blind with greed."

Mapan cooly began to criticize the lords of the Northern Alliance. Traders always took pleasure in taking advantage of the powerless. For war reparations, usually 70% was divided amongst the soldiers. The remaining 30% went to the Lord for developing the city. Mapan wanted to benefit as much as possible from the situation. Mapan emphatically demanded.

"One users is 900 gold and its 200 gold per soldier as reparations."

"This is ridiculous."

"I expected a large amount but this is too much!"

This situation was also within his calculations. It was a reasonable amount for the cost of their lives. The problem with the war negotiations was the at lords did not have that kind of money! In the center of the continent, those in power always had thousands of gold but the lords of the North were generally poor. They had used most of their fortune moving from the central continent to the North to form towns.

"We don't have that kind of money."

"Even if you cut it in half, we still can't pay it."

Even for the central continent, 120 thousand troops of the Northern Alliance was not common. The fact that they had been defeated as well as having such a large number of captives was a disgrace to the lords. If they could not afford to pay the ransom then it could lead to another war.

"A single user at 900 gold is the amount though. Until now, all the previous wars on the Continent of Versailles had done this so it is a reasonable amount."

Mapan raised an eyebrow at the opposition. Even if there was no money to pay, they could not move on without making negotiations. Weed had his arms folded and was silent.

'Even at around 70%, they would have to depend on credit and pay in installments each month, and then the amount would lessen each month. I would not gain much. Then the overdue interest would increase drastically...'

Weed decided to clean up the situation while Mapan was with the troubled lords.

"There is no need for compensation."

"What?"

Mapan was astonished. To think that Weed would out and say something like this. He could not believe that these words would come out of Weed's mouth. The Lords of the Northern Alliance did not understand about the war reparations and just looked onwards. They did not believe what he had just said.

'They would be forced to get a loan.'

The lords of the northern towns could not earn much income. The investments cost them a lot and there was nothing that they could earn from. There was no guarantee that Morata would ever see the money since it was such an excessive amount. If there was another war then Morata would not have the Kallamore Knights

available. In the future there may be another lord that my decide to invade the North again. Weed, to the Northern Alliance Lords, would look like a malicious debt collector.

"There will be no compensation, the prisoners will be set free."

"Really?"

The Styrene Guild could not believe it. From Weed's position this could only be charity and there was no sense for it.

"Also a promise. Morata will not invade the other towns."

From Weed's position he did not need to occupy the towns to get benefits. Morata was not a small territory. Territory was not something that was fixed. There was a lot of ground between each state. Thus as culture grows, the boundary of the city expands.

"I suggest a trade agreement."

"What?"

"As you know, Morata has improved a lot as a beginner town."

The Lords of the Northern Alliance nodded. They had experienced it first hand so they knew better than anyone else.

"In the future there will be a need for weapons and armors for the beginners as well as a large amount of resources."

The Lords of the Northern Alliance began to get uncomfortable. Morata was a place that beginners could grow easily at. They had watched Morata grow increasingly powerful.

"And?"

"The beginners will need the necessary resources. Morata has many things such as mines and fields. There are items that are obtained from hunting that would be useful for beginners that you could sell."

Commercial development, taxes and permits were the right of the Lords. To open up the Northern Lords would create a huge market for beginners. The Styrene Guild had a broad expression on their faces during this difficult negotiations.

"This is a very good proposal for us. Why are you give us so much?"

"The Central Continent is far way. The merchants would have to take too long to get their and the prices would be too high. The merchants need all the help they can get. Our biggest problems is the northern beginners not being able to use weapons at reasonable prices because of the central continent's prices. That sort of thing is wrong."

The lords considered by making eye contact with each other and nodding.

"We are also sympathetic."

"We as well."

Morata made a lot more trade than the rest of the northern towns combined.

"I heard that you have trouble developing culture."

"..."

The Lords well into despair. They had found it increasingly difficult to develop culture as more people kept leaving.

"Morata will send cultural advisors to live in each of the villages. They will work to increase the culture and the towns and reduce the number of villagers that leave."

Culture had the effect of significantly reducing the complaints of the people. Morata had a lot of bards and dancers. They could be seen around the day performing. They would earn money from going from town to town.

One of the lords asked.

"However that would decrease Morata's culture. That does not make any sense to me."

Weed glared at him for a moment. The look in his eyes made him shrink away to show that they were not equals. There was a change in the atmosphere which was sufficient to reverse the situation. There were people that loved to talk and then forget what they had said. He had to threaten them this way. This, in a sense, was more favorable.

"I am angry that there are a lot of sculptors in Morata. There are a lot of skilled sculptors in Morata particularly. They create a lot of sculptures and paintings."

Weed was aiming to export the works of art. There was the Light Tower and the Statue of Freya but the growing number of artworks in the city needed to slow down. He did not want it to be a city of artists like Rhodium. Weed sank into a low voice.

"There are a lot of novice users in Morata. They need to go out so that they can grow their skills."

"..."

"Morata feels like it is very large. However, there are more quests and hunting that can be done by visiting other towns more often. There is room to develop Morata and the other towns."

Weed broke off into another topic.

"First, as the lord you need to invest and treat the village with love so that many beginners will start in you town. Establish a general store and a square so business can flourish. You will be able to see beginners fill their water bottle at the fountain. There will be nothing against the beginners from this war."

This was the talk that took place with Weed. The Northern Lords rose from their chairs. Cheers could be heard from all over the walls.

"Waaa!"

"God of War Weed is the best!"

"Weed hurrah!"

The beginners and the users of the Northern Alliance cheered! Weed also showed generosity to the invaders coming to Morata. Mapan as well as Pale's party was showing complete shock. Like how they saw Weed differently in artistry after the Light Tower.

"No what is...that's not like Weed at all."

"He can't be a philanthropist, right?"

"Has he fallen seriously ill? Maybe he fell off of a sculpture while he was making it?"

A man could not change so much so they were concerned with Weed's mental health. It was very difficult to understand what Weed was doing. Everyone that was there and watching the broadcast was showing a different attitude. Only Zephyr seemed to know what was going on as he nodded.

'With this negotiation he's going to reap huge profits.'

The value of beginners! The Northern Lord was concerned with their futures! However Weed had calculated the damages into his head and that there would be endless benefits in the future. The northern towns would sell their foods and obtain many benefits but Morata would be the one gaining the tax revenues. They had trade with the central continent but now they could actively trade with the northern merchants. It would also get rid of the northern town's reasons for war. With culture they will reduce the number of people leaving. Digging a mine to gather resources will develop the city's technology and create more quality goods for the town. This peace agreement will accelerate the northern towns' development. It would so get rid of the tension and anxiety of beginners in Morata as well as make more people start in the North. The Northern specialties would grown and develop as merchant trade increases. In the long run, Morata as the center of commerce would be the one to benefit. There would be better items for beginners which would rapidly increases the amount of taxes being paid.

"After the war he can get rid of the excess art!"

For the time being, the economy of each village depended on

Morata. He could grow their culture by selling off the art to each town. Nevertheless, the sale of the products gave big benefits despite the conditions to the northern lords. Trade with Morata did not give them any losses and there was no longer a need to war against Morata. So with these facts given to each town, a second war of Morata would not happen. Zephyr's thought more highly of Weed now. He had conquered the Northern Alliance. It was complex reasonable judgement and there was no need to make a hateful enemy.

"The strategy and the planning, as well as the policies. It's so scary that no one had noticed!"

While pretending to do this, he was actually waiting to exploit and harvest the benefits. Weed determination and concentration towards money was one of a kind.

"Fresh grass porridge."

The festival celebrating Morata's victory! The delighted beginners were excited. It was entertaining for Weed to watch them spend.

-The viewership has exploded. To think that viewership would rise this much from live footage of the war!

They were happy with Maylon's progress. KMC media as well as 12 other broadcast station had broadcasted Morata's war. They had footage of two perspective of Weed's war and earned a percentage from advertising with a small fee for broadcasting rights. They

were rolling in money.

"The world is a truly beautiful place."

As thanks for those that participated in the war, Weed gave out unlimited rice porridge. The lord opened up the storages and the residents and users could enjoy themselves.

-Special Ahreupen Grain Warehouse opened with free grass porridge to drink.

-Morata festival uses 50 thousand gold.

The lord was considered generous. There was money being spent everywhere. There was wild boar on barbacue, deer being baked and barrels filled with liquor.

"Drink it all!"

It was a new recipe made from a mixture of fruits and other items. It was a bit bitter from the bark and it had nutritional value from lettuce and raspberries. Weed had constantly used herbalism and cooking in the intermediate levels to research alcohol. He had finally made a new drink that was a liquor full of mysteries.

'Alcohol is money.'

Alcohol had a long shelf life and it was easy to store so it wasn't

uncommon that it was a best selling product. Professional brewing was a career that was held in regard on the Continent of Versailles. Food recipes, as well as drinks were traded at high prices. It had a good taste and nutritional value so it would be a recipe that was worth a lot. Weed had created a drink with high nutritrional value with low cost materials!

"This drink is amazing!"

"Is it that good?"

The beginners could taste the amazing taste of alcohol. It was not expensive compared to a bar and it was good for the price.

"Cheers!"

"We give our thanks to Morata!"

"Cheers to the 49th beginner division!"

The beginners were smiling brightly to show their joy. The festival was going on everywhere and events of all sorts. Others were getting ready to hunt since they had gained a significant amount of experience from the war. In order to get stronger the beginners needed to hunt outside of the city. Weed thought of it as a good thing.

"As you get stronger you make me more taxes."

The more taxes he got, the better. More users in the Morata created more positive effects in their own ways. Geomchis were off in the square consuming alcohol. The rest of the users that had survived the war were thoroughly enjoying themselves in the festival. Everyone was happy. Weed took out his lord mode and watched over the atmosphere.

“Increase city taxes by 2% for two days!”

Ttiring!

-For two days, a temporary tax is applied.

Items have been changed to a rate from 5 to 7% in the stores.

It was the festival season. There was a lot of stuff to buy and eat so there was a lot of consumption. He raised the tax moderately to cover the cost of his investments.

"I can earn a lot with this atmosphere."

The reason was the Grass Porridge Cult buying things.

In the real world, nothing was free!

Chapter 9: Sculptural History

The Central Continent's Lords did not like Weed.

"Just because he was a little famous in the Continent of Magic they say that we shouldn't carelessly fight him in Royal Road."

"Weed is the God of War? A little territory like his would be turned into ashes if it was in the Central Continent."

"Just because he finished a couple of quests that people thought were impossible."

Each of the Lords of the Central Continent had the same mindset from their long bloody history. They were the prominent users back in the early days of Royal Road and they had emerged victorious from several user based wars with various achievements. Each of the lords had an elite squad of at least 80 thousand units. Each of the territories that they owned were highly active with users.

"Morata is nothing."

Resentment and jealousy for Weed!

The war enthusiasts were quite annoyed with the reputation that the user Weed had gained from his quests. They also felt nervous over the number of beginners that were in Morata.

"Sculptures that are alive and can move...so is creating a sculpture similar to summoning a monster? To think that were was such a secret in the sculpting skill."

"With the level of growth that Morata is receiving, it might not be too far fetched that the northern lands will extend all the way down to the central continent!"

The Lords were in a rage. However, Bard Ray of the Hermes Guild simply waited for the result of the war. He deliberately did not watch the television. He went hunting as usual while waiting for news of Weed's demise. The Information Officer that was watching the Northern war reported the news. Even upon hearing the bad news that Morata won, there was no change in Bard Ray's expression.

"So It was Weed's victory."

"Yes, Morata was not damaged much either. The Northern Alliance was incompetent in many ways and they were far from united."

"But Morata's power was greater?"

Bard Ray did not understand what was going on. A few days ago, the stations had analyzed the reports on the power on both sides of the war. From what had been heard, the Northern Alliance should have had enough to completely overwhelm Morata.

"I'm guessing it is because of Weed's outstanding performance."

"Yes. That could be true. There are no words to describe his capabilities."

"..."

"Most of Morata participated in the war and with the show of power and tactics as well as the appearance of the Kallamore Knights will let them attract more people. The internet message boards are overflowing."

Bard Ray had a calm expression. To the Hermes Guild, there were only minor guilds in the North. Their total numbers could not begin to shake the top powers in the Kingdom of Haven. There was no change in his expression. But deep down it was not.

'Weed led the war and forced the Northern Alliance to surrender...!'

That was more than enough to ruin Bard Ray's mood.

"Selling Rotten Dagger. It cuts well and its best for hunting monsters."

"Selling Crooked Blade. It's a really good strong sword for beginners. I'll sell it for cheap."

"Selling Leather Armor. The chest area is a bit torn apart but other than that everything is fine."

Transactions between beginners were only in the numbers of coppers up to a maximum of 5 gold! Wyvern Square, Bingryong Square, Light Square and the Rover Square were all crowded with travelers. The four squares that he had created were now booming when it was once empty. However Morata had increased the number of beginners on a large scale because of the war. After the Royal Road's broadcast, it had opened its doors to a large number of beginners.

"Three pieces of barley bread for sale."

"Are they selling that to make a living?"

"I need to hang in there until I can buy a weapon."

"Huaaa, even though I can access a well, water doesn't help fill my stomach."

"Thank you."

Despite the cold air of spring Morata was very lively. Novice traders went around transporting 1 or two specialty products. Tens of thousands of beginners were hanging around as Pavo was building the Morata Center of Art. During this vacation, Weed had work to be done.

"I finished restoring sculptures, so I have to raise my level by hunting. I need to concentrate or else I won't have any peace of mind when winter comes by."

The trip he had went on had shortened his summer break

"Stat window!"

Name: Weed Title: Eternal Sculptor

Level: 368 Job: Legendary Moonlight Sculptor!

Title: Dragon Slaying Commander

Fame: 29,726

HP: 31360 Mana: 14405

Strength: 1315 Agility: 1005

Stamina: 159 Wisdom: 189

Intelligence: 184 Endurance: 695

Art: 1621 Charisma: 260

Leadership: 672 Luck: 215

Faith: 135 + 435 Charm: 210 +30

Fighting Spirit: 419

Mentality: 25 Honor: 95

Attack: 5329 Defense: 1761

Resistances: Fire: 27% Water: 31% Earth 35% Dark 50%

+All stats are increased by 20 points.

+Art is increased by an additional 80 points.

+30% increase in stats in the moonlit night.

+Able to learn all production skills up to the level of master. Able to learn all the subskills of each production class. High level skills can be learned.

+Sculptures with high artistic value will increase fame.

+A total of 113 stats have been raised from sculptures, skills,

combat, and quests prior to having the title. Over 100 stat points have been increased from sculptures and production skills since getting the title.

+Bracelet that is currently equipped increases all stats by 15.

Weed had gotten his level back to 368 despite having given life to sculptures. Each time he leveled up he had put all of his stat points into strength and agility, while the rest of the points had been raised by quests, equipment and sculptures. His stat window showed vivid traces of the hard work he had put in. Looking at the website forums of Royal Road, his stats were something to boast about. There was no one with a stat window such as his.

"Not just Geumini, Bingryong, and the King Hydra but I'm even lower level than the Wyverns."

Because of the quests, his level had been at quite the disadvantage. That was because of the nature of the quests, in order to cling to success he could not focus on hunting. His level was too low to be strong. Instead of raising his skill proficiency, he had been raising troops for the siege battle.

"The users that are on the television are usually level 420 and above...I can't stop and wait so I need to first restore the seal."

Weed entered a small room in the Lord's Castle.

"Any sculpture will do as long as its not a great piece."

In order to level up Sculpture Repair he needed to repeatedly break sculptures. He had to go through the hard work of creating beautiful, gorgeous, and precious statues to break them and then restore them again.

"What is truly hard work, it seems that I do not yet know the meaning of hard work."

He agonized as he began to select the sculptures that he was going to break!

"This one will have to do it."

Weed chose the sculpture of the seven money demons. It had the work demon written on the forehead as it shamelessly extended its palm out to ask for money. It even had a smile on its face. A demon that was holding onto a bag of money! The fine piece had such precise meaning and was good enough to be praised. Weed looked at the completed sculpture.

"There!"

Kwagkwag! Wajangchang! Peoseog!

He took the sculptures and took a hammer to them.

He ripped out the eyes, broke the joints and then twisted the

neck!

“This money demon!”

The bitterness and hatred of having to do this.

-You have damaged the sculpture.

Fame has decreased by 5 points.

Weed then reattached the pieces of the broken sculptures and then completely destroyed the newly made ones. The way to create the sculptures remained in his memory. He was able to restore the money demons quite quickly.

“This horrible money demon!”

Repeatedly breaking and repairing!

A lot of time passed.

-Sculpture Repair Skill is intermediate level. Durability and gloss of the sculpture will now be better.

Sculptural Memory has increased by 20.

It was a piece that greatly surpassed what a beginner sculptor could make. In order to get Intermediate Sculpture Repair he used the money demon.

"It needs a good sculpture to raise it aside from my passion and hatred!"

After the money demon was a statue of the Thirsty Hippo. It was a hippopotamus that was as large as Rover that was eating pieces of copper off of the floor. The hippo was so greedy that it was eating money with a wicked expression, a great piece with meaning! Aside from the matters of money, its artistic value was over 1400.

"Die!"

Weed hung the hippo upside down as he started a fire to burn the iron. Historically human had done all manners of atrocities against money and hippos. Rover who had come from the cow pasture and returned to sleep at the owner's side witnessed the scene. Geumini, Wyverns, Bingryong were outside the Lord's Castle as they watched Weed's behavior from outside the window.

"I will need to listen to the master's words more."

"We are very fortunate that we are not a hippo."

The Sculptures of Life swore loyalty to their master! Weed began to use the hippo for Sculpture Repair and managed to reach intermediate level 7. He had been working for over four days. Since he did not need to do miscellaneous things such as going to school, he was able to invest all his time into Royal Road.

"Now to restore the Ahreupen Imperial Seal."

Weed carefully pulled out the seal. He had wrapped the precious sculpture in a high quality cloth to avoid damage.

"I need to repair this sculpture..."

Aside from other skills, the sculpture repair skill required the user to use their hands.

"The memories of the Emperor Geihar Von Arpen are in this Sculpture so it'll be hard to fix."

The appearance of the sculpture seemed to be made of gold and jade. He was prepared to restore the ancient treasure.

"Sculpture Repair!"

He used his skills to mold the gold. He was trying to make it back to its original shape.

Paaaas!

He removed the parts that had crumbled with old age and repaired the worn out or missing parts. After years of abuse, there were no signs of cracks or completely broken pieces.

"Time to fix the bottom."

The seal symbolized the ruler of the continent but it was also a very important sculpture. Weed was careful to meticulously repair the pieces of the Ahreupen sculpture. Sculpture Repair depended on skill level but with an antique like the Ahreupen Imperial Seal it could bork at any minute so a lot was at stake. Thankfully he could repair the severe damage that had been down to the seal and the original appearance could be seen. He had managed to reproduce the full majesty of the golden dragon! He was even able to fix the embroidering.

-You have used the Sculpture Repair Skill.

The Sculpture Repair skill has greatly improved skill proficiency.

For restoring a lost art sculpture, Art has increased by 3 points.

It had an old antique look but it did not have the same feeling that large sculptures had.

"Was it successful?"

Weed was hiding the seal since it was difficult for him to look it. It was like eating rice without the crucial part known as kimchi.

"Identify!"

Unidentified Emperor's Seal: Durability 24/30

The Continent of Versaille's history of the Ahreupen Kingdom.

It is difficult to imagine the ability of the sculptor that made it.

A trusty sculptor had tried to restore it but it could not be fully restored because of the limitations of the number of years that have passed.

Artistic Value: 43100

Options : +95 Dignity

+55 Charisma

Maximum Loyalty and Morale of soldiers increased by 20%.

Reduces the harmful effects of all magic to the owner's body by 55%.

Intimidates nobles and knights.

“It’s still not completely restored.

The seal had been greatly fixed but it did not have the same feeling that the sculpture was supposed to originally have. He

needed to fully restore the long and severe damage to the Emperor's Geihar von Arpen's sculpture.

"The gold dragon is supposed to be the symbol of imperial authority and government. The imperial seal that the Emperor made should emit light."

Weed began to resume his work, more slowly and cautious now.

"I need to reimagine the golden dragon as it would whole. It needs to have the same form as before to show the cold might of the Ahreupen Empire."

Sculptures were very sensitive to materials. Rocks have the basic natural beauty of being rough while marble and bronze were smooth materials. The object could be the decisive difference in a work of art. Gold was a very hard yet weak material. The finished product was very expensive to make. So you needed to make compromises. The sculpture was made of precious and special metal materials that were difficult to find but made it remarkably beautiful.

"There must be a reason that Emperor Geihar made this the symbol of the Empire."

Sculpting was a three dimensional art form and it was also influenced by the presence of light. Lighting could be used to change the impression and the construction of sculptures to make it more spectacular and magnificent. Rock sculptures were commonly left in places where people could see them. When

dealing with light, it could give an entirely different feeling to the sculpture. A good engraver knows the importance of light and dark and learns light sculpting. The gold dragon was supposed to be the one that rules over the light.

"Light sculpture. The Emperor rooted that authority into the sculpture!"

He had based it to be a golden dragon because of his own works. Weed began to use light sculpting to repair the seal. The unique light sculpture began to regain its form. He moved his hand more slowly. Every time his hand touched it, the history and glory of the empire would revive and the light would shine off of the sculpture. The brilliant Ahreupen Imperial glory and the resurrection of the golden dragon. Weed restored the sculpture to the best of his ability.

Ttiring!

-You have restored the Emperor's Seal.

The Seal of the Ahreupen Empire!

A symbol of the ruler of the continent of the long past.

-All sculpting skills have increased by 3% for restoring the royal seal.

-Sculpture Repair Skill is now Intermediate Level 8.

Handicrafting skill proficiency has increased by 9%.

Art has increased by 37.

Lord of the Continent: Durability 38/60

The seal of the ruler of the Continent of Versailles

A sculpture wrapped in mystery.

The memories of the ancient seem to remain within the seal.

Artistic Value: 49400

Options: +3000 fame.

+105 Dignity

+60 Reputation

+70 Charisma

The Authority of the Emperor is available

Maximum Loyalty and Morale of soldiers increased by 25%.

Resistance to all harmful magic to the owner's body is increased by 60%.

Nobles and Knights will be intimidated.

Golden Bird has memories of the past.

The historical treasure has generated a stat.

Dignity stat has been created.

Dignity: The Royal Family, the Nobility, and the Knight class.

A very important and dignified noble of society; residents will be respectful. Resident will have reduced complaints about paying taxes. You can increase this stat when you level up. Increases when the people are ruled wisely or whenever a king's command is fulfilled. Treasures, works of art, and even buildings can increase the stat.

He got a new stat, but until now Weed had only meant to distribute all his points into strength and agility. The dignity stat applied to various weapons and armor but he did not feel the need to raise it.

"I need to worry about how I'm going to eat for the next year instead of how dignified I am."

Weed then looked at the emperor's memories.

The thriving Ahreupen Empire!

They build a beautiful marble temple and there were many living creatures. Sculptures were man made pieces of art that all could share. He could see military birds fighting against monsters and large beasts scattering seeds onto the ground. In contrast, the human were lazy and inactive.

"No. No. I'm too old to play around like a young person."

"Bring me some beer over here, drink!"

In the middle of the day, in the Ahreupen Imperial Capital there were many humans that were relaxing. The Emperor Geihar von Arpen saw that his empire had gotten too great! The study of magic and swordsmanship were being neglected because of an easier lifestyle. The Sculptures of Life were going exploited and abused so much that it was a joke. Then the Emperor Geihar von Arpen made a difficult decision.

"I call together my sculptures of life!"

The sculptures of life throughout the Ahreupen Empire were awaiting his commands.

"You are not longer obliged to serve the humans. You have no orders and now can seek your own freedom!"

The Sculptures of Life were given their freedom!

With the death of the Emperor Geihar, the Sculptures of Life did not follow anyone's commands. The birds formed their own kingdom. The Joinjok family. The City of the Sky Lavias was a tribe that originated from the Sculptures of Life! Not only that. Uncommon monsters with various appearances such as Trolls and Ogres could be seen living in the deep forest and jungles. The sculptures of life had been many of their ancestors. They left to live in caves and jungles to avoid human life.

"Where did you come from?"

"Emperor Geihar made me when he was 35 years old."

"Do not be rude. I was created when he was 25 years old."

"I am sorry to have been rude, Sunbae nim."

The rigorous system of the juniors and the seniors!

The Sculptures of Life built a world of their own and eventually found balance on the Continent of Versailles. Emperor Geihar made a number of monster sculptures of life that were well known. They did not feel a strong attachment to humans because they could not tolerate them. They began disputes and the destruction of the humans and would usually win the fights. The humans began to blame the monsters that Geihar had made. The Ahreupen

Empire greatly declined and there was no longer an unified continent because the sculptures of life had left. Since then history books no longer talked of Emperor Geihar's sculptures of life. Their origins were soon forgotten. However deep in the east there were still some alive, far away from the humans.

Weed watched the video and trembled slightly.

“Sculptures of life were the origin of some monsters...”

It was limited to some monsters but it would be a fact that if it were known then sculpting would be condemned! It would increase the wariness towards sculptors. It would be even graver to the point that the awareness would cause the number of great sculptures to cease. Weed had a rotten smile on his face.

"It's not necessarily something that needs to be known."

The truth was not always good. Sometimes you want to bury the truth in history. The Emperor Geihar von Arpen had made countless sculptures and some of them were nothing more than monstrosities.

"It's not something to can be seen. Even less to be known."

Weed laughed like it was milk that was long past its expiration date.

“I’m fine. It’s better for you to eat.”

He had been eating herbs!

It would go unnoticed to others but not the this sculptor. Even if he knew, he decided to keep his mouth shut.

Eummeoeoeoeoeo.

Suddenly Rover cried out and came into the room.

The cow did all he could to remain quiet.

"The herb roots will make you stronger and more energetic."

Rover stood in gratitude as he rubbed his head.

He was weak to the owner's bribes and rewards. Weed had secretly thought this out so that it would have a profound impact on the Continent of Versailles.

"In the course of the sculpting quest, it's good to know the background information."

A simple sculpting quest gave skill proficiency and a bit of compensation.

But the one that he had in progress was an adventure with a much higher difficulty for a sculpting quest since it involved the history of sculpting on the Continent of Versailles.

It was possible to discover sculpting skills that no one knew before. Sculptures had contributed a lot to the history of mankind.

In primitive times, a hunter would be bestowed a sculpture to encourage courage and faith. Sculptures were three dimensional representations of all things fundamental. Art is not necessarily bound by existence. The extent that it had on the Continent of Versailles was amazing.

Chapter 10: Ghost Ship

"Unless you advanced your skills and learned the Give Life to Sculpture skill, then there would have been no one to have found the memories and legacy that the Emperor Geihar had left behind. Identify!" Weed used his skills to view the memories in the seal once more. He could see the past of the Niflheim Empire. The Emperor Geihar had made the Imperial Ahreupen War Seal which made its way to the Niflheim Empire.

The Knights' Empire.

The knights were known to be honorable and loyal as the human territory continued to expand throughout the barren north.

Then quite a long time passed. The once flourishing Niflheim Empire was invaded by monsters. Weed could see the invading monster army destroying the castle walls of the capital.

The legion of monsters along with dragons began to decimate the human made structures and with it the genocide of its people. So far, it was as it was told in the history books of the Continent of Versialles. The magical attacks were being rained down on the capital. The Imperial Palace was covered in a rain of fire! The Imperial Knights came out of the flaming structure. They failed to defeat the monsters and had no choice but to use the Serbian Ice Witch's Beads as a last resort.

Ttiring!

Agents of the Niflheim Empire(2)

After the death of the Emperor Geihar, his descendants, servants and the rest of the Ahreupen Empire wept for four days in mourning. The seal was a symbol of the tension over power of the ruler of the continent was being disputed, so it came into the possession of many. The Niflheim Empire tried to retrieve the seal for over 200 years. However they could not avoid war. The invasion of monsters led by the dragons killed and burned the royalty. Many do not know that the sudden invasion of monsters was the true reason for the fall of the empire. However, the Emperor Geihar had granted life to Golden Bird who distinctly remembers the destruction of the Empire. The Golden Bird is chasing after those responsible for revenge.

Difficulty: S

Quest restriction: Second chain quest of a trilogy. Advanced sculpting.

The second stage of an S class quest!

-You can now appreciate the buildings of the Romantic Era of the Niflheim Empire.

As a sculptor that owns the town, you can now build buildings and castles. Buildings can be built. The artistic value of the buildings from the Romantic Era will spread culture among the nobility. You can now promote the birth of knights and expand political influence. You can build special buildings.

Gugugugugu.

The Golden Bird that he was looking for from the Niflheim Empire's Past had appeared. It was a bird that was made out of lustrous gold. You could take your eyes off such a creature stirring with energy. It had eyes made out of light blue sapphire and white platinum hair. There was a small crown on its head encrusted with diamonds. It flew around beautifully with its clear golden body. A sculptor would not be able to help but admire it.

"Gulp."

Weed swallowed.

If he could hunt down the Golden Bird then he could sell it for money!

'I could take apart the precious materials and sell it to the store...'

He looked with greedy eyes as if unique items were rolling down the street.

"This was Emperor Geihar's favorite. He has good taste in gold and jewelry!"

Weed had to hesitate from simply kidnapping it and running.

"Emperor Geihar's Sculpture of Life."

It was not a form of loyalty towards the emperor for having been his teacher of sorts. There was a more worrisome part.

“Golden Bird stat window!”

-Sculpture of Life stat window

It is not possible at this time to view more information

Name: Senolia Luseloni Type: Nature

Race: Bird

Level: 519 Class: The Tracker of Clear Skies

Title: Intelligent Bird

Fame: 60

A creature made by Emperor Geihar. Made at the same time along with the Imperial Ahreupen Seal. Likes fleshy, ample worms.

+Can talk to birds.

+Very fast

+Can break various weapons such as swords with its teeth.

+Can not be poisoned

+Unknown

+Unknown

It was a small cute bird in comparison to the giant armies of the Embinyu Cult and the King Hydra.

'I shouldn't touch it.'

Weed wet his mouth. He would not be able to tame Golden Bird like the others. As a sculpture of life, they devoted their lives to their parents. They were not accustomed to listening to others. The fact that the Wyverns and Geumini were still following him for so long and had not went to find another owner was proof.

Gugugu.

The Golden Bird flew out of the castle window away from Weed. It knew the identity of the enemy that destroyed the Niflheim Empire. Weed chased behind the Golden Bird. Golden Bird was leisurely riding on the wind's currents. Weed occasionally looked up at its location and raised his speed. He got Bingryong and Phoenix who were flying outside. It was handy when it came to

moving over places like mountains and forests. It would be more difficult to tranverse such paths by land and wagon. After a couple of days, the Golden Bird flew northeast and arrived at the coast!

Kwaleuleuleung, kwagwagwagwang!

The sky was dark and cloudy and it looked like it was going to rain, making it difficult to seperate the sky from the ocean. The sound of thunder could be heard in the distance as the waves struck.

“Is that it?”

In response to Weed's question, the Golden Bird gave a cry.

Gugugu.

“Then where is it?”

Kkukku.

"It's up to me from here?"

Gugugu.

"So...the culprit behind the destruction of the Niflheim Empire is somewhere beyond here?"

Gugugu..

Weed could guess as much!

He had completed an S rank quest where the first step was to defeat the High Priest of the Embinyu Cult despite not gathering information through conversations. There was a need to have accurate background information to complete a quest. However, Weed had watched a lot of these kinds of experiences with his grandmother. They would kill time together by watching television. He had learned reasoning from watching drama!

"There was a trace of dragons in the fight against the Embinyu Cult in the River of Wailing. They must be related!"

Weed roughly noticed the identity of the Embinyu Cult. They were an evil organization on the Continent of Versailles. There were a number of quests involved with the destructions caused by the cult. Weed had a bad feeling about the Embinyu. The High Priest had not dropped any items because he had sacrificed his own life. He would have dropped something unique for high priests classes such as Saints.

"Miser. Worst ugly. Dirty bastard."

Weed went on about his idea.

"So the Embinyu Cult intervened and caused the invasion of monsters...but we do not know the identity of the other culprit."

There had to be someone behind the monsters. They had only been a supporting role in a drama. Villain, victim, intrigue, strife! The Niflheim Kingdom was the victim. The Embinyu Cult had supported the collapse of the empire. A long time passed. He stilled needed to wipe out the bad guys before the Niflheim Empire could reconstruct.

"Perfect. It makes perfect sense!"

Weed was impressed with his reason. He had never believed that the Embinyu Cult was behind all of it. There was no fun in a drama if the villain was alone. For there to be a great drama there had to be multiple large scale villains!

"Only then does it all fit together."

He waited on the beach until morning but the storm showed no signs of passing. He had read similar information on the board about the geography of the Continent of Versailles.

Holy City: Do not enter my colleagues. Character level 376.

Misty Lake Region: I had wanted to go to the lake to hunt the singing elves only to die. Character level 312.

Owl's Nest: Do not go even if you want to commit suicide. I barely escaped. Character level 389.

Poco's Cave: Don't come here. I died in this place. I went the owl's nest with five others and died. We all dropped a level. Character level 388.

In the north there were a number of places that gamers had adventured into at the cost of their lives. They had only explored briefly but they gave what little information they had to the next challengers.

The northeast coast of the North: Severe rainstorm and lightning bolt strikes. Not accessible by sea. Climate is very bad. However, this smells like a quest. There are a large number of monsters in the ocean. Character level 379.

Based on the board, it looked like the lightning would never stop.

“The sea...”

The waves were high as if they would topple a ship. It would be no easy task for the Wyvern to navigate across the sea. They had no time to relax as hostile monsters would appear.

"We don't have the skills to make a boat."

Weed was talking about the shipbuilding skill. It was associated with Intermediate Level 5 Blacksmithing which helps weave timber but it was impossible to make a large boat.

"Should I go back to Morata and start shipbuilding skills?"

It was a severe waste to build a Marines Guild in Morata just to learn the skill. Even if he managed to learn the skill, in order to get past the storm he needed at least intermediate shipbuilding skills.

"That would take at least a year..."

Weed was in pain from the headache. It would be very expensive to keep the Wyvern on the deck. He wanted to save money but he could not buy a fast boat and the central continent was also a problem. He needed to hire officer and a crew. It would all be very difficult to do.

"Master, there is something moving on the sea."

"The sea?"

Weed squinted his eyes to look at the stormy waters. Like the Wyverns had said, there was something little sailing to the north. It was calmly sailing despite the high waves! It had ragged torn sailes and the mast was split into two. The hull had a giant hole in it. It became more visible with the rain and wind but it was a very old medium sized boat.

"Is it possible to sail in that state?"

Weed was puzzled. He had seen trading ships in broadcasts before. They were always in top condition since they needed to maintain a heavy load. He did not understand how in that condition it could carry itself through the storm. The Wyverns flew to observe more closely.

"Master, there are undead riding on the deck of that ship."

"Undead you say..."

An idea flashed into Weed's head. There was a ghost ship moving around in the sea.

"That means I can get a free ride!"

Weed took out a sculpting knife.

Seogeok seogeok.

He was cutting away at a piece of rock.

"A long skinny body with a robe and a red jewel lodged into the forehead."

He had fought a lot of skeletons. He was actually familiar with the appearance and body structure. However the skeleton he was making had a different feel to it. The Lich Shire that Weed fought in the Yuroki Mountains! It was completely different from the simple and ignorant Karichwi.

"It needs to be smaller and more compact. It is necessary for the lich to be a corrupt and insidious wizard using any means for the goal."

Weed's complaints poured out.

"I don't know what hell feels like. I lived a good life and its too difficult for me to work on various types of sculptures."

Each time his sculpting knife moved the lich began to reveal itself. The finger bones were vivid and lifelike and the head was that of a skeleton! The eye sockets were narrow and empty. All of the features, even the eyes, gave off the look of an actual lich. It was very similar to the Lich Shire in appearance. However it had a more cunning feeling to it. The skeleton's head was filled with teeth that were giving a rotten smile!

"No. There's something off. It has to be a lich that has lived for a very long time so there needs to be some cracks."

He split a crack into the skull. He even added in some holes.

"Now it looks a lot better."

On the forehead he mounted the ruby that he had gotten from a quest. Now it was a skeleton, the birth of a lich!

Ttiring!

-Please set the name of the sculpture.

"Lich Shire....no. That's not it,"

Weed tried to think of a name.

"It's going to be in the sea so it needs to be a strong name...not like like as Karichwi though."

The Orc Karichwi had powerful charisma! Weed had named himself very well thinking of that in mind. But this time the name needed intelligence and dignity.

"The name of the sculpture is One Eyed Lich!"

-The sculpture is not one eyed. Do you still want to use that name?

It was not a choice for Weed.

"Yes, it's absolutely necessary to have one eye at the ocean."

Masterpiece! You have completed the One Eyed Lich Sculpture!

A Lich is a wizard of dark souls!

It is a sculptor's work that is so amazing that it takes away the viewer's breath. It is possible to be confused with Shire since the lich resembles him. It is revolting to have a lich sculpture since it is difficult to have it considered as art. The name does not fit.

Artistic Value: 269

Options: One Eyed Lich will increase health and mana regeneration by 11% for a day.

Intelligence and Wisdom are increased by 20 points.

Agility has increased by 10.

Power has decreased by 75.

Casting speed has increased by 5%.

Control over the undead has increased by 3%.

Does not overlap with other sculpture effects.

So far, the number of completed fine pieces: 86

-Sculpting skills have improved

-Fame has increased by 12.

-Fighting Spirit has increased by 1

-Intelligence has increased by 2.

"It's successful!"

The birth of a fine sculpture! Weed was not done with the sculpture yet. There was still things to do with it.

"Sculptural Shapeshift!"

-Sculptural Shapeshift has been used.

Weed began to grow thinner and his hair fell off. He was bald and in a flash the flesh disappeared from his body in steam. Weed had turned into the One Eyed Lich!

-The body has now changed to that of a lich so a number of equipment have become unusable and are recommended to switch them. You can not wear mithril or divine equipment and it may be necessary to obtain new equipment based on the species type.

-As a result of Sculpture Shapeshift, Intelligence and Wisdom have increased. Strength and agility has decreased dramatically and art has been reduced to a third. Health and mana have significantly increased. Physical limitations have disappeared. The transformation is not complete since Sculptural Understanding has yet to reach Advanced Level 3. Life Drain and Mana Drain can be used at 20% efficiency but is unusable in the sunlight. It can be used to recover health and mana. You are now fatally weak to divine power. This form will remain until Sculpture Shapeshift is removed.

It was easy to replace the equipment. He still had the Fallen Saint Staff that he got from the Lich Shire. A black magic item for controlling the undead! With the Saint's staff in the right hand, he held the Necromancer's Tome in the left.

“Kilkilkil”

Weed laughed with his charred teeth. He put his chin forwards and smiled as an unscrupulous lich! He was wearing a vampire cape and the robe of an Embinyu wizard he had looted. Items from the other churches were holy element but this one strengthened undead affinity because it only had 3 durability left. Weed covered one of his eyes with a black cloth.

"I shall be called Deorol!"

He called himself a looter! With that, Weed had turned himself into a lich.

"It's short and it's good. It feels dirty and lethal so it fits a pirate well."

Eummeoeoeoeoeo

Wah-il came flying back only to see that Rover had been crying. He was crying because of that owner. Wah-il wrapped him in his wings.

"It'll be fine. There is nothing to be worried about that man for."

Eummeo, eummeoeoeoeo.

"Wait here."

Weed was going to walk to the beach in the rainstorm. The rain bounced off of his bony skeleton. The robe and cloaks were soaked in the rain but as a lich he did not need to worry about cold or exhaustion. Weed held out the Fallen Saint's Staff.

"Quick Water Walk."

It was a spell to walk on water. It was a basic spell written in the magical Necromancer Tome. The skeleton advanced by walking onto the waves. With its light body it did not need much mana consumption.

"Stat window."

Character Name: Weed Type:Undead

Level: 368 Class: Lich

Health: 113480 Mana: 197964

Strength: 185 Agility: 361

Stamina: Infinite

Wisdom: 1463 Intelligence: 1128

Fighting Spirit: 479 Endurance: Infinite

Patience: 695 Charisma: 419

Leadership: 672 Guilt: 388

Charm: 210

+Life Drain and Mana Drain can be used.

+Has the ability to command the undead.

+Vulnerable to Divine magic.

+Stats have increased by 3 percent for being a fine piece.

Weed had more than enough mana.

"I'm not going to die in the sea."

The Golden Bird and the Wyverns remained some distance away from the ocean. It was unreasonable for Golden Bird that rode on the wind to go into the rain and thunder to be blown away! Weed walked up to the ghost ship. It looked like the hull was over a hundred years old. The sails were not adjusted and the entire place looked like there was a haunted crew.

We are called the Crescent Crew.

In the morning and evening we drink rum

When we are drunk we are not homesick

The captain caused trouble by taking us to a deserted island.

The voice of seamen singing was heard. The voices of the men matched with the sound of the waves. The ghost ship was rocking significantly but it was also moving very quickly. Unlike a regular ship, the ghost ship itself was a living monster. As Weed approached the ship a ladder fell down. They had saw him coming. The One Eyed Lich then noticed a crucial error.

"This is the ghost ship. I welcome the lich wizard."

The crew of the ghost ship introduced themselves. There was an extreme respect towards liches. However, he did not have the important left arm. All captains are supposed to have a hook instead of an arm. It was a manly pirate romance to have one arm and one eye.

Morata had just completed its newest building. It was the Art Center that was built, a favorite of the beginners! It was built on an area of over 2000 square meters and with a large garden. Morata's sculptures were stored within. There were various colorful paintings and flowers and trees everywhere. There was an image of Weed sitting on a blue ice dragon. There were various paintings on the walls of him. There was room for further improvement but those pictures show the memories and light the way to the future.

"It's finally done."

Pavo placed a plaque at the front.

Weed Art Center

Two years since he arrivedl.

He probably died at least a few times

Morata Province

His sculptures are all over the Continent of Versailles

Through hard work he gained tremendous sculpting skill proficiency.

There is still work to improve on.

Statue of Freya and the Light Tower are all representations of his work.

The sculptures by the Wailing River as well

His sculptures are available to the public and are committed to

the continent's peace.

A friend of Weed, an architect built the art center.

This is dedicated to the people.

The plaque was created to celebrate the moment of the completion of the two story building. It caused an increase in Morata's contribution, closeness and reputation. A positive phenomenon occurred in the city.

-Morata's cultural development has increased.

Artistic development speed has increased by 3%.

Culture further increases expansion.

Local fame has increased by 15, the Center of Art is designated as a monument.

-The art and wisdom of the people of Morata has increased. The probability of more artists and wizards being born is high.

The building was developed to be part of the city.

“Finally...”

Pavo felt a deep rewarding sense of self satisfaction as he closed

the doors to the art center. Weed had not named the sculpture but the fact that a legendary sculpture was there was amazing. Soon it would be opened. They sent a messenger to get Mandol and his wife so that they could open up the art center.

"As an architect I have always been thinking that I've lived my life fully and confidently but now..."

Pavo confessed his thoughts to Gaston, his painter friend.

"I have always been trying to think of ways to get extra options or more money for my stuff. This is common for an architect. However to only accept a single copper to create such a work of art? The mind of a sculptor is hard to understand."

Gaston tried to think of some encouragement but only sat there in silence. He did not know anything other than trying to draw more beautiful paintings.

"Weed is special. He is young but he has the warm heart of a father."

"Yea. I can't help but think what he is doing now."

"You are the mean and petty archer Pale?"

"How is it that Irene, the lousy healer is here?"

"It's Romuna, the wizard that eats young children whole!"

After they came back from Todeum, Pale and his colleagues were getting bad reactions from the people.

"Wasn't the original reward 200 gold? Now it's only 30 gold."

"You completed the quest so quickly so you must have cheated right? I will not change my mind on this!"

Even though the people were being vicious, they were undaunted as they tried to build up familiarity again as recover their good faith with high level quests. Pale and his party went into the weapon shop.

"How are you doing!"

Irene smiled brightly.

"There's a lot more people here now. Business must be good."

"There are a lot of young people fighting monsters now. It would be nice if there were more children in the north...So what brings you here?"

"We're here to sell off our things."

There were now five weapon shops in Morata. The monthly income tax revenue had increased by a few percent which is then reinvested into the merchants. The supply of weaponry was large. Mapan greedily bought many weapons from their supplies because of their large surplus. When operating a blacksmith it was important to gather raw materials in large quantity. Pale and his party visited the first weapon store that was in Morata.

"We would not want to bother a benefactor of Morata with a request. However, these days there are a lack of weapons in the stores..."

As they entered the weapon store, Pale and his party stood still and listened.

'If anything it sounds like a quest.'

It was possible that it was a quest to get weapons or hunt and gather materials. In fact many beginners were getting quests that involved getting weapons. They could obtain weapons from hunting goblins as well. If the delivery is made then the user could get a premium on purchases from the store. Even if they had bad fame, they could still get common quests.

"Back in the day, there were some very famous weapon smiths of the Niflheim Empire."

"What?"

"All of the royal family's armors were made by them."

From the description it smelled like a high level quest. Irene's eyes were sparkling.

"Manager oppa, could you please tell us the family's name?"

Irene was usually innocent but she was very interested when it came to quests.

"It was the Viteoleu family. With the fall of the empire they were never heard of again...but what of their descendants? They must still be there and they would be a big help to the weapon shipments."

Ttiring!

Masters of the sword

There were many professional artisans and knights of the Niflheim Empire of the Viteoleu family. I want you to find their descendants and bring them here.

Difficulty: B

Quest limit: Will fail upon the death of the descendants of the Viteoleu.

Pale and party got a Rank B quest. It was a big difference in progress compared to the normal users. Ever since they been helping with Weed in Morata's defense, their familiarity with the people increased. Pale, Maylon, Romuna, and Irene looked at each other.

'Do it?'

'Let's do it.'

'I think it would be fun even if it fails.'

Maylon especially wanted to do the quest. Pale said as the representative.

"Can we go get them?"

"Will you? They were once in the capital but now its a haven of monsters. Ask around the shops. I have my pride but would you do this quest for me?"

You have accepted the quest.

Pale and his party accepted the quest. The quest could also be shared to more people.

"I'm getting a little anxious though..."

"Should we get Weed?"

The capital of the Niflheim Empire was a large hunting ground so they would be sufficient. However they could get more quests since Weed had high fame. Irene thought about it and shook her head.

"Weed is still doing his three stage quest."

It was an S class quest from the church. He needed to take care of that quest first.

"Well, we could always get the Geomchi oppas."

Surka suggested that they get their help. However they were not sure the Geomchis would come. In this case, Hwaryung persuaded them.

"Would you like a quest?"

Since Geomchi and Geomchi2 were in the Yuroki Mountains on dates so Geomchi3 was the representative. Geomchi went on a long journey to Morata to go help the beginners. The lively little beginners needed help. He took them to the training center and taught them as disciples.

"I'm a little busy...."

"This is Jeong you know?"

"The actress?"

Jeong Hyo-Lynn was the heroine of the recent sensational drama on television. Her energetic personality made her perfect as an actress.

"My career is a singer. I'm called Hyo-Lynn there."

"You appear on television as an actress but still able to go hunting..."

"So are you busy?"

"By all means."

Her music sales was nothing compared to her appearance and atmosphere. To the Geomchis she was a perfect woman, not as a singer since they don't know about music. However it was because she frequently appeared on shows! The Geomchis decided that she was the one actress that they all wanted to go out with. They awkwardly gathered in Morata to go to the capital. Mapan got a wagon and joined in. Whenever traders traveled they would level up. There was no difference between fighting and trading. Mapan went to Morata and asked them.

"Aren't you going to get Weed?"

He suddenly proposed to which Hwaryung said.

"We're going to the capital to hunt. Let's see what's Weed doing."

"Okay?"

The party began to wonder what Weed was doing. Weed had gone to the ocean. After a few days on horseback they reached the place.

"Where is Weed?"

Pale had very good eyesight as an archer. He could see visibly in the distance.

"I can't seem to find him, let's send a whisper?"

It was then. A storm was coming in the distance as it was going to hit the ship. Each time the ship moved there was lightning striking. They shouted out.

"A ship is approaching!"

The wide stretched sails were torn, the deck and the hull had holes in them. The ghost ship passed through the waves. The ghost crew was on deck wandering around. Weed, the one eyed lich, was standing at the bow. Ghost Fleet Captain! Everytime the wind blew, his torn cloak would flap. The golden bird was sitting on the

shoulders of the lich grooming its feathers.

Chapter 11: Captain Deoreol

It was not difficult to change from being a guest to the new captain of the ghost ship. All he needed to do was beat the previous captain in a mild sword fight.

-You have become the captain of the ghost ship.

-As the captain of the ghost ship, you can now decide how to navigate the ship.

-Leadership has increased by 7.

-Charisma has increased by 14.

"Where's the original captain?"

Weed's jawbone moved as he asked, so the former captain of the crew answered him.

"80 years ago I threw him off at a deserted island. He probably died of starvation by now. Kilkilkil!"

Soon after he became captain, something happened. A myriad of ghost ship quests!

Find the Treasure

Raid another ship

Cross the largest sea in the quickest time

Hunt the dolphins

Unfortunately Weed would not be able to receive 3 of the quests even if he wanted to. That was because those quests required the ghost ship to engage in battle.

"Ghost Ship window."

The Ghost Ship Maria

This ship was built in a port by a family of shipbuilding craftsmen. It's a medium sized sailboat, made with the intention of being a merchant ship. However the ship got caught up in some sort of unfortunate accident every year. For seven years, every owner of the ship met some sort of catastrophe and has become a symbol of bad luck ever since. On the ninth year, it fell into the hands of a crew of criminals pirates. That summer the ship got caught in a storm and sank. The crew died at sea.

Speed 3-5

There are a total of 35 crew members. All of them are undead.

There are 42 cannons. 39 of them are broken.

Cargo space 36/298

Durability of the Hull 350/1390

Sails 0/6

Wind -49 Waves -27

The poor excuse for sails does not allow the ship to sail properly.

Become slower when entangled in seaweed.

There is a large hole in the hull and the wood of the ghost ship is distorted.

The situation could worsen further.

Will encounter misfortune at sea.

Weed had placed the ghost ship entirely under his control. The ghost ship would never surrender to human but it was not hard to become the captain if you were undead. It was unreasonable for someone besides Weed to do this unless they had Sculpture Shapeshift or the Reject Death Skill.

"Do you wish to plunder?"

"Uooooo."

"Come with me if you want to go rob people!"

"Long live Captain Deoreol!"

"I will call you Deoreol."

"Deoreol, Deoreol, Deoreol!"

The Ghost Crew was soaked in Weed's charisma. However he did not have the necessary sailing skills to navigate. The Geomchis and Pale's party saw him returning from the ocean. There was a one eyed skeleton with a hook attached to its left arm. Mapan looked closely with his eyes.

"It's Weed!"

It was a trade in which you only tried to earn money and laugh in the face of new challenges. The Pirate Captain Deoreol who leads the ghost ship!

"It looks like Weed has been working hard."

Pale and Irene thought to themselves.

'So he's...a pirate. It suits him.'

'Sometimes I'm ashamed to think that I'm his friend...'

The Geomchis were envious.

"Capain of a ghost ship...such a great success."

"Pirate Deoreol. Nicely done."

Weed went to pick up Pale's party and the Geomchis. This way the quest would be more enjoyable. However, he never did get the chance to say goodbye to Da'in. Weed had hoped that she would have approached him first but she did not seem to want to. They departed into the sea on a clear day. There were seagulls in the sky and dolphins in the ocean. They were kind of envious of the expensive ghost ship and its crew. Zephyr took out his rod.

"Fishing at the sea...I wonder if I could catch a dolphin."

The placed his fisherman rod along the ship. Weed was planning on increasing his fishing skill while working.

"I'm going to catch some fish and make some chowder."

"Weed hyungnim, I hope the ghost crew doesn't need to eat."

"It's useless for them, alcohol only keeps their morale up."

The Geomchis went to the deck of the ship to either sunbathe or diving into the ocean to swim. They were as fast as the Ghost Ship.

"Geomchi27 are you good at swimming?"

"It's a must!"

"I know a way to make this more thrilling."

"Really?"

One of the Geomchis gave himself a self inflicted knife wound to the side! They wanted to use the blood to attract sharks so that they could eat.

"Very funny."

The rest of the Geomchis jumped in as well into the sea. The feeling of swimming in the ocean surrounded by shark fins! There would soon be no sharks left.

"What are all these people?"

Hwaryung friend Bellotte was puzzled. There was a lich pirate with all sorts of large men on a battered ghost ship.

"Girl, milk is good for the body."

The crew of the ghost ship were considerably rotting since it had been three years. In general, it was tough to be forced into this sort of adventure on the Continent of Versailles. Hwaryung gave her some encouragement.

"You'll adapt shortly."

"Huh?"

"It's surprisingly fun."

She was going to the deck to enjoy sunbathing. She took off her colorful dress and put on her swim suit.

"I'll come along...I didn't expect that I would get a chance like this."

Maylon, Surka, Irene, Romuna also laid down. There was no need to be worried about the gaze of men. The Geomchis were too shy to make eye contact and the ghost crew was busy with this jobs. The awkward practitioners went around opening the doors of the rooms.

"Let's see what we can find?"

Exploring the rooms of the ghost ship! Originally humans would not want to wander around on a ghost ship in the middle of the sea. That's why there was a fear of shipwrecked boats and ghost ships would take away a person's breath in fear. There were all sorts of monsters and hidden traps. However Weed and the Geomchis did not feel this was serious at all or were the least bit worried

In fact it was the monsters that they felt sorry for!

"Liquor!"

"Let's binge and drink rum, this is a paradise!"

The Geomchis had already went to the bottom of the ghost ship and were drinking the rum that they crew had been saving. Since Weed was a high ranking undead, the lich, and with his charisma he dominated the Ghost Crew so they did not have any complains. They would still be loyal to their captain even if he abandoned them on a deserted island! They did as they were told. Weed didn't have to do anything so he was fishing.

"Captain."

"Yes, sir"

Weed called forth the fleet captain of the ghost ship.

"Are there boats close to here?"

Ships usually went along a river or the sea, so there weren't many trade ships in the northern waters. There was a significant amount of small fishing boats! In his eyes, the fisherman were probably only around level 20. The most he could get from them was some japtem.

"On the map you can go down here a bit. There are a lot of boats there."

Weed unfolded it. He was using the map of the sea that was on the ghost ship for quite some time. Each of the city's current developmental status was identified, such as the port facilities and terrain. It was the largest sea in the northeast. It connected to the seas of the central continent. The Mediterranean Sea bordered the various kingdoms of the European Continent. The area was swarming with merchant ships and pirate ships.

"That's a lot of prey."

"That's true."

"Pirates...huhuhu."

Weed hastily managed the ship. With a smile on his face, he needed to be careful for his jawbone to slip from his cracked skull.

"Back into the sea."

"Understood sir!"

The haunted Ghost Crew began to change direction at this signal. The Ghost ship entered back into the waves. Weed had anchored onto the island for four days. There were many beasts on the deserted island as well as sea monsters. Using his blacksmith and repair skill, he repaired the cannons while gathering food and water supplies. He took care of the wooden hull and used leather to make sails. With his carving skills and made a one eyed, one armed, and one legged pirate to mount at the head of the ship. Aside from the fact that it was dressed like a scarecrow, the shape of the ship had considerably improved.

"Ghost Ship window."

Ghost Ship Maria

This ship was built in a port by a family of shipbuilding craftsmen. It's a medium sized sailboat, made with the intention of being a merchant ship. However the ship got caught up in some sort of unfortunate accident every year. For seven years, every owner of the ship met some sort of catastrophe and has become a symbol of bad luck ever since. On the ninth year, it fell into the hands of a crew of criminals pirates. That summer the ship got caught in a storm and sank. The crew died at sea.

Speed 11-19

There are a total of 35 crew members. All of them are undead.

There are 42 cannons. 6 of them are broken.

Cargo space 66/298

Durability of the hull 965/1390

Sail 6/6

Wind -16 Waves 6

The hull remains distorted but can now move at full speed.

Will encounter misfortune at sea.

Players will have 20 increased hostility to all country when offshore.

Pirates will respect you.

While on board, injuries will be slightly reduced.

With the Ghost Ship Maria, he took full advantage of the materials. Even without being a shipbuilder, he was able to fix most of the essential parts of the ship. Surka, Maylon, Irene, and Pale were off to the side having a secret conversation.

"But what's going to happen to our quest?"

"It's strange that we're taking a ghost ship around the sea."

"I hope we don't accumulate notoriety like we did in Todeum right?"

"Hopefully we won't..."

They were hoping that they didn't make the wrong choice by taking the quest.

Book 19: The Lost Pirate Fleet

Chapter 1: Captain Of The Ghost Ship

Using sculpture transformation Weed was in the appearance of the Lich Pirate Deorol. There were limits to the Lich's magic, health and mana absorption ability, but he was still a high-ranking undead. When Weed spoke, the ghost sailors trembled.

“Please, relieve your anger.”

“I implore you to not throw me into the sea, with a rock tied to my ankle.”

“The waters here are shark infested. Captain, don't use me as shark bait, I'll do anything you command me to do.”

“I only have 2 teeth left... Surely, you won't pull them too? Are you going to make me toothless like the First Mate?”

With the crew in despair, Weed couldn't miss this opportunity. With his shoulders raised proudly he asked.

“Who am I to you?”

“You are the owner of this ship, ruler of the 7 seas, and our Master!”

The ghost sailors, who were symbols of terror, rubbed their

hands together and sang his praises. They went to their knees, and bowed down to Weed.

Appearing weak against the strong and strong against the weak was typical of Weed.

“Huhuhu!”

“Kellkellkell!” While Weed’s sailors were playing around, Pale’s party were surveying on the deck.

“We aren’t going any further from the reef, is the ship even moving?”

“It’s really slow.”

The Ghost Ship was originally a slow ship.

Weed touched up the ship with his blacksmith skill, but the Ghost Ship was an old rust bucket. The maximum number of passengers, that was allowed on this medium sized ship, was only 70 people!

Pale’s party, plus the Geomchis were on the ship; due to their weight, the ship sunk even lower below the water and could not move. Geomchis were people that could make a 12 people limit elevator, maxed out with only 8 people.

“The waves are really strong; and the wind is blowing in the opposite direction of where we want to go!”

Strong winds, heavy waves, reefs scratching the ship, and seaweed were getting tangled on the rudder. The Ghost Ship that carries misfortune!

****Kuhiiing****

With a frightful noise, where the ghosts of the dead congregate, it was surely a ship of dread. During sailing, all kinds of bad things were happening.

The Ghost Ship was going around in circles and Weed and the ghost sailors were chatting around and, “I am Deorol!” could be heard.

“Fiercest Pirate Deorol! He plunders from the rich then, then without mercy takes everything from the poor, women, and even children!”

“Kuheheheh!” Weed laughed proudly.

Where his left eye should be, there was an eye patch; and he had a red bandana tied around his head. Where his ears should be there was a hole, and around it hung a pair of earrings.

****Palang Palang****

The earrings that were made of a silver coin, and made noise every time the wind blew.

“This is what real pirates should be wearing.”

Pirates and a Lich’s romanticism! Pale and his party tried to keep their distance from Weed. The outfit even repelled Surka, the youngest of the group.

Twelve days of boring sailing passed.

Due to the speed of the Ghost Ship, the trip was 3-4 times longer than normal; but they finally the reached the Neria Sea.

Neria Sea is the Versailles Continent’s largest inland sea. From here all kinds of ships such and fishing, explorers and merchant ships go back and forth each day.

The ship was running out of provisions; Weed and Zephyr used their fishing skills to make up for the lack of food. Fishing skill intermediate level 4! It was lower than Weed’s other skills, since he could only raise them near a river, lake or sea. In the Neria Sea, morning, noon, and evening was fishing time.

“I got a big catch!”, Beside him, Zephyr raised his fishing rod. “Oh ho, it’s a clam this time. Wow, it even has a pearl inside.” He had caught a pearl oyster.

Weed glimpsed this occurrence, but a not one word left his mouth. Zephyr, with his fishing skills, could fish up a great white shark, small whales and antiques from the sea. Weed could get, cutlass, mackerel, or if he was lucky a red sea bream fish. This hurt Weed's delicate pride. Weed threw his line deep into the sea. Moments later, due to a fish nibbling on the bait the line moved.

‘Looks like I’ll get a large fish this time’

In the sea, fish with high vitality and strength could be caught. If those fish are eaten, life recovery goes up. Furthermore if it was cooked and eaten, it raises maximum HP by 1. Of course even if the same meal was eaten, the effect is the same; but you could get stronger even while resting, so many users enjoyed food and rest together.

Weed pulled on the fishing rod with all his strength. “Big catch!” The fish with its mouth opened wide caught on the hook. It couldn't really be called a fish, since it was a sea monster with nine legs and an ugly face.

“Kwaaarg!” The monster tried to threaten Weed with its roar. However Weed's appearance was that of a Lich, his eyes were burning bright, and even his earrings stopped the monster from struggling.

In terms of cruelty, no one could top Weed. “ It looks pretty tasty!” Weed cut up the sea monster into pieces, and used it for an ingredient for the seafood soup. It wasn't a bad catch, especially since he hadn't prepared bait for fishing in the sea. During that time Zephyr pulled in a large tuna, one that he could barely carry.

‘Now I know what they mean by, “When a cousin buys land, your stomach hurts” (t/n: Korean saying for envy). Weed acted as if he didn’t notice the tuna caught by Zephyr.

“Your fishing skill is unmatched as always.”

“This isn’t much, Brother.”

“It seems you caught many valuables...”

Pottery, old bottles, even fish holding treasure in their bellies, were all caught by Zephyr. If you compare his fishing to hunting, he was making just as much. Zephyr had an advanced skill in fishing, and he used it to the best of his abilities.

The baits that could only be used for fishing in the sea struggled vigorously on the hook. When a fish came close the bait (worm, shrimp, and baby tuna) did their best to dance and tempt the fish. As a big fish, the temptation was too much, it couldn’t resist biting on the hook.

With his advanced level in fishing, Zephyr even had the bait tracking skill. By looking at the surface of the water he could see the hook deep underneath the sea, in a magnified view. He could even manipulate the hook to move, using mana. Using this skill he could survey the sea and find the fish to target.

There are rumors of one player who only fished in Royal Road,

and his best find was a shipwreck filled with treasure. A fisher wasn't a job to be ignored.

Zephyr had a great deal of good food, from fishing; so he used his high strength and health/vitality to participate in battles. When a large mob of monsters grouped together, nimbly sending bait that matched the monster; and then coaxing them to separate from the group, was a fisherman's specialty.

"Once you get into it, fishing is something that has a lot of depth", said a Zephyr, who hated long explanations.

"It's mostly all luck. My luck stat is over 700, so that's why fishing is so easy for me." Weed had his Art stat as a sculptor, Zephyr as a fisherman had Luck. Leisurely fishing in the river while increasing stamina and vitality; Zephyr who had an incredible amount of luck! Even when hunting, monsters frequently missed, and they also dropped a lot of loot and equipment.

Zephyr was someone who looked like a lazy person but in reality tries really hard to be the best. He was a kind of cheeky character who you can't hate! He cast his line and asked Weed.

"Umm... Hyung-nim, about Yurin..."

"Hmm?"

"I'm just asking, but if Yurin got herself a boyfriend, what kind

of guy would suit her? I want to know what you think as her brother.”

Zephyr asked Weed for his opinion as if he wasn't really curious.

“Yurin's boyfriend...” Weed thought for a moment then answered.

“He has to be a kind guy, someone who really cherishes my sister.”

“That's right isn't it.”

Weed gained his knowledge about taking care of a girl, by taking care of his sister. Yurin was still young, but it was an important period in her life, where she could move forward in the world. She could meet a man, or set goals for her life. If she wanted to study abroad, then she should go. Living for a dream, or love; experiencing success, failure, regretting or reminiscing about the past, is what life was about.

“Even if they fight as a couple, a man who uses violence is no good.”

“Hahaha, of course of course.”

“When they're dating he can't even let one drop of water touch her hand.”

“.....”

“If I ever find a mark left from water; that is the day I’ll kill him”

“.....”

It was the heart of the brother who didn’t want his sister to suffer even a bit.

On the sea, Hwaryeong’s friend Bellotte, and other girls, became remarkably close and were chatting together. They bathed in the sunlight and lounged around the deck to share stories.

“I’m sure it must have been frightening, when Weed boarded the Ghost Ship alone.”

Surka imagined the scene in her head. The storm would have been raging, sky covered in darkness, and raining relentlessly. The Ghost Ship would have been covered in seaweed and broken in many places.

“He boarded the ship filled with undead sailors alone! It’s really scary you know.”

Most of the women sympathized with what Surka was saying. It would be like a scene from a horror movie, but probably worse. In the Royal Road forums, there were posts of users saying they saw

the Ghost Ship pass by. Other posts talk about the Ghost Ship that passes silently by, undead sailors with no legs or arms, who will bring a scream to your throat if your eyes meet.

To board a Ghost Ship at night, and alone would have taken an amazing amount of courage.

Hwaryeong stuck her tongue out as she said, “Basically, instead of the victim in a horror movie, Weed is” Irian finished the statement.

“More like a horror movie’s monster.”

Weed was frightening in the fact that he had the ability to exploit the Ghost Ship and its crew. At that moment they could hear Weed’s skill ‘Lion’s Roar’.

“It’s time to work!” While on the sea you would think there would be nothing to do but rest, but that would be a huge mistake.

There would only be a moment of free time, as the sun rises from the East. Everyone spread out on the deck to let the undead sailors do their work.

The sailors let down nets from the side of the ship. “You could say the sea is nature’s repository; there is no need to buy food.” For meals, fish needed to be caught. When Weed’s order went out, the undead sailors frantically moved to do their jobs.

When Weed was in command of orcs, dark elf or undead he was a strong and a commander overflowing with charisma. Even dreadful monsters (and Weed) had something they truly feared.

Something that Weed could never forget in his life was the landlord, L-A-N-D-L-O-R-D.

‘Kuhuk!’

When he lived on a monthly rent, his mouth ran dry from anxiousness.

These were the times when he watched out to see if the landlord was in or not. Even if the walls were covered in mold, the boiler was broken, or the lights were out; not one word of protest would be made. The landlord didn’t talk very much.

“Are you going to vacate the house?” For some reason after buying his home, he dreamt up a nightmare that couldn’t come true. In the dream, after buying the house, the old landlord came.

“Since you moved into a better house, pay 20000 won more every month!” Even in the dream Weed instinctively pleaded.

“Just a few more days... There is money coming in, but I haven’t received it yet. I’ll properly pay on time next month.” The one being that could make Weed meek without a doubt was a landlord.

Weed surveyed the indigo sea on the deck.

The islands that could be seen with the eye increased, and merchant ships and other sailing vessels could be seen passing by.

“Anyway, We’ve arrived in Neria!” Even with the Geomchis’ weight, the slow/rickety Ghost Ship, undead sailors who are weak on the sea, and other negative influences; they arrived near their destination, albeit barely.

When a dolphin, which is a symbol of luck, appears even the Ghost Ship became a lot faster. The Ghost Ship was a ship, that even the dolphins out speeded in a moment. The Ghost Ship is called the calamity of the sea, but when ridden it was nothing more than a ridiculously slow ass boat.

“At this rate, if we want to go out into the far reaches of the sea, it will probably take two-No, three months!” After arriving in Neria Sea they realized the seriousness of the problem. Even a ship with one sail could move at a faster speed than the Ghost Ship.

Since the undead sailors don’t eat they’re fine, but to feed all the Geomchis fishing is necessary. If fish can’t be caught for a few days, it would become a situation where everyone would starve. There were times where they landed and explored islands in search of food and water.

Another problem was Weed being new to navigating the seas as a captain. With the blacksmith skill the ship could be repaired and sculptures could be made, but there were no navigational skills. Since Weed couldn’t get a grasp on the direction he should be

heading; things such as the Ghost Ship heading in wrong direction, or getting caught in the ocean current, happened in frequent succession.

“Well, since it looks like we’ll arrive at the Island of Ipia in 2-3 hours, I guess I should prepare. Call Death Knight Van Hawk!”

“You called me, master?”

“I have something for you to do. Follow me.” Weed went down into the ship’s storage and got busy with his hands. “Drink, Drink!” The fish that were caught with the fishing skill were coolly stored. Weed was forcefully feeding the fish water.

****Gurururuk****

Death Knight Van Hawk was now nimble with his hands, and could feed the fish water. The reason was that a fish that was heavier and plump sold better.

The Island of Ipia was a known attraction for vacationing; the beach was crowded with users who enjoyed the waves and the sun.

“Sometimes, you need this kind of rest.”

“This is paradise.” People enjoyed the rest as if they were in heaven.

The Island of Ipia was one of the 8 islands on the Versailles continent known for its beauty, so it was full of tourists all year around. The island's beachside lodges, that looked like they came straight out of a painting (and appealing food) were some of its main points that kept bringing tourists. The shining sun and the cool sea! Take a dip in the sea, bask in the sunlight, have a sand bath, and finally have a bar-be-que party, with beer at night. These activities makes for an enjoyable day, which is why people who are tired from repetitive dungeon grinding visit the Island of Ipia.

Suddenly, large sailing vessels appeared near Island of Ipia! The vessels looked so decrepit and unseaworthy, that it was hard to believe that the fleet of 7 vessels still floated! Most sea vessels have figureheads to avoid storms and disasters at sea; such as a statue of Freya, dolphins, and spirits of the sea. The vessels that just appeared had a statue of a one-eyed, one armed, and one legged pirate.

The fleet of Ghost Ships led by Weed had arrived at the Island of Ipia. The island was located near the edge of the Neria Sea, where it met the wide ocean, so there were many adventurers and merchants. It took a long time for the ships to arrive at the island, after it appeared on the horizon.

****Kuhiiing, Kwazizizick****

The reason was due to the contact with the seaweed and the reef, which slowed the ships down. The Ghost Ship lowered its sails and dropped its anchor then Weed's party rode on a rowboat to shore.

"Selling all kinds of fish. Mackerel pike, cutlass, salmon, and

tuna! You name it, I have it! It's a chance you don't want to miss! They're very fresh, so have a taste! I am also selling shrimp and clam, very cheap!"

It was a business chance that Weed couldn't miss. He caught a lot of fish from the 12 days on the sea, while raising his fishing skill.

"Oppa, is that person a Lich?"

"I think he is... Wow a real Lich.... Even a Lich sells stuff now."

Weed was someone who makes profits, even from using his appearance. There were a lot of good looking people who came to the island, but there weren't any people who brought attention with curiosity. Weed stuck out his skull head with pride.

'I knew this day would come, where I would bring attention with my face. It was because of other people that my appearance didn't stand out.'

Zephyr, who looks attractive, even from a male perspective; and Pale, who had a decent fashion sense. Ever since Weed associated with the Geomchis, he thought he was alienated by women.

In reality, if the girls who hunted with him, were excluded, like Surka, Irene, ones introduced by Mapan/Hwaryeong, and those whose relationship are ambiguous like Seoyoon; he wasn't all that popular with girls.

‘Indeed, a man should present himself as he wants. All he needs is confidence.’ Weed laughed as he sold fish, the female users’ hands went to their weapons.

The people with the priest class saw the undead Lich Weed and thought ‘Experience!’

‘Will he really drop items?’ For those of the priest class, hunting the undead gives a lot more experience, fame and faith; so even the female priestesses flocked around Weed.

Everyone was itching to take out their weapons, but it looked like a human user, and not a monster so they were all hesitating. The reason was that if their name became red, they would be killed without a doubt.

“We only have 2 sardines left.” The fresh, tasty and nutritious sardines were caught from a sea to the Northwest. You can fry it, boil it, bake it, add it to a soup, or eat it raw since it’s that fresh. Special price of only 23 silver each, if you buy both, it’s can be yours for only 44 silver!”

If you buy it, you’ll feel like it was such a bargain, and if you don’t buy it, it feels like you’ll regret it. This was the feeling that Weed brought with his business ability. After selling all the fish, Weed took his steps in stride in the streets.

‘It’s probably the first time a Lich ever came into a town.’ Weed had confidence in his pride of being the first, but the island’s guards gave him looks as if he were a criminal.

People were shocked to see an undead. As those who use forbidden magic, necromancers are shunned in all kingdoms in the continent. A Lich is considered a higher rank of a necromancer, and as such Weed was treated the same. Users whispered among themselves and were amazed.

“He must be a really high leveled magician.”

“Is that a Necromancer’s second job or even a third job?” Weed walked by, keeping silent to maintain his stature as a Lich. The only thing left by Weed, as he passed by, was the stench of rotting flesh and fish.

Pale and the others had visited many vacation spots before. The reason was that they weren’t obsessed with hunting and raising skill levels like Weed was.

“I think this place was one of the best places I’ve visited. I’ve heard that spending the summer in the Island of Ipia was great, and they were right.” Surka said enviously.

How enjoyable would it be to spend a week on the Island of Ipia. The sea was full of coral and the island had a small mountain, that was full of palm like trees; the sight couldn’t be any wonderful.

“So cool.”

Even Romuna was impressed by the view of the Island of Ipia.

You could experience many enjoyable things in the game, which you couldn't see (or do) in real life; it caused many people to become addicted to Royal Road.

You could have endless peace and quiet, but it could also be dangerous. This is because you can have an adventure, go hunting, become intimate with other people, and be caught in the web of Royal Road's appeal.

Looking at Morata, the amount of users increased, and they were becoming happier. Every time Morata was mentioned Hwaryeong smiles brightly and says,

"I think Weed always respects his people and the beginners; unlike the other lords." The ones who knew Weed's true self such as Mapan and Pale could only stay silent.

'Why is it that we met the same Weed... Yet Hwaryeong's view is so different from ours?'

"That's what I call being 'completely blinded' Once they see his 'good side' it will be hard to convince otherwise."

Bellotte made a suggestion. "How about we have a walk on the beach?"

"Agreed."

"Let's go!" Ipia Island's beach was one of the most popular spots.

Coming to Ipia Island and not taking a walking on the beach was unthinkable. There were many users in swimwear, and others had simple leather clothing. People were getting a tan, sand bathing, have a relaxing rest, or even jumping into the sea to enjoy the waters. In such a picturesque sight, a crowd could be seen gathering.

The Geomchis whose muscles were like bodybuilders came and were swimming or lying on the sand. It broke the pride of every male on the beach who were showing off their body.

Weed entered the Maritime/Navigation Guild.

The guild was used by players who owned a ship, merchants, fishermen and those whose livelihood was in the sea. Like other guilds it had an instructor and a training hall to teach essential skills. The guild taught skills such as how to drop an anchor, what to do in a storm, how to control the sail and other necessary skills.

When Weed came plodding along the instructor wasn't surprised.

“You came here to learn Sailing skills?”

“Yes.”

“What do you want to learn?”

“I want to learn everything that helps in quickening a voyage”

“You’re pretty greedy. You have the qualifications?”

“Of course.” The Sailing skill was mostly learned by working the body hard.

“Then follow me!” The Maritime guild was larger than other guilds.

Weed followed the instructor’s teachings on how to row, control the sail, and other skills. To travel fast on the sea, wind had to be used effectively. Therefore, the skill for controlling the sail was essential. All the ghost sailors, and the first mate Nick, didn’t know how to control the sails.

The Ghost Ship was a ship that travels slowly towards its target. Since the ship follows disaster, Weed had to learn the skill for using the sail effectively.

“A ship reacts differently depending on the direction of the ocean current. If you want to sail to the far reaches of the sea, you have to use the currents and know when to quickly turn the helm. To avoid sand bars and marine animals it’s a necessary skill.”

Weed followed his instructions and learned to turn the helm on a small ship. Every time Weed turned the helm the ship slowly turned in the direction Weed wanted it to go.

“You know how to swim? If you fall in the sea and you can’t

swim you,die there and then.” The instructor pushed Weed into the water and he practiced swimming. Weed was a natural dog paddler expert. On the stage called a reservoir, Weed polished his art of dog paddling even in storms.

“It’s a weird form, but quick and effective. Even if you trip and fall into the sea you won’t die from it. With this much I’ll say you are qualified to learn the Navigation skill”

****Trring!****

-You have learned the Sailing skill-

Sailing: travel affiliated skill

General skill to use a ship on the sea or river.

As the skill level goes up the skill in handling ships increases and the ship gets bonus movement speed

Chances of meeting storms or hail decrease.

Long voyages, extraordinary discovery or sailing in ill wind increases the leveling speed of this skill

At intermediate skill level, the sailor’s discontent can be quelled and keep loyalty from dropping so it is useful for long voyages.

Current skill level: Beginner 1

The ship gets a 3% increase in speed.

Decrease of 1.5% chance of meeting storms.

-You have gained 4 Stamina from acquiring this skill!

-You have gained 6 Leadership from acquiring this skill!

-You have gained 3 Agility from acquiring this skill!

-You have gained 9 Luck from acquiring this skill!

Sailing skill was a skill so useful, that it was almost essential for users who started on islands or seaside towns. Even if they didn't travel the seas often, you could raise several stats with this skill.

“Do you want to also learn the Chart reading skill?”

“It's necessary to travel the seas, I want to learn it.” Weed learned how to read nautical charts. It was a skill to find a ship's position from a compass and the ship's speed by calculating. During a voyage, if a special discovery is found, or affection with marine life forms, an increase in the skill informs the position of their location. Of course the skill level had to be better than beginner for it to be possible. By learning the skill Weed gained 3 stats in Wisdom and Intelligence.

“If you want to learn shipbuilding I will teach you, with your handicraft skill you could learn it anytime you want.”

“I'll learn it”

By acquiring a skill few stat points and gained. More the merrier was the saying when it came to skills. The shipbuilding skill could be levelled by constructing small boats using wood, since Weed had advanced handicraft and sculpting, it was piece of cake. For

ships sailing on the sea the most central thing is functionality. Following that, Weed listened to the instructor recount his experiences of shipbuilding. After acquiring the shipbuilding skill Weed gained 5 Stamina, Strength and Endurance. Even though Weed was pretty much a jack of all trades he didn't have the confidence to raise the shipbuilding skill to the intermediate or advanced level.

‘It takes too long to make a ship.’ There was also the limitation of only being able to sell and make one near the sea. ‘In that regard a sculptor is much better’

Weed found a positive side to sculpting.

Hunting, hunting and more hunting!

Seoyoon killed all the monsters that attacked her and picked up the items. As expected of a berserker the more monsters there are the stronger they get. Seoyoon was the type of person to dive straight into a dungeon no matter how dangerous it was. Seoyoon cleared the Valley of Echoes, Spirit Ridge, and Cactus Gorge all by herself. In the North she was the first person to discover the hunting areas, so she received more fame, experience and items.

In the area full of high level monsters, Seoyoon hunted in the dungeons and completed quests.

-My fawn has run away from home. If you have the time can you find her?

It was the request of a deer Seoyoon met near a stream.

Seoyoon never spoke in Royal Road except for the time she sent a friend request to Weed. From not speaking, she gained a certain skill.

Soul Conversation: Can converse with animals, monsters, spirits and legendary beings.

Skill not only affected by skill level but also affected greatly by closeness, Charisma, and Charm.

Can send simple greetings, but cannot converse with monsters that have been hunted.

Seoyoon received quests from monster and animals. Quests for her occurred not in towns, but in far places such as a mountain spring.

Just because of the request by that deer Seoyoon cleared multiple dungeons to find the fawn.

Luckily, the fawn was saved by Seoyoon before it almost became food.

-Did my mother send you? Thank you. Since you were able to save me you must be very skilled.

The fawn gave her valuable information in return for saving her.

-There is a necklace with gems, that humans really like, and it

was thrown away in that forest over there. If no one picked it up it probably is still there. I want to see that necklace again and mother would like to as well.

Treasure quest, get! Seoyoon headed in the direction of the forest with the necklace.

The Valley of Death, it wasn't far from the place where Seoyoon and Weed arduously traveled together.

'He was sick...I made him rice porridge. I wonder if it tasted good.' At that time Seoyoon displayed great courage, since it was the first time she cooked for someone and personally feeding them.

She was trembling from nervousness so much, she didn't season the porridge properly; she just concentrated on feeding Weed carefully. The porridge was salty, spicy and bitter! For Seoyoon that moment became a heartwarming memory.

'I was happy that time.' When she had travelled with Weed, she didn't feel lonely, and at times had to she keep herself from laughing.

'There was that sculpture in the cave.' She remembered seeing Weed carving a loving couple that cared for each other in the extreme cold. Since she could meet Weed in school she didn't miss him.

'I have to be strong enough to support him' She didn't want to

see Weed killed by a monster.

Everyday Seoyoon roamed the hunting grounds. She spent a lot more time hunting monsters. She was invited by the vampire to Todeum. When vampire lord Tori invited Weed at the Valley of Death, Seoyoon was there with him.

“Beautiful lady, you can visit Todeum anytime.” Tori gave a rose to Seoyoon while Weed wasn’t watching and invited her. Vampire Lord Tori was a very simple vampire. Whenever he saw beautiful women he tried to become intimate with them by saying,

“Beautiful lady, have you thought of becoming a vampire by any chance?”

****Triing!****

-Hidden race ‘vampire’ has been unlocked, do you want to become a vampire?

When you switch to a different race that race’s special abilities can be used.

But, the penalty for dying is 3 times the normal rate of experience, and skill.

There are restrictions on equipment that a vampire can equip and use.

The vampire race’s physical abilities are incomparably greater than a warrior’s and have great vitality, battle ability and they can use magic.

As long as you are a vampire you can promote to a Vampire Queen or a Vampire Lord.

But, if you are killed 7 times or a silver nail is embedded into your heart you return to being a human.

Without a doubt Seoyoon refused.

Seoyoon, who was wary of suspicious people, didn't want her neck bitten by Tori. When she left Todeum the vampire kingdom, Tori followed her.

"Sure enough, you need to find a good master." She was incomparable to Weed in her treatment of Tori. She didn't scold or beat him up.

Since Tori was hunting together with the beautiful Seoyoon, there couldn't be anything that could make him happier. Even the true blood vampires led by Tori hunted with Seoyoon and grew in level.

Chapter 2: Dinner On The Island Of Ipia

“The sea!”

“Alright! Then first, let’s start by building the foundation!”

Novice sailors starting in Ipia Island exclaimed from ashore. They were chopping wood to make a seaworthy raft. But a warning to all aspiring sailors in Ipia! The production of timber is actually quite costly. First you need to go to the forests in the mountains and chop down the trees yourself. Then you have to drag the lumber down the mountain to build your raft.

“Once you have the fishing skill, you can just eat whatever you catch. Later on I’ll be sailing the far seas.”

But many sailors had a different mentality.

“There’s been pirates on that island. If I find their buried treasure... fufufu.”

“If you’re going to have a large gathering, then of course it has to be by the sea!”

“If you’re going to go take a risk, it has to be in the sea!”

Novice users!

At first many set out in shitty boats made out of logs held together by knotted vines. They use a sheet of cloth for a sail as they begin their adventure!

(T/N: Every pirate's first boat sucks.)

There were many names engraved on top of the flagpoles.

There were many names engraved on the sides.

Best Ipia Transport.

Shipping Federation of Versailles Continent.

Chateau de Balleroy Ocean Peace Corps.

The ships were just rafts, but their names showed huge aspirations.

Surka sighed wistfully.

“This island is really lively.”

She was sitting in a tavern overlooking the sea while drinking orange juice. Zephyr was sitting near her, searching through the women by swiveling only his eyes. Even if he tried to stop, his eyes would start roaming again subconsciously.

“This is a nice resort... it has a good atmosphere.”

He did not miss a single woman within a 100-meter radius.

‘Hmm, her thighs are a bit thick for her body. She has shoulder length hair. Her posture is that of someone with military training and it looks like she can high-kick. My conclusion is that she is someone who trained hard to overcome her petite body.’

An in-depth analysis of women!

‘It only goes to show that women are lonely.’

For him it was easy to become friends and lovers. Buy a drink for a girl who looked lonely and then... natural instinct would take over. After that it was easy to register them as friends and maybe even take them out to dinner.

Still Zephyr’s butt remained stuck to the chair. He was sick of these quick girlfriends who were so easily seduced by a few words. He wanted a real companion. Many women loved his appearance, academic background, and financial power. His possessions included designer clothes, a foreign car, membership to first class hotels and luxury watches. He was tired of using his assets to gain favor. He felt as if he was a fake, and he was tired of people getting close just because of his possessions.

If the heart was not moved, then it was meaningless.

‘I can heal their loneliness for a brief moment but it would never last.’

Zephyr wanted to meet a woman who he could really love. Could

anyone truly be happy in life without sharing it side by side with a loved one? Surely not. However you can not judge a person without knowing them.

'... What would I like to do....'

Spending time alone on dates would be nice, but going out with others as a group also sounded attractive. Would simply spending time together solve the problem and make them feel closer?

Even amidst these complex thoughts, he was stirring the cinnamon around in his drink while his eyes turned fully back to the women.

“That? She looks fine but her neck is moving by itself... tsk!”

He muttered to himself.

“Because of that it won’t work out.”

Hwaryeong, along with Maylon and Romuna were just watching. Drinking soda from glasses, they were relaxing without a care in the world. Summer vacation on Ipia Island! It was supposedly the most heart-soothing place in all of Royal Road.

*

Weed floated on a boat just off of Ipia Island. He looked at the

boats floating around with just a plastic sheet and a flag.

“They sure are putting a lot of faith into those little rafts.”

He felt sympathy for the novice users because the raft he was using was more than just a simple raft! It was a dugout Korean canoe! He felt like he could even kill a Kraken with it! He took the name from a mighty sea creature thingy! This was the first ship he had built with his shipbuilding skills. The ghost ship could be operated properly after advancing the beginner ship sailing skills to level 7. It was too large for his low skill to operate now, so right now if he tried to steer the ship it would just drift in the wrong direction. To raise his skill, he needed a smaller boat, so an one-person dugout canoe was perfect.

Sailing skills proficiency has increased.

Even just floating in the sea increased his skill. Weed had raised his sailing skills to level 3 just by going around the island and looking at the sights and views. As his skill level rose he became better and faster at getting around while feeling less and less of the waves' impacts. The dugout canoe was easy to handle with low-level skills. He started to head back to one of the many ports on Ipia Island.

Due to sailing for a long time there is a 13% increase of proficiency.

Sailing skills is now at Beginner Level 4.

An additional 2% acceleration will be added.

Probability of being of capsized in rough weather has been reduced by 5%.

Endurance stat has increase by 15%.

Sailing skills level 4! (T/N It actually said nautical skill level 4 but the word nautical made me laugh too much so I changed it)

“This skill is rising so quickly!”

Weed was quite delighted. It had a very fast growth rate compared to the sculpture and production skills. The skill grew fast during a short period, but Weed was determined to never be a sailor.

“Would the skill go up faster if my ship got damaged? I think it would give proficiency if I sunk the ship....”

He looked at a coral reef nearby and paddled furiously!

When the durability of the ship had reached zero, the repair ship skill was used. Sticks and broken pieces of rope were wound around the tree branch parts. He received food by fishing and fresh water when it rained; after its long journey around Ipia island, the little canoe was ready to fall apart at any moment. Weed returned to the harbor not a moment too soon!

Ship owned by Deoreo has sunk.

Fame -35.

4 loads of seaweed have been lost.

He could just create a new boat. There was no use salvaging it since it was a cheap dugout canoe. Still, it was not your usual beginner's ship.

“Sailing skills at level 4. Now I will be able to control small, high-speed boats.”

It was great fun building up his navigation skills to become a great sailor. Now he could get a high-quality boat, hire a crew, sail some more, and go on an ocean voyage. A real dream!

But Weed's professional career with sailing skills was going to end here. He had only meant to enjoy a quick vacation on the Ipia Island. A few days off that his sister could enjoy!

However the ocean was really, very attractive. Different species of fish could be seen in different colored waters. The water was so clear in some parts that the fish could be seen flitting about. The coral reefs and the fish gave off mysterious and bright light effects. If you sailed around you could even discover uninhabited islands.

Marine trade was a very profitable form of commerce that most users overlooked. Most well-known trade routes could earn a lot of money on a single trip.

They could also earn a lot by providing transportation to people. Going by ship around the continent was so much faster than walking! The Versailles proverb went:

“The first on the soil will be the adventurers full of muscle. Then will the merchants.”

There was no place in the Versailles continent where merchants did not work. It may not be actual strength, but the power wielded by a merchant who traded vast amounts of goods across the continent could not be ignored. Aspiring merchants who utilized the sea had an advantage when they familiarized themselves with sailing skills.

“It’s certain that prestigious guilds would not hold out very long if there were no merchants supporting them.”

Instead of going with Weed to the Mariners guild, Hwaryeong and the others went together to the pub where they heard a quest related to Zahab. Quests relating to the remaining Matallost, and quests relating to the Niflheim Empire.

Ipia Island attracted many people with its specialty beers and you would often see parties eating barbecue on the beach. But Weed had another purpose in mind. He would collect information relating to the Niflheim Imperial quest.

It was said that Ipia Island was just a giant resort, but it was visited by so many people that it could also be called an important port. Every port has taverns and the waitress had the most information. In order to obtain information on sea quests you had to “capture” them. Treatment of the waitresses at the bars was a sensitive competition that often provoked rivalry.

“Getting on the ghost ship would be meaningless if I don’t have any information.”

*

Pirate Island Croix is located near Ipia Island! Small fishing boats which consisted of hunting parties full of warriors and priests floated around, completing quests.

“I hope ye didn’t run into too much trouble”

“Not at all. I enjoyed talking to you.”

“Shank’s, here’s the three gold ye were promised.”

Croix was a very dangerous hunting ground because the first half, it was a pirate base with various defenses that had been built around the fort. And the other half, it was filled with monsters!

Only users of level 340 or higher could enter and come out alive. On a narrow but safe strip of land, users were standing around gathering parties to carefully hunt and explore Croix!

However, seven ships sailing decrepit sailboats with an imposing presence arrived from the sea. It was the ghost fleet of pirate Deoreol. A one eyed, one armed, one-legged pirate held out a money bag in one hand and a great flag in the other.

“Tweeeeet! Pwap pwap pwap pwap. Sha! Invasion of the enemy!”

The pirates of the island promptly responded. Shouts of alarm and the sound of a bull horn cried out a state of emergency. Users attempting to hunt sat down in amazement.

“What should I do?”

“What else, just wait till those idiots die.”

No users were usually crazy enough to attack Croix Island. Croix was the gathering place for some of the most notorious pirate gangs. Even so much to hunt on this island that it would make users feel proud. (T/N It took a lot of guts to hunt there.)

“Foolish bastards.”

The users were laughing as the pirates lined up one after another to protect their waterfront home. The decrepit ship sailed straight on without changing directions. Geomchi3 was sitting in the captain’s seat while the first mate Nickey was steering the ship. Nickey humbly bowed at the waist and said.

“Temporary Captain! At this speed, we will hit the coast. Do you want to slow down?”

Geomchi3 shook his head.

“Go straight at full speed.”

“Aye, sir.”

Going straight ahead without changing direction! Anchored on a sandbar. At Croix Island, raiders carrying scimitars and ropes with hooks were waiting as the ghost ship approached.

"Uwaaah!"

Emerging from a hole leading to the hull of the Ghost Ship, Geomchi came out.

A landing operation on the famous Pirate Island Croix was being carried out.

*

There were over 20 bars in the Ipia Island port. There were also many big name resorts, but for sailors who came back from a long voyage, they wanted to relax and wash away their tiredness with beer at their usual hangouts. It was classified as a cozy pub near the harbor and beach that allowed casual swimwear. Sailors usually went there for its quiet atmosphere. Hwaryeong had told him to meet at the bar because of its good atmosphere and the bar's name “Girl Waiting at the Harbor”.

“Here is your glass of beer and dried seaweed snacks. Please tip over here.”

Weed finished ordering and sat down at the bar where gentle music was flowing.

“Not a bad atmosphere. Zephyr and the others haven’t arrived yet.”

Weed firmly put a piece of seaweed in his rotten teeth with bony fingers. Even after turning into an undead it was still possible to taste the fragrant flavor. Normally a skeleton wouldn’t have much of a sense of taste, but thanks to the effects of Sculpture Shapeshifting, he was effectively masking his real body. So he still had some advantages of a human body.

When he learned Sculpture Shapeshifting, it was unknown to him if those masking traits would disappear, but for now taste and aroma were meant to be enjoyed. While drinking beer, Weed listened to the circulating stories.

“I’m glad we came to Ipia Island. I am going to try to come again next year.”

“Then invite Oze and all the other guys to come on New Year.”

“Palowin’s team followed the Berwick fleet into this dungeon. There they revealed they were doing a really big quest, and the fame was amazing.”

“You know that you can transport cheese to the kingdom of Brent for big money.”

“... Do you really think so?”

“Information was from a minor source, but I think it could be a big draw.”

Users with multiple jobs and merchants talked freely and shared stories. You could benefit by listening, and they might receive help too. If there were no secrets to share, one could listen to the band. It was customary to pay for drinking expenses while gathering information. Weed eavesdropped on many other people's conversations at the heart of the tavern while wearing a heavy robe. After about 10 minutes of spying, he heard.

“But every time I go to Morata, the lord is busy. I would have liked to see his face before I left.”

Every ear within the place must have heard and started talking.

“Where do you go to get in on a sculpture quest?”

“God of War Weed, Matallost quest... do you think he is only sharing with the users who helped him rescue the church?”

“I heard that everyone who did the original was included but

they don't have exclusive rights, so anyone can join."

"That's nice experience for the combat professions, such easy experience from one quest can't be seen that often in large organizations."

"Hundreds of people cooperating together for a quest... sound like fun."

Weed suddenly stretched his shoulders wide even though they were only narrow bones. Users that completed the Matallost quest were resolved to beat the next request. In Royal Road it was not such an easy thing to take part in a big quest, it would also be a fun experience.

"Morata's Lord's obsession with earning money is certainly unique. He has done a lot more business than most traders."

"Oh, by the way have you heard about this evening's performance of Hairen Benti?"

They had quickly changed topics. When drinking there is no reason to talk too deeply of the lords from other regions.

"Do you mean that show that is going on in the central square?"

"Has it finally arrived at the central square? At this rate there's gonna be a lot of people attending."

“It is a great show.”

Hairen Benti was a female bard. Singing and dancing from Morata, she had gained sensational popularity. Thanks to the ongoing investment in culture, the bards were vigorously working. Many songs with a Morata theme were showing up all over the Versailles continent. Morata was full of fun adventures and included a robust commerce centre.

The fact that stories about Morata had spread into the far northern island of Ipia was an evidence that Morata was growing. Whenever Weed's quests are being broadcast, each bar always blossomed with conversations about it.

“Over here, waitress!”

Weed called out to one of the employees.

“Yes, sir?”

Soon after a waitress with pigtails came running.

"Rather, the bards at that table seem to be calling for me... can I just give you the bill now?"

“No no. Please send me two more strands of seaweed. I’ll calculate the bill later.”

“Sheesh! Okay, sir.”

He was ignoring the waitresses bad attitude. This is what happens when you have bad intimacy. Weed was an unknown and a skeleton, not even four drinks were enough protection for Weed.

“Thank you.”

Weed thanked the waitress with the bad attitude when he received seaweed with a gentle wave of his hand. And soon he walked up to the hostess with a swish of his mantle. The stretched lobes immediately crumpled.

“Do you girls like sculptures?”

Working to build intimacy! Weed talked to the female employees under the watchful eyes of the users. It was a bar by the sea, retaining a friendly relationship with the waitress could lead to the necessary information for a quest. The others sympathized as they kept watch wondering what sort of information the female employees would give out.

“My name is Delia, not “you”, and I hate sculptures!”

A sharp rejection! He didn't even have to put this much effort into carving a masterpiece. If he had to build intimacy like this, it could take a long time to earn the information he needed for his quest. Weed was not going to give up because it was hard, how else

was he be able to share the lunch with the instructor, and take away the elder of Morata's precious sweet potatoes with only a resigned look left on the elder's face?

Weed tapped his bony finger on the table and said lightly.

"You are beautiful."

"Hearing such praise from a skeleton does not make me happy."

"What kind of man do you like?"

"I like a man with a short head of hair. I hate a man with no hair."

The sorrow of a skeleton! The one eyed, pierced appearance was met with severe antipathy from Delia.

'A skeleton is not beautiful?'

It was not cool? How the hell was his outfit not wonderful? He could never understand the taste of women. Okay, the cracked part of the skull naturally gave off the inelegant appearance of a gaping skull. Since his appearance had escaped the Orc Karichwi charming effects with women, Weed decided to switch directions. (T/N Weed has great talent in making hideous ugly things.)

Assuming one cannot gain familiarity from talking there was

another special way one could gain favors.

‘Gifts.’

The fastest way to buy the favor of the female employees! However, intimacy gained from gifts did not last long. If the gift you give is not up to par, then the intimacy immediately dropped.

‘And then you regret the gift.’

Weed decided to ask directly instead.

“What kind of stories do you like?”

“Hmmm... I’m fond of adventure stories, especially adventure stories from the sea! However I probably wouldn’t have any interest in ones from a skeleton.”

Weed thought of an adventure that went with the sea and the surrounding regions.

“I’ve had many great adventures from around the sea.”

“Okay, I’ll tell you an interesting story.”

“It seems like a waste of time.”

“Once I’ve heard a certain adventurer from the kingdom of Rosenheim....”

The start of an adventure story to buy the female employee’s favor, impress the employees, and make the bar become more jubilant.

Kkiruru!

Just as he was about to unveil the story of the adventurer, a bird made out of gold flew onto his shoulder. The Golden Bird with its eyes made out of sapphire looked at Delia. A cute figure wearing a crown of diamonds. The Golden Bird showed exquisite timing!

The guests of the bar looked in surprise at the Golden Bird. Golden Bird made users stumble because they had never heard of such a thing.

“Oh my! Did you raise this mysterious birdie?”

“Yes.”

Strength of friendship with Delia, employee of the tavern “Girl Waiting in the Harbor”, has increased a little.

“May I touch it?”

“Of course.”

Since it did not cost anything to touch, plenty of touching was allowed. Delia lightly swiped a finger along Golden Bird.

“I did not know there were birds like this. You must be a great adventurer!”

Strength of friendship with Delia, employee of the tavern “Girl Waiting in the Harbor”, has increased significantly.

The tacky skeleton’s treatment rose greatly! If you miss an opportunity to gain a great deal of intimacy, you would surely regret it.

Even though now and then he fell into misfortune in the Versailles continent, he was now living the dream of adventuring at sea.

However now that he was able to own a medium sized sailboat, there was no need to worry about small disasters.... The commandeered ghost ship had no end to small disasters. There was no need to even talk about the habitual water leaks, the awful air filtration, the seaweed that twisted them up at the reef, and the group of dirty sailors and colleagues ready to jump into the mouth of any sea monster at the first word.

The only reason he came to sea was because the Golden Bird had pointed to the location across from it. Weed had been ready to kidnap Golden Bird with his silky voice. Yes, the atmosphere maintained a certain skeletal theme, and had left him with

lingering expectations.

“The Golden Bird is pointing somewhere isn’t it? Is it supposed to do that?”

“Unfortunately I don’t know yet. However I am certain there is a connection to the collapse of the Niflheim Empire. Have you ever heard of it?”

“... It is the Niflheim Empire, right? That topic covers names from long ago, but I wouldn’t know anything about them. But if you’re talking about the North Sea then you should talk to Grandpa North T., he often sailed in the north. Wouldn’t it be better to go speak to him then ask me?”

“May I ask where I can meet him?”

“He lives near the island’s eastern Imperial Villa. It’s always easier to meet him in front of his house during broad daylight.”

Weed felt a premonition.

Sometimes the slightest clue could cause the greatest things to occur. There was a possibility that Thira did not know anything about the Niflheim Empire. However it was information that he did not have to pay for, so he accepted it as a gift.

Weed spread his shoulders wide.

“This is all thanks to my luck!”

Kkiruru!

The Golden Bird laughed along with Weed! The sculptures created by a sculpting master like the Emperor were really unique, they had a calming bond.

‘Life Bestowal sculptures like this guy are really uncommon. This guy is so much smarter than the guys I have to beat.’

Weed thought of all the inadequacies of large bird shapes.

‘In regard to shape there are many inefficiencies. Beautiful appearances and eye catching wings, but the feet are inconvenient to write, eat, and carry things with.’

While Weed contemplated the geometry of eating vs. carrying.

“Hyeong-nim, you came first.”

Zephyr appeared carrying a fishing rod.

His colleagues had previously gone their separate ways on Ipia Island, but Zephyr had been spending his time drinking at the bar.

“Welcome back, sir!”

Delia showed a bright figure of hospitality!

“Mister, you are incredible! You’ve caught a pretty big fish!”

One of Zephyr’s packages included a variety of rare fish.

“For a great angler like me, this is child’s play!”

“Oh, I’ve never seen such a big Sunfish.”

The female waitresses flocked around Zephyr!

“Isn’t this a Cinnamon Ganhan? I will personally give you a salted plate if you want to sell this.”

“There are also good seaweed, skin shells, and powdered pearl which might be good for you according to some medical journals.”

“This might be good!”

“Sir angler, come and sit down. Do you have any questions or need anything else?”

Zephyr’s popularity with the waitresses was explosive.

‘This guy... he didn’t even have to ask for seaweed.’

"Did you figure out some kind of secret?"

"Cinnamon."

Meanwhile Yurin was using her picture shift to travel around.

"Oh Yurin, I like to use cinnamon a lot. "

As if to answer his thoughts, Yurin showed up shortly after.

"Uh huh, such a nice system."

He didn’t ask why she just showed up. Just that suddenly there were dark clouds in the background of Zephy’s love life; he felt like weeping.

*

A moonlit night party on Ipia Island the companions shared their stories while drinking beer. In the humidity, Hwaryeong shared her stories of how she composed her songs in various countries.

"I first saw the Eiffel Tower when I was 16."

“The Eiffel Tower... you mean the steel structure in France?”

“Weed, when did you see that?”

“On my summer vacation trip. Do you want to see the photos of it? I have some other travel photos as well.”

France, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, England! Weed was able to converse with Hwaryeong about all of them.

“The taste of traveling abroad is very different....”

“Hey, I have to travel because of my band. I do my best work when I travel! England’s strip is really small but the most lively, right?”

Hwaryeong had attended mostly only major cities because her performances needed large spaces, so she had not seen much of the countryside. Talking about the band that harmonized with Hwaryeong’s talent left her with tears in her eyes.

"Do you think we have time to go now?"

Bellot's face was flushed bright red.

Mapan's eyes were frantically darting about as if he was waiting for something and then he nodded his head respectfully.

He was holding an exquisitely designed set of playing cards.

Yurin especially was sketching the scene and the playing cards.

Drinking alcohol in a good atmosphere! There was just the perfect amount of people for a great party!

“It’s a bet, 10 gold.”

“It will be a fairly large plate. All bets are final.”

*

Dain was at the beach party under the moonlight escape.

“It looks like you’re doing fine.”

Weed looked happy with all of his companions. It was a picture she had imagined in the hospital.

‘Prior to the surgery I did not know if I would be leaving this world forever... I was afraid, so I didn’t want to admit that I thought of you so much.’

It was insane. What the mind tells you was not always what the heart wants to accept.

‘Ah, Royal Road was not very interesting. I did not know when I could even connect later. From the beginning, my family and friends would just worry. I felt so alone. I just wanted to quietly have the surgery. So I didn’t tell you about it until the very end. But at the end, I was given courage because I knew that someone would remember me forever, even without a candid confession. I wanted to remain as that special person without causing you to worry about other inconveniences. Then I was worried about what kind of story to tell you, so I deliberately did not change my cursed appearance.

Sorry.

However, Weed, now you look really happy with your close companions. I’m sorry that I could not properly talk to you. And now it’s impossible to ask if you liked me. It was my fate to meet with you again. I had a fantastic illusion. With the memories of us you carved into the earth, I was truly pleased.’

“But all that doesn’t matter now. Weed, now that you’re doing well, my mind is at ease. It means you can love someone else, right? Probably for the best... but... even if you say that now it’s okay isn’t it?... to stay by your side.”

Tears shimmered gently in Dain’s eyes. However, as she walked to another location they slowly were replaced with a vigorous laugh.

“First love.... In the end your first love was me though, right?”

Chapter 3: A Ship's Performance

At sunrise Weed walked east towards the Imperial Villa to meet with North Thira.

Hwaryeong, Bellotte, and Pale followed him along the beach.

Dain had left the party and gone somewhere others could not see her.

Weed turned to face the shimmering cold morning sea air.

“1,190 gold and 690 in prizes winnings went to Hwaryeong. I trailed behind by some because of drawing to the lower yen provocation. As far as I know of the current gold prices and sales market... I lost 810 gold in just a few hours?”

Weed accurately calculated the amount of money that changed hands in the few hours they played Go-Stop. Hwaryeong laughed.

“Hey, we were just playing cards, it can't be that bad? Right?”

“No, that 1190 could have lead to a really good investment. I could have saved that money for the inheritance of my future children!”

The money lost while playing Go-Stop! Weed swallowed his grief

and stopped walking east and instead headed west to the detached palace. Fortunately they were able to meet North Thira on the street.

He was standing on a hill, being buffeted by the wind while looking outwards towards the sea. With the nostalgic sea in mind Weed approached in a friendly manner.

“Mr. North Thira, are you busy? Elder, you were a great sailor were you not? You don’t have much gold but you must have a great understanding of the ocean. Would you mind teaching this young sailor who dreams of the sea how he can become a great sailor as well?”

Blatantly asking for what you want. Sometimes dancing around the topic and trickily sneaking in the question does not increase your intimacy with NPC’s.

“Hue hue, You want to know how to navigate the sea do you?”

“Yes. I heard you mastered sailing the North Sea”

“When we were young our fathers would take us in their boats. We practically grew up sailing the sea. ”

“The Niflheim Empire was once part of the North a long time ago, is it possible that the people there traveled in the northern sea?”

“The Niflheim Empire? That was quite some time ago. They were

part of the Imperial Age if that means anything to you.”

North Thira did not know. However, Weed did not give up. Even the smallest clue could be of the greatest help.

“Are the northern isles related to the Niflheim Empire?” Coarse gray hair and thick white sea bones; North T. was filled with knowledge far richer than others!

In Royal Road, no matter how high your intimacy with a NPC was, they could only answer to the limit of their knowledge.

“The small fishing village Mocon in the North Sea is said to be the remain of Niflheim Empire. It may even still be inhabited by the descendants of the first sailors and fishermen...”

“It hasn’t been discovered by the Ipia Island fisherman?”

“Due to the tremendous cold and the monsters that inhabit most of the islands, it is hard to navigate too. Only a person who is familiar with the sea could easily find the islands today. Do you have a chart?”

“Yes.”

“Take it out, I’ll show you the harbor points I know that still remain in the Northern Sea.”

North T. marked out several places on the map, on the land and the sea.

- Position of Port of Twelve Teeth has been recorded.

Ttiring!

The young sailor learned the basic story navigation. If you hurry the first turn into the cays, then the ship won't get sucked into the vortex. If you get sucked in you can never recover.

Sailing skill proficiency has increased by 25%

Effective steering level goes up by 1.2% permanently (PR Note: cays are islands, banks and reefs.)

“Ah, there is a task I want you to do. If you happen to port by Mocon village, could you tell the head blacksmith there about me? Tell him that I'm doing well in my hometown. Also tell him that I can't go out to sea anymore.”

Ttiring!

Contact for Grandfather North T.

Life is running low for North T. While sailing the ocean North T. created a brotherly friendship with the blacksmith from the town of Mocon. Deliver the news of North T. to the blacksmith. It is not a difficult task but the blacksmith of Mocon village will treat it as a great favor.

Difficulty: D

Compensation: Can receive something from the blacksmith of Mocon village

Requirement: Must know the location of the Mocon village.

Weed was really happy, blacksmith related items were the most expensive. Since he had to go to Mocon village it made it all the better.

The difficulty was low but the compensation was high; it was a perfect quest.

“Okay, we will be sure to deliver the news.”

The number of quest limits has been reached. You cannot receive this quest until one of the three current quests has been completed.

North T. shook his in resignation.

“It looks like you’ve already doing lots of work. Hoarding your works leaves no space for new thing, I’ll have to leave this to somebody else”

Bellotte was the first to notice Hwaryeong, who had been quietly watching up till this point. She reached out and grasped North T. hand with the affection of a granddaughter.

“I will do this request in Weed’s place.”

“Sweet lady, you will become a good wife for somebody. I will

leave this request to you.”

Ttiring!

You have accepted the quest Contact for grandfather North T.

Luck stat +4.

Hwaryeong just wanted to complete the Contact for North T. purely as a favor she could clearly see how Weed saw it from his expression.

His skull was horribly stiff! Weed said.

“So you follow the trail of the loser eh. First you take 810 gold now you take my quest!”

This was an unreasonable assumption since Weed couldn’t accept the quest anyway. But such excessive stubbornness leads to unreasonable feelings. Hwaryeong said.

“Bellotte, you should take this quest too.”

“Can I?”

“Of course. Even if you don’t I will still have to do it so might as well.”

Bellotte accepted the quest with Hwaryeong. Weed mumbled words as they passed by.

“Have you also bought salt that was 200 won more expensive? I bet both of you bought salt as high as a mountain. The luxury of a sinner.”

*

After meeting with North T. Weed went to Linda port in the northern harbor to ‘prepare for departure’.

The ghost crew did not need many supplies since they did not eat.

The problem was the Geomchis.

Though fishing for their food was not an issue, excessive amounts of weight would slow the sailing speed of the boat significantly.

It was possible to double your carrying capacity if you had intermediate sailing but right now Weed was only at beginner level 4. It was impossible to use the ghost ship as a cruise ship.

Weed went up to Geomchi3 and said, “Sahyung, do you want to remain on Ipia Island?”

“Why?” Suspicion had crept into his voice. He had followed Weed to the island from Morata to help on his quest, why would he want to stay? Weed heartlessly thought.

‘You’re heavy and you eat a lot. Why can’t you understand!’

“Yesterday the beer was really good right.”

“Yeah the beer was really delicious.”

“I hear there is even finer beers here. I hear they have barbecues all throughout the day and night with tall, pretty girls in bikinis.”

“!?!?”

Geomchi3 was concentrating on the story.

For the next five minutes Weed told him all about the benefits of Ipia Island.

“Ipia Island could be called a heaven on Earth, a paradise, you can accomplish anything here. The women are more aggressive after all the drinking with colleagues at the beach parties. And why is this? Because in a resort women are more relaxed. Why hitting on women is a common sight. Even I could get 5 friend registration.”

However, any woman Weed called out as a skeleton froze.

Though there were at least 5 women who sought to register friends with Zephyr.

“Uh, the Island of Ipia.....”

Geomchi's awareness drifted as he looked down the fabulous long beach at the 5 supposed women...

Disciplining his body in real life made talking to women a distant dream. However, here in Royal Road there was ample opportunity to party and talk.

Among the Geomchis, 30 of them now had successful romantic relationships; there was a growing frenzy in the dojo.

Weed said in regrettable voice.

“It's a great opportunity but what a pity. I have to go out to sea and who knows when I might come back to Ipia Island? The voyage might take several months.”

“There's great courage in self-sacrifice but do you need to miss every opportunity? This island will surely be an exhilarating and thrilling sea adventure ... the possibility of love blossoming under the sun is supposed to be very high! There are even American women out there!”

Geomchi3's eyes were locked towards where Weed was pointing to.

The primal instincts of a man cannot be denied! Geomchi3 was shaken by the presence of such beauty.

Honestly, who would want to sail at a snails pace. Weed, who could not really show expressions as a skeleton was struggling to appear sincere said.

“Sahyung, in Royal Road you’ve so far only been in battles. Don’t you think it’s time you took a hiatus? Enjoy Ipia Island, go sunbathing or even hunt for crabs.”

“Well, if it’s okay with you Weed.”

“Yes, Geomsachi3-sahyung. If it’s sahyung, then your loyalty can be seen with your words alone. Not just you but the other Geomchis should also share this wondrous opportunity.”

Weed stated seriously. It was a serious scam. Geomchi3 put his strong hand on Weed’s stiff shoulder.

“Thank you!

“You can truly be called youngest.”

The Geomchis were left on Ipia Island as the ghost fleet ran away.

*

While Weed was dealing with his troublesome colleagues, Mapan was buying enough supplies and trading properties to fill a warehouse.

In the northern port many things were very expensive so mainly focused on collecting local commodities and the necessities.

Departing from Ipia Island Again! The speed of the ghost ship was blown to 4 times faster than before. It cannot be compared to a high speed of course but compared to how slow it was before it was a pleasure to be creating a fast wake.

“Wow, cool.”

Out on the deck Surka took her hat off.

The light breeze blew her black hair back. Now there really was a feeling of starting on an ocean voyage.

Golden Bird has taken off from Weed's shoulder and attracted a gaggle of geese that flew around and around. Birds sitting on the deck of full sails adds an effect!

- Because of seabirds sailing speed is increased by 16%

A small reef rose out of the sea like a trident that marked the first path marker. The passage to the North Islands was not a common

path.

*

“Watch out for the reef. Full starboard!” Weed turned into the cay to avoid the reef.

Before it was still too early to completely control the Ghost ship with his deficient skills, so difficult banking and cutting maneuvers could not be used indulgently. (T/N This sailing jargon refers to how the ship maneuvers. Banking refers to few things, pulling along things, sailing in shallow water, literally landing on a bank (thus banking), and turning while slowing down. Cutting refers to turning your ship to go faster. A sailboat usually cuts from one side of the wind to the other to gain more speed. The faster you can cut the more maneuverable your ship is. Also a quick reminder starboard is the right of the ship and port is left.)

However Weed was able to steer much better due to his improved proficiency. Weed sneaked a peek at the passing reef.

On top of the coral reef a charming mermaid waved.

A beautiful naked upper body and lower body covered in mermaid fins, she was something you couldn't normally see in the sea.

It takes great fortune to be able to meet a mermaid.

“Aloha!”

“Nice to meet you mermaid.”

Mapan and Pale enthusiastically waved.

You could hunt mermaids but it was hardly ever done. Mermaids are very pretty and are also high level monsters.

Plus once they dove into the sea it very difficult to track; mermaid hunting was practically impossible.

Weed only innocently stared straight ahead.

The monsters were like cut outs from a magazine. To female users, beautiful mermaids were like soul magic and a lofty dream.

Due to the sea mermaid the luck of the entire ships voyage is raised by 35%

Sailing speed raises 12%

It turns out mermaids could make the ship go faster.

Sailing skills proficiency has risen

Charisma +1.

The faster they sailed the faster the sailing skill proficiency increased.

When Weed's skills hit Beginner level 5 he got a 8% increase in leadership and perseverance.

On the deck Bellotte blew her neatly crafted flute. The power of her playing as bard did not have much effect because beautiful melodies do not really suit the Ghosts ships' atmosphere.

While the bird chirped, fish jumped out over the sea.

Mermaid had been swimming along side the ghost ship.

It could not really be seen well but water and wind sprits followed along the company in graceful lines.

Wherever a minstrel went there was a good show. Hwaryeong pull out a dress with a flap.

“Do you want to dance a little?”

“Wow! I want to see my Unni's dance.”

Surka was really rejoicing.

The women sat around on the ghost ship having cutthroat chatter.

Chatter might not seem very deadly at first glance but don't be

mistaken; They talked about celebrities in recent television dramas, movies, music, politics, economy, society, business, foreign things, and perhaps a guild adventure or two thrown in the mix!

It was no exaggeration to say that there looked to be no end to the chatter.

Understandably Mapan, Pale, and Weed, all sat down by Zephyr to fish.

To top it off, as the girls sat around drinking beer the ghost crew quivered in guilty lust at the sight.

“Well I’ll start off with a simple dance.”

Hwaryeong complied and stood on her tiptoes, she started to lightly dance on her tiptoe round and round the deck.

It was a dance of grace and dignity like the nobles of the Middle Ages.

Dress, music and atmosphere seem to naturally suit Hwaryeong.

The music and dance made the atmosphere of the ghost ship lighthearted and jovial.

Morale of the whole ship is improved by the performance on

board.

Stamina recovery will increase temporarily, the best luck will be granted to the voyage.

The effect of both Bellotte and Hwaryeong performance! In the blink of an eye the quality of the fish Zephyr caught began to differ from those he fished the previous month.

Rare fish that could be caught only every few months were being caught one after another; a line of mermaid and spirits flocked to the side of the ghost ship to listen to the musical performance.

From a distance it looked like a giant whale had come alive from under the sea.

Received the blessings of the sea spirits. Navigation speed will increase 17%

Received blessing of the water spirit. Voyage will be less likely to be disturbed by the elements. If an impact with a reef or vortex occurs the effects will be lessened.

Received blessings of the wind spirit. Able to use the maximum ability of the sails.

Suddenly the ghost ship became as fast as a high speed boat.

It was the power of music, dance, and culture.

“Wow!”

Everyone was thrilled by the effect of Bellotte’s music and

Hwaryeong's dance.

The clear high notes made you think of the nostalgic feeling of playing with your childhood friend.

The flute gave off a light and airy melody that Hwaryeong interpreted with an elegant dance.

The friend who used to play with as lively childrens, became a young lady and a grown man who danced happily in a wedding atmosphere, surrounded by loved ones.

A diamond studded necklace and earring shook lightly; long hair swishes by leaving a deep aroma of flowers being carried by a fall wind.

“Wow! It's beautiful.”

“The best! Bellotte playing is amazing.”

No one cared about money and applauded away.

A bard can engrave their soul into their song; the music and dance exuded charm.

The presence alone created a unique atmosphere.

No matter how tired or fatigued you were, the girls performance seemed to wash rejuvenate you. Weed seeing the voyage speed had increased with the performance was hyped up.

“Music and dance could do this much then... how much could would it grow if I played the harp while singing.”

Beads of sweat emerged on many foreheads. To keep up the wonderful atmosphere Hwaryeong had created the women had no choice but to say. (PR Note: Remember what happened when Weed tried playing the harp and singing at the jewelry store?)

“Unni, I want to dance.”

“Surka, you want to dance? What degree of difficulty would you like?”

“Degree of difficulty? I want to learn the dance you were dancing right now.”

The atmosphere changed to that of women learning to dance together. Hwaryeong taught the girls the simple dance and said.

“Do you also want to perform with me?”

“Can we?!” Romuna said. “I’m really interested in putting on a show.”

Mapan and Pale continued to look at the girls dancing. It was slightly awkward but cute, and the boys still enjoyed the view. However it was not a show to put on with a just a bard.

“...Instead of just music and dance we should perform the story as a play!”

The audience would be the mermaids, sea creatures, birds, and barely visible spirits.

Before the story was decided Hwaryeong picked her role.

“I want to be the world’s most beautiful and kind princess.”

A role that every woman desires. Nobody in the voyage looked as good as Hwaryeong in a frilly dress so the role was set. Romuna spoke up next on her desired role.

“Well I want to be the continent most powerful wizard. Isn’t that the best role for me to fill?”

“I want to be priest who saves people!”

They were picking roles not much different from their current classes.

It was a good thing since it means they wouldn’t need many special clothes as props. Maylon following along with the idea,

said.

“To be a true enemy of injustice like in William Tell’s stories I want to be a ranger.” (PR Note: Swiss crossbow user, famed for his marksmanship. He refused to bow down to a hat, as a show of accepting foreign rule. As punishment he had to hit an apple from his sons head with his crossbow. Later he was bound, escaped and killed the villain with a bolt. That’s the cliffsnotes, feel free to Google him.)

She had dreams of the inevitable fairytail fight between hero and villain.

Bellotte was unable to follow along with the atmosphere.

“There's no such thing as a minstrel hero.”

The men jumped at that remark.

“Bullshit!”

But Zephyr scratched his head and replied.

“This show has a lot of memorable roles so I don’t know what I’ll do...”

Pale stated his and Maylon.

“I’m going to be a ranger with Maylon.”

Mapan also had a role he wished for.

“I want the role of the trader with most money in the world.”

Various hopeful roles! Perhaps a play in the middle of the ocean was not quite as romantic a setting as it seemed.

With the last of the roles being picked, all eyes wandered over to Weed.

They were worried about what role he would want.

Weed didn’t have to think about what role he wanted to play.

“A great scoundrel! The world isn't a nice place. I want to dominate the world as a great devil.”

There was a long standing play by Mr. Otou that was interesting enough.

They hurriedly modified the play to fit all of the roles.

It only took 15 minutes to write the script.

The first half of the play began with a sweet performance by Bellotte.

“La la la.”

Hwaryeong was dancing with flowers adorning her hair.

As she laughed the sound of ghost crew laughing was clear! The title of the first part of the show was .

The ghost sailors did a song and dance while drinking and eating meat.

“Om nom nom This is delicious.”

“Say whatever you please but please order something.”

After the awkward dance the ghost sailors brought out a carpet and placed a chair on it.

With a transcendent smiling expression Hwaryeong said.

“I’m going to get married to a great prince.”

Far far away Weed was watching the scene with Death Knight.

“Anti-Austrailian.”(PR Note: I swear this is what it says.)

“Yes, master.”

“What a beautiful lady.”

“Yeah.”

It was love at first sight!

“Would you be so kind as to escort her to me so I can marry her... gently.”

Death Knight diligently walked towards Hwaryeong.

“The master has ordered me to kidnap you.”

“Oh really? So you’ve come to take me away... I’ll go but don’t fight the crew.”

The ghost crew rushed to protect Hwaryeong.

"Chuckle You think you can take the princess."

“We will be the ones to bring you down."

Death Knight only pulled out his sword in silence.

Amongst the undead Death Knight was commander, the princess skeletons were quite inferior.

Poor sluggish ghosts! Death Knight returned to Weed after leaving not one intact. Rather than acting it was actual violence! Weed received a whisper from Pale.

Weed, is this ok?

After the very realistic defeat of the ghost crew Hwaryeong was brought to Weed and said.

“Hic hic. I’m gonna end up married to the devil after all.”

Looking at the skeleton Hwaryeong mourned her fate.

She then got up and began to dance away. A thrilling chase scene right out of a horror film started.

Even as Hwaryeong threw daggers at him Weed refused to give up courting her.

“I’m not that much older and I have a lot of money.”

“...I don’t want it. You got that money through violence!”

“Oh!”

The music changed tempo as the skeletal devil eyes moistened. Weed looked at Hwaryeong and said.

“There has been a change in this devil ever since he set eyes on a girl like you. You have not only changed my naughty mind with your body but also my mentality. I will give you all of my accumulated treasures. Though I have many shortcomings, will you please take me?”

“Whatever.”

After the devil caught up and gave his saddened confession, Hwaryeong the Fire Princess decided to marry the devil.

Hwaryeong was donned with all kind of jewelry and accessories.

The beauty and the skeleton began to dance!

It was supposed to be a graceful dance but Hwaryeong had a hard time not laughing as she danced with a pile of bones. The couple did not match at all.

The song that Bellotte play seem much too good for them.

And the allies of justice, Pale and Maylon appeared.

“Satan, our town has sent us to fight against thee.”

“Well.”

Weed only threw apples at them.

Pale and Maylon threw various lightning arrows at the incoming apple barrage.

Weed clapped.

“I admire your skill. You can be exempt from taxes for the next five years.”

“Thank you, Satan.”

The ghost sailors cheered for the righteous archers.

Then Romuna appeared and showed off her skills as a wizard and was recognized as the best wizard.

Surka showed off her martial arts skills and was also recognized by Satan.

All the acquaintances got together prayed for peace.

Then an awkward song and dance about the previous drama

started.

Suddenly Zephyr appears.

“The taxes of Satan’s village has been raise up to 7 times.”

Weed replied.

“Well done! Any person who can increase Satan’s money is a good person.”

The faithful henchmen appeared and began to exploit the ghost crew.

By the end of the play Mapan appeared.

“Your Majesty, Satan! I am the worlds’ leading merchant, Mapan. I have created a huge amount of money through many successful business deals. I am here to pay the taxes.”

It was a simple play of of a devils dream to earn large amounts of money through taxing successful traders.

You have successfully performed “The Ugly Vicious Dream of the Demon King.”

Audience response: 67.

Due to the moral propensity the performers of the unethical play

will have -5 fame.

The audience of the sea has not been in contact with the outside and welcomes it warmly.

It was a passing grade from the audience of the sea.

“The human performance was awesome.”

“I think I want to be married to the cruel devil.”

The mermaids had a good impression of the play.

The nature of the play was not appropriate for those who aren't very mature.

The mermaids gave boost in thanks for the show.

The Ship received maximum elasticity and maximum speed. The soaring bow sluiced through the waves as it moved forward.

“This absolutely cannot be shown on the Royal Road Hall of Fame.”

“Yeah, it's too embarrassing.”

They decided not to get navigation bonuses through plays from then on.

Chapter 4: Weed Divers

“Hmm, the reef stretches out even further than I thought. I should take care not to get caught in the vortex.”

Weed remained vigilant in the open sea. It looked as if the sea spread all the way to the horizon, but the faster you sail more ground is covered and things pop up surprisingly quick. The ghost ship could easily become damaged due to the seaweed or the coral reefs.

“You can’t let your guard down while sailing.”

Weed, though wary of his surroundings, continued to fish with Zephyr. They threw the rejected fish to the birds. The birds ripped the fish to bits and pieces. An eating flock of birds increases the speed of the ship. Gone were the days of working diligently. Before they had to fish all the time just to feed the Geomchis. Compared to that, throwing an extra fish to the birds was too easy. Weed pulled out the chart with the route.

“Seems like there’s no need to stop at the port on our way, don’t you think.”

Because the ghost sailors don’t eat, and only drink a little liquor, there was an abundance food and drinking water. While docked on Ipia Island they stocked the ghost ship’s supply room with enough water for five days and enough food for two. Even in the worst situation they would be able to hold out for a week if the food was

eaten sparingly. To slowly die of starvation was unpleasant; thankfully they could supplement their supplies.

“We can go directly to the destination!”

As miserly as ever, he did not prepare a lot of food on board. They would just have to keep fishing; if the fish was salted and dried then it could last for a month. When it rained the water was collected in the sails so there was enough drinking water to fill their canteens. (PR Note: Before chlorine and whatnot sailors gathered the rainwater in the sails then stored in barrels. Don't drink seawater, you lose more water than you gain~).

“If a storm is blowing I'll ride it so we'll be able to reach Gotoba, the first island in the North Sea, in 6 days.”

In the middle of the long distance voyage, his Sailing Mastery skill reached Intermediate. Rather than short trips back and forth, it was better to perform one long continuous journey.

“Because huge, long distance traveling uses sailing skills quite intensely.”

It was the eighth day of their voyage. Weed was fishing with Zephyr, when a black image appeared under the sea.

A sea monster legion is chasing you. Sea monster legions are more likely to target ships on long voyages.

“Full speed ahead!”

Weed increased the ships speed to maximum. He wanted to outrun the monsters chasing the ship. The reaction of the ghost sailors was remarkable.

“Quick say something about sailing.”

“Does that mean to lower the anchor?”

“Retract the sails!”

Reckless ghost crew! It seems that their loyalty decreased due to the long voyage while their antipathy with Weed increased. But if the ghost ships speed did not increase then the sea monsters were going be the ones bullying them soon.

“It’s gonna be difficult to shake them off.”

Weed started taking ghost sailors and throwing them into the sea.

“If you’re just going to play around, go and fight!”

“Sir, please spare me!”

The ghost sailor that was thrown into the sea was wildly brandishing his swords but was quickly munched on by a sea monster. Panicked cries immediately emerged from the deck.

“Sob Captain don’t throw me to the sea monsters, they’ll rip me apart!”

The ghost sailors continued to be thrown to the sea monsters. Weed hoped to lose the pursuit of the sea monsters, and in turn, the ghost soldiers continued to run away from Weed hoping to evade his grasping hand. Both parties, however, were persistent.

“If it’s like this, who can blame me?” How could he bring himself to fight in the sea when he’s never done so before.

In the Versailles continent there were advantages and disadvantages according to the characteristics of each job. But sea fare was largely dependent of the performance of the ship.

However it is generally accepted that the angler was the strongest maritime profession, not the sailor or the pirate.

Holding a harpoon, trying to hook big game while a large number of sea monsters and man-eating sharks circled around the ship, boring holes in the bottom.

It takes tremendous courage and swimming ability, it was the dawn of the underwater dungeon exploration that only adventurous users do!

Weed got ready to set out with three diver girls escorting him. He had read in a previous forum post that taking 3-4 people was

essential when diving.

However no one on the ghost ship had even been diving before and were not familiar with sea battles. Weed decided to pick out a quote to raise morale:

“There is no such thing as useless leather, you can savor the meat even if it’s about to expire. Oh, what I would give for japtem!

The Dark Gamers Union forums had a list of possible item drops from sea monsters that would make one tremble.

“Battle formation! Everyone get ready to attack as soon as the battle starts!”

Weed was waiting for the decisive moment for his colleagues to immediately attack.

“Lightning shot!” Pale continuously rained lightning arrows into the sea immediately those under water were struck by a powerful electric shock.

Maylon climbed on top of the mast and fired arrows into the sea. On board there wasn’t an opportunity to showcase the agility of Rangers, but if there was ever a need for a ranged attack, it was now.

“Whew. Waaaaaah. Ow!”

Lightning imbued arrows were sticking out of the sea monsters bodies.

Every time a big wave passed the sea monsters would writhe their bodies in pain. Even though they were being attacked with arrows the monsters chased them relentlessly. Due to their large vitality they did not suffer any major damage.

“Keep up the speed!”

The ghost sailors were in charge of controlling the sails, to maintain their speed and avoid slowing down even a little. It was not possible to confirm the exact number of sea monsters, but from Weeds calculation there were roughly 10 or so taking their attacks.

Romuna finished chanting her magic spell.

“Lightning Storm!”

Sea monster will immediately flee if they see you chanting for a long time, because when you gather up a large amount of mana you can create lightning magic! Lightning struck the sea around the ghost ship.

The bodies of the sea monsters convulsed. It was evident that they had been damaged by each lightning strike that hit the water. (PR Note: Just in case, even though the lightning bolts hit

randomly, due to water being a conductor, they were still damaged even if they were not hit directly).

Kuttun

The boat had its first big shock as the pursuing sea monsters initiated their attack. People were stumbling and sliding from where they stood and several ghost sailors fell into the sea. Everybody started clamoring for something to hold on to as the ship was attacked.

The hull has been damaged, durability decreased by 36.

The ghost ship was too slow against the pursuing sea monsters and they were now attacking directly from below. The ghost ship started to slow down even more as the monsters leg started to wrap around the hull!

(L/N The front of a ship is called the bow, the back is the stern and the hull means everything below the masts and sails, essentially the wooden body)

The speed of the ship was slowed down even further as more monsters stuck to the ship. If the durability of the ship kept dwindling they would sink and die.

“All reserved to the quarter deck!”

After taking one of Surka’s heavy punches the giant tentacle began to unwrap itself! The sea monster’s appendage was wrapped

in flames due to Surka's gloves. The twitching squid tentacles gave off a savory aroma. (PR Note: In DnD Monks can use gauntlets, necklaces and such to get more damage or special effect to their basic attacks).

Irene rapidly casted Blessing to increase the party's defense.

“Rapid Fire!”

Pale and Maylon used their Ranger and Archer skills.

They concentrated their attacks on the sea monster. The head of the sea monster started to appear as it used its' legs to climb up the ghost ship. The ghost sailors started to fight against the appendages of the giant octopus with swords and hatchets. Zephyr simultaneously attacked several sea monsters.

“Maybe the sea monsters are attracted to fresh meat from land.”

The monster of the sea did not want any more fish. Zephyr who was as knowledgeable as an encyclopedia about baits, hooked his rod with san-gyup-sal and cast it into the sea. Monsters hundred meters long were crowding around his line. This made many of the sea monster get tangled around the ghost ship until there were only two attacking. (TLC/N: San-gyup-sal is a type of Korean meat that is often grilled.

“Koooot JAJAJAK.”

The hull was being greatly destroyed by the giant squid. The durability of the ship was decreasing rapidly. After the ship was destroyed it would be quite easy for the monsters to feed. Weed chanted.

“Dismal darkness falls upon the spear. Spear born from the darkness, penetrate the enemy’s heart. Dark Spear!”

A spear as thick as an ogre’s thigh on horseback was launched toward the sea monster’s head. Powerful magic that was used against the Bone Dragon. It was more powerful than it was before as he could now properly use magic as a lich. The climbing sea monster was forced off the deck of the ghost ship. As the Dark Spear exploded and the sea monster fell back into the sea, the hull that had tilted under its weight, tilted back into place.

“He was pushed over the edge, yes!”

An undecipherable scream rose from the sea monster.

“Wow! Magic!”

“Since when has Weed been able to use magic?!”

The party members agreed that the spell was amazing. Most vanguards use melee weapons, so for Weed to have such a strong magic spell was uncommon. Although he could cast high tier spells easily as a lich, it also weakened his physical abilities.

Khaa Boo Boo

The hull has been damaged, durability decreased by 21.

The auxiliary sail has been torn.

He had dropped one monster back into the sea but there still another stuck to the ship. The ghost sailors attacked its legs with knives and swords, Pale and Maylon fired arrows, but the monster hid its head under the bottom of the ship. The vitality of sea monsters was much greater than of the monsters on land.

Zephyr suddenly cried out.

“Hyung, I need help on this side!”

Different lures attract different types of fish. As a result several shark-like sea monsters started to spring to the surface to eat the lure. Sea monsters generally have low intelligence and are a bit on the dull side, but if you use the same move on a party repeatedly even they will stop being fooled after a while.

“No wonder he’s in trouble. Summon Death Knight!”

Van Hawk was summoned.

“You called master.”

“Go fight the sea monsters.”

“All right.”

Death Knight leapt onto the deck with a small ax and sword in hand. Using his shadow skill, Van Hawk was able to cut the sea monster's leg. The sea monster's seemingly infinite vitality finally ran out and it fell away, squirming in pain. Its loss left the ghost ship with a significantly smaller burden, but soon a crisis came again. The sea monster that had hidden in the deep sea suddenly jumped onto the deck and started wielding its legs to knock ghost sailors over in rows. Irene and Romuna expanded their defensive magic so that Pale and Maylon who were on top of the sails were protected from the tentacles.

“Dark Spear!”

Weed attacked again with magic he had used so much he could cast it in his sleep. Attacking monsters that were under the sea was like playing a very difficult guessing game. It was easier to stand on the deck and wait for a tentacle to pop up than to fire randomly at the water.

Aaaaaaaaaah, chwaaawo

Tentacles rose from the water and entwined around a delicate set of lich bones. Weeds body started to rise above the deck of the ghost ship.

“Weed!”

“Weed is being pulled in by the monster!”

Hearing this Hwaryeong screamed, Maylon notched a magical arrow on her bow and started to aim, but she was too late and Weed was drawn into the water. The strong body of the sea monster squeezed his body with severe suction. The strength of the monster would exceed even the strength of the Orc Karichwi. Pure superhuman strength!

Paralyzing poison attack has been cast.

Poison rendered ineffective due to characteristics of the undead.

(PR Note: All squids and octopuses have a poison sac, usually not harmful to humans but, supersize me?)

The superhuman strength the sea monster was exerting was overwhelming. It was particularly strong in the water. Underwater, Weed was able to look around more broadly. After a brief moment he was able to distinguish the herd of sea monsters that crowded around the bait. There were regular-sized sea monsters, some larger than the ghost ship, and young sea monsters that swarmed around like bees. It was a gruesome sight! He could see the sea monster that he hit with Dark Spear floating next to him. The sea monster that captured Weed was turning a different color as it got a good look at him.

A monsters' mentality is: 'Eat till it can't eat anymore.'

It was worried it would get an upset stomach if it ate Weed, who was meatless. Such was the advantage of being undead.

“Don’t worry you won’t have to think about that much longer.”

Weed tried to cut the leg wrapped around him with Dark Spear. However the leg was hard as steel and the attack barely made a scratch. The thickest part of the sea monster was grade A leather; there was no way to easily cut it without damaging it. Even if he were to cut off it off, it was just one of its legs and would only serve to piss it off. Attacking it this way was pointless.

He was aiming for the heart. The heart of a sea monster would probably be in the head. Weed was waiting for an opportunity to present itself.

If Weed was a human he would have long run out of air and died with his lungs full of water, but because he was undead he did not have to worry about that. His vitality was being reduced as monsters leg was slowly squeezed him but still he waited patiently. Finally Weed raised his left hand and said.

“Life Drain, Mana Drain!”

You’ve used the powers of the lich.

You will now absorb the sea monster's health and mana.

369 health has been restored.

112 has been restored.

291 health has been restored...

It was possible for the drain to hit the mob multiple times. Though his movements were impaired due to the water, it didn't mean he was powerless. As it started dying the sea monster did not

know what to do and opened its mouth wide. Weed, who had not died by drowning, could not be paralyzed, and would cause an upset stomach would be eaten. Weed waited patiently for the right moment to attack. Just as it was about to chow down he threw his Dark Spear inside of the monster's gaping mouth.

You have attacked the sea monster Ortes weak spot.

You have dealt a fatal blow!

The leg that was holding Weed started to loosen as the sea monster tried to retreat.

“Leave it to freeze.” (PR Note: It doesn't make sense to us either).

In the past Dark Spear consumed half of his mana, but now Dark Spear could be used any number of time with mana left over for other spells as well. The magic he used now was very different from the previous spells he's used.

“Reverse gravity!”

Rather than the sea monster floating downward and away it started to float up toward the sky. Reverse gravity was a spell to make things fly. Then, the sea monster was pushed above the water surface! It hit the barriers created by Romuna and was riddled with arrows by Maylon. It was an easy target since it was such a large sea monster.

The Ortes sea monster has been killed.

You've gained experience points.

Swimming skill proficiency has risen.

It was quite a tough battle, but this was the moment he had been waiting for. A dark red glow nestled in Weed's skeleton. Lich! It was time to demonstrate the real power of the undead wizard. With Balkans tome in one hand and the Staff of the Fallen Saint in the other, Weed began to chant.

“Rise, spirit who cannot rest in peace. Come alive and confront those who murdered you. Dead Rise!”

The water near Weed started to ebb away and in its place a mighty undead carp was summoned. (T/N Hahaha, the BT translation called it a giant Guppy).

Mana flowed out of Weeds' body like low tide. Since the undead sea monster was large, he needed a large amount of mana.

Due to being a lich, the power of the Necromancy skill increases.

The undead sea monster immediately attacked the sea monsters. The sea monsters were attacked from both the Dark Spear and the undead sea monster. Together it was an immense combo. The sea monsters struggled to identify which one of them was attacking them and soon enough they started to attack one another indiscriminately. The ghost ship was also indiscriminately attacking any animal that came within its range.

“This time I'll try a 2nd stage necromancy spell.... Step 1, when alive attack the vulnerable parts with this spell. When it's weakened begin step two.” (T/N I love how all of the necromancy tome spells read like cookbooks. Add two dead skeletons, one

angry spirit, and compress for 10 minutes. When done should be big gruesome killing machine. Enjoy!)

“You’ve come alive, only to be stuck in a place of sorrow. Herbal black rot. Never disappear, engrave onto others the laws of darkness. Undead rise!”

All of the flesh from the bodies of the sea monsters started to separate from their bones. The sea monster did not know how to handle this little fellow. He rushed to one of the sea monsters and used it as a shield while the others attacked. It tried to shake him off but Weed clung to it like a leech.

“Life Drain, Mana Drain.”

Draining life and mana is a vulgar and cowardly action that cannot be expressed without certain words. (!%\$**\$&\$!). A majestic undead lord of darkness and despair using this tactic cannot be found. He adapted to the environment in accordance to Weed’s Save Your Neck Survival Guide.

By endlessly absorbing the mana and vitality of the sea monsters, more undead monsters could be created. Undead with great vitality, undead with water attacks, undead that pulled enemies down into the depths. There were many varieties.

You’ve gained experience points.

Ortess sea monster is incapacitated.

The seven children of this sea monster were destroyed. If Undead

Rise is used, mana cost may be halved.

Has gained 10 sea monster fins.

Sea creatures are very difficult and elusive, but because of his necromancy magic, he was able to easily hunt them down while gaining fantastic experience, as well as loot. As more and more undead were raised the sea monsters started to retreat.

“Wow!”

The party members on the boat sat down exhausted.

“Really hard.”

“They have tremendous vitality but they were not intelligent.”

Dungeon hunting was difficult but it was nothing compared to fighting on the wildly swaying and tilting boat. You can go back to pick up item in a dungeon, but in the middle of the ocean? That was impossible.

The durability of the hull decreased by a lot. Other boats attacked by the sea legion never escaped.

You have successfully navigated through the sea monsters' habitat, the Malvinas Mela.

Sailing Mastery skill has risen.

Fame increased by 160.

While hunting the sea monster they gained a lot of experience.

Some got 3, 6 or even 8 levels of experience. Sea monster give great items. Coming out of the monster's stomach was pearl jewelry, undigested turtle shells, fresh oysters and edible seaweed!

“I would catch ten thousand sea monsters if only the hull didn’t take damage.”

Weeds eyes filled with regret as they continued on. It had been a long time since he was not bored when hunting monsters. Sea monster were a challenge. Mana was steadily consumed. Under the ghost ship there were still undead sea monsters. Every time they killed a fish a little experience came back to Weed.

Necromancy skill proficiency has increased.

It was during the time when he was shapeshifted, but increasing the Dark skills was what Weed wanted. Necromancer was very powerful class. Throughout the Versailles continent there were tens of thousands of object that increase the undead wizards’ ability. Their power and cursing ability were greater than a normal wizard. But, on the other hand, they had many weaknesses. The skills were hard to level. The more undead creatures you created, the more bodies you needed; to make a strong undead creature you sometimes had to prey on other users.

If you enter a large scale battle you can, do a lot of damage, get a lot of loot, and raise your level by a lot. But, as a result, you tend to be targeted by murderers and assassins. Necromancers have to deal with death and darkness, but because of their power over death, they take even more damage. If you die, it will lead to a decrease in level and a decrease in skill proficiency. If you are unable to be healed by a priest, you are more likely to die during battle.

The job requires a great deal of mana consumption and you need to frequently sit and meditate. Players who play in large scale battles are particularly shunned by the warriors on their side since necromancy uses enemies and ally parts to create undead. The Necromancer is a dangerous and lonely class.

Chapter 5: The Lost Pirate Fleet

After another nine days of sailing, they finally arrived at their destination, the port town of Kruger. Their speed dropped because the ship had encountered the sea monsters' nests 3 more times, and thus they killed an additional 57 more. Their long distance voyage allowed Weed's sailing skill to improve by a level. (T/N I'm not too sure if he improved by a level or became intermediate)

“Land ahoy!”

An ecstatic Surka was the first to leave the dock.

Kruger was a small, charming harbor. The houses and shops were built like a picture.

Weed first went to the bar and collected information.

“You say you're looking for people or groups related to the Niflheim Empire? It's been a long time since we've had visitors from the outside so we don't know much. You're the first outsider we've had in awhile. Unless you're an experienced sailor, most people don't know about Kruger Harbor, you see.”

They made some money at Port Kruger, selling the necessities of life and then immediately took off. Two days later they arrived in the harbor of Runei. It was a harbor with slightly larger ships than Kruger. Collecting information in the pub was easier if you bought a round of drinks. While sipping cups, the sailor's stories easily

flowed out.

“Sailors don’t like talking about where they’re from. And you don’t even know the name, you say? Then finding em would be even more difficult!”

“If you are looking for sailors from Niflheim there’d be a lot amongst the pirates. Many fishermen can’t fish around here anymore because of the storm and changed to being pirates. Where we from? Thats...hehe, you’d report us if you knew wouldn’t you?”

“Storm? I’m not sure why but the seas seemed to start to become like this after the fall of the Niflheim Empire....heard the sea used to be quite calm before that.”

There were also many unconfirmed rumors.

“In the northeast sea there’s an island infested with monsters. Don’t even think about landing on an island infested with monster for supplies. You’ll become monster food in an instant.”

“Did you see the fish with red fins? That one’s meat is tender so its great for eating.”

“The area the pirates mainly infest is the Perion Bay.” Sailors who traveled the extensive sea bragged an awful lot. One could only confirm the truth by going for themselves.

Still, even the smallest tidbits could be used for later reference. It

happened while Weed was investigating in a very small port called Rejado. As he bought a drink for a very old fisherman, he drank with thanks and said.

“Young man who has the temperament of an Admiral, are you asking about the Armenian Pirates?”

“I didn’t ask anything about pirates.”

“A long time ago, I heard from my Grandfather about that storm hitting the sea. During the fall of the Niflheim Empire, a certain man went through the ritual of the pirates in that sea and took a ship. Later on, it seems he became the head of a pirate crew. Rumor has it, he was a great magician.”

Weed’s head started processing quickly. Rejado port is very close to the stormy seas, but it was found at the back of an island. Weed would have missed it had he not looked closer.

“Are the Armenian Pirates still at large?”

“Their forces practically ran the North sea.”

“What about now?”

“They’ve been missing for a few decades now.”

Weed decided there was no other way but to pursue the

Armenian pirates.

“Is there any way to know where they went?”

“If you travel towards the north for a long enough time, there is said to be a beautiful Aurora that spreads across the night sky. It is said that even the very best sailors may or may not experience it once in a lifetime. If you go along the aurora you will arrive in the Northern Region of the continent.”

Morata was also part of the North and so if the old fisherman were basing the Middle continent as the standard, then Lezadra port was also in the North.

When he liberated Morata, it became the center of the north and supply for dry leather. But most of the north past it was opted out.

Then how much more North are you telling me to go. Weed's complexion changed as fast as a flying car. This was because he was reminded of that place.

“No way.”

“There's absolutely no way.....just no way. No matter how bad my luck is, it can't be that.”

The words of the fisherman continued.

“The place that you must break through is in the cold ice, where the land breathes. Rumors has it that the Armenian Pirates went to the Las Phalanx area. I also heard from grandfather that their treasure lies sleeping there.”

You have obtained information on the quest.

Acquiring clues about the quest!

Las Phalanx. Even the name alone sounded ghastly. It was one of the 10 forbidden areas in the continent, for starters it is an area of fierce glacial cold! Volcanoes constantly explode and spew out lava. And the level of monsters that appear are mainly between 500 and 600, so just entering is impossible unless one was prepared for death.

Weed was greatly enlightened.

“There is a map of Las Phalanx which my ancestors went to. Would you be willing to take at least that?”

‘Ah finally, you are trying to kill me, Quest!’

It could be said that he was moments away from reaching his goal by walking on the path of death. The moment his coffin was made, the hole was dug and all that was needed was for his breath to stop.

Weed sharply asked.

“Is it free?”

“ I have no particular use for it now so just take it.”

The fisherman went to his house and left Weed the old leather map.

You have obtained a map for heading towards Las Phalanx.

You obtained Roughly drawn map of Las Phalanx #1. The Las Phalanx area could be said to be the end of the northern part of the Versailles continent.

The moment Weed looked at the map, images started to flow.

A Land of Frozen, Pure White Ice!

Mammoths, large polar bears, and yeti walk leaving massive footprints.

The eerie scene of furry bears laying dead and frozen was incomparable to the cold of the land above the North. If the North was like kids saying they were cold after eating ice cream, then this was just a freezer.

It was a miserable place to call a hunting ground. If you were not there for a quest or for treasure you would never have even ventured near it,. Even if he brought 100,000 soldiers, around 90,000 would die of the cold and about 8,000 would die of hunger. The smarter 2,000 would flee before they even got to the glacier.

However, if you went past to Las Phalanx, it was no longer as cold. The ice is barely frozen and you can feel the warm atmosphere waiting to flake away. Red light and steam rise up out of a large crack in the ground.

Aaaannn Kwaaah booom!

The mountains of Las Phalanx frequently spew out lava. Tropical monsters such as; the Borado Warriors of Chaos; Phantom Bolas that crawled on all fours; the winged Deabbedo, which looked like bats and were considered the weakest at around 380 were always being eaten by the other monsters. In the distance, Feyoumu fire giants wriggled in the center of the volcanoes spraying lava. The dangerous volcanoes and the shiny ores around dangerous dungeons stood out. There were a lot of veins of mithrils, gold, silver, and many other precious minerals for jewelry. Las Phalanx also had many rare stones just scattered on the surface. It was definitely a place worth going to for sculptors.

An extremely dangerous land he had never been to before and infested with all-powerful monsters. Even so Weed did not feel like giving up the quest.

“If failure was the first option in mind then fighting the Immortal Legion (I think that's what it's called ie. can't be bothered to check) in the first place was also impossible!”

Whatever the request, you can't succeed without challenging it. Nonetheless, Weed decided to think positively instead of

pessimistically.

“I’m not going to die of the cold air, dying by fire is a million times better.”

The durability of armor and weapon becomes significantly lower when scorched by flames. Though they can become wrecked to the degree of restoration being impossible once they melt, with his blacksmithing skills he could repair the damage to a certain degree so it was ok.

“Since it’s on the land instead of the unfamiliar sea it’ll be easier to endure.”

If it’s fighting on land it was also possible to call the sculptures of life pieces. However, it would take a long time to just to go back to get them though.

“For now, I’m a Lich and not a Sculptor so it’ll be more advantageous.”

Sculptors are able to increase their force’s overall power and contribute greatly to the development of a city. It was a job capable of empowering many other residents and users.

On the other hand, Necromancers could fight with corpses and mana. The sculptures of life had a similar effect, but the benefit of raising reinforced zombies and ghouls even in death was much greater. Combat-wise, the Necromancer is said to be the strongest

career known to date. It was not like it had the broadness of a Magician's ranged attacks, nor did it have the might of a swordsman or knight. However, looking at it from the side, it was a profession enabling you to handle legions of undead and becoming a one-man army which is an advantage incomparable to the other occupations.

"It'd be better to not use the Ancient shield"

Even the Ancient shield that accounted for about of 30% of his total defense could not be used.

"Nonetheless, all I can do is endure as much as possible"

All that's left to believe is that his vitality is more persistent than a cockroach's.

(imitation-I don't think he should be proud of that)

*

In the little kingdom Selzium. Mandol, lived in a huge thousand square ft. mansion with his wife.

Some visitors had arrived at the mansion they lived in.

"The sculptures have been made in Morata. It's difficult to move them so we hope you drop by there, that is the message."

On the Versailles continent, There was a company that would give simple messages for others or deliver goods so long as they knew the address. Through them, Weed's message had arrived. Only then had Mandol told his wife about the request he had made.

“You did something useless.” “Even if Weed is a famous sculptor how would he carve my daughter when he's never seen her?”

“Well. . .”

“Alright. If you really insist, then let's go.”

Even if it was through traveling, Mandol wanted to regain the happiness he had lost with his wife.

“It's been a while since we've traveled together.”

“Let's see many good things and eat lots of tasty dishes”

“Yes”

They made their trip while hunting and making their own food. Looking at Mandol giving his utmost best, his wife, Delfina, sometimes smiled.

“Here's Morata.”

Unlike Mandol, who had a bushy beard and looked like a bandit, his wife, Delphi, was a slim and attractive beauty.

“There’s been a lot of development since the last time I came. There are a lot of buildings that have been built as well.”

Mandol once came to Morata to leave his request with Weed.

‘At that time, there weren’t this many people and buildings.’

A lot of large and ornate structures have been made too.’

It seemed like even a few days wouldn’t be enough to cover looking around all of Morata. Mandol spoke with an uneasy mind.

“Even if the sculpture is disappointing, please don’t be mad.”

“It’s alright. I mean it was great on the way here.”

Mandol deliberately approached Morata slowly trying to ease his wife on the way.

1 Copper for a Sculpture! ‘He couldn’t have made it terribly for being a cheapie, could he?’

Having traveled a long way, the distress would be devastating for

his wife much less himself if the sculpture was unsightly.

“I can only leave it to his conscience. But he didn’t look too kind, nor that honest though.”

As they tried to pass through the gate, there was a girl waiting to pick them up.

“Are you perhaps Mandol?”

“Yes, but”

It was a cute and pretty girl.

The girl named Freena had worked in several occupations after being saved by Weed. She sold flowers, helped make clothes, and even assisted with cooking in the cafeteria when the meat of the King Hydra and the Imugi was cooked and served.

At present she’d even been entrusted with the guide mission.

“My lord has urgent work to do elsewhere, so you can not meet him.”

Questions and doubts flew across Mandol’s head.

‘Did he really make a cheapie and run off?’

Freena continued.

“Instead I will guide you there.”

“There?”

“The location of the sculpture.”

Well, he definitely wouldn't have thrown it just anywhere. Beginners in this city could be seen everywhere; the whole place was vibrant and lively. Drawn to its bright and cheery atmosphere, Mandol just wanted to go exploring the city already. New quests and hunting grounds were being discovered one after another, and there was also the nearby lake and mountain scenery that was out of this world. Delphi and Mandol receiving the guide entered the center area of Morata. There was a jumbo sized building surrounded by gardens and a live fishpond.

Weed's Art Center.

“This is the place.”

“This is where the sculpture... that I requested of the lord is, you say?”

Mandol was slightly overwhelmed.

The Arts Center building was constructed grander and larger than many of the villas in the central continent.

“Yes, from here on out the architect, Pavo, will personally guide you.”

Pavo was waiting in advance at the entrance.

“I am the architect of this Arts Center, Pavo .”

“I’m Mandol and this is Delphi.”

Mandol politely bowed to Pavo who looked much older than the two

“You seem to be more of an elder than us, so please take it easy on us. But, it’s the middle of the day, so why is the Art Center’s doors closed? ”

“That’s because it hasn’t been opened yet. I’m opening the door now, so please take your time looking around.”

Weed’s Arts Center’s first guests were Mandol and Delphi. The official opening would be after the two come out. The locked doors that had been waiting for them sprang wide open.

After obtaining information from Rejado port they finally departed for Lal Phalanx! First, they stopped at Mocon village for the quest of meeting the blacksmith. Everybody had the quest except Weed. Weed did not say much as the others went into Mocon village. He just sighed seven hundred times.

“Sigh, huff, ehfu, aarhus, shhhiii, wow, whew.”

“...”

“Call Death Knight!”

“You called master? Who must I fight?”

“It’s me.”

“Huh?”

“Let’s fight.”

There had already been dozens of incidents of beating the innocent death knight in between fishing.

“I’m doing this just to raise my combat skills’ proficiency, so don’t mind me. It’s definitely not like I’m still holding some kind of grudge from Go-stop.”

(T/N Weed...you still hold a grudge huh.)

By the way, the Mocon village blacksmith also issued a quest.

“There’s a lack of Iron ore and I can not make the stuff I need. Heard that near Mordred there were good mines, could you search over there for me? I can’t wait forever so I hope you can get it in at least 4 months.”

A Difficulty level C request.

Of course everyone accepted the quest. It was because they were in a situation where they had to do the Mordred’s great craftsman descendent quest anyway. And so they once again set out from Mocon village with sails spread wide.

“Las Phalanx area, huh. . . .”

The North of Versailles continent was a very polar region. To reach the Northern part of the continent by land, you have to cross large mountains and rivers, as well as pass through a dangerous forest full of demons. Even if it could be said to be far safer to go by sea, it’s a very far distance. “What’s more is that it’s said that the storms and currents aren’t so great either so the path is tough.”

Looking at Weed’s sailing skills or the state of the ghost ship, it wasn’t looking good. It’s said that going further North from here, encountering glaciers floating around was very likely and avoiding them would be difficult.

“I may sink before I even get to Las Phalanx.”

It was a situation where he had no choice but to freeze to death if he fell into the sea. The ghost ship was not a high speed ship, despite sailing for five days, they did not go so far in the north. Not only was it because of the influence of the headwind and currents, but also was there the fault of going through every island and port selling necessities and gathering info.

“To go to Las Phalanx that’s one crazy man.”

An aging old woman asked seriously.

“Are you going with a deathwish?”

Two days later Pale said.

“By the way, Weed the time limit on our quest is approaching.”

They originally followed Weed on their way to Modred. They were detained for a while so they had to do their quest too.

“Or should we just cancel our quest? Las Phalanx should be a really dangerous area. You’d need our help.”

Despite Pale’s goodwill Weed could not accept it with ease. Even on the ship, Weed was perpetually raising his skill proficiency as

well as Fishing, Carving, Cooking and a variety of others. But the others could only sit around and watch the scenery on the way to Las Phalanx taking God knows how long. In addition, there was no way to guarantee that everyone would arrive safely at Las Phalanx now was there. He could not ask them to go as far as to give up a quest for that.

“No, I’ll go alone. I’ll try finding Lax Phalanx by myself.”

“If we leave, the battles at sea will get harder, won’t they?”

“I just have to bring the Sculptures of Life on board when I let you guys off.”

Getting the comparably lighter Golden Bird aboard was no problem.

Phoenix, Bingryong, and the Wyverns could not go together to as far as Las Phalanx. Hwaryeong and Irene strongly protested but Weed did not accept.

“Please first set out for Mordred’s quest. Even I alone am sufficient for my quest.

There is no need to feel sorry. If I really need help later you can always come to help through Yurins picture shift ability.”

This was when Yurin regrouped with them through the shift ability after painting a picture at Morata. Only after that was Pale’s

party convinced. The ghost ship went full speed ahead for sure and docked at the pier.

“Hwaryeong, you have my 1190 gold, so luck be with you. Irene, do not donate that 810 gold, because I’m going to regain it from you later. And Bellote, who won 690 gold, could you remain on the ghost ship separately for a little while longer, because I have a favor I’d like to ask of you.”

“What?”

“It’s nothing grand and I’ll send you over to the others through Yurin”

“That so?”

Bellote agreed and was puzzled but decided to stay for now. Weed was a cheaty, petty man crazy for money. However, it didn’t seem like he would be harboring any dirty or underhanded ambitions. This is Bellote, who had a considerably sober assessment on Weed that we’re talking about. Seeing her best friend, Hwaryeong have absolutely no worries was also relieving. Bellote glanced at Weed’s face; a skeleton with a lonely expression having said farewell to his peers.

“Without the rest of us there it’ll just be him and the ghost sailors. It’ll be a lonely voyage.”

“I still feel a bit sorry somehow.”

Weed's jawbone spread so far from the mouth it looked like it was going to fall off.

"Now I can hog all the treasure!"

And then there were the Sculptures of Life coming aboard the ghost ship.

*

"Mooooo!"

Wyvern, Phoenix, Rover, Geomuni and Bingryong!

"Get on the boat Geumini."

"Okay, master."

"Wyverns, for starters try getting on."

The Wyverns were too heavy to carry on the deck to the valley. If they tried to sit on the mast it would break under their force.

"Wyverns, come down."

It was when the Wyverns were going to fly off the boat. Walking determinedly Bingryong was five times as big as the ghost ship! Shamelessly Bingryong was trying to get on the ghost ship. It seemed like he was trying to destroy it by stomping on it with his foot.

“Stop, right there.”

Just before Bingryong was about to step on the ship he stopped

“You just can’t get on.”

With those words from Weed, Bingryong, as if somewhat sad, turned away.

*

Lee Hyun connected to the Royal Road website.

“I need skilled sailors.”

If it was near the high-traffic Nelia there wasn’t much worry about getting lost. On the other hand, to get to Las Phalanx, you had to cross a great sea. If you didn’t know where the currents were, in the worst case scenario you could get swept up in the wrong current and it would lead to disaster. A little mistake in the wrong direction could lead to a few days in the wrong direction, which could lead to the loss of several days of wandering around to get on the right path again or going to the wrong place entirely.

“To get to Las Phalanx, a high level navigator is needed.”

Ghost sailors were high-level to a certain degree, but that was just to a certain degree in battle. When it came to adjusting the sails or handling the keys they were so clumsy that getting to the destination quickly and accurately was impossible.

“Famous Captains or navigators, huh...”

Lee Hyun was searching the website articles.

“Though it’d better to get anyone that does not belong to a guild or group.”

From among them he found a striking article.

Title: Dirty Navigator Bastards! They robbed me of everything in Lanetis Sea.

Timber! You dirty bastards! I was pressed into Eulra on 4teeth.

(T/N Pressed is a old term that was used to reference people who where pressed “kidnapped” into the becoming sailors for the navy [usual an old British reference])

I hired some navigator, but he caused a mutiny with the other crewmen and I lost all of my trading goods and even got my ship stolen.

After I searched up their names, man these guys were famous.

Seems like Hye, Fractal, and Board Mir were friends. Don't ever hire them.

The name was also posted about in several other articles.

Title Accusing the armed mugger of Planatis sea.

Even while they have high levels they're jerks who hijack others' ships. In order to access us they pretend to be goodie two shoes and after hiring them for their talents they stole the ship and I got a total loss. Don't ever be fooled. They totally lust for women and their personalities are shit. Main base Becky. Let's all be careful.

Lee Hyun was in a position where he had to use a pirate caught as a slave if he couldn't get a navigator.

“For starters I just need to get the contract.”

When the sailor contract is fulfilled that person's status belongs to the ship.

In other words, as long as the ship does not sink, they are revived on the ship. Therefore the right to decide the life and death of the seafarers belongs to the captain. However, it was always possible for the sailors to take control of the ship by rioting and overthrowing the captain. At sea anything can happen!

The Port city Becky! As a port city that was part of a small marine dukedom. Trade and the shipbuilding industry were developed. In order to enter the Neria Sea from the Planatis Sea, it was an island that must essentially be passed by. The Island had many good hunting grounds, and its ocean currents lead all the way to the eastern kingdom of Brenton in just four or five days.

“Hehe, please another bottle of wine here.”

Bellotte was dressed in a neat leather dress and was drinking in the hard drunk pubs. Cute rosy cheeks, clear eyes, and innocent impression; she had attracted all the men’s attention.

“Hmm.”

“A woman drinking alone.... Is she waiting for her colleagues to come?”

Many of the male users were taking a peek at her.

Because this tavern was near the port the ratio of male sailors was overwhelmingly high. As the men were building up courage, watching Bellote sipping a drink, there were three men who stood up first. It was Hye, Fractal, and Board Mir the navigators famous for bad taste. They loved hard liquor, women, and had experience seizing boats by betraying the captain. They had a notorious reputation for going in between as normal users and murderers. They also had the nickname “ Becky’s 3 Mad Sharks.” Now they sat next to Bellotte and spoke in light tones. The one with the job to break the silence was Hye whose appearance was the better of the

three.

“Seems like this is your first time in Becky?”

“Yes. My friends asked me to come here recently. Hehe.”

It was important how the opponent accepts the first words. Hye thought it wasn't a bad start. That was because she laughed goodheartedly without any repulsion.

“Where are your friends now?”

“They're waiting in the harbor.”

For Hye there was no need to retire even if there was a friend. If it was a girl with a cutesy innocent impression like Bellotte anyone would want to go out with her.

“Your friends as in men?”

“Their names are Romuna and Surka. Would you like to see a picture?”

“Picture?”

“A little sis I know is a painter. She painted us each a portrait.”

“I would love to see it, by all means.”

Bellotte pulled out the images from her backpack below. The image contained A Sporty girl in a red wizards hat and charming dancer staring wide-eyed. etc

Hye, Fractal and Board Mir swallowed their spit and thought:

‘Jackpot.’

Hitting on Bellotte alone was already amazing. But along with her friends it was not an exaggeration to say it was a beauty corp. Hye’s smile thickened further.

“By the way why, is there no nautical officer in this picture?”

“Because none of them is a nautical officer.”

“I presume you got here with another’s boat or a liner.”

“No, we hitched a ride with a friend who has his very own boat. He’s a beginner Captain.”

“Oh my, it must’ve been tough coming here.”

The currents around Becky were extreme, thus unless sailed by a skilled sailor, there was bound to be trouble.

“Actually it was really hard. It took more than four days to get here.”

“Yes it was very difficult. It took us three days longer to get here.”

“My my that so? It would’ve been much better if some skilled navigators helped out....”

Hye peeked a glance at his mates.

As if written on a script Fractal asked the next question

“The sea is really beautiful, right?”

“Yes, it’s really beautiful. The clouds roll across, and the floating stars and clouds.... and watching the jumping fish and dolphins make me really happy.”

Hye gazed gracefully back at Bellotte again at the end of the eloquent words.

“The sea is a really nice place. Are you going to continue your voyage? If so then perhaps we can help out a bit.... Really?

“All the good views of Becky are in the palm of our hands. We’ve even got some drinks to drink while looking.”

“Actually there’s a place I really want to go....”

Bellotte suddenly tailored a guilty look. If one looked close it seemed like a frozen face doing something one really shouldn’t. But this was interpreted differently by Hye.

‘Is she being sorry for asking me for help? Such a nice lady.’

Going with beauties like Bellote, how much trouble could go over that. Given the chance, wanting to go together were the three men’s hearts.

“What’s the problem? If you’re worried about something like not having enough money there’s no worries.”

“Honestly I came looking for a crew and a navigator, but I couldn’t bear the shame to ask you. Will you really help me?”

“Of course. You should have asked sooner.”

Board Mir suddenly interrupted as well. He was feeling jealous at the other two for being the only ones to talk to Bellotte.

“Then will you make the contract?”

“Do you by any chance have a boat?”

“It’s a friend’s, but it’s an old medium sized sailboat.”

“Oh, is that so.”

Nothing would be better than Bellote or her friends. However, if there was no sign of going well with them they could always steal the boat in the middle of the sea.

An opportunity to Bellote and her friends and obtaining the boat and items.

‘Great.’ ‘A gnarly opportunity.’ The three got hasty and said.

“Let’s first start with the sailor contract.”

”How much would we get a day from the sailing contract?”

All of them were thinking everything was theirs’ so there was no need to ask for a lot.

“We’re good with 5 gold a day. No, the even if we don’t get that much we’re good.”

A trip with beauties and the chance to take over the boat low wages were but a trifle.

“That’s great. I already have the contract as the temporary vice Captain.”

Documents, which had been prepared in advanced, were removed from Bellotte’s bag.

Ding!

Bellotte has proposed a voyage contract for the Maria’s issue, on the behalf of the captain.

Title: Sailors and Navigators.

Allowance: 1 gold per day.

Contract duration: until arrived at the destination.

The Navigators Guild of Becky’s oceans ensures this agreement. Sailors are disqualified if they deny the ship’s captain’s command, or conduct an unauthorized withdrawal from the ship.

The allowance was only one gold. Even it was only word of mouth, after saying they would even do service free of charge they would only be stingy men if they started nitpicking. By signing the consent forms Hye, Fractal, and Board Mir happily entered into an unreasonable sailors contract. If the Voyage contract was assured by the Navigation Guild of Becky’s oceans, it was impossible to leave the ship. If they deserted the ship without authorization, their licenses would be disqualified by the Navigator’s Guild of Becky’s oceans, so they couldn’t be employed on other ships. Plus, the ships they own would be useless because no harbor would take them making it hard to get any work. The three men twitched like tracking dogs ready for the hunt.

“Then shall we go see the boat?”

“Yes.”

With rosy imaginations they followed Bellotte to the harbor. However, when they got there, they were a little confused. Despite the clear signs of being repaired the medium sized boat was still badly damaged. While being dumbfounded Hye asked.

“This is your boat?”

“Yeah. Is there any problem”

“No, nothing. It’s just that it didn’t seem like it’d go with your style.”

Such an old ship doesn’t seem like it’d fetch a good price , but oh well, a medium sized ship is a medium sized ship.

“Would you go ahead? I’ll catch up later.”

“Got it. We’ll be waiting on the ship.”

They climbed up the ladder with pleasure.

“Now it’s our world.” “Pretty girls and a sea adventure, huh”

And the continuing shock, confusion and despair! On the deck three men with deathly white faces could be seen. What they boarded was a ghost ship, and one with ghost sailors walking around at that. They vaguely thought it might not be a trip with all women but they could never imagine a disaster of this proportion.

“Excuse me, this isn’t the boat Maria’s that we got issued to is it? We just got issued to Bellotte’s ship.”

The ghost sailors laughed raucously and willingly answered Hye’s stuttered question.

“KYeekyekeyekeye This is the ship Maria.”

“The curse, the disaster of the ocean, The ghost ship Maria! Hehehehehe”

“What are you talking abo ... we’ve been cheated?”

As they were in a rush in making the contract there was a lot they didn’t ask.

“Umm, Where is the ship headed?”

“Khihihihi it’s going to the Las Phalanx region.”

“Las Phalanx? I think I’ve heard that name somewhere before...

Oh, you cant be referring to that Las Phalanx?!”

Known to be a place where you have to sacrifice yourself just to get there, one of the 10 classified forbidden areas; Las Phalanx! As navigators, they had heard about it so they knew the name.

“Yes, we’re going to Las Phalanx. Are you scared? You’ll probably die and become like us? Hihhi.”

“Blessing! Blessing! Become a sailor and stay on this ship forever.”

Looking at the ghost crew Hye frowned. Nonetheless, as the voyage contract stated they could not cancel it until they fulfilled it. If they left without permission they couldn’t get any jobs at the harbor so the disadvantages were just too enormous, Fractal gave a small whisper.

“There’s no problem. We only need to kill the Captain.”

All they needed to do was kill the captain and grab the contract documents.

Then they would have no problems with the Navigation Guild of Becky’s oceans.

“Let’s just kill the captain like always and take the ship already.”

“ Though it’s an old antique... but we’ll still be able to get a so-so price for it.

Hye asked with hope.

“Where is the Captain of this ship?”

“huek huekhue, our Captain , scary Captain, is fishing.”

“Where?”

“Go towards the front.”

The three navigators pulled out their knives and moved with bold fronts. They were planning on slicing the captain and selling the boat straightaway. However, the moment the three men saw the captain their faces turned a ghastly white. With the body of a Lich consisting of a skeleton and skull, Weed was fishing.

Chapter 6: DeRon's Aurora

“For the sake of the quest Weed seems to have moved.”

“He followed the gold.”

In Morata spies were seen reporting to the Lords and the Guilds. In the north, the guilds and lords, as well as Central and Western continents sent spies to watch their movements. It was evident they were fairly conscious about the plans of Weed. Each of the stations also had sources planted in Morata to gain real time information.

“Is this the second part of the S-class quest?”

“It seems to be finally starting.”

Weed had the only S-class quest in progress on the Versailles continent. Even A and B class quest could influence the entire continent. The very difficult S-class is a step above that and a very big change was coming. Even just step one of the quest, devastated one of the Embinyu cults and restarted the secret Matallost cult.

“An S class quest that only be started out in the north, there shouldn't be many cases that impact the Versailles Continent.”

“What if he acquires a rare sword that came out from the history books? A premium magic sword or maybe an outrageously fire

resistant armor?”

“Since the north continent doesn’t have a nation, there could be a quest about establishing one.”

There were many who speculated what would happen, but if Weed completed the quest he would once again be the center of the world's attention. If he was successful, he would be the first player to ever fulfill a S-class; with all the glory and prestige that every user yearned for. A fierce competition between broadcasters was going on behind the scenes. The views from the first part of the S-class quest were huge. King Hydra, Imugi, Balkan Lich: monsters that normal users couldn’t even find, were part of a fierce and massive battle. Balkan’s outstanding performance caused wizards to change to Necromancers in droves. However broadcaster did not expect for Weed to have a second success. According to Weed, part 1 was utilizing the Matallost relic to the utmost and a lot of luck. As the quest progressed each step would be more and more difficult. But even if the quest was failed, the viewers would still watch so they were preparing to broadcast.

“....seems to have disappeared from the waterfront.”

BardRay was also notified. Like a scalpel the Hermes guild focused on surveillance of Weed and were reporting directly to BardRay. It was a unilateral decision by the core guild members. The fact that the guild watches only the top 50 players in the Versailles continent which included Weed put BardRay in a very bad mood.

-What if it’s a sea quest?

BardRay asked in a whisper to his spy. He sent many high level spies to chase after Weed. Of course they ultimately lost Weed, but they were able to follow him to the water because Weed moved in a straight path there.

-There's insufficient information on what the quest is.

-If the trail was lost, did you see if he rode the Wyverns and continued on?

-It seems he went to sea aboard a boat and not on the Wyverns. We've found traces of hunting around here that could be the wyverns but we also found traces of a boat landing on the beach.

-He rode a boat? What was the boat's size?

-It was a small wooden boat but I can't tell if he switched to a larger ship or not.

-He went out to sea without a doubt right?

-Not only the I but other guild's spies are here looking for evidence here. We've found footprints of several hundred people from Morata. If you look at the characteristics of the footprints you can determine the equipment and they all belong to the same class. It appears it was that strong force during the Morata war. (T/N Signs of Geomichis)

-Roger that. Notify me first if there are any changes.

-Yes, sir.

Bardray's forehead wrinkled slightly. That Weed could succeed in an S class quest before him was getting on his nerves.

“Should I just kill him?”

Bardray heart wavered. His equipment and levels were incomparable to anyone on the Versailles continent. And Weeds combat ability that he showed while hunting the dragon was surprising, but the same could be achieved by Bardray easily. Bardray had been hunting monster of similar levels while receiving the assistance of wizards or clerics. It was after his 3rd job change at level 400 he passed the advanced training center. Even in virtual reality he was getting accustomed to fighting. There was no obstacle or monster he couldn't overcome. If you lack movement in some way, then with equipment, skills, and levels the gap could be narrowed. Bardray fought many opponents in the Hermes guild, until he held the highest position in the guild. (T/N In this case there talking about how the BardRay faction holds the most power in the guild not that he is the highest seat, which is guild master.)

Even if he only used two or three sword skills, Weed was as good as dead.

“However now's a critical time. Until we win full control of the Kingdom of Haven under the hegemony alliance I can't leave. The

time to show you the taste of true despair is not yet.”

Revenge would come with subjugating the Versailles Continent and exiling Weed; But Weed’s success in the chain quest and his growth annoyed BardRay.

“You probably used the Kallamore Knights for a quest, and they likely can’t be used more than a few times. More users are starting in Morata of late. You better savor it now because eventually I will be coming.” He hated users that surpassed themselves and rose up in the ranks. That Weed could somehow gain the same equipment of the same power level as him was terribly unpleasant.”

BardRay sent a whisper

-Navy Admiral Drinfeld.

-Yes?

An Admiral for the Hermes guild! Drinfeld was in charge of the Kingdom’s 2nd fleet.

-You’ve got work to do.

-Just send me an order.

-Take your 2nd fleet to the north. Your goal is Weed.

-You want me to keep assassinating him?

-No, it's only important to kill him once or twice. Just to teach him a lesson.

-Yes, sir.

If Weed had left on a boat then Drinfeld was going to be needed. BardRay rethought about the command.

“It might not be enough. The sea is very broad. It'll be tough for Drinfeld to catch-up to Weed.”

BardRay wrote a letter to allied guild master Laffe. It was a proposal to send a transmission to the Griffith pirates who occupy the largest sea area.

“Kill God of War Weed who's out at sea....“

Griffith read the letter from the Hermes guild. The navies from the kingdoms in the continent were powerful, but Griffith's power at sea was enormous. He had more than 400 small and medium Pirate vessels under his immediate control. Pirates also had an indirect sphere of influence. In order for sea merchants to transport shipments by sea, they had to pay a fee to the Griffith pirates. The deputy head of the pirates Colm asked.

“Who did they say to kill that you’re hesitating so?”

“It’s not a bad deal.”

The guild said that if they managed to kill Weed three times they could keep any equipment he dropped. They also could gain one piece of the equipment broadcasted by BardRay. Any equipment worn by Bardray was extremely powerful.

“It’s a very generous compensation.”

“It’s a fake though. The Hermes guild would not reveal their real equipment on air; its best kept a secret.”

“Then you don’t want to do it?”

“No opportunities like this don’t come very often.”

Griffith grinned. Not only the Hermes guild, but many lords and prestigious guilds of the Central continent had the same request.

*

The sailing speed of the ghost ship was significantly faster now. It was all because of the trained officer adjusting the sails and course. As expected, the anxiety of the three navigators grew with each new point they passed. It was a rare experience to work together with a ghost crew and steer a ghost ship. They now had a

lot new tales they could tell at bars. Going to Las Phalanx was like waking up sleeping lion.

“Umm, I know of other hunting grounds.”

“Do you want to go somewhere with a better view?”

Board Mir and Hye proposed to Weed, despite that, he continued to fish! Deoreol was known as the captain of the ghost ship, so they did not know that it was Weed. A Moo sound came from Yellowy. He was lying spread out on the deck along with Geumuni, who was fishing while wearing a straw hat.

“Why on earth did a lich suddenly appear?”

“He should be a high level... shit, we got caught up in this pretty bad. We can’t attack him.”

The Lich is not a class that can be easily killed by a surprise attack. Looking at the undead sea monsters that rose from the seafloor, the group felt exasperated.

“Is it possible to change jobs to Lich?”

“I don’t know. I haven’t heard of any users from the continent switching before. We’re so unlucky to meet the one who did.”

It was then, as Hye, Fractal, and Board Mir were wallowing in

their despair,

“Large reef discovered on the port side! Turn.”

Fractal, who was monitoring the front, shouted out about the reef.

tsu rurururu chwek

Hye hastily turned the helm to the left. The turn was sharp enough to rock the boat from side to side, as they barely avoided the reef lightly scratching the side of the boat. They'd come quite a long ways from Becky Nin so there were no other boats in the vicinity.

“Whew. This is also a great experience, isn't it?”

“Yes, my sailing skills have risen a huge amount.”

Hye and Board Mir were surprised. The more they moved along Weed's route the more experience and skill proficiency piled up. This does not require the presence of the sea. The voyage itself gave off the experience, skill level, and fame of a user who discovered a new dungeon.

“I think it was a good thing to come along with this voyage.”

“I know what you mean, my navigation skills have greatly

improved.”

“We can pretend to faithfully follow commands for now . . . but we’re the only ones who can steer the ship.”

“Well, don’t worry about it. We’ll definitely find an opportunity to take control of the ghost ship. We’ll desert them when we anchor on an unknown island. Captain of the ghost ship! Kuhuhuhu.”

The three men held a secret conversation. However Yellowy saw their scheming and could only feel sorry for them.

How daring to make such dirty conspiracies against Weed! Eumumu. ‘You don’t know how cheap, petty, and despicable master is.’

It was like little children trying to pickpocket professional gamblers. On top of that Weed didn’t even let the smallest amount of money slip through his fingers. Due to the north wind in their sails, they traveled quickly. Speaking cautiously, Hye call out to Weed.

“Captain, I have something to tell you.”

“Mmm.”

Weed fished on almost silently. His Fishing skill had risen to Intermediate 5 and 35% and his handicraft stat by 3%. There were

millions of skills to improve maximum vitality, but they wouldn't be gained by fishing.

“In about half a days time, we'll be a third of the way to our destination. We can expect to arrive 2 days earlier.”

“MMMM!”

Modest praise from Weed. Even with an accurate map to Las Phalanx, without the three navigator's skills, it would've been a harsh journey. Though their personalities weren't much,, no one could deny their skills. Anyways, Weed was their employer.

“Keep up the good work. You will receive many rewards on our return.”

“Yes sir.”

Hye stepped back after the small conversation. While navigating for this long, they had been paid only a stipend of 1 gold a day, which was too cheap. He was trying to point this out to Weed, but Weed already knew that. Weed thought.

“I guess I will have to pay them 1 gold extra as payment for saving two days time.”

The waves became violently rough for the second half of voyage to Las Phalanx. As 7-meter waves met the ghost ship, it would repeatedly climb and fall.

“Whooooo! i guess I’ll have to hold on to something if I don’t want to fall”

“Ahhhhh! Please let me live!”

The ghost crew that were struck were knocked into the sea. However, they soon reemerged in their assigned spots. If they were real sailors, they would either be dead or it would be very difficult to save them. Even the currents became harsh. They would be sailing calmly when suddenly a giant whirlpool large enough to suck in and shatter a large ship would appear.

“To the right! Turn wide.”

Without the utmost concentration, it was impossible to avoid them. The ghost ship teeter tottered through the stiff currents as they made their way north. After three days, they finally made it out of the whirlpool area. All Weed did was continue fishing. As they headed, north he caught rare purple fish species that raised his skills. On top of that, as the captain, he adjusted sails which raised his navigation skills.

“How much longer do we have?” Exhausted, Board Mir answered Weed’s question.

“We’ve traveled about 60% of the way.”

“We ought to arrive soon.”

“Work hard!”

It was not a short distance, so there was no choice but to adapt to the sea. With only navigation skills and their belief in themselves, they could only unite and weather the harsh sea. Strength, courage, and a challenging mindset were needed to hold out when the sea was this rough. Fortunately, the wind didn't blow against them and the waves calmed down and for two days they had a calm journey. Their bodies suddenly felt cold. Instead of rain, thick snowfall came from from the sky.

“Now I've really come far into the north.”

Hye, Fractal, and Board Mir, who had never come this far, suddenly felt fear. However, it was too late to turn the ship around, so they ventured forward. The sky was clear during the day, and at night the moon emerged, with countless stars reflecting over the ocean. It was like sailing through Mother Nature itself.

Ding!

- You have entered The DeRon Seaway.
- Sailing skill proficiency increased.
- Due to risk strength, Endurance, wisdom, and charisma stat +6.
- Fame +260.

Navigators who first discover an island or a geographic region will have an increase in fame stats.

“This is great! Normally it only climbs up one or two stat points but six?!. Its even for 4 different types of stats.”

“It’s because we came all the way from the harbor in Becky Nin without rest.”

It was usually the norm to stop one day for every two days of travel. This was to restock on supplies and to reduce the fatigue of the crew. Ghost sailors may not be the best workers, but they didn’t have the usual fatigue and homesickness.

Chuckle ”The Human sailors look delicious.”

“Let’s steal their bodies. Let’s steal their bodies. I’m so fed up with roaming the seas eternally. I want to enter a human’s body.”

“Shush. Those guys are the Captain’s prey. I’m sure the Captain will give us a bite to eat after he’s through with them.”

Weed procured food and water, so there was no need to worry about starvation. Plus, since he could repair the ship, was as good as it was in the harbor and there was nothing more needed on the voyage. As they headed north less mermaids were sighted and whales and birds had long stopped following them. After entering into the DeRon seaway, nippy cold air began to bite at them. And then the Aurora finally unfolded! A curtain of light and stars hung above the ghost ship in the middle of the night. It was beautiful enough to enchant the three hardened sailors. The natural light was so amazing that it caused shivers.

- You have found DeRon's Aurora.
- Due to your amazing discovery Fame + 350.
- Art stat +28.
- All stats +5.
- Due the power of nature all abnormal states are cured.
- 30% increase for five days in strength and heat resistance.
- 13% increase to the maximum value of all stats.
- The maximum speed of the ship, turning ability, and ship's ability to land will increase by 27%.
- Due to the blessing of the aurora, you will be granted additional benefits in naval battle.

The Ghost sailors and the navigators were lost in admiration of the Aurora. Even Weed was mesmerized by the aurora . Like butterflies leaving their cocoons, tears swelled up in traveler's eyes. Most natural beauty would not soften Weeds stout heart, but he softly said.

“I will have to memorize your exact look. Next time I make a light sculpture in Morata it'll be of this sight.”

It was like the joy of earning money from recycling empty bottles when he was young. The aurora's one and only role was creating a lifelong memory for the travelers. It paved a twinkling road in the sky.

Weed instructed.

“Let head toward over there.”

“Aye, sir.”

The officer steered the ship towards the path that the Aurora showed. There were no reefs, currents, or sea monsters that touched them; it was a calm sea. With the exception of the extreme cold, there was very little to be unhappy about.

“Uuugh, cold!”

While adjusting the sail, Board Mir body was shivering as his teeth chattered. They were the signs of catching a cold. Both concentration and stamina fell. Weed felt fine because he had caught a baby whale and had made a robe out of it in advance.

“Got to take care to not to repeat the same mistakes.”

He had already suffered twice before in northern explorations. After arriving at Las Phalanx, you would probably have to worry about the heat more than the cold. However, until then, you have to keep your body in the best condition possible. He wore the yeti clothes he had previously made with the newly made whale robe. He made hot fish soup out of the fish he caught and this made the cold a bit more bearable. The navigators gathered around Weed and watched him with pleading eyes. Hye, as the representative, said.

“Chatter. Chatter. Captain.”

It was as if a woodpecker suddenly appeared. The men's teeth clattered in their mouths. They wore short sleeves and shorts because they were easy to move around in and they usually traveled in warmer climates.

"We may freeze to death in this state. Please give us some clothes to wear."

"Why would I do that?" Weed replied indifferently.

Eating alone next to hungry people, fooling around as everyone else worked, wearing warm clothes as everyone else shivered! Weed did the cheapest things and he did three different kinds at once. Hye gave a frustrated look.

"Then, you want our report to freeze too sir?"

"You should always prepare for your own survival. What ship has their Captain provide clothing as well?"

Weed said that with no remorse. Welfare benefits are nonexistent for the sailors of the ghost ship. 'The ghost sailors are just fine in the cold' spoke louder than words.

"Please captain save us."

"20 gold"

“What?”

“One day rental fee. It’s not like clothes grow out of the ground.”

“But, you obtain your own clothes by fishing and you can collect the scales of the fishes. I saw you do that.”

“If you don’t want it you go find another place.”

A new level of dirty cheapness, to get a rental fee from a person who would freeze to death! You have to pay the rental fee with a cup of tears.

“With a deposit of 500 gold for a week in advance.”

Once the clothes were rented, the officers got together and secretly whispered to one another.

-I’ll put up with it for now.

-Is he planning on us turning into popsicles? There is a contract, but our opportunity will come.

-It’s not like we’ve only killed once or twice, if there would only be a chance

If they seized the ship, they would maroon Weed and leave by themselves. Sailors have shipbuilding skills just in case they needed to build their own, but, for now, they suffered in silence.

-We will make him pay a hundred times over.

-Only a hundred times? No it needs to be a thousand. Tens of thousands of times.

Chapter 7: Adventurer Of Las Phalanx

Weed's Arts Center was officially open! The first guests were the Mandol couple who requested the sculpture. And the next day the doors properly opened.

“Weed's sculptures are in here?”

Morata users were quite interested in Weed's sculpture. The effects of the light tower and the The Sculpture of Freya were always benefiting hunting so the users looked forward to the Arts Center's new sculptures.

The admission was 10 gold. For people under level 100 the price was three gold. Prices even applied to mercenary and subordinate NPCs. For groups of 30 or more, they got a 50% discount.. There was signage regarding admission fees starting at the entrance. Student or senior discounts were cold-heartedly denied. However the elderly and students of Royal Road are much more frightening.

“Nothing to do at this old age...Elder Shin what level are you?”

“Around Level 360. Hulhul.”

“You've leveled up a lot. Similar to Goo Grannie in the lower town nursing home.”

“No no, I'm a difficult to level magician class. You can't compare

me to her.”

The senior’s children don’t play with them and their grandchildren have all grown up. But that doesn’t mean they should go play all day. From Entertainment to Music, News to Dramas the elderly had experienced it all, but Royal Road was a new world. In reality, their backs would get more crooked and their health would deteriorate however, in Royal Road they could have a new body again.

Because of their overwhelming free time, grandmothers and grandfathers could easily hunt monsters all the time.

“But isn’t the entrance fee too expensive?”

“What kind of Arts Center charges 10 gold for?”

Morata users that had waited since the morning were full of complaints. It was because if they paid and there wasn’t much to see they would regret it.

“Well if its only 10 gold I guess seeing it once wouldn’t be too much of a waste?”

“Well Weed’s amazing sculptures helped a lot with hunting so I guess I’ll see it as repayment and look inside.”

The users bought their tickets and entered the Arts Center. The 5-story building had 2 underground floors and a large garden. The

garden was a comfortable space where one could relax and view the sculptures. Sculptures such as bronze statues confessing their love, monster hunting, and bronze bear statues that children liked.

“Sandwiches and meat for sale.”

“Please try the Art Hall meal set.”

The restaurants also opened their doors. They advertised that families could relax as they ate. There was a stage for bards that was already completed, though it currently wasn't being used.

“Let's view the Art hall then let's go.”

“We should see it fast and go hunting.”

Novices and users crowded past the entrance area. They wanted to skip everything and see Weed's work. From B2 to the second floor was several exhibition space for the other general artists. Well known Morata painters and sculptors now had a place to exhibit their work. Artists up until now had to earn money by selling commissioned works. But with the opening of the Arts Center now it was possible to receive money from admissions. It was an opportunity to show their work to a large audience and artists and sculptors could get their name out.

“Here is my work.”

“Borahum, it's this way. There's a black pig sculpture from the

east.”

The Morata’s artists at this moment felt a great deal of joy.

“You cannot find another lord that treasures artwork to this extent in all the Versailles continent.”

“Since he himself is a sculptor he probably understands our plight.”

When the Arts Center opened Morata’s fame went up by 60. Morata’s fame went up with winning the war, and dramatically raised its fame with all the cultural achievements. The affiliated artists from Morata that traveled to show off their work received special treatments and privileges.

“A bard of Morata’s production? It must’ve been a long journey. Would you like to come perform at our village? I’ll pay you 20 gold more than your usual rate.”

“If it’s a sculpture of Morata, then they are really popular so they sell well. If the original price is 7 gold, I will pay you 5 gold more.”

Although the north was not yet fully realized, artists felt the rewards from it. But the true value of the Arts Center was they could have their work appreciated. An artwork that is properly displayed gives off an additional 20% increase in certain options and price. It would be preserved in perfect condition so even if time passed they wouldn’t be damaged. Sculpture and paintings by themselves usually could not have cumulative effects, but it differed in the arts center. One sculpture increased the effect of the

other, so when fully appreciated it created better advantages when paired. Featured artists had the opportunity to make new bold artworks. The users were content that they could view an array of artworks in one place and felt that the expensive admission could be justified.

“But there’s a lot of empty spaces.”

“Its only the opening so it probably can’t be helped.”

“Since there is empty slots, shouldn’t they have a discount on the admission fee?”

Morata’s artwork couldn’t be displayed without any distinguishing. Each artist only volunteered their work so there was only a few works on display.

The visitors went up to the third floor. It was full of Weed’s little sculptures from traveling around. Monster of every kind from each providence; there was even miniatures of cities. The city of Serabourg in the Rosenheim Kingdom, the Grava mountain range, The city in the sky Lavias, the free city of Somren, and the trek through the Bar Khu mountains. There was also the Yurokina Mountain range in the plains of despair. It was like a miniature version of the Versailles continent was created. Each piece was created during his travels so they weren’t all the same size or quality but each monster, tree, mansion and other works caught the visitors eyes. Since carrying them while traveling was getting harder, they were all put into the Art’s Center.

“A tremendous amount of devotion dwells in these works.”

“There are so many sculptures”

The visitor eyes were filled with wonder as they saw Weed's sculptures. It was a display of one person's maximum potential. On the fourth floor, one-third of it was a hall made of glass so you could see inside. There. they were able to view dolls. The sculptures of From Birth to Death, was shown inside the glass displays. It was an impeccable sculpture where a stitch wasn't out of place. It was created by a large amount of concentration and focus. It wasn't just about one child's growth. The viewer could experience and connect with this life. Over time, the possibility of human and the potential for happiness shows life is precious. Looking at the dolls of a person's life one had a vivid experience of the creation. Family, tears, pain and joy all naturally emulated within the dolls. Most of the visitors read the description of the work first. To fully understand the work, background was essential. Additionally if you wanted to tell others about the work, it would require information from the description.

- This works display was made by the worthless architect Pavo adjunct with art deputy

Gaston. This is the work of a sincere and humble artist who left no name. The hope is that you it will leave warm and worthwhile feelings that you will remember for the rest of your life.

At the end the description there was a paper sign probably from the first viewer.

‘I am the man who commissioned a sculpture of my unborn daughter. Though I asked the sculptor to make this, truthfully I didn’t have much hope it would be done. I was grasping at straws when I made the request. The commission fee was only 1 copper. The sculptor created this sculpture based on my wife and I. I do not know what everyone will feel as they see this sculpture. But this sculpture has left a moving impression on us. Before seeing this, I felt life could be too cruel and irrational. Thank you for spending this moment in life with me.’

Visitors saw the dolls with reverence. People naturally viewed with appreciation and gratitude.

Ding!

You have seen a mythical sculpture of an unknown name. Flower of art.

The work could only be called phenomenal. The Sculptor who did not reveal his name expressed his prowess by creating this work entitled From Birth to Death.

Looking at this sculpture will show the blessings of life to the viewer.

For one day:

Health, mana, and stamina recovery rate will increase by 32%.

Health and mana + 36%.

+24 in all stats.

In addition agility and courage will have increase.

Movement speed will increase by 36%. When traveling long distances this effect is higher

From savoring the joy of life vitality + 500 permanently.

Wisdom and knowledge + 2 permanently.

In order to fully understand this work frequent and careful viewing of this sculpture is needed.

The Arts Center's first floor, second floor kept flooding visitors to the third floor. On the third floor visitors still kept going, but on the fourth floor no one wanted to leave. There was a line of people waiting for other people to leave. They looked at the dolls from birth, to school, to marriage, to having children, to death and heading back to the beginning. That cannot be resorted to life, the most precious things is those hours of happiness. Just like bright precious jewels the hours passed staring at the life. Nobody knows who started clapping, but soon the applause was thunderous.

“Darling, do you want to live here?”

Delphi first suggested after looking at the sculptures of her daughter. Even if she did return to the Central continent she had precious memories of the sculptures to cheer her up. Delphi asked concerned.

“Do you like this place?”

“Yes, I can feel the energy from the people. And it's there's adventure. The Central continent is under the concessions of the guilds who are endlessly warring. Considering the political stability the northern conflicts are small. The guilds are also new. People have lots of expedition, and exploration quests. The New products and hunting grounds are overflowing, and it's really is too beautiful. I think I'd like to settle down here and hunt together

like we used to do.”

They moved into a two-story stone house on the outskirts of the Morata district. There are many shacks in Morata so tenancy is high. For the first time parties of people could own a house. The first signs of moving people threw moving parties with food for the new tenants. Everybody who carries something gets something to eat. Houses with vistas were shockingly popular. The view was amazing even if the ceiling popped and cracked and leaked when it rained. Owning a poor shack was amazingly romantic. Women would come home from the Arts Center in tears.

*

“Starboard!

“If these conditions persist than we’ll be hit”

“Slow down!”

Las Phalanx had become bitterly cold. In the harsh cold, large pieces of ice floating around created a dangerous sea.

“Get your head straight. If the ship is damaged we’ll all fall in the water and freeze to death!”

“Fractal, where’s that glacier?”

“10 second, flowing from the right.”

“Preparing to turn to port. As soon as the glacier is past adjust the sails to the wind.”

The sailors hadn't yet run into the thousands of glaciers only by the grace of god. The natural wonders were beautiful and dangerous at the same time. It was a dangerous voyage that had never been seen before.

Mooooo!

As the rest watched the incoming icebergs and fell into a complete panic Weed and rover were sitting and fishing comfortably.

“The Arts Center's numbers of visitors are increasing exponentially.”

According to Pavo's report the number exceeds 25,000 visitors a day. People are even lining up at dawn to get in.

‘In a sense the Arts Center is money. The construction cost for this time is significantly less. The other painters, sculptors, and performers should also share in the profits. Nevertheless, it is needless to say that there is a huge surplus from this. And the users in the north would all visit at least once because the sculpture of the girl's life gave permanent stat increases. The 10 gold will be a burden on the novices but they will soon grow. And when they

grow up more they will go to Art center before every time they go hunting.'

In the mean time the sewed leather armor needed by the beginners made money for the craftsman in the process. It was a key source of income and tax trade. However, for a piece artwork you could earn BIG money. For the first time in the history of the Versailles continent there was a revenue structure of the land based around art. It was not even an exaggeration to call it a revolution.

"The power of great art."

The names of great artists stayed in history for 1 or 2 eras. More visitors creates more works, which creates more money. It was beautiful. Nice. Fantastic. Sublime. The sculptor profession was not poison! Weed laughed even as the icebergs raced towards him. (T/N In this they keep calling the icebergs glaciers. But glaciers don't float into ships)

"If you have visitors visiting once a month then if you raise the price to 13 gold even more money could be made."

"HaHaHaHaHaHaHaHaHa."

The jawbone was in extreme danger of falling off the crazily laughing skull. Gumeni and Rover seemed normal in comparison, but none of the ghost sailors could approach the bony shoulder.

"A good one sir."

“The ocean is a grave to no one but you.”

The ghost crew had thoughts of pushing Weed in the sea, even though he would probably think of it as taking a bath.

“Kueh, he brought the Maria all this way, We’ll just have to demonstrate our power.”

“The sea is deep. He could just slide out and go missing.”

“The Captain!”

“Captain I now offer you to the sea”

The ghost crew’s loyalty after sailing for a long distance! But they would not soon better the far superior lich out of fear. The Left side was hit! An iceberg plunged into the side of the ship and tore a deep gouge. It was not part of the ghost that was underwater, but the state of the ghost ship had steadily worsened as they went along the waterway. Hye checked the condition of the hull and then said.

“Captain, we might have to suspend navigating to the destination. More and more icebergs are floating along; it’s inevitable that a big iceberg will hit the ship and we’ll immediately sink.”

That an iceberg could hit was intimidating enough. But there was small and large chunks of ice floating in the sea that continued to hit the ship thus accumulating damage. Paradoxically, the seaweed that was stuck to them prevented more damage.

“What should I do then?”

The wide laughing mouth asked. With the admission fee from the Art Center, Weed felt like he was heaven.

‘When the ship sinks we can just walk on the glaciers. This region is one big bowl of water. Of course there’s riding on the undead. This area is much more severe than the ice storm that erupted in Morata.’

(PR: I think that Riding on the Undead means Riding on the Large Sea Monsters that Weed can raise)

For tough roads, it is better to think positive thoughts.

“The icebergs are constantly coming from the sea, eventually they will have to stop.”

While laughing he asked.

“Well doesn’t that mean that we’re close to land? If you look at the chart you should see that a large river flows through the land. We’ll be able to get to Las Phalanx through there.”

“Won’t it also be frozen?”

Up north the glaciers are constantly growing. The cold they caught was evidence of the sea freezing. Then of course the rivers would be frozen as well. It would be better to walk than go by boat.

“Wouldn’t be better to walk?”

“I don’t know what the captains thinking.”

“It’s not like you can sail on a frozen river.”

Weed’s quick decision was made with the reasoning that:

‘If you cannot get to Las Pheonix by sea than go by land. Even if you have to skate over the river’

“Go to the river.”

So the ghost ship changed its route, heading for the mainland. They were busy with the increasing amount of icebergs, but eventually they were getting the timing down to avoid the floating blocks of ice. But when they arrived there was no frozen river to be found. Thick, white snow had piled up on the land like mountains, but the river remain unfrozen. The temperature around the ghost ship felt much warmer for some reason. Weed tenderly asked Rover.

“Yellowy, are you thirsty?”

Yellowy waited then nodded. He gave water from the warm flowing river a sniff.

“Thank you, master.”

Rover put his head in the offered bucket and drank.

“Glug,glug,glug,glug... kya, this water taste good.”

The water had a slight yellow color, but the eyes that were cast toward Weed had little resentment.

“This water is safe to drink is it not. Then is it coming from Las Phalanx?”

If one looked carefully at the Las Phalanx it could be seen that it was a volcanic region. The yellow color was run off from the volcanoes.’

“The sulfur taste isn’t too bad.”

“Good, now the boats water supply can be filled.”

After Yellowy’s report Weed started ordering the water barrel to be filled. With the unfreezing river flowing away from Las Phalanx would slow them down, but now there was no need to dodge ice, which was great. The three navigators gathered on the bow.

“He’s a monster coming to this region.”

“What are the levels around this region?”

“I don’t know but nowhere near the beginner levels. From the appearances, nothing is normal.”

Large bodies covered in hair with horns; the monsters were very intimidating. Wild tribes that ran around with axes and ice weapons, crying bloody murder. Users that wanted to land here to hunt would have to be insane. Usually the level of the monsters would be enough to turn one away, but you also had to fight the cold.

“There’s no need to fight recklessly.”

Weed passed by while watching the monsters. The high quality leather obtained would help insulate much better. He could also collect the loot, but it was better to avoid battles where it would be easy to slip on the ice.

“After riding Bingryong I couldn’t fight.”

After riding he caught a cold and was forcefully nursed by Seoyoon. Air combat was out.

“Don’t want to repeat the same mistake.”

Weed focused on fishing the occasional fish and ordered the ghost ship to move on. the closer they got to Las Phalanx , the hotter it got.. Steam puffed out and wrapped around them like a fog. It was like a natural sauna that prevents cold and the like. When the sun shone through rainbows would occur.

“Huh, billions of rainbows!”

“I’m so thirsty.”

The navigators whose strength was lacking from the effect of being frozen for a long time had a violent thirst. They drank water to replenish the sweat that started to flow frequently. Hye was fed up with the matter and said,

“I cant take it anymore. I’m exhausted from these symptoms.”

For the three sailors who did not have the advantages of being undead, the heat was unbearable.

“Tsk, deplorable.”

Weed wrinkled his forehead at the pathetic sailors. Because the navigators were at hand, the ghost ship was moving along pretty fast.

“Well, you do enough to let us live, I don’t think you’re being a

greedy guy.”

“So we can stop here?”

“Please let us anchor the ship in the river at least once.”

“The symptoms are getting worse and worse. We’re exhausted.”

Weed looked at the three. In the first place their bodies were streaked with sweat, and bony from the days of keeping up with advantaged undead. The three sailors were struggling to beat the heat because of their feeble endurance stat.

“Tsk, weaklings.”

(T/N HAHA one of the Translation said -TSK TSK you suck. XD.)

Weeds forehead narrowed further. The three sailors so far had been invaluable since they kept the ship from harm.

“Well, it’s because of you guys that we’ve made it this far. A little selfishness could be indulged. We can anchor here for a little while. And you can get off”

“Then we can go back?”

“Once the ship is docked you can leave and take a look around.”

“I see. Captain!”

The three sailors quickly docked the boat. Weed said,

“You guys docked on the ice so well. Go ahead and get off to cool down.”

“Oh thank you very much”

Hye and Fractal would get off-board, than Board Mir would join them.

‘Once you landed on land we were preparing to escape.’

‘If we left it up to you we would have never been left off’

The three sailors had already made their decision in their hearts. So far they have had numerous bad things committed against them and very few pleasures on the boat. Without them, the ghost ship would have a hard time going anywhere

“Go drop dead while looking for us.”

“Let them suffer for it properly afterwards.”

The three sailors stiffly climbed down to the icy glaciers all while praying. Once they were on the ice the Maria sails grew wide and

their ties to the land were cast off by Rover biting them. And the ghost ship began to move away! Weed was at the captain's seat turning the helm. On the voyage his sailing skills had advanced 7 levels. Now he was at a level where he could comfortably drive the ghost ship. The normally only fishing Captain unabashedly drove the ghost ship!

“Why is the ship moving?”

“Oh man, Captain!”

The greatly persecuted sailors did not also cry out. They were here with the crew.

‘He can’t leave without us.’

“Captain this is the trail. KI hie hihi.”

“Away we go. We can’t count the number of times you helped. Thank you.”

Sobbing

More ghost sailors appeared and threw out dirty lines.

“What the heck. Are we going to be abandoned?”

“But what about our lives?”

The three sailors ran as if their feet were on fire. They ran alongside the ghost ship on the glaciers.

“Please save us!”

“Please give us a ride I’ll do anything that you say.!”

Shouted the three iron-hard sailors. The perpetrators felt for the first time that they had become the victims.

Weed said towards them.

“Don’t worry. We are not going to abandon you. Are you not sailors on my ship? Deoreol does not leave family behind.”

“Do you really mean that?”

“Thank you, captain!”

But the ship did not stop. In the end, Weed was not such a person to hold up to such pretty words. Particularly not the one-eyed lich pirate Captain who would not hold onto unnecessary numbers.

“Wait here and I will come back here at a later date.”

“But there are too many monsters!”

“It’d be safer to wait on the boat!”

Weed ignored their words lightly. Because he had an ulterior motive.

“When will you return...What!”

“HAHAHA we got you now! We would have tossed you in the water, but it’s entertaining to see that you’ll never be picked up for a ride. Kueh Ha Ha!”

The crew agreement had been revoked. And soon the new vice captain from the ghost crew was bending at the waist to greet him.

“Yes, captain. Ki hihihi I’ll take the helm.”

*

From the foggy area to the rainbow land Las Phalanx could be seen! Mountains sat spewing out smoke and lava.

“We are finally here.”

Weed quickly set out to observe the area's monsters. Just a short boat ride revealed many more monsters than the known kinds.

Hairy bears roaming around with frozen white skin, leopard like rock-hard bollards that roared unexpectedly. Chaos Warriors, wielding large axes, waiting in the shadows for their prey. Lava spiked where the flame giants were. Their body consisting of mostly lava fire giants! Out of the land, cracked areas spewed out steam. There, fire salamander-like demons and other monsters subject to the firelights lived.

“I seem to have a general idea. The Armenia pirates may have come up the unfreezing river.”

There was no evidence of Armenia pirates in sight. Weed anchored the ghost ship and went down the rope to check out the monsters. It was at that moment.

Ding!

Adventurers have arrived at Las Phalanx.

Whether the heroic adventurers live or die is a gamble. This Land that has only remained as part of the Versailles history books has been practically forgotten. If you did not visit the goddess of earth you should leave rather than remain in oblivion for a long time.

Benefits:

Fame +800.

During this week 2x experience, and item drop rate. The first monster slain will give the best item.

Blessings of the earth goddess of the mines.

Soft and sacred energy welled up from the ground and engulfed Weed.

Have received the blessings of the goddess of the earth.

Mana recovery rate is 40% faster.

Increase concentration and greatly reduced the probability of magic failure.

38% of the enemies attack damaged can be absorbed by the earth.

Can help reduce the enemies defense.

Has a five day duration, Ten blessing remain.

Because of undead state piety 35 permanently reduced.

The blessing of the goddess of the earth. Usually the goddess blessing are discriminating among certain races, and were considerably weaker. From the prosperity to abundance of crops, it can also help defeat enemy forces. In shows of display Freya is a bit on the downside. But the blessing given by the goddess of the earth had a very long duration.

“It’s extremely helpful for the next five days”

Ding!

A new route to Las Phalanx was found.

Because of pioneering Reputation +360.

All stats +12.

If the adventuring is successful + 3 to all stats.

Sailing skill proficiency has increased.

Title “Unknown Ghost Captain who widens the sea.”

Maximum speed +7 on open ocean stretches.

Even after traveling you did not lose hope. When unearthing new

islands, ruins, and lost treasure fame increases even further.

Kings and Nobles support your sails.

+20 charisma and leadership.

Increased probability of good things happening at sea.

Limitations:

Beginner level 5 Sailing skills or above.

Only applicable at sea

Weed, for once, was delighted by the rewards. He quickly moved his body looking among crevices.

“Cave! Need to find a cave.”

Obtaining a safe haven was the core of exploring and hunting.

*

The Black lion guild, Red Mercenaries chiefs, Red dragon guild, The Hammer and Anvil guild, the Pro-Am Mercenary guild union and 89 other large prestigious held a guild meeting.

“Then you all agree to the formation of the hegemonic alliance. Any against?”

It was a meeting of all the important guilds masters! All the other prestigious guilds nodded their heads.

“We approve.”

“...There’s no reason for us to reject.”

Hegemony alliance. All of the Versailles continent’s prestigious guilds trying to hedge under one fence.

“Next month the official proclamation will be stated on the first. The hope is after a week’s time the individual judgments will come forward. I will leave that up to each of you.”

All the guild masters held delighted smiles. Any guild included in the hegemony alliance was primed for supremacy and armed to kill any external threats; it was a secured timeout! The Alliance did not erase all the hostilities between the guilds, but now most of that would be handled behind the scenes. It secured that any guild not included in the alliance would have tough time attacking a guild or a castle. It would be difficult for any group to survive that was not included in the hegemony alliance; to survive once the full-scale territorial expansion began. There were two or three small prestigious guilds capable of attacking and winning over a territory, but they would almost never be able to hold on to it in the Central continent. This alliance was far more favorable for defense, since even if they have the power to take them over individually the result would be different the minute reinforcements arrived. Bardray and the Hermes guild lead this Alliance guild, as the most predominant and most prestigious guild. He became the chairman of the hegemony alliance and was given exclusive rights to the Kingdom of Haven. There were a lot of ordinary users who came for tourism in the Versailles continent. The prestigious guilds were in a position to take care of the exclusive rights of hunting, item trading, and commercial taxes. The raising of glass was heard all around.

“This year belong to the supremacy of the Hegemony Alliance”

The Masters of the prestigious guild raised their glasses a little higher

“For the Versailles continent!”

“For our Alliances supremacy!”

Chapter 8: The Sculpture's Heritage

Weed found a cave to hide in with little difficulty. A cave that was not artificial, but natural. It was a hole that spewed lava when the tectonic plates collided.

If you went deep into the underground territory you could see lava flowing, emitting immense heat. Though there were monsters like dolphins and spearfish jumping out of the lava, Weed didn't look for very long.

“No, who knows if just looking at them could burn me then there's no way I'd want to fight with those guys!”

Golden Bird was confused and wondered why Weed was staring at him so intently.

“If I were as free as a bird, it would be a convenient way to scout. After all, flying would be much easier.”

Using Golden Bird as a reference, Weed created a new piece. Covered in volcanic ash; dark as night; a creature that blended with the current environment: he made a crow.

“Sculpture transformation!”

Weed's body suddenly shrunk and doubled over. Feathers sprouted over his body and his mouth transformed into a sharp beak; his beady eyes turned jet black like coal.

In this form you will not be able to use your current equipment. A small winged creature will suffer a penalty when wearing heavy equipment.

Wearing heavy equipment has severely impacted your current agility

If you do not maintain the minimum amount of strength and agility it will be impossible to walk or fly.

The effect of sculpture transformation has lowered knowledge and wisdom to its lowest point. However, agility has improved for quick flight

His current stats were impacted as it imitated a bird completely, all feathers and no brain.

The crow's bad luck status followed him closely too. The luck stat moved into the negative range, as if it was necessary to spread the misery around. Yes, it was sad, intrinsically the crow was known as a precursor to misery.

Mana, stamina, and vitality -25%.

Valid until transformation is undone.

Weed wanted to test out cawing once.

“It's stuck in the AH Ah Ah Ah AAH.”

It was a very irritating, unpleasant noise that frightened golden bird a little, annoyed Rover, and made Geumini wince in resignation.

“Anyways, I’ll just scout around for a bit.”

A crow is not suited for battle. Even worse, it’s beak can’t be used for writing, and it is unable to use any kind of equipment.

“Left foot, right foot, left foot, right foot.”

Weed did a small series of steps to adapt to his new body. He sat down and stood up again, then folded and unfolded his wings. As a small crow, there were a number of things to adapt to. After staggering around for about 10 minutes in that awkward body, he seemed to get the hang of it.

“Well, I think it’s time to try flying.”

Weed sped up the vacant lot like a plane taking off.

Da da da da da da da

Weed lifted off from the ground as he scooped up the empty air under his wings. It was unstable, but he finally left the ground, flying as a crow. It was awkward but successful.

Digging with his wings into the air, he soared higher and higher. From his place in the sky he could pick out firedrakes that circled around. Unfortunately, Weed was too weak to fight them.

He was great in battle, and would have easily prevailed in his human form, but as a crow he would surely die, as his current arsenal only included a beak attack. After one strike of that move, it would all be for naught; as he would instantly receive a counter strike. He would not be able to escape after attacking.

He adjusted his wings and changed direction. His goal was to look at the monsters' formations. Almost every monster here could be called a natural treasure.

The video on the Royal Road homepage called this area a 'really dangerous neighborhood'. Weed did not cry out, he slowly nodded his head back and forth, wary of his surroundings.

Since he changed to a crow, the highest points of Las Phalanx that could not be seen from ground level, came into view. Las Phalanx wasn't an isolated island. The big and wide volcanic region, the unfreezing river, and the other parts of the glaciers were all connected.

Between Las Phalanx and the glaciers there was a buffer zone covered with snow and some hills.

"You're either too hot or too cold."

Both sides of the border had high-level monsters. On the glacier side of the island, monsters were often ready and willing to engage in a fight against the monsters that poured from underground on the other side. It was an area of strife that this half hearted crow wanted to be nowhere near.

“I have to find an Armenian pirate...”

Scouting as a raven in the nearby terrain was difficult. Hot air rose out of the mountain and the fire drake circled the volcanoes. The landscape was a valley full of cracks and coves where lava flows. In one area with several cracks, there was a unique old tower. A stone tower, drawing 20 meters high, was set in an area that was relatively untouched by the volcanoes.

“What’s that over there?”

Weed cautiously flew to the tower. There were monsters all around the tower spires, but they didn’t care about a crow so he arrived at the entrance to the tower in safety.

At the entrance to the tower, sculptures of the monsters in Las Phalanx had been vividly created. Since the Emperor’s death, the empire had disintegrated. Invasions spread across the continent and the empire was split up falling into chaos, leaving the pieces he made scattered.

With his passion for art and beauty, any person who had a piece was reluctant to give it up. In Las Phalanx, one could easily find all of the precious metals of the Versailles continent. Sculptors can turn those precious metals into living metal statues. So they mostly escaped during the split of the continent.

Before Weed arrived, the only person who knew of this place was the Emperor Geihar Von Arpen. Every sculpture was at a high

level. But when they arrived at Las Phalanx even the advantages they had as pieces of life were not enough against the monsters of the natural environment, and they lost their lives. The tower was the legacy created by the pieces who came here. Anyone who creates sculptures would be convinced.

‘The Sculptor’s guild’s head and 13 pieces of life sculptors...’

You have made the great discovery “The History of the Sculptor.”

If you report these finding to the sculptor’s guild you can receive great rewards.

The reward for the Sculptor’s Heritage is to pick out a gift made here! A piece on the tower has engraved writing. The name is not known; maybe it is from a very famous sculptor.

(PR Note: Someone tell me what the Sculptor’s Heritage is!)

Geihar Von Arpen’s pieces of life. Weed had made five Magnum pieces.

‘In the Versailles continent, there is still no better sculptor than the emperor.’

The evidence was what he was touching right now. Weed admired the view for a while, then went up the tower.

“Call Death Knight”

The area in front of Weed shimmered and Death Knight appeared in front of the pitch black crow.

“Master, now that is a rare appearance, but it fits nicely.”

“It fits for now.” Weed said in response to Death Knight’s comment.

He sent Death Knight down to the entrance of the tower. The door had been created so that it could only be opened from the outside. There was a dangerous bell in the corner that he could ring, but he was fearful of the monsters it’d attract so he left it alone.

On each floor there were scary looking knight sculptures posed to attack. The sculptures actually seemed like a threat. They were covered in a thick crust because of the years of accumulated dust or perhaps it was the massive earthquakes that made the ceiling give off a fine powder. The number of monster seemed to be huge.

“Perhaps they are monsters that once lived in the past?”

There were insects and sea monsters in large numbers! Each of the kingdom’s soldiers, knights, and nobles looked vividly real. At the top of the tower there was a small comfortable sculpture of a fire. Even after a long time the bronze and gold of the sculpture was still intact, making it forever ablaze.

Numerous carvings depicted historic nobles and the like with a dreary radiance. Instead of legendary pieces, there were numerous fine and masterpieces, while there were only 4 magnums. While staring at the historic sculptures Weeds art stat increase by a total of 189 points. Sculpture skill had increased by 8%. It was a tremendous reward.

“But the people who left such great pieces might be nearby.”

Unfortunately no matter how much he searched the ruins of the tower he could not find any signs of the ones who created the sculptures inside. However he did find the bodies of 6 big pieces made of metal and crystal displayed in one place. Weed left the tower of the sculptor's inheritance and started to search around Las Phalanx again.

When he investigated the other parts he found more created sculptures. However they were badly damaged by the lava and monsters and were far from their original appearance. It was an unimaginable scale. To find the sculptures he had to fly high to remain safe from the monsters but he could still see sculptures all the way in the mountains in the distance.

“But the way of the sculptor seems to follow down the same path... there's some gold!”(He means the better you get the larger the statue you can make)

Even the smaller sculptures would take a lot of manpower just to lift them. It was necessary of course to get a closer look at the price of the sculptures. It takes a strong attachment to work, for mere pennies. Through the sculptures a rough path could be picked out

when they first arrived. This land seems to stretch on forever!

The trail disappeared with the land in the distance. The third largest peak, filled with Drakes and Chaos warriors, came into view as the crow moved through the dangerous mountains. In the mountain's valley, abandoned mines with unknown entrances supported by really old posts sat undiscovered.

“Think carefully.... Where would a sign of the Armenia Pirates be.”

He had to find a sign of the Armenian Pirates. If he only thought about where they sailed he couldn't find them, but it could narrow down the scope of the search.

“Maybe they did not come up the unfreezing river and instead walked over by landing in the glacier region.”

Reconnaissance of the glacial boundary! Because it was so cold, frost formed on his beak and wings, but he kept up his meticulous reconnaissance. Thanks to this he was able to distinguish traces of human remains near the glacial area.

The place where the remains were, was barely visible thanks to the monsters that walked over them and covered them in snow. However the places that had many footprints clearly revealed evidence of frozen pirates!

The Armenia pirates had gone through over there. The pirates'

trail was hard to differentiate from the land but it was clear they moved from the snow filled region.

Several skeletons were shown where the snow filled skeletons left off into Las Phalanx. Where the Armenia skeleton bones were found there were also their last belongings. The pirates that headed over the seventh highest peak of Las Phalanx seemed to be mostly dead. They moved toward where the monsters mostly stayed.

“Straight from the glaciers to the monster’s dens. They must have tried to reach a place somewhere nearby.”

It was a very rough scout, but Weed deemed it was impossible to approach any further. The monsters would have shot him down. Weed flew back to the place where Geumini and Rover were. He undid the sculpture transformation and turned back into an undead skeleton.

“Geumini.”

“Gologologol, what did you need me for this week? You must know I believe in you the most,

right?”

“So what?”

Even though he abandoned the sculptures for a long time

intimacy had increased. Absence does make the heart grow fonder.

“Get ready for battle. Call Death Knight!”

“Master, I’m ready to fight anytime.”

Death Knight was also summoned. Geumini riding Rover escorted by Death Knight were equipped with a wide assortment of basic equipment.

“Skill check”

Undead summoning intermediate 7(65%) You can make use of the undead. The amount of undead and their skill levels is dependant on the users body.

Step 1 of Undead Summoning : Understanding 1,187

Step 2 of Undead Summoning : Understanding 450

Step 3 of Undead Summoning : Understanding 11

Corpse explosion intermediate 3(41%): Able to destroy a corpses body in a explosion. Very powerful magic

You are currently under the effect of Transfiguration.

Your skill and stats are affected by the current transformation. Based on that a penalty will be granted.

Sculptural Understanding Advance level 3 had considerable advantages. Besides various curse magic and escort golems, production of every undead went up as well.

“Okay, Undead Summoning is Intermediate level 7.”

Alcohol was useless in his transformed state so this was as far as he could get for benefits. Thanks to the sculpture transformation the majority of his skill of raising undead had improved, while his main attack skills had greatly reduced.

“I think its time to start hunting.”

Weed looked at the rest of his set up before turning to Van Hawk.

“I have no brother more reliable than you brother Hawk, you go first.”

“I get it master.”

Death Knight did not say a word as he walked toward the front. Weed’s hunting laws are usually different when Death Knight comes to the forefront to fight.

“Leaving everything to death knight in the front and fighting behind his back, I’m not use to this fighting style Well, it’s no big deal.”

One of the top thing’s to revitalize was the attributes of the job. Producing curses from the back!

“Dark Speculation!”

Around Death Knight's body distinctive shadows jumped out of hiding places. Access a Weapon! Diet and Exercise! (T/N -.- he's testing out his skills on Death Knight but I have no idea why the author insist on using these weird references)(PR: I don't get it TT^T)

The shades that jumped out of the shadows started to attack Death Knight. Deer and chubby bats that were level 300 started to come out at the sound of the battle. Then 6 horses and 5 dogs and a whopping 23 cats came out.

“Master, your command.”

“The darkness descends, corpse soldiers attack!”

Death Knight swung his sword all over the place to prevent their approach and attack, hurling away the ones who came close away as they railed at him. However among the common monsters there were several uncommon:

Tairbeth

(T/N In volume twenty these creatures were called TairBeth's but in translating I've found that their called Tair Badgers, which I think is the correct name since they never give an explanation of what it's body looks like. I think it's a flying badger type creature. Since they use their teeth and claws to attack and can spit.) (PR I'm

just gonna leave this word there as a reminder then)

The TairBadger quickly glued their body to Death Knight. Their saliva had a sticky mucus like quality that stuck to death knight like a kid playing with glue. It was toxic, and strong enough it melt the bones off your flesh, but the potent poison was of no avail to death knight.

‘I think their physical attack power is weak compared with their level. Their saliva can suppress Death Knight’s movements. Then they attack him with attacks too fast for him to avoid. Considering Death Knight’s defenses (armor) he can hold out for a while.’

The TairBadger attacks were quick enough that it made it difficult to dodge, along with the movement sealing mucus, it was too much of a burden to deal with all at once. Assassin, adventurers and explorers have navigation skills. But no matter how much you scout you can’t find out everything hidden. For example, the hostilities of TairBadgers. It was better to throw Death Knight out there as bait instead of charging in like a fool. Weed pulled out the Fallen Saints staff and started summoning.

“Your flesh will be made undead. Ye shall be forever stuck in my hand. Necromancer’s Declaration.”

You have used Necromancer’s Declaration.

When you create undead the effect is increased by 15%

The target’s physical ability will be decreased 10%

The targets mental suffering will be increased by 10%

The target's hit by Necromancer will have greater hostility towards you

Necromancer's declaration. Before a full-scale fight, use the top tier spells to increase your powers. If your magical proficiency is high enough, then it can even increase the effect of unique techniques. Some TairBadgers turned and attacked Weed, even when they were near death or severely weakened. The 10 TairBadgers attacked his body with spit shots, scratches and bites. Weed's bones made sounds as they absorbed the attacks.

"The fateful bitterness doesn't feel. A narrow sight! The confusion and suffering is endless. No end to the pain! Even at dawn, just do as they do and fall in a deep tired sleep. With deep stinging in his eyes and yawning come forth. Increase in Fatigue!"

"Every inch of the body is tickled. The disease of the blood occurs! The body is rotting away from the corrupt air, spreading to anyone who drinks it in. Summon Poison mist"

A huge number of subsequent curse magics were summoned continuously. Weed had summoned up to 4 instantaneous curses a minute. In order to prepare a magic curse he has to constantly recite the exact summoning spell. But Weeds cursing did not falter for even one second.

During the battle he placed curses on the creature that attacked him and the sculptures of life fighting. There was a delay when using curse magic. The effect of using many curses in a row lead to considerable drop in magic concentration.

When the magic concentration drops the spell is more likely to fail, and the spells get considerable weaker. But all the blessings and curses were still recited properly so they worked.

Due to the curses, the TairBadgers were noticeable weakened. Weed drew a long breath as one of the TairBadgers stuck to Death Knight and died. He immediately ordered.

“Corpse Explosion!”

Cracks appeared all over the dead TairBadger’s body then exploded in great flash of light! Part’s of the Tair Badgers body bounced all over the place. The strongest skill of the magical skills, at the top of the necromancer class; the Corpse Explosion. The explosion happened right next to Death Knight, but he was saved from the blast by the Tair Badgers which were stuck to his body, thus mitigating most of the damage.

Due to continuous use magic concentration has severally dropped.

The front of Weed’s eyes suddenly grew cloudy, like cataracts in adults. Even if his wisdom and knowledge was very high for the moment he had still used too many high level spells.

“Chek, chek, chek!”

The TairBadgers now had a new enemy for their animosity.

There were only two left on Death Knight. The other TairBadgers flew off as they joined up and came to attack Death Knight/Weed. Due to the effects of the curse they were noticeably slower. They bumped into each other as they flew up and down in the air.

“Geumini, bow and arrows!”

“GoloGoloGol!”

Geumini shot a bunch of arrows from the high elf bow that went straight for the target! For example (T/N I hate when I see these words!) an African bow. The arrows are made from blessed stones and sprinkled with holy water to produce the best results when they are released. The spirits in action are a very beautiful sight, but the Tair Badgers had very little resistance, being just six meters from fight.

“Golden Bird, you go ahead and fight too!”

But the Golden bird only sat and preened its feathers. Weed had not been recognized with a measure of acceptable intimacy so it did not help with the battle. There was a bit of golden light shining up from the ground.

“Gologol, from the earth sparks will rise.”

Pillars of fire suddenly erupted from the ground. Only Guemuni who had a 100% fire resistance could exert his full potential in the battlefield now.

However in the extreme heat a little bit of gold was melted away. Geumini, who was fully intent on saving his lord, started to advance through the fire. But as he moved forward, the TairBadgers pierced through the fire. The monsters in Las Pheonix have very strong fire resistance.

The TairBadgers that had been hit by the initial explosion fell to the ground wrapped in flames, but then they casually flicked off the flames like they were annoying flies, and nonchalantly kept flying.

More than 15 of them pierced the air, flying toward their enemies. At the moment the TairBadgers arrived, Weed pushed Geumini to the side as a diversion.

Weed sword's was quite accurate, but with the excess use of magic his eyes were clouded making the enemies hard to hit. Also most of his fencing skills had been turned into curse skills or skill to summon the undead. The liches' strength and speed in battle was considerably lower.

The TairBadgers came back! They threw their steaming gummy spit all over.

Actions are blocked.

Up to -80% movement speed.

A 95% percent increase strength is required to move.

The TairBadgers attacked when it was physically hard to resist! They attacked vulnerable spots like the neck; it was the worst situation. The TairBadgers spit dozens of red seeds toward Weed.

The seeds of the Dymond flower have been planted.

It would best to get rid of them as soon as possible.

The Dymond's flower plants have infected and spread throughout your body.

The Dymond's flower plants...

Dozens of red seed started to attach to Weeds body. Weed examined the attack of the TairBadgers and didn't know how to respond.

The Dymond flowers have started to grow.

In Las Phlanax some special plants have organic attributes and are able to absorb nutrients very quickly. Weed quickly tried to pull them off his clothes with his fingers but they stuck to his bones. The flower seed grew in a matter of 5 or six seconds. They were sucking up Weeds life force and using it to joyously bloom and grow roots. They were beautiful colorful flowers.

The Dymond flowers that the TairBadgers have sown have started to bloom.

Each one of the seeds turned to different colors as they bloomed; yellow, pink, blue... The petals, long and sugary, gave off a sweet refreshing scent as they spread. Packed in a small space, they

emitted light, and soon after came an explosion!

Weed's vitality decreased. Here in Las Phalanx even if the monsters had a weak body they had a devastating fighting style. Though the TairBadgers had weak physical attacks, they exploited the weak points. But they did not expect the advantages of being a liche. If one exploits the advantages of being undead then they can be number 1 even in Las Phalanx.

*

The Kingdom of Haven's captain of the second fleet Drinfield! The Hermes Guild's admiral headed toward the starting areas in the port.

“On Ipia Island a ghost fleet was spotted with a Lich aboard as the captain. Chances are high that it's him....”

Drinfield, the naval admiral, was covered in black with a sleek hip outfit and a feather in his hat. He gave a sharp click with his tongue.

“What kind of quest can't be done by this military, Earl!”

Drinfield thought as he stroked his mustache.

He had heard about the old rumors of Weed from CoM. Nevertheless, Weeds exploits in Royal Road made the blood boil.

“But he is not a true man from the sea. From sea to sea, no matter how big, he is just another fish to fry.”

No matter what kind of quest he was doing it didn't matter, Drinfield would proceed. Out of the Brent kingdom the second fleet sailed with 37 large sailing ships to demonstrate their gall.

“In Royal Road the first one to catch Weed will be me.”

The column of users that followed Drinfield was about 1,200 people! The navy command was focused on ability and growth so all the people were strong in one-to one duels as well. Every one of them were undisputed powerhouses.

*

“Golo golo golo.”

Gemuni was deliberately pushed, but this just recovered any fallen intimacy.

‘Master cares if I live or die. He doesn't just abuse us. He would even turn into a mangled tree for me!’

Weeds thought process was that the value of Gold was more valuable than the materials and ingredients on Bingryong. (T/N so THAT's where bingryongs been the entire time. Ingredient

freezer) With that in mind he chose to save Gumeni the moment the enemies revived.

“Master hang in there! Gol golo golo.”

Gumeni rushed the TairBadgers in order to save Weed.

With Death Knight there, two more Tair Badgers died. Death Knights level was much higher, but the TairBadgers moved fast; whirling from side to side to avoid their attacks was not easy.

Most of the TairBadgers intensely attacked Weed. When he used the move corpse explosion he attracted the most aggro. They would have continued to spit Dymond flower seeds at him, but Weed rolled on the ground.

The fire might have doubled the TairBadgers attack but with the Goddess of the Earth blessing still active, it did not do much damage.

After being barely scratched Weed came up brandishing his staff. The TairBadgers attacked the bones of his shoulders and neck with viscous bites.

But Weed activated the exquisite defense skill “Stone Skin”. The skills that were gained and considerable strengthened during the Hero’s tower. Double hard!! Bones that can cut nails. What about their teeth? (T/N Had to double check this line)

The Tair Badgers continued to chew on the solid stone bones. The other two also locked their teeth in Weed. Noticing this Weed said,

“I’m rather lucky.”

Biting meant they wouldn’t be shooting more flower seeds at him. Weed put his left hand on his torso where he felt the pain.

“Life drain, Mana drain.”

He aimed at the fiercely biting TairBadgers. Weed raised his arms at the same time. He sucked in both the mana and the life force from his attackers. The attack severely damages the attackers leaving them too weak to attack properly. Even when losing so much of its health and strength, the TairBadger didn’t stop chewing. Its eyes slowly lowered as more of its life was drained by the moment.

“I failed to pick up the item during the corpse explosion. But the power of death can be used like this too.” (PR Note: I think this says that the power of the death aka corpse explosion was useful? Not too sure but then again I’m just a lowly Pr... TTAT)

The Tair Badgers refused to give up chewing to avenge their fallen comrades.

EM Mo moo moo moo moo

Suddenly Rover roared and rushed over. Weed watched at the TairBadgers received the attack en masse. Due to the attack by Rover, several TairBadgers attacks could be avoided for a while. Weed was grasping at them with both hands and continuing to absorb their health and mana. And also many of them had been struck by Rover. Indeed many of them were rolling on the ground now shortly before death!

“Master.”

Geumini took out a blue sapphire he had been carrying.

“Gem Destruction!”

The gem shattered and blew out a magical wind.

“Sapphire Dust!”

The fine chipped sapphire dust started to blow around. The light blue wind started to attack the TairBadgers!

“Pretty solution.”

Weed, Rover, and Death Knight were also swept up in the sapphire pieces. First it reflects its master owners actions, so its behavior resembled Gumeni's.

Freezing.

Vitality is reduced by 190 every second.

This rapidly reduces stamina, but has no effect if you are in undead state.

It is impossible to move!

It is impossible to use magic!

You will not be able to use weapons.

The Geumini's magic dealt a severe blow to the TairBadgers. The TairBadgers were frozen and could not fly and were lying on the ground! The TairBadgers had some magical resistance living in Las Phalanx but none against ice magic. But the TairBadgers chewing on Weeds body persisted; they did not know how to fall. Weed was also stuck under this ban.

“I am this judge. If you want to participate in this battle then....”

He started to grab at the clinging TairBadgers in their frozen state.

“Life drain, Mana Drain!”

Crazy biting! The Vitality of the Tair Badgers was on the weak side but they had high defense and tremendous endurance. The attack from the TairBadgers persisted until they died. If not for the stone skin absorbing most of the damage, he would have dropped a long time ago.

Even with the Stone Skin skill, it was barely tolerable to Weed; a warrior without high defenses would never be able to endure!

Meanwhile the much weakened TairBadgers were being split between Death Knight and Geumeni. Rover took 4 frozen ones and started kicking. The vitality of the frozen were reduced to 2 from the constant harassment.

Due to enduring many blows, Strength and Vitality goes up by 1.

Weed's life force increased about 5%; there was an increase to a stat! In order to get this increase you had to risk your life. Death Knight, Rover, and Geumeni got rid of the remaining 8 enemies. Weed's health was 5% and mana 8%; he had been hit all over.

Because the Las Phlanx was too hot the freezing restriction was quickly released and then his concentration and recovery rate went back to normal. It was a difficult first fight but it was difficult pleasure. With a sweaty smile Weed started to perform some magic.

"May you live and come back to this land. Come back to this place, a dark and corrupt land. Do not disappear. In the law of darkness engraved to you. Undead rise!"

From the ground, dead TairBadgers rose and soared. The wings were Broken and its' necks were at a strange angle but the TairBadgers were alive (well undead). They had half of their original vitality and 1/3 of their original attack and defense power. Weed wearily went by the TairBadgers with Death Knight and turned them into undead too. By the end of the fight he had gain a whopping 25 TairBadgers. He made 3 air columns out of the

undead TairBadgers.

“Your sovereign prince. I gave blood and flesh so these might never die without my permission, So they forever obey. Soul Submission!”

+15% to maximum health of the undead.

They will be a little more nimble now and will obey commands with absolute certainty . Using curse magic on the undead gave blessings. Now the real battle of the Necromancer could begin.

Weed, and Death Knight went back to the place where the Tair Badgers first pounced on them on the shadows. And were attacked by 15 more of them. But this time the situations had changed drastically.

“Fight! The enemy is upon you!”

Weed fell straight back into battle. While watching the battle he poured out curses and several magical attacks. Undead summoning casts wherever they fall, the sides are silently flipped. Death Knight was much freer, dealing destructive power with his strong sword skills as he tears up the TairBadgers. Geumeni was able to properly support from the ground by shooting arrows. The 25 undead Tair Badgers fell once or twice in battle, but they produced corpses and were quickly able to be resummoned. Infinite recovery and reproducible goods! This really did seem to be one of the top jobs. Weed fought five more groups and gained 89 undead TairBadgers. Indirect hunting gets far less experience. But the

Speed is different. Driving two groups, he was able to split any incoming forces and hunt and track them using organization.

“I dedicate you to our glory. Form your sword with black.”

After collecting some bodies He summoned several Skeleton Mages and a few skeleton knights. Now you could say he leading an undead legion.

“No time to summon the zombies as well.”

After the following battle he collect the TairBadgers bodies and baked them together after a little rain. The Zombies turned out like the cheesy kind that walked slowly, but they had acidic venom and high defense.

Using the correct undead is very important. Their bodies were even intact because they had been made out of the best looking TairBadgers with the highest efficiency. In one night of continuous hunting, Weed had an enormous increase in his undead army.

He had 89 TairBadgers, 55 Skeleton Mages, 20 skeleton Knights, 40 baked zombies, and 5 horses. It took a certain amount of work to maintain all that undead, but the skeleton knight, mages and zombies were a bit easier than others because they were cheap. A Mana recovery + 10% speed ring, plus a 55% Mana mantle, plus a 20% recovery rate increase from the bracelets; the treasure of the Nifleheim kingdom. All were worn. Plus he had the Critical blessing from the Goddess of the Earth which added an additional 40% to his Mana. IT was definitely powerful enough to keep up

with the undead legion.

In the first day of the hunt he gained 27% experience. The next day he gained 29%. The Undead summoning skill and the Skeletons origins were being perfectly displayed and adapted for fighting for the first time. But in distinction Golden Bird stay far away circling from atop. The only thing that could be seen was Weed's moving forces.

Chapter 9: Seoyoon's Arrival

“The undead army legion has now increased 3 times in size. Now, I don't need to go out with nearly as many skeletons, nor do I need as many troops.”

With Weed's Lich skills, he can take advantage of every battle and create flying undead! But too much greed could be hazardous in hunting, so he did not increase the number of his undead, even though they were cheap. Because, increasing the number of undead would not necessarily increase the hunting speed and their numbers were definitely not infinite. To keep a steady pace, they needed constant maintenance and the hunting grounds needed to be navigated; wasting more time. Once the undead fell, it was time to attack with curse magic.

“Utilization of the Meiji era skeletons should increase.”

By hunting day and night, Weed had gained one level. However, the monsters also got stronger. The monsters gained a 30% stat increase at night. Since he was transfigured, the benefits of moonlight sculptor did not apply. However, the lich's magical curses and black magic had a large area effect at night, so it wasn't that bad.

“Finally level 370.”

The quests and giving life to sculptures had left his level rather lacking compared to his stats. Now he could raise his level through

hunting as it was the optimal solution. But the monsters' levels were very high, and it was very hard to sneak around in the sculpture heritage since it was so bare. In Las Phalanx massive earthquakes happened often.

“Again?”

Whenever there was a big quake, Weed would quickly duck into a relatively safe spot.

‘THakur ruka ruka ruk’

The volcanic ground shook, shaking everything off balance. TairBadgers, Bollards, and Chaos Warriors' rushed out of their hiding places. Drakes flew all over the place avoiding the blow out from the nearby earthquake. Aerial and ground creatures all in unison ran around. It was a great and terrible sight. A great mole-like creature popped its head out of the ground, froze, then ran away. The creatures were quickly falling into a deeper panic. The tension was rising.

Geuminyi said,

“Gol gol go, the heat is rising. The origin is hot.”

“That’s not it.”

The lava was being excavated from under the mountains.

“That is surely.....The lava welling up in reverse and the black smoke pouring out of the nearby north mountain range....Kuah.

No way.”

“Volcanic Eruptions!”

The Versailles continent pageantry(display)! After the icy storm comes volcanic explosions! The fireballs fell down here and there. Large rocks melting, crushing and burning monsters.

“Stand down! Scatter!”

Giving orders, Weed lead the undead legion towards the river. As the volcanoes erupted, they sent tons of flaming rocks, that felt like comets, to destroy the area around them. It looked like the end of the world and it was such a lovely sight to see.

The volcanic lava mightily soared in upside down streams in the air. Massive rocks matching the top area of the volcanoes collapsed in ghastly balls of summer flames. It was a scary sight, enough to make one dizzy. Jets of steam came out of the ground and split the stiff land. From the cracks, streams of lava flowed. Weed and the undead hastily ran to the river.

“More than anything, dying by a fireball would just be too unfair. I can’t let that happen. Seeing this from afar though, I think I should eat some roasted sweet potatoes.”

He watched the volcanic eruptions while thinking about baked sweet potatoes. For 2 hours the earthquakes and volcanoes continued its blast and spurt. He could not escape quick enough

and several zombies and undead got destroyed reaching a total number of 65 survivors. After the earth's movement was stable and the lava flowing on the ground had become black and hard, Weed felt safe enough to venture out from behind the rocks he had been hiding behind by the river. The undead, Geuminyi, and Rover were all looking very shabby, due to the volcanic eruption and being covered in soot.

“Seeing such a display on the Versailles Continent, I have no luck.”

Picking a place that had such famous scenery and seeing a once in a lifetime spectacle, is being blamed on bad luck! Weed dragged out 800 objects that might be undead. By listening to the log system, he knew that several undead were completely destroyed even with the certain amount of pre-inserted mana he injected. Under a shadow, or hidden in a coffin or in a grave his undead were waiting. Due to the maintenance of the undead, a third of his mana was consumed.

“The blessing period lasts twelve more days. If I can gain three more levels than it should be more than enough to increase the undead armies efficiency.”

That day, the hunting speed doubled and he filled his experience bar by an additional 39%. Because of the blessing of the Goddess of the Earth, he begrudged eating and sleeping preferring to hunt instead. TairBadgers had a salty taste when unprepared. Groups with level 300 lurked in the shadows that could be hunted in large quantities. When TairBadgers died, they gave gems and rare magic items. When he got a bunch of little gems he could make a piece of jewelry that many people would pay lots of money for.

“I wonder what I can pick up from Bollards.”

He greedily thought about hunting high level Bollards while calculating the risk. If he were to die he may be denied the option to revive since he was already undead and he would lose the blessing of the earth.

“TairBadgers are lower on the food chain. The next step would be Bollards.”

Yet there were many high level monsters in Las Phalanx that he had not attacked yet. In addition to the creatures needing high level attacks, the terrain was also difficult to hunt in. Considering that the bottom of the food chain was the Bollards, it was gonna get tough soon. But Weed had enough confidence that using the TairBadgers would be enough to hunt them. Weed temporarily increased the undead army legion by 40%. Due to this, he was using too much mana and Weed couldn't sustain it for extended periods of time but it was great for dealing a great deal of damage.

“Ah, I'm so proud of my undead army legion. Let's go look for Bollards to hunt. Trample them when you see them. I will make more colleagues for us. ATTACK!”

Hiding behind a rock he gave instructions. The undead stampeded toward the Bollards. The Panther like creatures nimbly ran past huge flame columns. Changed to undead, the TairBadgers had a much lower fire resistance but they still easily clung to the Bollards. Weed looked as the Bollard jumped about and shook the

zombies into the flames leaving burned chunks of meat.

“This fight right now. The Bollards are just addicted to burning the zombies.”

“This shield!”

“This arrow.”

“Air Blaster.”

(The translation literally say this. Guessing that this is the actual translation and not some cool buff name)

More than 100 skeleton mages cast their magic spells at once adding various buffs. The TairBadgers clung to the Bollards for all they're worth. Thanks to that, the skeleton knights with swords could attack.

Weed used his Lions Roar.

“Fight! You are undead! Prove that you are the definition of loss to this land! Show your full power to the armed forces of this world. Attack those weak bastards!”

Bollards are strong and fast. However the skeleton mages had infinite magic attacks! More than enough, strength and power. Even more so than Weeds 480 skeleton knights and others; 900 in all. The Bollards that they killed were made into undead. Compared to when they were alive their balance was much worse and four died right off the bat in the next fight.

You have learned valuable experience

(funny alternate TL lines again-are you trying to earn experience points?. -Gain and take of experience points is an understanding. – you are the experience gaining master)

Skill proficiency of Necromancer has improved

You have obtained grade 1 sewing material leather.

“I lost quite a number of my undead army. But I gained 1.6% exp. And Bollard leather!”

Continuous Bollard hunting was difficult. Weed increased the number of dead while the rest were out tracking them. When they found some Bollards, they took them down. The undead level of a Bollard’s corpse had a much better quality. They had higher vitality and strength stats. After turning undead only the fire attribute was lacking.

Undead summoning skills Intermediate level 8

The ability to summon corpses has increased. You are now able to handle higher quality bodies.

Step 1 Understanding Undead Summoning 1,219.

Step 2 Understanding Undead Summoning 461

Step 3 Understanding Undead Summoning 17

Step 4 Understanding Undead Summoning 6

Undead’s maximum health and damage increases.

The amount of Mana consumed in maintaining the undead is slightly reduced.

The effect of increasing Understanding Undead summoning was

acquiring a number of new skills.

Step 4 undead Summoning spells were deadly! Producing the haunting bodies of souls of warriors. They should bring excellent fighting skills and at the same time create fear. They were even scary to summon with the strength cap of the undead completely removed. The top skills of the Necromancer were much more difficult to perform than other magic related skills such as purification.

Black magic and curse magic, undead summoning aside, only increase in small increments, hardly gaining anything.

“The top 4 skills of Undead Summoning are the same. Perhaps when I turn back into a human they will increase in strength?”

To a certain degree, there must have been some penalties but the level up was not too bad. However, he would lose the undead advantage of having unlimited stamina.

“Fight! Kill! Dispose of everything at once!”

The undead had increased and now included TairBadgers, undead horsemen and Bollards all occupying the same space! The blessing of the Goddess of the Earth made it possible to hunt to level 373. Having the blessing for such a long time, there was no time to rest even for 1 or 2 days. He only concentrated on hunting. Weed took a break to compare his results and focus on the new tracking positions.

“This is a rare hunting ground.”

In Las Phalanx the region around the river had many experience and items but it was only skin deep. By networking he could work with maximum efficiency.

“Orders from the master. Annihilate your enemies.”

Death Knight Van Hawk was conducting a group of 30 Bollards! Because of a lack of the right magical ingredients a significantly massive Golem could not be created.

Raw black ore obtained

Fix obtained

Acquired 10 leather TairBadgers wings

Obtained the floral brush, Ripper

Acquired 10 dwarf Bollard leather pants

Obtaining several rare items.

“Identify!”

Dwarf Bollard leather pants:Durability 65/70Defense power 58

Somebody who came to Las Phalanx and hunted Bollards decided to make leather pants. Made by dwarf’s meticulous hands.

Options: 28% fire resistance.

Increase in hostility of Bollards

While exploring the area he occasional discovered the traces of carvings.

“Identify!”

Broken sculpture:Durability 3/25Lava has melted down part of this sculpture. However some of Las Phalanx was made in the process. Knowing the original shape of the piece is impossible. A very small part is still intact but even the roughest guess can not pinpoint who created it.

Artistic value : 2

Special options: recovery is impossible

There were many sculptures around Las Phlanax that were impossible to pick up and were too damaged. But still they were created with someone’s heart and soul!

“This can't even be sold as japtem!”

Weed left the broken sculpture just as he saw them.

*

Seoyoon listened to the animal and like clients they gave her problems to solve.

“ ...and this is required. Also can you get a little herbs? I have an appointment to keep with some friends but I should be able to get you some red flower. The red flowers help with child prevention right? I’ll have to wander around a bit, but once I smell it I’m sure I can’t miss it.

Every night she hears a strange wind. Please check out the reason.

The small and cute animals asked for resources.

“In exchange, I will tell you the location of the flowers. You will have the location of flowers that humans crave.

“I would like help in recovering of a wound.”

“Is there a water drinking fountain for cats?”

The animals were very informed.

“Keep in mind that several polar fleece foxes have passed this way. I’ll let you know of a safer forest.”

The forest jobs were much easier to take great strides when the proper knowledge was used. The quest rewards were also quite good as well. Animals who live in the forest and mountain were familiar with those areas as well. They also knew the locations of mines, monsters, rare habitats, and hidden treasures that were not directly available. Although Seoyoon did not talk back directly they understood her meaning and they had conversations. She increased the intimacy with the animals by stroking them. The Quest rewards of the fox furs and the cat fountain were led to something very curious.

-And beyond at the end of mothers' territory. There is a dungeon that has a door, which was created by the fairies, that crosses dimension.

-Could you really go anywhere you wish just by passing through the entrance way? This fairy door was very astonishing.

It can only be used in a two month period. Mother knows that this is fact, if you're curious. Is this a good reward? I heard that man always wanted that type of thing. Money is usually what humans are rewarded with.

-That's not always necessary, what you gave me will come in handy.

Seoyoon decided to go to the dungeon.

"This smells dangerous but I think I'll be okay."

With the help of Tori, Seoyoon found the fairy door. The door that was opened for just two months was reached with success! While the door was opening, Seoyoon recalled where she wanted to go,

"Weed, I want to go to where Weed's place is....."

*

"Kill everything! All the successful people in the world are bad guys. TairBadgers! Sweep them away!"

Weed lead the undead legion, dedicated to hunting. Weed was restricted to fighting what was next on the food chain ladder, but he had TairBadgers and Bollards so he had no complaints. By using a connecting network for continuous tracking, his skill proficiency and experience were rising. Geuminyi, Rover, and Death Knight Van Hawk were hunting and tracking while trying to avoid the earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

“Although it’s difficult., it’s worth the risk.”

For now, this was the optimal time for hunting on the present hunting ground because of the Goddess of the Earth’s blessing made traveling through the hunting grounds easier.

“Unfortunately sculpturing, cooking, blacksmithing, and sewing are too difficult to advance at this point.”

The undead don’t eat food and sculpture effects aren’t applied. You must buy a good weapon for a zombie to upgrade it.”

He used the cheapest undead magic with the highest volume. He couldn’t worry about a low level soldier losing weapons.

“I cannot create clothes that has flame resistance, it’ll just be filled with holes.”

The materials from Las Phalanx were piling up, but he could not access them yet. Weed’s assets are his high stats and various productions skill. Yes, the Necromancer stood at the top of the

magic class. You can play with undead and make military colleagues, but you can't take advantage of the materials! It did not help that he didn't even have the dexterity to use a hunting bow to command the battle. In addition to commanding the battle it is important to know the additional effects. Weed pondered new methods to have better efficiency.

“Sculpture! A sculpture that won't be lost to the lava....”

Light sculptures were made in the air and were sculptures.

“But if other creatures are curious about it they might come up and destroy it.”

A gathering of monsters! He did not want that. Then he would make a sculpture that he could transform himself into. Weed enjoyed the sculpture's makeover effect skills! Leveraging the synergetic effect of the sculpture he could take on even more advantages.

“The materials....”

What was around here? No trees or stone. The ground was full of holes and is open for bone cancer with the rocks hence they would have low vitality.”

Las Phalanx had many materials, that fell to the ground, that could be used for modification.

“Identify!”

“Identify!”

Little rock crystal : Hardness 15/15

Picked up on a Las Phalanx mountain.

A little transparent. A kind of jewel that fetches a high price but is not that expensive.

Several types of magic weapons, accessories or sculptures can be processed with it.

Can amplify mana boosts effect

Material grade: 2

Options: low grade enchantments can be sealed in for a day.

“It’s too difficult to give up the liche race so I’ll just make a new skeleton”

Whole body modifications with the material.

“This material is almost invisible....”

Even it was only a little dark ,which was good, it could catch the light and refract it making it hard for monster to find him.. It would be hard to pinpoint the curse and attack magic and make it

so the hostilities were not increased toward him. This was very valuable for necromancers since they are extremely weak at close combat.

“Now I can add many magical modifications. Now’s the time to take advantage of the strength and stamina of the undead and provide this skull with lots of concentrated magic.”

He made over 450 modifications. Because it was impossible to create the piece all at once he carved each bone and put them together. He created an assembly of bones.

“Quite a tricky thing, but that’s okay when I have the extra mana for hunting by using intermediate carving.”

He seemed to find other utilizations for the crystal.

“From the blacksmithing and sewing production perspective there are many uses.”

Created in a blacksmith shop, weapons would have high defense or other desirable options. There was also many other production of technologies that could be developed for the crystal

“If you change the characteristics in the blacksmith shop it could be made to be used as an instrument.”

Due to Weed’s high sculpting art stat he could make use of an instrument. Although his songs were the worst his harp

performance was considerable. He looked at the trees and listened to the metal, looking for things to create an instrument with. The tendons of the monsters used for strings. For battle purposes you only need high defensive and offensive things so creating a weapons with this in mind is mainly a blacksmith's job. But with the revolution of musical instruments, anything was possible. As a high level blacksmith himself, once a senior competitor appeared among the competition, his eyesight became narrowed. But Weeds art stat was too low, practically absent, alas Weeds life was too difficult.

“Getting the materials would be a waste, but looking at the long term, it's more sensible to increase my drawing and sewing skills while I still can later.”

Weed's herbology and bandage skill were in the advance stage along with his cooking which was at advance level 2. The right plants and herbs could be used as things to write on and dyes for clothes. It could even the increase the characteristics. Fortunately, the Versailles continent has lots of plant materials that could come in handy later. Almost nothing was useless as plants could be dried and sold later for money, but that is not the reason they should be kept.

“No matter where you go or what you do, while searching for materials on the Versailles continent there are endless possibilities.”

Weed was modifying the bones with the hunt in mind. If you look at the bone,s it was not hard to create them one by one. In the meantime the liches foundation came forth. A ghostly skeleton

dismembered and separate came to life.

“Fixing them so they fit exactly to the size and proportion, can be a little tricky.”

Looking at the body modifications he measured the bones to himself.

“Perhaps a few more centimeters is key? No. The key is to look bigger and more fit, not be taller. I have to stick to the current body state and make as much amends as possible.”

While creating, one has to have a nice head for knowledge and wisdom stat.

“Should I experiment more with the sculpture shapeshifter skill? A ten times bigger head is not likely to be as good as a vaguely smart looking skull.”

Having a very large head, for more knowledge. A favorite!

“A supersized head skeleton and frame modifications.”

Unfortunately the biggest Weed could make the modifications to was only 1.5 times larger than the current one. Considering the proportions of the human body, it could easily be quite large.

“An 8 foot tall man wouldn’t necessarily be smarter... Guess I’ll

have to do without.”

The big headed skull was sculpted without a hitch. The hands that now sweeps away the shavings now has much experience with the material. Conversion and conception of imagination was essential to the creation of culture and art.

Go and play!

Adapting and sculpting the bones in the ribs, spines, pelvis, torso, arms, shoulder, and head. The teeth also had to be revised. The molars for the head had to be 1.5 times bigger.

Ttring!

The name of the sculpture is.....

“Modified liche!”

Is this what you want to name the sculpture?

“Yes”

-A Masterpiece! The Modified liche is complete!!

The modification and clean workmanship are rare manifestations in sculptures. The first of this kind can be added to his Art Center. With driving experience from his heroic efforts he has created a modified liche. However the process isn't just amazing. To adventurers, there is a lot of unique artistic feeling.

There were similar liches made in the past but they were prone to failure. Since it is an uncomfortable appearance to reach, having not a lot of beauty and luxurious appearance, it is hard to make! However the artistic sensitivity is still low, because there is already a shape of this sculpture made. There should be no more of this made in the world.

Artistic value: 219

Special options: Increases vitality and mana recovery rate by 16% for those who see it during the day.

+ 42 wisdom

+10 agility

Decrease of attack by 130

Magic chanting is + 8% faster

Undead advantage + 4%

Does not overlap with other sculptors

Number of masterpieces completed: 87

Handicraft skill proficiency is improved

+15 fame

+1 Wisdom

The head had different proportions. The rest of the piece looked very similar to Weed's one eyed liche pieces but the sculpture skill did not match. The one eyed liche was making an artistic sculpture and also had daytime states.

“The level of proficiency of the skill of dexterity only rose a little.”

But Weed was prepared.

“Sculpture Shapeshift.”

Body turns into the piece

Weed’s bones became transparent. And his head was rapidly growing larger in the process. The bones gave off a pale violet clear colored hue. On the other side it appeared transparent, but the shape of a mysterious skeleton remains.

The effects of knowledge and wisdom have increased slightly due to the effect of transfiguration.

+15% health and mana

Understanding of advance sculpture is at level 3 so you are not fully transformed into a liche.

Mana and life drain absorption and efficiency rate went up by 10% Understanding of sculptures has been increased due to engraving a bigger sculpture and transforming.

“Hueg hueg hue”

With the revision of the crystal skull created, Weed smiled in satisfaction. On the hilly terrain he could now drive a drove of undead! The one eyed liches proficiency, could only handle three legions at the same time, but now more could be summoned.

“Death knight!”

Zombies, that burn a huge amount of mana can now be sent to the forefront. The TairBadgers and Bollards hunting speed went up.

Shuffling through the door made by the fairies, Seoyoon arrived at her selected location Las Phalanx.

“Hot. And thirsty.”

Spilling lava came from the top of the mountain. Scattered all around were broken sculptures like a cemetery.

“Where am I?”

Seoyoon look around for Weed but he couldn't be found anywhere in the nearby vicinity. A nasty trick by the elves, she was dropped close to her target and she was still considerably far away.

“It's hot and there's a strong smell of blood in this country.”

Tori picked his way forward.

“There's a monster hiding here, I am going to take the initiative.”

He headed toward the dark shadows cast by several rocks. Tori of the vampire clan can smell the enemy blood. Hiding is useless! Tori

and his rebuilt vampire clan forced a fight.

“The taste is not much!”

Tori and the vampires fought the shade with high defenses. With support of the magic fire items, Seoyoon pulled out her sword and began to hunt the monsters. Monster with strong blood when drunk tasted like snake fish pie! Tori, Seoyoon, and the vampire clan were at their max potential for growth. So with all of them there, hunting a Bollard came off without a hitch! Seoyoon with her high level damage, was able to beat it down with Tori.

“This is dangerous.”

Without the help of the clan to help heal, Seoyoon wouldn't go after anything that came up. But Seoyoon wanted to immediately search for Weed. A fragile existence like Weed definitely would be troubled to reach his goal in Las Phalanx.

Chapter 10: Limits Of The Necromancer

Lee-Hyun thought as he prepared breakfast and cleaned the house,

‘What’s the value of a university graduation certificate? People wanted a graduation certificate as if it was absolutely necessary in order to get a job.’

The life of getting a job at a huge company, getting paid every month, getting bonus every holiday, and getting an end-of-year bonus! Is this not the life of a businessman Lee-Hyun cries for?!

‘Dating, buying a car under monthly installment payments, going on a trip over summer vacation through the crowded highway too.’

The value of a university graduation certificate was limitless. However, not everyone who gets a good job at a good company has it because they have the certificate.

‘I have to have a high grade and be good at foreign languages. I also have to have a few licenses in order to be in a more advantageous position than others. I’ll have to run some internship too!’ He could only sigh more as he continued to think.

He was older than others, and to add on, he dropped high school and took Gum-Jung-Go-Si, so he can’t expect to live in normal ways like others.

“To think attending a university would be this painful.”

The certificate was more likely to become useless than helpful, besides being a nice wall decoration.

It was when Lee-Hyun picked up a camcorder, a few necessary notes and headed out.

He saw Seo-Yoon standing in front of the door.

Because summer vacation just ended, the weather was still hot.

She who wore casually with jeans and white T-shirts, felt strange. Compared to her blinding beauty, the clothes she wore were absolutely normal, and she looked even more innocent and beautiful.

When wearing a party dress she as pretty as a goddess, and even when wearing casual clothes, she still attracts attention.

Her beauty was on the level of shining even when wearing any type of clothes! Lee-Hyun brusquely talked to her.

“Going to walk to university with me?”

Seo-Yoon lightly nodded.

She put in a bit of effort by going to Lee-Hyun's house solely for the reason that she wanted to go to the university with him.

Lee-Hyun replied bitterly.

“Fine, do whatever you want.”

He bloomed his imagination of having a snail bride.

(TN: There's a Korean folk story where a snail transforms into a human at nights and do all house chores for the farmer who treated it/her nicely.)

A innocent and kind girl who cooks for Lee-Hyun in secret out of love! But, when he looks at Seo-Yoon, he couldn't help but have his dream be shattered.

‘She must’ve cooked for me without much meaning.

I cooked for her at times, so she must be doing this to pay back for what she received.’

Lee-Hyun could've waited for the bus at the bus station with Seo-Yoon and walked to the university, but after he started to hunt at Las Phalanx, he decided to ride on the bus to save time. The undead who have their mana supply cut from their necromancers weaken and turn back into a corpse or crumble away.

To hunt longer and save at least one more undead, riding the bus

was necessary.

“L-Loo-Look at that girl!”

“So beautiful. I’ve never seen a girl as beautiful as her.”

When he was with Seo-Yoon, people who came to watch, crowded so much to the point that the road gets blocked.

Lee-Hyun got used to such attention, so he only felt uncomfortable.

“There’re too many shortcomings going to university with you. Too many people come to watch you.”

Upon hearing that, Seo-Yoon wore a cap and a mask. After that, people let out disappointing sighs and went about their ways.

Soon, the bus they were waiting for arrived.

Lee-Hyun used his bus card and moved to go to an empty seat, but Seo-Yoon only stood still.

“What? Don’t you have a transportation card?” Seo-Yoon nodded.

When would she ever get another chance to ride a bus? Since it

was her first time riding a bus, she didn't have a transportation card. She only now learned that she needed to use the card to ride the bus.

Seo-Yoon wrote on a paper and showed it to him.

It's my first time riding a bus, you see...

Lee-Hyun paid for hers as well and they sat together at empty seats.

“Erm.....”

“Next time, you have to carry around a transportation card, ok? If you have it, you can ride on a bus and you can ride on subways too.”

Lee-Hyun sincerely advised her.

Upon hearing that, Seo-Yoon opened up her wallet thinking, maybe.

An unbelievable amount of cash and three credit cards. Black premium, diamond, and platinum cards! Annual fee alone is over 1000000 won for the cards, so of course they had a transportation card option amongst their many benefits that they had.

When Seo-yoon showed him those cards, Lee Hyun shook out of

rage.

‘I got done in.’ Her cruelty of making him pay for the bus and showing him her transportation cards afterward! No one but Seo-Yoon could do such a dreadful thing.

It was about when they arrived at the university and Lee Hyun was headed to the lecture room to take his first class. Seo-Yoon followed him.

“What? Did you sign up for capsule engineering?” Seo-Yoon only nodded twice. They took a 3 hours long lecture together, and shared a lunch box together in a grassy quad under warm sunlight.

Seo-Yoon followed him when he headed to listen to his next lecture.

“By any chance, did you also sign up for social structure theory in virtual reality?” She nodded again. Seo-Yoon picked out the lectures Lee Hyun took and signed up for them only.

“Hyung, it’s been long.”

“Hello Oppa!” Back Soon-Jo, Lee Yoo-Jung, Min So-Ra, and Choi Sang-Joon also signed up for social class theory in virtual reality, so they could meet in the lecture room.

After the lecture was over, all students gathered in the great lecture room.

“As I have promised, we will check your assignments today.”

Lee-Hyun sat at the front line in the lecture room with over 300 students.

‘It’s hard to give an F to a student who always sits at a front seat.’ The seat to get the professor’s favor! Lee-Hyun, Seo-Yoon and 12 other students sat at the very front.

“Then, please come up one by one starting from the left.”

Professor Joo Jong-Hoon played the students’ camcorders in order.

The camcorder played a scene with a sunny sky and blue sea with parents and nieces laughing.

“Family trip at a resort..... Must’ve been fun.”

The professor gave short comments as he checked the videos.

“You worked hard at voluntary works. Must’ve felt proud.”

“Watching a play at a theatre..... Good for cultural experience.”

It seems like the students spent their vacation very fulfillingly.

Well, at least for recording. And, it was Seo-Yoon's turn.

When it showed Seo-Yoon's vacation life, the students' ability to focus boosted up more than ever.

Bright sunlight came through the window.

Seo-Yoon was sleeping on a bed with a quilt on, but soon raised, rubbing her eyes.

She did not have her make-up on, but with her perfect beauty, not even a hint of sleep layed on her face.

"Woof woff!" a dog that barked with enthusiasm, ran to her arms. The scene of Seo-Yoon patting the dog while holding it in her arms played on the screen.

Perked ears, quick legs, and a frivolously shaking tail. The dog seemed familiar.

It was Momn Boshin, the one Lee Hyun gave her.

Seo-Yoon held a towel on one hand and went into the bathroom. She just took a moment to wash her face, but her face shone as if a halo was behind her! Since nothing special happened over the vacation, she decided to just record her daily life and asked her nurse to film for her.

Seo-Yoon got up in the morning to cook. She took out ingredients to make omelet rice and chicken salad. She brushed her soft hair that came down onto her beautiful shoulders aside and started to cut ingredients.

All scenes were like CF.

The food displaced on the dishes were decorated beautifully like the ones from a very high-class restaurants.

Omelet rice, salad, and an orange juice that were placed very neatly on the white table! She ate with the nurse who was filming for her.

Lee Hyun thought,

‘Why do you cook so tiresomely so early in the morning? Just how much more delicious did you want to eat?’ If it wasn’t for his sister, he just ate simply.

Seo-Yoon’s cooking got better as she made lunches for Lee Hyun, but no one noticed it.

Boshin also ate below the table, and she started to wash dishes after finishing her meal.

Someone amongst the students let out an exclamation of “Wow!” as he watched her wipe a drop of water that splashed onto her forehead as she washed dishes.

It wouldn't be a waste to make a movie from Seo-Yoon waking up, washing her face, cooking, and eating meals. But, Lee Hyun thought differently.

'She only needed half of the detergent that she used..... She splashes too much water as she washes her dishes.' After finishing washing the dishes, she sat on a rocking chair and opened a book.

The title of the book she was reading was "Art Museum Envoy Diary".

It's a book that lets you study about art pieces and artists as you take a glimpse at art museums all over the world.

While the other students thought 'as expected from Seo-Yoon', Lee Hyun, again thought differently.

'It's all just faking.' He thought she was overacting with a camera in front of her! After reading a book, she got into a capsule, played Royal Road, took a walk in a garden, showered, and headed to the bed.

As she lied on her bed, covering herself with a quilt, with the light turned off, the video ended after giving a bit of silent space at the end.

The professor said,

“It was a brilliant art piece that described your daily life in a beautiful way.”

That was something that gave Lee Hyun great shock.

He went through hell of going to Africa and Europe to record, but to think Seo-Yoon would be praised for just filming her normal daily life!

“Next.”

Lee Hyun handed the assistant his video camera with a disappointed face.

They just saw Seo-Yoon’s so no one really looked forward to seeing Lee Hyun’s video.

Actually, it’s not an overstatement to say that most students only wanted to see Seo-Yoon’s.

The travel across Egypt, Africa, and Europe!

Crossing the desert on a four-wheel drive jeep, skydiving on an airplane and a hotel, an autobike, a motor boat, deep sea adventure, and even extreme sports! The Professor commented long after finishing the video.

“As professors give out assignments, there is a range to the

expectation.

But, I never thought there would be a student who would experience such a special vacation!

If I had not given out such an assignment, we would not know about this student, would we? Please give a round of applause to Lee Hyun who experienced such a special travel that no one else could've done!" Some students even trembled.

"As expected from Princess Knight."

"He was amazing at the MT too, you know."

Lee Hyun was not happy as he got the applause.

Because he would've been happier if he could have a normal life like quietly eating at home, feeding animals he raises at the backyard, training at the DoJang, and going into the capsule to hunt.

Seo-Yoon was looking at him with eyes of envy and amazement.

Lee Hyun wasn't so happy to be envied by her. 'I'll spend my winter vacation at home at any cost. There's no way another assignment like this will be given, and if there is, I'll just make a snowman. If I need more things to film, I guess I can just have a snow fight with the neighbor's kids.' Lee Hyun was promising himself to spend his winter vacation only at home.

Other student's recordings were mostly simple and

uninteresting, so Lee Hyun nodded off and ended up sleeping.

Seo-Yoon also was thinking rather than watching. She wanted to travel afar over the winter vacation.

If she could go on a trip with a friend she can trust and rely on, she thought it would be very nice.

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“Ghost ships? If you’re asking about the ship a skeletal captain directs, I am not sure. I think it was going Northeast...”

“He bought a lot of dried fishes from here.”

“He also bought lot of dried apples at a very cheap price. He haggled over prices with amazing skill.”

The 2nd warship of Kingdom Haven that arrived at Iiffia Island had sent out trackers to gather information.

Since the ship carried over 230 users alone, gathering information did not take long.

“There’re not many places he can go to, northeast from here..... If he heads northeast after coming out from Neria Sea, he’ll be headed into a far sea.”

He can go to the southern place after going around the east of Versa Continue, but if that were the case, it would be better to just go through Neria Sea canal.

“Is he trying to hunt for monsters after arriving at the island? Or is he just doing a quest related to sea travel?” He did not understand his intent, but Drinfeld decided to chase after the ghost ship for now.

After going off into the Northeastern Sea, he himself asked sea creatures and birds for the direction the ghost ship went.

And, they arrived at the Planetis Port after chasing after the trace of the ghost ship.

“A hidden port at such a place..... as expected of Weed. All ships, full speed towards the north!” The warships of Haven Kingdom all set sail.

It was a grand view to see each ships set 16 sails.

Colossal war ships headed out to sea, riding on the wind.

Trace the ghost ship! They followed the trace of the ghost ship and headed north of the sea.

The most famous pirate on the sea, Griffith! Over 50 mid-sized sailboats and galleons that he directed were gathered on the Platis Sea.

Pirates must have enough bravery to fight until death even when armies come, and information gathering must be done fast.

They tracked the ships of Haven Kingdom the moment they left their area. “So, the admiral of the Haven Kingdom navy has come out himself, huh.”

Griffith and his pirates only needed to follow after the Haven Kingdom’s ships without much effort.

“So, they looked for even us to hunt down Weed, unsatisfied with only Haven Kingdom’s navy, huh? Now, now. I cannot let them have our prey with our pride as pirates on the line. Let’s go, to hunt the legend of this continent!” Upon hearing Griffith’s words, the pirates yelled loudly.

Pirates fell behind compared to the navy in supplies and equipments. However, they could cover for their lacking power with their numbers.

Through pirates’ secretive information exchange, the man of sea on the Neria Sea gathered under Griffith’s order.

This was a huge gathering for pirates that may happen only once or twice in a year.

Weed hunted at an amazing place commanding undead armies, but there were limits to mobilizing for the quest.

Because undead armies are basically cheap and weak, lots of sacrifices were required whenever fighting against Bollards.

“Not easy to explore.”

Undead armies unconditionally get hostile reactions from monsters.

Because of that, he had to fight without rest.

Now, he even summoned 40 Death Knights.

It was the biggest undead army Weed could make with his level, mana recovery rate, and necromancer skill.

Even so, 30 to 50 undead died whenever fighting against Bollards.

“For now, we have to head to the 7th peak where the Armenia pirates headed to. But, we’ll have to fight at least 20 times against Bollards..... “ Whenever fighting against Bollards, the number of undead reduces tremendously.

Mostly low-level undead dies, but if the number of low-level undead get too low, even Death Knights will die.

“Can’t help, but to keep on moving as we fight against Tairbeth.”

At where 4 Bollards are gathered, AOE curse magic is casted, Death Knights attack, and skeleton mages shoot out magic.

A bunch of ghouls and zombies charged forward, and Deer that was undead-ized to the Bollards! Due to huge attack by undead army, battles were lead to victories, but 23 undead crumbled from burning, never to be summoned again.

Because they fought against Bollard after Bollard, at least 100 undead were unable to be re-summoned.

“At this rate, it’ll be troublesome.”

Weed moved to hunt Tairbeths, but the closer he went to the 7th peak, the number of Bollards increased and now, at least 5 or 6 of them roamed around together.

To add on, based on what he observed when he turned into a crow, even if he passes through Bollards, Warriors of Chaos will appear.

“Can’t be helped. I’ll think about it later, and use all that I can for now.”

Weed took out his last card, Mirror of Eternal Rest.

It's an item related to the Matallost religion; it allows an undead to possess high vitality, mana, and strength.

“There's only 3 left for the durability, so..... I'll have to use it really carefully and give it back before it breaks.”

As soon as he took out the Mirror of Eternal Rest, black and blue energy flowed through Weed.

Ding!

- A hideous Lich uses the Mirror of Eternal Rest

The raised undead's vitality increases by 25%.

Mobility increases by 38%.

They'll use various methods to move. For example, crawling on four feet or jumping off of a wall.

They'll possess deadly poisons.

Resistance increases.

Instinct becomes sharpened.

The undead that dug and hid inside the earth will be able to endure for longer period of time even without necromancer's mana supply.

You can use level 5 undead summoning skill.

You can summon a group of witches that will obey a necromancer.

Necromancer skill effect increases by 55%.

Able to use special skills.

Grim grave, Ghost Cry in Mid of Night, Acid Breath, Self Destruction of Anguish, Vitality Transfer.

- Not much of the durability of the Mirror of Eternal Rest is left.

Weed's vitality, mana, and wisdom also increased by a lot. His intelligence and wisdom alone increased by 300, and his maximum mana doubled.

“For now, rest everyone.”

Weed stopped all mana supplies to the undead, and disabled undead summon magic.

Then, zombies, ghouls, skeleton, and Death Knights all collapsed onto the ground.

The only ones left were Death Knight Van Hawk and Geuminyi

“Rise again. I will save you from the tortures at the bottom of the hell. I will give you power, enough to rule the world. Summon Death Knight!”

He raised at least 50 Death Knights using the skeletons that turned back into corpses.

Originally, real Death Knights should only be raised using a knight's corpse.

The effect is bigger if a corrupt, greedy, and unjust knight's corpse is used to summon a Death Knight.

A penalty was put on to the Death Knights as they were raised using the bones that were originally of beasts.

Still, the magenta aura that flows on their bodies!

- With necromancer's skill strengthened, the Death Knights' strength and vitality also increased.

“At least level 270.”

Weed was very satisfied even with this much.

If their levels were 270, then they were stronger than most Death Knights.

Currently, necromancers are praised by majority, but it is not invincible. While you can bring around undead armies, the quality of each individual units sucked.

It is most suited for fast leveling up, mass production, and mass consumption.

“We want to know if you have the right to order us.”

The summoned Death Knights asked him.

To obtain their loyalty, he must prove his power and leadership.

Instead of inconveniently talking lots, he took out the Royal Seal of Arpen Kingdom.

“Authority of the Emperor.”

Luminosity that gently shone from the crystal skull!

- You have used the Authority of the Emperor.

When a lord or a king uses it, your diplomacy skill will temporarily increase.

You can suppress a citizen's objection with your authority.

Knights and nobles will follow any orders.

Increases loyalty of commoners.

Leadership increased by 150%.

Charisma increased by 150%.

Stats irrelevant to battle will temporarily increase by 40.

Until you directly get involved in a battle, the Authority of the Emperor will be maintained.

If you battle without cancelling the skill, the effect of the Authority of the Emperor will continually decrease until its owner gets changed.

An emperor does not fight in front of the army!

The Death Knights, as the necessary condition to make full use of the Authority of Emperor was fulfilled, kneeled.

“We will follow your order.”

For now, he got the promise of loyalty, so they won't betray him easily. Plus, since he, the lord of undead, raised them himself, the basic process was already done.

Weed showed a satisfied smile and cancelled the skill.

“Cancel the Authority of the Emperor!” The aura that decorated the crystal skull slowly disappeared.

“If I walk around the town under that state, it will be pretty useful.”

Weed raised more types of undead using Undead Rise. Undead were now a lot stronger and had their levels raised from 30% to 40% compared to before.

“Let's go!” Weed ordered the undead to go toward the Bollards.

“Death Knights, mark one for each. Undead, focus on supporting them!” Ghouls and zombies got the mission of staying by Weed.

Skeleton mages used magic attacks, and Geuminyi shot arrows.

With Death Knights becoming the main forces, 5 Bollards could be caught with only minor damage.

There were times when Death Knights were in danger, but Weed gave them his vitality at the last moment.

“Now this is more like hunting!” Weed used Bollards’ corpses to summon horses.

The horse of terror that Death Knights can ride on!

After hunting Tairbeths, he summoned low-level undead to slow down monsters for a bit, and after hunting Bollards, he increased the number of Death Knights and witches.

He was on the stage where he must mind not only the quantity, but quality as well. As Derald’s witches were summoned, the magic used in battle varied more, and its power increased as well. The overall strength of Weed’s undead army was much higher than before.

“Charge!” Weed marched on saving as much time as possible before the durability of the Mirror of Eternal Rest ran out.

As he hunted Bollards, the overall number of undead did not decrease by much. As there were more corpses raised using Bollards, there weren’t much losses.

“Let bones grow and cover the body. Bone Armor!” With enough

supplies of corpses, he made bone armors with magic for Death Knights.

They didn't have much resistance or defence, but Death Knights could fight more easily with that poor armor.

“Corpses stacking and stacking, there is no lifeform existing here. Only the tombs of corpses made by time exists. Tomb of Deceased!” Tombstones raised where Weed battled.

It was a support magic that increases necromancer skills at a limited area and undead' recovery rate.

Finally, he broke through the defense line of Bollards and arrived at where the Legacy of Sculptors were which could only be viewed when Weed transformed into a crow.

The cracked earth showed even 300 meters below, and lava flowed there. “Walk with caution.”

Weed fought monsters, avoiding the cracks.

Las Phalanx's Evil Spirit, Daebans' spirit, and lost angry barbarians! “It seems it's better to avoid evil spirits as much as possible.”

They were weaker than Tairbeths, but it's important for necromancers to leave corpses behind after battles. He avoided Las Phalanx's Evil Spirit or Daeban's Spirit and fought with

barbarians.

The barbarians fought against Death Knights with equal strength, but they could not fight equally with Weed's curses and witches attacks.

If you haven't hunted monsters with overwhelming numbers, you won't understand the feeling. He meditated at the Tower of Ruins for a moment to recover his mana to the max.

Now came the most difficult barrier, the Warriors of Chaos.

The Warriors of Chaos that hunts Bollards with a snort. If he can't pass through them, he won't be able to arrive at where the Armenia pirates are. "Kill them!" The undead army poured toward the Warriors of Chaos.

There were 8 Warriors of Chaos! Their levels are unknown.

"Rotten corpses, be cleansed with pure fire."

The Warriors of Chaos swung their axe and whips toward the undead army. At the moment when the whip touched them, weak ones like zombie, ghoul, and skeleton melted from the high temperature fire.

It was a terrifying attack.

Even Van Hawk resisted against the joint attacks of three Warriors of Chaos for about 2 minutes and was finally called back. Even Death Knights were cruelly crushed to powders by the Warriors of Chaos.

Anyway, it was when Weed tried to cast a curse magic upon seeing undead get swept away. Whether they had to run or fight, cursing the opponent is very advantageous.

“Blink.”

The Warriors of Chaos flashed here and there. As they used short distance teleportation, they were massacring witches and Death Knights.

They were fast to the point where Weed could not dare to cast AOE curse magic. While he hesitated for a moment, the number of undead rapidly reduced.

“Moouoo!” Yellowy hurriedly cried and ran.

“Let’s run, master.” Weed agreed very much.

“Geuminyi run!”

At times like this, the fast Geuminyi even let out Wings of Light to run! When he counted the units later, only about 7 zombies that looks like they’re about time to be buried, 2 Death Knights, and 10 skeleton were all that were left.

Even if the undead fought in however way they wanted without the necromancer's order after Weed ran away, this was horrible.

Compared to that, the 8 Warriors of Chaos who were chewing on Daebet's meat on the horizon looked fine.

"This won't do."

Weed had to increase the number of undead again.

At where the Legacy of Sculptures was, he hunted Tairbeths and Bollards. And when there were more undead, he tried again.

"We've come for revenge. Kill them all!"

He gathered undead and tried two more times against the Warriors of Chaos, but he could only hunt 1 with overly focused attacks. Overall, it was a failure! Even when he hunted down 1 Warrior of Chaos, Weed used Undead Rise.

When he did that, other Warriors of Chaos went berserk too much, so even his life was on the line. He couldn't help but retreat.

"There's too much gap in the levels, so even if I get reborn, it's almost impossible."

Even if Weed is resurrected with the Power to Resist Death, it

will only increase the number of deaths to the count.

It will also cause a huge drop to the skill mastery, but he can't stop fighting either.

Weed gathered as many of his undead army as possible.

“If I just kill 3 more and curse them, there's a chance of winning.”

However, they moved too fast to cast curse on them.

With the undead army rapidly decreasing, he again retreated! At the fourth battle, he had to return once again, only after losing his undead army.

If he did not have the undead army as a necromancer, Weed, Yellowy, or Geuminyi would've died.

It's the necromancer that's praised as the best jobs ever existing..... Plus, since a necromancer can order around an undead army by himself, necromancers are by far the best fighters as individuals.

Of course, they'd buy mercenaries with lot of money, but when looking at only levels and skills, the best battle job is necromancer.

It's just it could be different if the level became very high and skill mastery almost at the master level.

Necromancers mostly used cheap undead.

There are high-level undead you can make like the bone dragon through specific methods, but even those undead are not invincible.

Swordmasters who have high attack and defence will beat up those undead, and if they are equipped well, they won't die easily either.

High-level magic of magicians whose skill masteries are hard to raise is thought to have tremendous power.

Anyway, even the necromancer, so-far called best job, could not roam around freely on Las Phalanx.

Rather than fighting against the Warrior of Chaos, Weed decided to focus on hunting with the undead army.

For the next 10 days, he leveled up 5 times.

- Durability of the Mirror of Eternal Rest became 1.

In the end, the durability of the Mirror of Eternal Rest reached its limit, so he put it into his backpack before it broke.

- Effects of the Mirror of the Eternal Rest disappears.

The undead and their stats changed back. Their max mana and recovery rate dropped as well.

Some undead that do not get controlled by the necromancer roams around however they like and get destroyed by falling into the crevices or by monsters.

He cannot use level 5 undead summon skill anymore, but he could maintain the witches he previously summoned.

“I’ll have to hunt for Tairbeths or Bollards again.”

Weed fell in deep thoughts.

Necromancer had his leadership and charisma raised at all times. Still, it would be better to turn back into sculptor to raise various skill masteries, endurance, and patience.

If he makes at least 10 sculptures and give them life, it wouldn’t be so bad to hunt Daebit even if it wouldn’t be quite like now. While Weed was troubled, someone approached from afar.

“I’m pretty sure monsters don’t come here.”

Over the horizon, a man with a pale face and black cape, and an unbelievably beautiful girl was walking toward him.

The abandoned land, Las Phalanx. The two who walked towards the place where the undead were.

“Were there other users who were exploring this region? That girl sure is pretty like Seo-Yoon.”

Weed couldn't understand that there could be a girl as pretty as Seo-Yoon. If there were at least 5 of such beauties, he felt like suicide rates all over the world would decrease tremendously.

“Men especially won't suicide.”

Looking at her from afar will make them burn with happiness of being alive and fill them with the motivation to live after all.

Savior from despair. Even the neets who do not step out from their room will run outside if they see Seo-Yoon through the window.

Death Knight Hawk also commented from the side.

“The black clothes, tall height, and pale face is just like Tori, Master.”

“Yeah, he sure looks like him.”

As Weed watched them with the undead army, the two walked toward them.

It's been long since they last saw each other after fighting against the bone dragon and because their equipments changed, they didn't recognized them easily. But, when their face came closer to the point they could see their face clearly, they were, in fact, Seo-Yoon and Torido.

The navy of Haven Kingdom Drinfeld followed exactly how the ghost ship sailed.

Using what sea creatures they witnessed, he arrived at the Deron Sea.

“Amazing. I heard he doesn't know much about the sea, so how did he travel so far?”

Unlike what he expected, seeing Weed travel such a long distance, Drinfeld adjusted his opinion of Weed.

Weed came even to the Area of Aurora and Glacier of Deron Sea.

“Just where is the destination for the quest to make him travel so far?” The warships had to stop several times to resupply for food and rest.

Aside from Drinfeld, users of Haven Kingdom learned fishing skills previously. You can say it's a must-have skill for a man of sea, but it wasn't enough to feed the whole fleet.

“Captain, it’s cold!” As they sailed through glacier areas, many unprepared sailors caught the flu.

“I never thought he’d really come to the Deron Sea. The damage to the crewman will be huge.”

Drinpelt did not expect to travel such a long distance leading the navy of Haven Kingdom. If there was to be any damage to the ships or crewmen of the Haven Kingdom, he would have to take all the responsibility for them.

He needed periodic results to keep his authority, but if he doesn’t act carefully, he’ll be blamed for everything.

The vice captain opened his mouth worriedly.

“We can turn back now. Should we give up on tracking down Weed and return?” Drinfeld shook his head. “No, it is too late to turn back when we are already all the way here. Proceed through.”

Harben Kingdom navy passed through the glacier area. During the process, 273 of the crewmen had died.

It was mostly the crew members who had light clothing to adjust the sail and observe the stars.

If he had not changed their direction upon hearing that the path

the ghost ship took changed because of the sea creatures, the damage would have tremendously increased.

‘Just where is he heading.....’ Various conjectures and suspicion arose amongst the users of Haven Kingdom and Drinfeld.

“Did he find some treasure island? Like, some place covered with gold all over the place with high graded weapons.”

“That treasure that all users of sea dream of?”

“I think he’s looking for a sunken ship full of gems rather than a treasure island.”

“It’s Weed we’re talking about, so maybe he’s chasing after some legend of Deron Sea. Something priceless like legendary weapons or a crown covered with gems.”

“Let’s head anywhere!” Their enthusiasm ran high. The more they chased after Weed, the harsher their path became, and they believed that a worthy price was waiting for them.

The 2nd division warships that were full of simplified ships, for profit of the kingdom were often attacked when meeting ships of other kingdoms.

They were chasing after Weed, full of desire to take his equipment and even his quest.

The merchants of central continent who visited Morata had many complaints.

“The transit duty was only 3% before, so why was it raised to 5%?”

“Can he really just raise taxes like this just because he’s the lord?” The merchants gathered and sent in complaints, but they couldn’t get any positive support from Morata’s users.

5% for transit tax was rather cheap. In the Central Continent, 15%, 20%, and even 35% for the transit tax were often the case.

Plus, the transit tax was not for Morata merchants, but only for the merchants of other districts to pay. It was something for Morata merchants to welcome, so they did not support them.

“I can’t understand how he can raise taxes like this.”

“There’s limit to looking down on us. Does the lord of Morata not know who’s behind us? It’s the Merchant Union!” The merchants gathered and caused an uproar. Then, someone shouted.

“We shouldn’t talk amongst ourselves like this. Let’s go to the lord’s castle.”

“Let’s go and talk to him!” The merchants crowded to the lord’s castle. Of course, they were doing this while knowing fully well that the lord of Morata, Weed, was absent.

They complained to the guards.

“To suddenly raise transit tax like this. How could you do this?!”

“We came to meet the one responsible for this.”

The fame and authority of the Central Continent merchants were outrageous.

The guards politely brought them to the department that was in charge of the commerce inside the lord’s castle.

“This is the Department of Commerce where they look out for the merchants staying at Morata.”

Merchants bashed in. But, the floor was covered with straws, and female cows were looking after calves.

“Who the hell decorated the Department of Commerce like this?! Where’s the person in charge?!”

Next to the feeder in the Department of Commerce, there was a nameplate.

Representative of Morata Commerce - Yellowy

Yellowy was currently absent.

“We shouldn’t stand here like this. Don’t we have to complain to the person in charge of transit tax?”

“That would be the one to talk to.”

The merchants came out again and looked for the Department of Finance, but Geuminyi wasn’t present either. And, Wyverns were the ones who had the seat of the 1st deputy head of taxing! Wyverns sat at the top of the towers and sometimes revisited Morata.

Because of that, it was hard to meet Wyverns either.

The merchants tried to use their fame and conversational skill to persuade, but there was no one to persuade. Of course, it was a wonder if Wyverns would actually be patient enough to listen to humans talk.

“To think that all of the people in charge are absent... then how about meeting other directors of Morata? We’ll be able to sway them a bit about Morata’s government.”

“I agree.”

The representative of the merchants came out from the Department of Finance and went to the Department of Military.

Due to repairing and improving the lord's castle, new departments formed, and there were directors for each of them.

The director of the Department of Military - Bingryong, Phoenix - hunting

Weed gave the seats to the sculpture lifeforms to gain practical dictatorship. Because of that, it was impossible for the merchants to lobby or persuade to pressure the government to change.

This was the true dictatorship! Later, the knights or merchants who stacked up contribution may be promoted into higher places, but currently, Weed ruled with absolute power.

Book 20: Inferno Dungeon

Chapter 1: Emotional Reunion

Commanding a ghost ship, Weed arrived at Las Phalanx and was hunting with undead.

Along with the necessary tracking of the Armenian Pirates, he also had to find the acclaimed sculpture material, Helium.

However, due to the high level monsters, he was forced to use any means necessary to survive!

In this place, Seoyoon appeared before Weed.

‘How did she come here?’

The sudden emergence of Seoyoon made Weed wary.

Having changed into the Lich species, his appearance was that of a modified skeleton and there was no law against unexpected attacks.

However, Seoyoon quietly met his eyes.

There was not the slightest intent to attack.

Weed’s appearance had turned into a skeleton and there were many undead around, but he was immediately recognizable thanks to Death Knight Van Hawk.

‘At last we meet again.’

Seoyoon pushed through the undead while walking with a limp.

‘You’re hurt quite a lot.’

There was a slight bit of compassion in Weed’s eyes.

Even with the pretense, her status was not good.

In order to meet Weed in Las Phalanx, she fought countless life threatening battles. Her health was just barely over 7 percent.

Severe injuries, other users in fear of getting killed and wasting their lives would relax until they recovered.

However, Berserker Seoyoon continued the brutal fight to find Weed.

“Show me where your wounds are.”

After a long time, Weed decided to exert his Cold Bandages skill.

He properly applied the herbs and meticulously wrapped her wounds with bandages.

Weed’s Cold Bandages skill was at a level where as long as you

were alive, it would suppress the aggravation of injuries and recover health to its maximum.

After the bandaging, unless you take drastic action such as combat or climbing, there would be no side effects.

“Tell me if there are any painful areas.”

Having been treated by Weed, Seoyoon also took off her helmet and armor and gave it to him as accustomed.

She took off the protruding equipment she was wearing until she was lightly dressed in leather armor.

“Keuheum.”

Weed cleared his throat as he received the armor.

He was simply entrusted to repair the armor, but obviously due to some of the items she was wearing, he was extremely curious.

Nonchalantly pretending, Weed gave an excuse.

“Well, let me check the information to repair it? To repair equipment, we need to know things such as what materials were used and how much durability there is.”

He was wearing armor received from the Church of Freya forged with Mithril by a famous dwarven blacksmith, Faith Talrokeuui Armor.

He was very proud of the armor he obtained.

“Identify.”

Mad Warrior’s Half Plate:

Durability 58/190.

Defense 167

The magical armor of the executioner of war once known as Bain.
Armor of unknown origins. Material is also unknown.
High wizards inscribed protection magic into it.

Lightweight and agile, the optimal armor for combat.

The longer it is worn to fight, the more strength and stamina it gives to the owner.

However, after the battle, sudden loss in physical strength will occur.

Wearing it for a long time causes tears to flow naturally, thus it also has the nickname, Sad Warrior’s Half Plate.

Restrictions:

Level 420

Strength 950

Berserker only

Options:

+75 Strength

+98 Agility

Magic Defense +59

Inhibits elemental magic damage.

During long lasting combat, Berserker characteristics double.

Maximum strength increases by 45%, stamina increases by 45%. Increased strength and stamina are maintained until the battle ends and more than 10 minutes of rest.

Fame -1500

Morality -30

Notoriety +690

Monsters are overwhelmed by fear.

Whenever you hunt a monster, a certain amount of mana is restored.

At night, you will occasionally shed tears in solitude.

When you cry, health and strength increase by 10%.

Laughter came from Weed.

“Heoheoheo.”

In all aspects it was flawless compared to the Faith Talrokeuui Armor.

‘Unlike the Faith Talrokeuui Armor that needlessly raises faith, charm and fame, this superior armor increases strength and stamina. Although fame and morality decrease and notoriety increases, that’s irrelevant.’

The armor has excellent ability to protect the core.

While protecting the owner, the armor gives you increasing strength and stamina as you go on!

Even the helmet, leather armor, boots and belt equipment Seoyoon was wearing were all unique items.

After being separated from Weed, the Berserker hunted a colossal amount while tirelessly raising her level.

As a result, almost all of the old worn equipment was newly replaced.

Every time Weed identified the remaining items, he felt regret and intense temptation occurred.

‘Shall I make away with it?’

If he could find a buyer and earn a fortune, he would hand the

armor over without hesitation!

At the moment he was going to sneak the armor into his backpack, he stumbled at Seoyoon's clearly staring eyes.

‘But you know my house, wouldn't be able to escape.’

Weed's tears faded as he repaired.

‘Farewell items.’

Putting plenty of sad feelings into it, he took advantage of his armor polishing skill, returning glittering light to it as if it were new.

“It works fine now, wear it.”

At the time he returned the armor to Seoyoon, the unspoken pretense of wanting to eat occurred.

It was an obviously hungry face.

“Don't be mistaken by my current appearance.”

Weed lightly gestured. Then a tremendous gathering of the undead army!

As a Lich Necromancer, he used an undead army as his subordinates.

The period of the land's divine blessing passed, as well as the advantage of the Copper Plate of Rest, severely dropping the quality of the undead.

There were many lesser undead such as ghouls and zombies but rather than the amount, it was the quality that worried him.

"I did not want to do this. But people have to have a conscience. After saving a man from drowning, get a four month regular pool membership, what's the difference."

Weed muttered in an evil tone as the undead assembled.

Demonstration of force.

Weed was overwhelmed by Seoyoon's gaze and shrank back.

The intent of the scheme was to exude a sense of power.

It was a story every man faces somewhere along the way.

However, the new relationship was considered.

Suddenly, he yielded to the large difference between him and Seoyoon.

‘Sad Warrior’s Half Plate, its level requirement is 420.’

Due to the blacksmith skill, Weed was free from the job and level restrictions.

Only now did he notice the report on the armor.

The fact that Seoyoon’s level was honestly over 420!

For Weed, in addition to the significant level difference, he was well acquainted with her fearsome combat abilities.

Weed shook his head as if to deny the reality in front of him.

‘I’ve grown stronger through the sculptor’s heritage!’

But there was no guarantee that Seoyoon did not see the sculptor’s heritage either.

Decisively, the servants of Necromancers are incredibly strong.

Precious corpses are enhanced through the augmentation of darkness into undead.

Compared to the undead army, it is not an exaggeration to say that the physical strength of Necromancers is extremely weak.

It was justification to avoid being beaten by her.

If there was a problem with Seoyoon, raise his hands before feeling her blade.

“What kind of dish do you want? You want to eat sipeong? I made bibimbap in the past, fairly good, fresh sashimi also tastes nice. I have separately packed ingredients. Are you hungry? I’ll make it now, just wait a minute.”

Weed calmly motioned the undead to go back.

After becoming a Lich, he did not need to cook, but to draw out the expressions that remained buried in Seoyoon, he was compelled to.

Using the fish he caught aboard the ship until he arrived at Las Phalanx and the advanced ingredients acquired through hunting, he started cooking.

Drinfeld led the Haven Kingdom’s fleet northward through the freezing river.

As the mist opened the way, the mystical scenery of a rainbow ascended along the river.

“As it stands, where do you think we’ll arrive at?”

Several users in the fleet were speculating while suppressing their excitement and calmly looked forward.

Since it was an incredibly distant voyage of the Haven Kingdom, naturally they were nervous.

To the left and the right, monsters in the glacier region were also very intimidating.

Then they heard the sound of people shouting from the glacier region.

“Please save us!”

“Rescue us please!”

Drinfeld heard the commotion and went up to the deck.

“What’s going on?”

“There are castaways.”

The lieutenant’s report contained confirmation through the telescope, near the river Seointeu, Fractal and Bordomir were waving.

“Who are those guys?”

“I don’t know. How did they get here?”

“We’ll figure it out once we take them for a ride.”

“Set the ship’s anchor into the river!”

The flagship of the Haven Kingdom’s fleet, Eleanor Kane’s Great Ark stopped at the river and Seointeu, Fractal and Bordomir climbed up the ladder.

Unable to flee, they were confronted by the Haven Kingdom’s handpicked people with their swords drawn.

“Tell me how you came here.”

Seointeu stealthily noticed who he was and decided to tell the truth.

Haven Kingdom’s fleet was equal to a war god of the sea because of Drinfeld.

“We are innocent sailors of Becky Ninh. I am Seointeu and my two friends are Fractal and Bordomir.”

Then one of the lieutenants whispered Drinfeld.

-The 3 Mad Sharks of Becky Ninh. Plainly put, they are quite the bad guys.

“We were just drinking in a bar when an incredibly beautiful woman appeared. Wouldn’t you have been tempted? After we were

enticed to go over there, we signed a voyage contract with a Lich Captain, so we couldn't run away and came all the way here. We labored away but he threw us the cold shoulder and abandoned us here all alone."

From the rambling stories, it was concluded that the 3 Mad Sharks arrived at this place through Weed.

The lieutenant asked curiously.

"He really had the appearance of a Lich?"

"Yes, I'm sure. He used undead summoning magic. He was the captain of a ghost ship."

"How were you thrown away and abandoned all alone?"

"We were momentarily caught off guard and the ship sailed off into that direction. We really didn't know he acquired the sufficient sailing skill necessary for sailing a ghost ship. By then, we lost track of the back of his head, very cunning."

"The pirates we were following disappeared into Las Phalanx, one of the 10 restricted zones."

Drinfeld received information through the 3 Mad Sharks.

At that moment, the faintly veiled destination began to clearly identify itself.

‘Must be the difficulty of the S-class quest.’

The lieutenant continued to ask.

“How far until we reach Las Phalanx?”

“There’s still some degree of sailing left. The ocean currents to reach the harbor of Las Phalanx in the northern seas should be well marked on the navigational charts.”

“From here to Las Phalanx, how much longer?”

“Almost there. The remaining distance shouldn’t take more than a day I think.”

Drinfeld’s face severely stiffened.

It was clear that Weed had already landed in Las Phalanx.

He wondered if he should follow him all the way to Las Phalanx, one of the 10 restricted zones.

‘Lich, he will be using Necromancer magic. In addition, the sailing skills might be related to some special quest.’

Rather than Weed, Drinfeld was more concerned about Las Phalanx itself.

Dragging the entire fleet and entering one of the 10 restricted zones, no matter what the result, there would be tremendous damage.

Due to that fact it was not an easy choice.

However, having traveled such far a distance, they could not return without having something to show for it.

Seointeu muttered.

“But what is that Lich’s identity for the Haven Kingdom’s fleet to come all this way for? So far, a high level necromancer presiding over a ghost ship, the only one relevant, is it really Weed? Somehow, the more I think about it, the more it seems to be true.”

Before the fleet heard the words Las Phalanx, they had an opportunity to return, but the fact that they were following Weed and the 3 Mad Sharks of Becky Ninh was now known.

‘Track him to the end.’

Drinfeld decided to go to Las Phalanx.

“Now get off.”

“Yes? We told you everything we know to the fullest extent. Don’t do this. Will you please take us back to Becky Ninh?”

“If you don’t want to die right now, get off!”

Drinfeld headed to Las Phalanx as the 3 Mad Sharks continued to be abandoned in the glacier region.

On the Royal Road bulletin board, an exciting article and movie came up.

Title: Behold the great adventures of the Mad Sharks of Becky Ninh!

In their own way, those users had built up notoriety in the seas.

Plenty of people knew, but still, as if to reflect the popularity of Royal Road, the initial number of queries easily beat 300. Users with even the slightest degree of curiosity clicked on the title.

We are very capable sailors from Becky Ninh. Having learned of our skills, God of War Weed-nim asked for us. Seointeu, Fractal and Bordomir.

Us three friends readily accepted his proposal, his boat ... Don’t be surprised keuheuheuheu.

We went out to sea driving an old ghost ship. Working aboard were ghost sailors, God of War Weed-nim was a Lich Necromancer.

Later we learned that in fact, Weed had been staying on Yipiah Island for a while and we quite enjoyed the honor of meeting him directly in person.

The destination of our long voyage was somewhere to the north.

One of Versailles Continent's 10 restricted zones! Weed had a quest in Las Phalanx.

As you read the text, a movie was streaming.

Fractal edited the video directly and showed the scenes from the recruitment at the pub to Lich Weed's appearance and the voyage of the ghost ship.

Avoiding the glaciers, the voyage entered the freezing river. In the white snow fields and glacier region, monsters could be seen.

We believed Weed's quest would succeed.

Then dirty Haven Kingdom's fleet and Drinfeld!

We were totally abandoned like rice to all the monsters from Las Phalanx.

PS. Weed-nim, we will depend on you for a ride when you go back to the continent.

The movie was perfect until the arrival of the Haven Kingdom's fleet. Weed's adventure in Las Phalanx and the Haven Kingdom's

fleet following behind!

The thread uploaded by the Mad Sharks of Becky Ninh resulted in an explosion of players posting articles referencing it on KMC media station's message board.

-When is the broadcast of Weed's adventure in Las Phalanx scheduled? Are you organizing a special close up again?

-Please announce a newsflash as soon as Weed-nim's quest ends. And let's not forget broadcasting it immediately. If you pointlessly delay the broadcast, I'll never watch KMC media again.

-Can you not start broadcasting immediately right now? First of all, I at least want to see Las Phalanx.

-How is Weed doing there? Don't tell me he already solved the quest.

Necromancers desperately wanted to see action scenes in Las Phalanx.

Weed and Tori awkwardly greeted each other at their reunion.

Once suffering at the end of a master and servant relationship until granting passage to the vampire kingdom of Todum and

retrieving his freedom was the Vampire Lord.

“It’s been a while Tori.”

“Yes indeed Weed.”

“Your words are shorter.”

“Because I don’t feel the need to lengthen them.”

“That’s cruel, for old times’ sake.”

“Even the hateful feelings have long since disappeared.”

“During my absence, I wondered if you were doing well.”

“Lived better without you, don’t worry.”

Tori coldly confronted Weed with a distinctively arrogant look.

He completely escaped Weed’s charisma and dominating ability from the past master and servant relationship due to the hatred he bore for the humiliating discipline.

In the first place, because of Tori’s illustrious pride, he would not follow commands from anyone other than women.

Weed was also in a bad mood, but he had already considered this occurrence as something inevitable.

Although not expecting anything in the slightest from his hollow words, he tried talking to Seoyoon.

“Please pass me Tori?”

“.....”

“I’ll give you 1 chicken.”

Bargaining with 1 chicken, but Seoyoon shook her head.

It seemed hardly possible that she would consent.

Seoyoon then wrote on the ground with her sword.

1 rabbit.

When visiting Weed’s home, she had seen with her eyes the young rabbits that popped out, the relaxing feeling still lingered.

“I’ll give you a rabbit?”

Coming from Seoyoon’s neck, the Necklace of Black Life that sealed Tori was handed over.

-You have received the Necklace of Black Life.

Ownership of the Vampire Lord Tori of the True Blood vampire clan has been transferred.

1 rabbit to restore the master and servant relationship of the past!

Weed considered what he said as half a joke, but he was amazed that she really gave him the necklace.

However, nothing could compare to Tori's shock.

“Ah

His point fangs visible, he was unable to shut his mouth.

Dark clouds gathered over the True Blood vampire clan at that moment.

And in accordance with the changing of masters, mental training was initiated.

Efficient corporal punishment learning that surpasses the ultimate punishment learning of talented instructors of expensive private education.

“Look, you realize I'm going to have to do something appropriate. You will be hit, that's how life works, not a big deal. Once you have been broken, you will see enlightenment on how to roughly adapt and learn how to live after losing.”

The result of the mental training was revealed to be intact.

“To

“Yes!”

“To.”

“Just say the word master.”

“Hey Tori, your shoulders are awfully sore. It seems you have been hit too much. Entirely your fault.”

Peobeobeobeobeok!

Heraim fencing, 15 chain combo!

Since transforming into a skeleton, an essential part of his strength came from striking only vital points with his pincer like hand.

Usually familiarizing behavior with domination is difficult.

“I should have beaten you on the spot. If you strike them at an early age, they’ll remember for a lifetime. The importance of corporal punishment at an early stage, that old saying is not wrong. Look at how punctual and responsive Van Hawk is. My level was just a little bit higher than Van Hawk’s and his beating was still incomplete, but he told me he recognized me as his master and didn’t even inquire about preferential treatment

Receiving praise, the Death Knight coolly held up his head as he stood there.

After warming up, Tori’s beating reached the point where he illustrated a carcass.

“Hopefully you will be smarter next time. From now on, if you listen to my words closely, occasionally you will be beaten up less.”

In this way the mental training finished and Seoyoon joined the hunt.

Weed first firmly commanded.

“Here you will do as I tell you. I’m going to give the undead the role of the shield. It’s dangerous because there are a lot of monsters so wait until they are weakened from the battle and deliver the final strike.”

“.....”

Without having answered if she understood or not, Seoyoon simply stared at his face.

“Let’s hunt, starting with a group of Tairbeths. You two start first.”

Weed, Van Hawk and Tori observed from the shadow of a rock. Then a gathering of Tairbeths!

Van Hawk and Tori fearlessly fought among the undead. As the Tairbeths surrounded the perimeter, Witches and Skeleton Mages intervened by hurling magic attacks.

Although the Tairbeths flew about irregularly and dizzily like butterflies, they could not resist the concentrated attacks and

moments later 1 of the creatures died. Seeing that it was an easy battle, Seoyoon returned without pulling out her sword.

“Hmm, with the addition of Tori, it’s by far easier.”

As expected of a vampire, Tori’s health and damage were extremely high.

Severing enemies into pieces with nails or attacking with magic, as well as using illusionary magic to speed up the hunt.

Facing the silently resting Seoyoon, Weed said.

“Don’t worry too much, because you’ll be protected by the undead. Wandering all alone in Las Phalanx must have been difficult right? From now on, you can believe in me.”

“.....”

Seoyoon only lightly nodded.

She believed the feeling she got from Weed was that she could rely on him.

‘As a woman, quite possibly she’s more timid. Indeed, with all the grotesque monsters in Las Phalanx, it’s bound to be scary.’

Weed continued to fight while chanting the mantra.

Curse magic, summon undead and corpse explosion!

Utilizing a variety of magic while hunting Tairbets, he increased his experience and loot.

Seoyoon in the meantime though just stood near Weed.

“If the damage is to this extent, we can even hunt a group of 5 Bollards.”

Weed assessed the situation and chose a certain eradication method. With the return of Tori, he could proceed with more drastic hunting.

“Van Hawk and Tori, take the lead!”

Leading the undead army, they rushed to the place where 5 Bollards gathered.

A fight occurred against the black bodied, fire emitting Bollards.

Under their orders, Van Hawk took one, Tori took two and the undead assaulted the rest as a group.

“Concentrate attacks on one monster as soon as possible and shorten the duration of the battle, that’s the only way to reduce the damage to a minimum.”

The Bollards released fire into the surroundings, destroying lesser undead instantly.

General skeletons or zombies could not even touch, but by sending them, Skeleton Mages were granted peace of mind to use their magic.

The loss of undead was large for a short period of time, but it was able to reduce the damage across the entire war.

“Attack!”

The undead walked one after another beyond the ridge.

Van Hawk and Tori rushed to take care of their respective appointed enemies as the Skeleton Mages cast their magic to attack the remaining two.

Skeleton Archers also shot arrows as support.

However, Seoyoon ran like the wind toward the two Bollards.

Weed hastily warned.

“Danger! Bollards are much stronger than the Tairbets. Even with the undead that’s reckless

At that time, Seoyoon gathered dark bloody aura into her sword and swung it toward the two Bollards.

Kaeaeaeng!

Kaeng!

The Bollards made never before heard sounds as they rolled on the ground, their bodies trembling.

When Weed fought with the undead, they never displayed this sort of behavior.

After a single hit from Seoyoon's sword, they fell into a state of confusion.

‘How much damage would be needed for the Bollards to fall into this stunned state? Even if you hit a vital point to stun them, you would need to reduce at least 20% or more of their health at once.’

While Weed was astonished, Seoyoon continued casting her attack skills and swinging her sword.

Different from Weed's method of fighting that kept in mind defense while using a combination of several attacks.

It did not identify the opponent's behavior or the weak areas of the defense.

Characteristically of a Berserker, she collected immense power and burst into intensely damaging continuous attacks.

A rapid, extreme and unmatched assault.

Death of a Bollard!

The other one was stuck in confusion whilst trying to recover from the large injury inflicted by Seoyoon's unrelenting attack.

Furthermore, the eyes of Berserkers have a very intense atrophy effect on monsters.

Seoyoon's unstoppable attack literally slaughtered the Bollards.

Once she started moving, she never stopped.

Tori in the meantime dealt with a Bollard by wildly launching his skills.

For Berserkers that jump into battle, there is nothing known as 'moderation'. Even monsters at far lower levels than them were overwhelmingly beaten and hunted to the best of their abilities.

A quickly recovering job that fought endlessly without sparing any health or mana, the battles of Berserkers were indeed overwhelming!

Weed hunted quickly in hopes of conserving his undead army. In addition, he had to look and see if there were any surviving

Bollards. It was likely to become dangerous with even one of them. Therefore, he slightly acknowledged Seoyoon's attack.

Seoyoon crossed the battlefield of joy and sorrow toward Weed.

‘Now that Seoyoon and Tori have joined, we can overcome the Chaos Warriors for the quest and might even be able to find the map of unexpected sculpting.’

After hunting 3 Bollards, Seoyoon inadvertently looked at Weed. It was the same instinctive behavior you would see from a child that wanted to receive praise from his mother.

Weed's jaw fell and his mouth spread into a forced smile.

“Well done Seoyoon. There is some hoedeopbap left from earlier, do you want to eat a little more? Oh, I will drop off the rabbit after I make it clean with a bath.”

Chapter 2: The Emergence Of Uninvited Guests

With Seoyoon and Tori in the lineup, Bollards were no longer a threat. Whenever a battle was fought, the undead army was significantly reduced, but with the help of the two, Bollards became so easy to hunt.

Weed's power more than doubled in level.

‘No tough guys eh? Even though the scale of the undead grows, the power available to concentrate on battle is limited.’

Weed ordered the last bastion of Ghouls, Zombies and Skeleton Knights to simply follow because they were not of much practical help.

‘Rather I would have preferred Skeleton Mages for an increase in ranged attacks.’

With Seoyoon and Tori capable of overpowering the monsters, it was better to increase the number of support troops.

Every time they fought with Bollards, the number of undead consumed shrunk and the army led by Weed also increased in quality.

‘The incoming experience and loot, not bad.’

Since half the Bollards were handled by Seoyoon, the experience decreased but the hunting sped up quite a bit.

The number of items that sprang up increased as well, garnering no apparent complaints from Weed.

“Hold!”

There was even an independently operated Ghoul unit carrying japtem as they followed along.

Hunting back and forth near the area of the Sculptor’s Legacy was extremely fast.

In Las Phalanx, Weed raised his level 10 times.

If he continued hunting with Seoyoon, he could quickly and reliably raise his level.

‘But skill proficiency won’t increase much’

You gain nothing if you lose, that is the law!

Weed wanted to continue staying in this place hunting Bollards and Tairbeths, but there was a need to move elsewhere.

‘Should we move towards the unfreezing river? Or look towards the 7 peaks for the quest about the annihilated Armenian Pirates?’

He challenged the Chaos Warriors four times with undead in order to hunt them, only to lose and run away beaten.

Now with the addition of Seoyoon and Tori who would be of great help in battle, the situation changed somewhat.

Due to the participation of the two, he had to change the configuration of the undead army to find optimal efficiency.

The Chaos Warriors fought in such a way that even when they were trapped in the gaps between the undead, they couldn't be stopped.

“Chaos Warriors will be a fairly difficult fight hunt for a day or two more. Also have to teach Seoyoon and Tori how to fight the Chaos Warriors.”

Weed did not know in the slightest how worried Seoyoon was for him, she hoped Weed would not die.

Hunting the Chaos Warriors was entirely due to Weed's quest. She did not want him to suffer from feelings of guilt or sorrow if she was killed en route.

“For now I want to go back to the place where I landed, over there are more monsters than here. Hunting nearby, come okay?”

Seoyoon nodded her head to give consent to the proposal.

Weed was hunting with Seoyoon for a while, when he came back to the unfreezing river, far away there was the Haven Kingdom's fleet.

“Even here that many boats come?”

From the center of the continent to Las Phalanx is an extremely great distance.

However, the ships were wearing the flag of the Haven Kingdom.

Dozens of accomplished ship admirals were approaching.

Weed was busy hunting lately so he did not know about the surrounding circumstances.

To command a large number of undead, he needed to turn off the staggering amounts of whispers and guild chat.

Weed still felt there was a problem.

“Well I can't just wait around here.”

The approaching fleet of the Haven Kingdom would take notice if he brought the undead army to hunt. Ordinary users recognized undead armies as monsters.

“Let’s go back to hunting at the place we originally were at.”

In his hideout cave he pulled out japtem and items from severe cracks in the land and went toward the area near the Sculptor’s Legacy.

“Ooooo, were finally here at Las Phalanx. At the end of the north, one of the continent’s 10 restricted zones!”

Many users in the Haven Kingdom’s fleet marveled at the sight of Las Phalanx.

In Versailles Continent, there is publicly disclosed information on several combinations of monster types, arduous terrain, distance etc.

Specifically the 10 restricted zones. Countless powerful people challenged the restricted zones!

Just getting there filled them with pride.

In Las Phalanx not a single tree existed and black volcanoes gave off acrid smoke, occasionally, crimson lava flowed as well.

The brutality of the roaming monsters was to the extent that it was not an exaggeration to say it was beyond dangerous.

Regular users with low fighting spirit, just viewing the high level monsters from a distance and they were already atrophied with their strength and agility stats declining.

In particular, the state of fear caused skill mastery to drop by a few steps.

“Undead army!”

“Up front, there’s a tremendous concentration of undead.”

Even before landing scouts were tracking the movements of the undead.

“Undead army led by Weed? Meeting the army faster than expected. Zombies, Ghouls, Death Knights, Witches, Skeletons, until now first time seeing such a variety.”

“Indeed Weed. Fully adapted to Las Phalanx and hunting, that’s all the evidence we need.”

“Even as a necromancer ... how can he control that many monsters? Does he have the ability to command each monster army individually?”

“Hopefully it’s true for us. If it’s Weed it’s possible!”

Users in the Haven Kingdom’s fleet were glad to have discovered the undead.

The senior officials of Hermes guild kept their feelings of resentment for Weed restrained to the extent that others did not notice those inhuman abnormalities.

They chased after Weed to as far as Las Phalanx despite not knowing his whereabouts. Some users considered the center of the continent where countless power struggles occurred more important.

Nevertheless, many users had to follow guild policy.

They were Weed's enemies, regardless of personal feelings.

Still, the idea of possibly hunting Weed in Las Phalanx filled them with pure delight.

“Nice.”

After arriving at Las Phalanx, Drinfeld felt a little bit of the burden lessened.

“Once we have landed, we must take control of the region.”

He was greedy for dungeons, items and levels. In addition, he had members of the fleet to hunt with.

Even if the pursuit of Weed was delayed a bit, it seemed fine to him.

“There you are ghost ship.”

Waiting for Weed, the ghost ship was docked at the unfrozen river.

“Without going through here again, Weed will not be able to go back to the center of the continent.”

Drinfeld ordered 3 large vessels to lure out the ghost ship and take it over.

The lieutenant asked.

“There are a lot of high level users aboard North Star, do you want me to mobilize?”

“Better off not, don’t know what it could do.”

“I firmly believe mobilizing North Star will make taking over the ghost ship a piece of cake.”

High level users gathered en masse at the main axis of the ship North Star of the Haven Kingdom’s fleet.

“But they also want to land in Las Phalanx. Wouldn’t they complain?”

“First have North Star occupy the ghost ship. Afterwards have the NPC soldiers and knights secure it.”

“I shall take action then.”

Kkwagwang!

Kwaahahahang!

Shortly after, a bombardment between the Haven Kingdom's ship and the ghost ship was initiated.

The ghost ship's aiming ability was poor and soon received a blow to the bow of the ship, followed by an unrelenting assault.

It took longer than expected but the enemies finally stepped down. Users from North Star and navy knights then proceeded to cross over to the ghost ship and without much difficulty took control.

“Those Haven Kingdom guys are landing.”

Pirate King Griffith's subordinates secretly followed Drinfeld.

The scouts' report came to him.

“Landing in Las Phalanx ... quite brave.”

Having been left behind, Griffith had no idea about the situation up front. On the other hand, the undead could not discover them either.

Thanks to the Mad Sharks of Becky Ninh, they were able to move quietly while avoiding the undead up to this point.

“Weed has already landed in Las Gigolo right?”

“Seems like it.”

Vice-Captain Corum replied.

Prior to this, the Griffith Pirates 2nd in command, the Vice-Captain had reached a compromise with a lieutenant of the Haven Kingdom’s fleet.

“What should we do now?”

“Currently, we can only wait I’m afraid.”

“Come to think of it

Griffith was given a commission for Weed’s death.

Originally before an attack, pirates usually waited in rivers or seas.

But Griffith, different from any other pirate could not wait.

“Drinfeld has given us permission to land.”

“We have a hostile relationship with the Haven Kingdom’s fleet. Would they not attack?”

The kingdom’s navy fought with pirates whenever they met at sea.

As navy, catching pirates was the best method to quickly earn experience and achievements. Likewise, pirates also stormed Navy warships to acquire treasures and rewards.

In the first place, shortening the distance between navy and pirates was extremely difficult.

The number of users in the Haven Kingdom's 2nd fleet was predominant over the number of pirates, albeit the lower overall quality.

Without even knowing the result of a battle on the seas, it would be difficult to fight and win against the users and soldiers of the Haven Kingdom on land.

“It's ok for now. Bad Ray made the commission, if we use his name, they won't attack us. Still, just to make sure, I'll contact Hermes Guild on the side.”

After getting in touch with Hermes guild and obtaining approval, the Griffith Pirates were ready to land on Las Phalanx.

“We came all the way here, should at least hunt some strong monsters.”

Weed clicked his tongue at the Haven Kingdom.

The single ghost ship that brought him was incomparable to the enormous expedition.

“Is that the flag of Hermes Guild’s 2nd fleet?”

He was surprised not only at the power of Hermes Guild but also that they could afford to send their armed forces all the way to Las Phalanx.

It was practically the first time he encountered the notorious and acclaimed Hermes Guild.

“Why of all things have they all come here now? I just want to live and eat in peace. Things are going to get worst now.”

Returning to the area around the Sculptor’s Legacy, he felt quite a bit nervous.

He did not know the fact that Haven Kingdom’s fleet was hostile to him. However, hoping for good results in front of that many users was difficult.

“What in the world, are they even going to steal beans overflowing on the side to eat?”

He arrived at the place with the crack in the land, where Seoyoon was staring at a distant volcano. His heart flickered for a moment

at the beauty that seemed to be waiting for him.

Weed's favorite, her hair blowing in the wind, like a scene out of a movie.

“Ahem.”

As a result, Weed stood beside her.

In accordance with his undead state, the posture he held gave off a horrifying atmosphere.

Weed stood there quietly as wind brushed by his head.

As a skeleton, his hair was nonexistent!

To outsiders, this would look like an evil undead threatening the beauty of the century, Seoyoon.

Given the spontaneously emerging atmosphere, the scene shifted to look like Seoyoon, duty bound, preparing to eradicate Weed who had modified his appearance into a skeleton.

“Keuheum, time to hunt again.”

Weed took the undead army to attract Bollards.

The monsters gave savory experience as well as a lot of leather.

With the addition of Seoyoon, he could use curses and corpse explosion without discretion.

The hunting speed was very rapid due to Seoyoon's Berserker characteristic that aggroed most of the monsters toward her first.

Using the total offensive of the undead, Necromancer's curse and corpse explosion along with Seoyoon's support changed the hunting pattern.

‘Necromancers usually don't get along with other jobs, now with a Berserker, sounds about right.’

The Berserker job was also quite rare.

Just acquiring the job was difficult. After that, you have to hunt alone for long periods of time in dangerous areas to increase stats and skills and properly grow the job.

It was not a job available to those that wanted colleagues.

“In any case, we are going to continue hunting so irrelevant.”

After hunting in the area with the severe cracks in the land for so long, all composure was abandoned.

The biggest advantage of undead armies was the frantic hunting

speed and loot.

“In order to hunt Chaos Warriors, we have to leave here and go to another place.”

Around the volcano crater, there was a dungeon.

At the large crack in the land, beneath the cliff terrain, lava flow occurred. In the middle of all that lay the dungeon.

He was about to descend down the created ladder to enter the dungeon when.

“No, no dungeons.”

As the first discoverer, he would reap the week long benefits of 2x experience and item drop rate.

But dungeon monsters are usually at higher levels than the roaming field monsters of the area by one, sometimes even two steps.

In Las Phalanx, given that the land counterpart monsters were already overwhelming, you couldn't recklessly enter dungeon.

“If we entered the dungeon as intended and it was a narrow cave or labyrinth, I wouldn't be able to drag the undead army and have to collapse it.”

Either way, there was not much choice for Weed.

“Short break. I need to make rice for my sister ... regroup in a little while.”

It was time to eat dinner so along with Seoyoon, they logged out to rest for an hour.

Dinner was gangdoenjang, bibimbap and lukewarm bean sprout soup.

After sautéing the rice in the pot and eating dinner with his sister, Lee Hyun turned on the computer.

“Since there’s a list of new items, determining the price won’t be easy.”

The newer items were the ones obtained while hunting in Las Phalanx.

When you sew leather directly and create clothes, the price is set in accordance with the manufactured goods. The market price for jewelry also rose depending on color saturation and brilliance and yet many undiscovered items were revealed to be useless while there were numerous kinds of complex japtem.

“If there’s an opportunity, I must sell or trade the goods.”

Japtem was never sold, but you had to find a buyer for the items. He never sold to stores because dealing with them wouldn't allow him to get a reasonable price.

“When I dispose of japtem through Mapan, definitely have to find out the item prices.”

In addition, he profited from the items he made while working as a tailor or blacksmith.

To receive a good price, you need to sell to the people who need, find the overall job orientation in Royal Road and understand the inner workings and situation of the current kingdom or village.

Originally a trader, Lee Hyun used surefire ways to collect money.

Items obtained from Las Phalanx were clearly organized and written into the household account book followed by information gathering.

Item prices were not fixed so depending on the situation, you had to be careful.

In order to earn lots of money, when hunting monsters, you had to concern yourself with the amount of experience as well as what types of loot to obtain and how many of each.

To gather information about items, he took a few moments to

access the Royal Road forums.

Title: What kind of adventure is Weed having in Las Phalanx?

With one click, Lee Hyun's story came out.

“How do they know I'm in Las Phalanx?”

Weed was always on an immense quest, so wondering what kind of adventure he was on was common.

Transforming into a Lich was beyond imagination, wouldn't you think?

Many comments followed the post.

-I wish it would quickly appear in KMC Media's the broadcast schedule.

-It's the only reliable broadcast.

-Guys, will it be possible to hunt in northern Las Phalanx later?

-Above, just give it up. Historically, the north wasn't originally cold. The temporary events simply masked Las Phalanx. Death is death.

-Is there any information on Las Phalanx circulating from Hermes Guild? Since Drinfeld and the fleet have already arrived there.

-News, Griffith Pirates have also arrived there. I heard from friends over there. During the voyage, the destination was kept in absolute secrecy and only when they started to land in Las Phalanx did they tell the other users.

- Incredible. Weed along with one of the 10 restricted zones and a large scale user landing, unbelievable.

On the Royal Road forums, the main story became about Las Phalanx.

Many users have fantasies about the adventures.

Setting foot on new lands with good hunting grounds scattered in abundance, the corresponding loot and experience as well as overcoming risk and adversity to acquire quest rewards!

Whenever legends and mysteries of Versailles Continent were to be revealed, users grew so enthusiastic that they rapidly posted on the forums to the point where you couldn't read any articles.

For now, one of the 10 restricted zones, Las Phalanx, Weed, the Haven Kingdom's fleet and the Griffith Pirates stood at the heart of those topics.

Title: The attitude of true adventurers is to challenge the mysteries.

Sir adventurers. In tombs and dungeons, let us not look only for artifacts and money, while wandering the wide lands, let us explore.

-Easy for you to say, you took a few minutes to write a post, go try adventuring yourself. All your life I bet you've never seen a region like that before. You would just encounter a useless death.

-You would be fortunate if you got lost on your way there.

-Is anyone beginning an adventure at their hometown?

Title: All this time we have been looking for another one of the 10 restricted zones.

I browsed through and processed a lot of data but I couldn't match anything.

It was disclosed few days ago, but we couldn't even figure out how he entered or how he was able to survive for even a few days.

But Weed was someone who did not know fear or abandonment.

I predict that someday, he's going to leave footsteps in all 10 restricted zones.

-Until the day Weed goes to all the 10 restricted zones!

-Within a year, think he will go to three of the places?

Title: Guess the content of Weed's quest.

He suddenly took a boat to Las Phalanx, for a quest perhaps? Whether or not he was a Lich I do not know, but given that the adventure is on Las Phalanx, you can imagine the difficulty of the quest and how awesome it will be. Las Phalanx, perhaps it's something to think about. What do you expect Weed to get?

-I can only make a solemn guess.

-We have a dog at home.

-That was my younger cousin. Just 8 months old. I'm in charge of him during the birthday party.

-Success or failure, that will be an issue. And we inevitably will stay up all night to savor the broadcast!

Many stories about Weed's adventures were written. However, stories about Haven Kingdom's fleet and pirates emerged.

Title: Why did the user plundering pirates go to Las Phalanx?

Title: Haven Kingdom's fleet arrived at Las Phalanx around the same time as Weed, what reason?

Title: Fact, Haven Kingdom's fleet has been tracking Weed since the island of Yipiah!

Title: Haven Kingdom's fleet and pirates, conspiracy? They are hostile why don't they fight?

Users analyzed the posts and tirelessly occupied the forums with their speculations.

Bad Ray and Drinfeld, along with the Hermes Guild did not expect it would grow up to this point.

That sinking the ghost ship at sea and possibly killing Weed would lead to such a big commotion.

However, it was in the land of new adventure called Las Phalanx, the issue of the Haven Kingdom's fleet and pirates chasing after Weed brought suspicion to other users.

No secret is eternal, that is law.

Posts came up that gradually revealed the truth about the Haven Kingdom's fleet and the pirates.

- A friend of mine belongs to the Haven Kingdom's fleet. He told me why, they followed Weed to interfere with his quest and kill him.

- A lie, right?

-My older cousin belongs to the pirate crew. He said he also got a

similar commission.

-Hermes Guild is going to publicly order the Killer-Blade Army to execute Weed?

-There is no doubt Haven Kingdom's fleet and the pirates are aiming for him.

-Wow, I want to come along. Snatching Weed's equipment and items will mean jackpot.

-Even though they want to, I don't know if it's possible to intercept the quest. If it's collecting limited materials then yes, but if they can find from anywhere then no. Furthermore, I heard that only if fame and several other conditions align will the special quest be offered to them and allow them to intercept.

- Dirty Hermes Guild! Above people don't die on me. Do you want to be their slaves for life?

-So Hermes Guild and the pirates are in Las Phalanx to hunt Weed?

-That's right. They went with every intention of doing so.

-Completely bad guys.

-Those heinous acts will happen in what, a day or two?

Lee Hyun's eyes convulsed with rage as he read the forum.

“Why me

He wondered why of the many people in the world did they target him who was barely scraping by just to feed a mouth and live with the bare essentials.

Hermes Guild, the center of the continent's most prestigious guild known for their atrocities, it was best to avoid them.

Initially, Weed made his character in Rosenheim Kingdom. In the center of the continent, due to site taxes, it was difficult to even obtain a hunting ground.

The tax even extended to wheels and so forth, tyranny of prestigious guilds!

Frankly, Lee Hyun's nerves were spent.

Hermes Guild formed the greatest force on the Versailles Continent, holding enormous influence in the Haven Kingdom.

In hunting grounds, they killed those who were eyesores and acted indulgently under the signboard “Part of Hermes Guilds”.

Backed by influence and power, high-level users were accepted as

guild members, growing the guild.

When Weed first saw Haven Kingdom's fleet at Las Phalanx, even though it was greatly inconvenient, he was forced to concede the hunting grounds to avoid them.

“Did you really chase me all the way here just to try and kill me?”

If it's limited to the degree of the commissioned, you can't steal the quest, so the only thing left is to impede its success.

In accordance with the ridiculous reason of snatching a quest, they sailed to the distant Las Phalanx.

If the blade swung quickly covers with rust, discard it.

Guilds must make good use of their power and fear, maintain the system of competition and be able to suppress the provocation of other guilds.

They wanted to sacrifice Weed. Hermes Guild's ulterior motive was easily predictable.

“If we could avoid fighting, that would be nice.”

Contrary to his words, his forehead was distorting, to Lee Hyun, there was no other option.

The opponent chased him all the way to Las Phalanx to fight him, because of that, he couldn't just go saying goodbye and leaving like that.

“If so, then the fight's unavoidable.”

Lee Hyun rifled through information on the Dark Gamers Union's forum.

“Know thy enemy. Even if I get injured, I need an escape plan.”

Many Dark Gamers have been dying under the tyranny of the Hermes Guild.

As Lee Hyun read the materials, he was put into deep thought.

“Lower the base supplies.”

“Come on, move without ceasing. We must create the barrier by the end of the day.”

Users and soldiers of Haven Kingdom's fleet busily moved.

Information about Las Phalanx was in a darkened state.

They knew nothing about the monster or terrain.

Generally, an adventurer party of individual wanders around. To

that extent, monsters don't react significantly.

However, monsters are sensitive to large-scale landings of humans and attack in droves. Under no circumstances could there not be a boundary.

“Construct a base on the hill near the landing area and explore Las Phalanx.

Drinfeld and the senior part of the fleet in order to maximize the contrast between relaxation and exploitation, tried to create a fortress for maintenance as soon as possible.

You need to ensure a comfortable night's sleep to quickly restore morale and stamina.

When you put a barrier around the hill, even against monster attacks, just considering the materials used to build the barrier, it is much safer than simple awning tents.

It was for the Haven Kingdom's fleet's main force of users rather than the NPC sailors, soldiers, etc.

For the users belonging to the fleet, it was not easy coping with the tedious voyage exceeding 1 month.

As seaman, it was normal for most of them to own their own ship. But when on a boat ride for a long time, due to the decrease in morale, all sorts of things tend to break out.

There were quite a few possible headaches such as rebellion, riots, homesickness, etc.

Commanding the soldiers and Navy knights, Drinfled had to pay special attention to morale and fatigue.

“We’re short on wood Captain!”

“Captain, I can’t get wood.”

Trees could not grow in the barren, unmatched environment of Las Phalanx.

Leaving the distantly visible monsters, Drinfled replied.

“To create the barrier, dismantle a ship and obtain a number of stones to pile up.”

“Yes sir.”

Users and the crew squatted down to carry the rocks.

Due to the distant voyage, extreme fatigue accumulated, but even in that state, they did not have the time to relax in order to make camp.

Carrying the heavy stone blocks and busily establishing the wall decreased stamina.

“Scouts, make observations on the surroundings.”

Drinfeld sent out the scouts to thoroughly prepare.

Five scouts quickly went around the vicinity to determine the quantity of monsters and the extent of their range before returning back.

“Special danger signs are visible.”

“The monsters roaming around seem to be under control of an intelligent boss class monster.”

The news put Drinfeld in a good mood. If it was just a massive raid of monsters, to some extent it brought your mind to rest.

“How is the terrain?”

“The terrain is very bad. Because most of the area is steep rock, it seems it will be difficult to move during a raid.”

As the battle goes on, it gets more difficult to fight systematically in the rugged rocky area.

Furthermore, for the Haven Kingdom’s crew, they were more accustomed the sea rather than the land.

“When monsters move around to bypass, it seems like it will take a lot of time. And even with scouts constantly on watch, I’m

curious ... is this place really safe?”

Part of the scouts could not be sure.

Nearby one of the volcanoes gave off black smoke and the land was shaken a little. Through the cracks of the cleft earth, lava flowed.

“Well, since Weed arrived much earlier than us, there’s no way it can be safe.”

“You’re absolutely right.”

The crew was committed to creating the walls well into the night.

Haven Kingdom’s 2nd fleet’s crew are said to be at least 250 in level.

But on average, the majority of the users were in the late 200s to early 300s.

Users were only 46 people, the soldiers numbered 590 people.

With tents and the barrier, they created a strong shelter as a place to rest.

Needless to say, they did not forget to establish appropriate alternating lookouts.

In the meantime, Griffith Pirates made contact with the leaders of Hermes Guild to land.

- Absolutely not allowed. Haven Kingdom's fleet is more than enough to hunt Weed.

Persistent Hermes Guild was unmatched.

When the fleet landed in Las Phalanx, they did not feel pleasant at the thought of the pirates exploiting the hunting grounds or unearthing relics in their area.

Griffith came up with a concession.

-I will prohibit pirates from conducting hostilities on all Hermes Guild ships.

- Not allowed.

-Willing to concede 3 treasures excavated from dungeons.

-Las Phalanx is obviously a unique area of our Hermes Guild.

Having first landed just a few hours ago, Hermes Guild shamelessly claimed the vested rights!

The prestigious guild of the center of the continent, however, the word shameless was horribly insufficient for the Hermes Guilds.

Unfortunately for Griffith's side, he learned he could not enter into negotiations as desired and would continue to be dragged around.

Griffith sent a final ultimatum.

-To save face, Hermes guild may take as much as 30% of the treasure. We are pirates of the sea. We are not afraid of Haven Kingdom's 2nd fleet. Think about our concessions, I look forward to your sincere response.

Leaders of Hermes Guild unfortunately had to give permission.

Haven Kingdom's 2nd fleet landed in Las Phalanx. After landing, the defense of the ships became weakened. If something as extreme as a pirate attack happened, it would be a big problem.

After getting landing permission, late at night the pirates put their first step on Las Phalanx.

"Pirate King-nim, shall we set up base?"

"We don't have the time. Today we are obliged to stay on the other side."

Around the fortress built by the Haven Kingdom's fleet, the Griffith Pirates enclosed their bodies with thin blankets.

Chapter 3: Night Of The Undead

Haven Kingdom's fleet and the pirates got together into battle formation and embarked on the occupation of Las Phalanx filled with momentum.

The headcount for the lesser undead that Weed summoned was considerably lacking.

However, even if you call together undead such as zombies, there is not much meaning to it.

Drinfeld, users and even the crew, the fight between them would be unavoidable, so the extent of the summons would need to be at a minimum Death Knight class.

“The friends I seek are

There are several monsters powerful monsters on Las Phalanx.

Even monsters cannot be ignored.

If you raise a lot of intimacy and friendship, they might help.

For monsters with low intelligence and severe gluttony, making delicious cuisine for them can lead to good impressions.

Things like gifts might also be required, but looking at the mechanics of a friendship relationship after that, fighting together in a crisis becomes a given.

“Um, you over there

Weed decided to talk to the Bollards.

Kyareureureu!

Immediately their fur stood on end and the monsters attacked!

While hunting over 1,000 animals, he collected leather, teeth, tails, etc. and made the meat into jerky.

Because of their indelible enemy relationship, the Bollards didn't even bother to listen.

Tairbeths, the bat type monsters did not understand human speech, but they accomplished their activities in collective groups rather than alone.

“Involving the Tairbeths will be useful.”

Even if he used Shape Shifter Sculpture to change into a Tairbeth, since he doesn't know their language, it was useless.

“But I can make them my colleagues I suppose.”

Weed confidently said.

Hunting in Las Phalanx for a long time creates severe hostilities which means they will unconditionally approach with anger!

The hostilities of the Las Phalanx monsters toward Van Hawk and Tori are also extremely terrible.

Even if they discover him outside their fixed area, they will still fight.

“At any rate, it seems bringing a minimum of 30 will be no problem.”

Consider the consequences afterwards!

“When you have been hungry for a long time, you cannot tell the difference between eating frozen pork and roasted pork. “

Even if it's unintentional help from the monsters, it will be enough as long as they fight the Haven Kingdom's fleet and the pirates.

“Still, leaving them alone after they chased me, unfathomable

While hunting or questing and you suddenly get besieged, it's inevitable that you get killed.

Even so, the only method to lessen the disadvantage is to launch a preemptive strike.

At the very least, the opponent could not possibly expect Weed to ambush first.

“Got to pick a good date to assault them. Thanks to coming to Las Phalanx first, I can figure out all the things I need to take advantage of. Summon Angry Stone!”

Violent and impatient nature. However, if they are the commands of the master, Angry Stone completely obeys.

In Morata, many Elemental Shamans contract with Angry Stone to hunt.

Thanks to Angry Stone, the force that can be exerted on the earth increased a bit.

With the advent of Angry Stone, the rising ambient temperature could be distinctly felt.

“Master, it's been a long time since we met.”

“Long time no see.”

“Keuhihi, here's my favorite person.”

After being summoned to Las Phalanx, Angry Stone rejoiced like

a child.

Angry Stone could report on the area's most optimal locations.

Weed did not summon Angry Stone when he was hunting earlier because of the monsters' resistance and mana efficiency.

Angry Stone might have furthered strengthened the highly flame resistant monster of Las Phalanx.

Sometimes, flame properties restore the monster's vitality instead of damaging it, forcing Weed to abandon that role.

“Summon Earth Expert.”

Along with the shape and good impression of a well-mannered adult, Earth Expert was summoned.

Earth Expert also listens to words well and dedicated to the protection of Elemental Shamans, even throws its body out there.

With many efforts to make a contract, the force you can exert increases as well.

Around Morata, the most popular Elementals were Angry Stone and Earth Expert.

“Did you call, Master?”

Weed went so far as to call the Elementals!

From his mouth came a vile smile.

“You touched me first. Really, I did not want to fight, but it can’t be helped. It’s all your fault.”

Shifting all responsibility.

Committed to mobilizing all despicable methods available.

A guilty conscience, confusion, etc. did not even originally exist.

“Keuheuheuheu.”

Seeing Weed imagining something and smiling, Rover, Van Hawk and Tori silently nodded their heads.

As people who have suffered, they knew that look. When a crisis situation arises, more of human nature was vividly revealed.

‘You touched a difficult bastard.’

‘How can such a sinister human being exist’

“Must be the original nature. If humans did not come, we wouldn’t be bullied. ‘

‘Truly a mistake to have met this master.’

As expected from the Admiral of the 2nd fleet, Drinfeld had great ambitions.

“Hermes Guild is increasingly expanding its presence ... and I will be the ruler of this spacious sea.”

After leveling to the top 1,200 in Royal Road, he had a perfect standard to comply to. For such reasons he followed the commands of the guild.

He tried to faithfully follow the command asking him to hunt Weed, but he got greedy.

“Arriving in Las Phalanx, it’s an opportunity.”

He had no intention of opposing Hermes Guild ruled by Bad Ray.

Those who knew even a bit of the real power of Hermes knew there was no freedom even in the sea.

However, while fulfilling the command to hunt Weed, slightly collecting private gain was fine.

“People are now watching me and my fleet. I think it’s an opportunity to enhance the overall reputation of Hermes Guild.”

Through the guild’s internal network, he was persuading a senior official.

People had tremendous interest in Las Phalanx.

Showing the adventure through the internet and broadcasting would make viewership soar.

The leaders of Hermes Guild underwent the necessary discussions.

As the Royal Guards of Bad Ray, the goal they aimed to seize was a grand guild, as instructed by the overall exterior guild management.

Guild Master Rafael was determined.

-Granted. Reveal the power of Hermes Guild.

Negotiations were made with stations.

Several stations were keen on relaying the exploration and hunting of Las Phalanx in real-time.

But KMC Media did not accept for they fully understood the situation would risk the exclusive coverage of Weed's adventures.

“The name Drinfeld will spread across the land like Weed.”

Haven Kingdom's fleet got up early the next day ready to explore.

“Temporarily leave 200 people at the fortress. 10 users and 190

soldiers guard the fortress and complement the defense.”

Drinfeld along with the users and crew began to explore.

Elite sailors revealed their maximum ability at sea.

On the other hand, their combat capability on land was somewhat impaired, but dedicated in their own way, the sailor troops grew.

The Griffith Pirates were the first to hunt.

“Block over there!”

“Arrows! Fire arrows! It’s best to use ranged attacks against this burning heat.”

“Wizard?”

“Pirates, where are the wizards!”

Bollards brutally killed the pirates.

The pirates had remarkable sailing skill, but they were much lower level compared to the sailors of the Haven Kingdom’s fleet. Hunting the level 400 Bollards naturally produced continuous casualties.

Kyahoooo!

With the roar of the Bollard, a myriad of pirates dropped their

weapons and sank down!

Whether Griffith or the pirates, there was one principal lesson they knew, prevent countries from putting out bounties on pirates, because unless you're lucky, it becomes difficult for pirates to deal with the general population.

From pubs, piers, casinos, alleys, etc. pirates could easily be recruited and grow even faster, however, compared to sailors, their established loyalty was low and they had weak minds. If you neglected the ship for even a little bit, they would take it away, flee and discard it after stealing money and then secede and leave the fleet.

Therefore, Pirate King Griffith rather than raise pirates handpicked several pirates that confidentially admired him as his generals and left them to their own management.

Numerically dominant along with their savage pirate nature, fought the monsters.

Under the general pirates' leadership and command ability, the subordinate pirates were required to quickly sacrifice themselves.

It was a similar way to dropping a lion cub off a cliff and raising the survivors.

“The level of monsters is high.”

At this spectacle, the countenance of Drinfeld and users of the fleet paled a bit.

“However, this degree of resistance was already expected when forming the plan.”

From the navy knight users were leisurely words.

“Of course. The difference between us and those rabbles, it would not be right to compare ourselves with the pirates.”

In addition to Drinfeld and Haven Kingdom’s fleet were several other high level users, making them decidedly different from the pirates.

They also decided to hunt down the Bollards.

“Commence attack!”

Within the fleet, only three wizards and twelve archers used long distance attacks.

Under attack from the pouncing Bollards, Drinfeld and the navy knights fought in a manner of ambushing them.

In the midst of the battle 2 sailors died, but compared to the pirates they were only slightly damaged.

For Drinfeld though the damage was very expensive because in order to raise 1 sailor you needed a lot of time and effort.

“As we battle again and again, we will become accustomed to it. Try to minimize damage. Forward!”

Drinfeld continued hunting with his subordinates.

In the end, you cannot come to Las Phalanx without taking a bit of damage.

Hunting Bollards helps reinforce the acquisition of loot and experience.

Every sailor was placed in the middle of users or navy knights to avoid being ambushed by Bollards.

“There’s a certain degree of merit from adapting to the Bollards.”

The lineup of several high level users from Haven Kingdom’s fleet allowed for the safe hunting of Bollards. This let the weary sailors easily train and raise their levels on the Bollards.

The faces of Drinfeld and the other users lightened up.

‘10 restricted zones seems somewhat exaggerated. Come to think of it, until us no one explored them. Hunting in Las Phalanx has merit.’

‘When this battle is broadcasted, my popularity will further increase.’

Quietly they hoped for greater difficulties.

Piercing through Bollards, they entered a shady place when they were suddenly attacked by Tairbeths.

The surprise attack was somewhat too big for the sailors to handle in the battlefield.

Levels in the mid to late 300s, unless the Tairbeths were suddenly alone, they would be unable to withstand the attacks and die.

Although surrounded by 5-6 Tairbeths, it was possible to hunt without dying because including Drinfeld, they numbered 28 people. The pirates on the other hand were only 15 people.

The Tairbeths were exceedingly fast and flew around brilliantly making hunting extremely difficult.

In the sea they were well trained and powerful, but without it the sailors could only be grabbed and eaten in vain.

“Sailors withdraw to the back. Users take care of your own lives!”

Drinfeld restrained himself and gave the command, Griffith gave a similar command.

While preserving the safety of the subordinates, they decided to proceed slowly with the adventure.

Landing in Las Phalanx!

The real time relay coming from each station reported significantly higher viewership.

On the stations' viewer forums and Royal Road internet forums, a lot of posts came up.

-As expected of the 10 restricted zones. Monster levels are amazing. Haven Kingdom's 2nd fleet's Drinfeld holds a key position in Hermes Guild. Truly a fleet of Hermes Guild. They are slow but are carefully advancing. I expect they will uncover all of Las Phalanx.

-Bravely fighting the Bollards in the name of the navy knights. Hermes Guild has truly outstanding courage and strength.

-To explore one of the 10 restricted zones, Hermes Guild's power is overwhelming. Makes me want to follow their courage and confidence.

-Look at this, Alba only moderately acts.

-I'm really sick and tired of Hermes' Alba. You think you can dominate the viewer forums?

-It's their first time in Las Phalanx, they're just following Weed.

-Bollards and Tairbeths are really frightening. They all rapidly died.

-Weed's alone in dangerous Las Phalanx while they act as a group pursuing him and indulge in extreme self-praise.

The thrill of exploring the 10 restricted zones caused an overflow of higher viewership, but public opinion on the internet was not on the side of Drinfeld and Hermes Guild.

However, it was a fact that many viewers felt envious toward Hermes Guild's exploration!

Drinfeld drafted a detailed plan.

Proud of their loot from hunting in the surrounding areas, the first day lightly ended.

Due to the distant voyage, the sailors' stamina and fatigue risked a degree of damage occurring.

Easily arriving at Las Phalanx, at that time against the herd they took slight damage. They definitely had to demonstrate their prowess.

On the second day explore dungeons in earnest.

Dungeons possessing higher difficulty levels will not be so easy.

A lot of damage may occur, but when you safely finish the dungeon exploration, the compensation and broadcast effects will be amazing.

Drinfeld had the desire to increase his prestige by conquering the dangerous dungeons of Las Phalanx.

After conquering the dungeons, earnestly expand the territory in Las Phalanx. Explore the wider area and chase Weed in earnest.

In front of the watching audience, flaunt overwhelming force and kill Weed!

Send two or three navy knights to measure skill. If he was capable of dealing with him, he had a one on one match in mind.

‘Of course before that, need to get a lot of rest.’

By killing Weed, Drinfeld’s fame would pierce the heavens.

But he was greatly unaware of Weed’s confrontation and perfectly established plan using Las Phalanx.

The second day.

Through the sailors’ labor, the fortress on the hill became strong enough to not be immediately destroyed when ogres come knocking.

Nearby the pirates' lair was built.

While hunting monsters, both parties suffered damage from 30 to 70 people. Users did not die, but the death of sailors or pirates was significantly expensive.

“Can be recovered when we return to Versailles Continent. Do not mind the damage to the sailors.”

“We will be able to enlist several people as pirates.”

For navy and pirates, fame was important.

When fame is high, lots of skilled sailors or pirates will volunteer.

They can be hired for next to nothing so in Las Phalanx, take some damage and concentrate on the adventure.

And so the dungeon exploration started!

“Have to conserve the sailors so we need to do something right now to demonstrate our prowess.”

Drinfeld picked the entrance to a big dungeon.

“Would be nice if it's a modest dungeon. A bit regretful we didn't

bring our excavation team on the adventure.”

If the chosen place in Las Phalanx was too weak, the broadcast performance wouldn't be good.

Although unconcerned about investigating the dungeon, only sailors and a few wizards were sent to enter the rough area.

You have become the first discoverer of Volcanic Heart Dungeon.

Benefits: 1,300 fame increase. For a week, experience and item drop rate are doubled.

The first monsters hunted have the highest possibility of dropping the best items.

“Oh, as expected!”

“We're the first discoverers.”

Drinfeld and the users were quite pleased.

As the first, it created a fluttering chest.

“2x experience 2x items!”

“Admiral, I think we will be tempted to hunt here for a few more days.”

Already smiling like a fully bloomed flower.

If not for the outgoing broadcast, Drinfeld would have cheerfully and widely laughed at the good luck of discovering a dungeon.

“There are many dungeons besides here. Have to concentrate on the battle.”

“Yes sir.”

As the Admiral under many eyes, he had to give the command in a dignified manner.

And battle.

Wooreureung!

Wajikkeun!

Kwagwagwang!

Inside the dungeon lay traps and monsters.

Monsters in the late level 400s and even 500s came out.

It was a dungeon with high level monsters and many natural traps.

The ceiling collapsed to attack and the ground completely disappeared.

Because of the broadcast the dungeon had some degree of difficulty, but they wished to keep the damage to the sailors at a

minimum.

Despite the risk, Drinfeld and the navy knights did what was best and came forward.

“Let’s go. Attack. Dodge. We are the strongest Hermes Guild!”

Battling the monsters, seven to eight sailors lost their lives, but coming out of it they tasted the truly exciting tension and thrill.

In this way they advanced and emerged at a place in the midst of a lava lake circling around them.

At the heart were five Fire Giants sleeping.

-They don’t seem to be awake.

-Shall we prepare the wizards?

- Large monsters and inhospitable terrain, I don’t think this battle will be easy

Unfortunately, jobs with possible ranged attacks like wizards or archers were not many people.

The sailors could shoot bows, but their weak damage was not capable of causing any fatal blows to the fire giants.

Drinfeld and the navy knights were unable to walk on lava so

they couldn't assault the giants.

-Should pass them quietly.

In a half body bath with half of their bodies immersed in the lava the Fire Giants slept.

Drinfeld, the navy knights, users and sailors stealthily walked on narrow roads below the rock walls.

Opposite to them around the lake was the entrance destined elsewhere.

Then one moment!

Tududuk.

Along with a subtle sound, the end of the road the sailors were walking on collapsed a bit.

A piece of stone fell into the lava and sank.

Drinfeld and the navy knights reflexively observed the Fire Giants, but they were fast asleep without even a tremor.

‘Whew, lucky.’

‘Looks good. We can cross over safely.’

But then an accident occurred.

Sweating and staggering due to the heat, while walking the sailors' legs loosened up and slipped.

“Euaaaaah!”

The sailors loudly screamed as they fell into the lava.

‘They won’t stay asleep this time.’

‘Please just sleep.’

The Fire Giants were already awakening and discovering the humans stuck on the edge.

“Feeble humans who have come here, you have not received permission. Having awoken me, you must fight and prove that you are qualified to pass through here.”

The giant immersed in lava lifted its arm.

In the hand with a thickness of 2 meters and a length of 30 meters held a sword.

It was an unknown sword, but by not melting in the lava, you could only assume that it had amazing strength and heat resistance!

Weapon damage is generally proportional to the intensity of its weight. Without sharpness, a fairly large penalty will occur, but the Fire Giants' broadswords were weapons beyond such dimensions.

“Death to intruders.”

The five Fire Giants brandished their broadswords.

When the broadsword hit, the rock walls crumbled and chunks crashed down from above.

That was not the only problem.

Lying in the lava lake, the ground shook whenever the Fire Giants made large movements.

Lava splattered as their sharp blades ascended, covering Drinfeld and his companions with undeserved misfortune and the narrow road the sailors were passing by on was destroyed by the Fire Giants' attack.

“Kkeuahahak!”

“Help!”

From the Fire Giants' strike, 15 sailors melted without resistance.

Dreadful damage!

Comparison with Bollards was impossible. Such was the grandeur of colossal boss monsters.

“Forward!”

The wizards were ordered to prepare magic in advance.

Several kinds of magic were focused upon the Fire Giants, but there was virtually no damage.

Rather it seemed to provoke their anger and they wielded their swords even more vigorously.

After a user reported that the Fire Giants remained unscathed, Drinfeld exclaimed.

“Run away!”

“Let’s go! We have to get out of here!”

Against the slashing Fire Giants, the users abandoned the fight and ran away toward the entrance.

Drinfeld had no desire to fight and lose a considerable part of the treasured fleet he raised within minutes.

“Run as fast as possible and escape from here.”

On the narrow road they got tangled together and crashed into the lava. In the midst of this the Fire Giants' attacks continued to pile up damage in succession.

From the chaos, they barely exited the dungeon with a staggering amount of 76 people dead.

Without assembling the subordinates, in order to live everyone ran away alone in ultimate humiliation!

A total of 7 users died.

In the place they died even locating the corpses was difficult so it was impossible to reclaim lost items.

“Keueuk.”

Drinfeld's fists trembled.

But even though it irritated him, he would not dare enter the dungeon again to fight.

In the sea, unless the ship breaks, the sailors do not die so easily.

However, in the dungeon the sailors lost brutally and no longer wanted to fight.

-We need to think about the broadcast. A lot of people are watching.

From his lieutenant and other users came whispers.

Barely conscious of the broadcast, Drinfeld straightened out his expression and said.

“Las Phalanx dungeons have outrageous difficulty. Like us, nobody will be able to break them yet. Today’s exploration was difficult so for now we’re going to withdraw and relax.”

Running out of motivation to explore another hard dungeon, they returned to the fortress. The appearance of the pirates also showed they took great damage while exploring the dungeon.

Both groups took comfort in the knowledge that the other reported failure as well.

For two days Weed sat down and created sculptures while waiting.

In the meantime, Seoyoon did not get bored.

Weed made sculptures of things he saw like Las Phalanx monsters or the ghost ship.

Whenever the sculpture was a cute and pretty yeti or animal, her palm extended out.

“.....”

Meaning request!

Weed with a trembling hand passed over the sculptures.

It was a pity and he didn't want to, but she sat down close to his side waiting until the moment the sculpture was completed, how could he refuse when asked?

Sculptures always make the best gifts for women!

Replacing words, every created piece of work took away sorrow from the job.

‘Damn job’s decent, but I still have minor regrets left behind.’

Weed purposely breathed a big sigh.

“Sculptor’s words, it’s a work of art sincerely made from the soul. Every one of my works has my heart imbued in them so I hope you will treasure it.”

Of course in his mind there was no such thing as freebies.

“And we’re quite intimate with each other are we not?”

Usually, Weed would not dare say so shamelessly.

Seoyoon clearly looked at his face.

“We listen to lessons together, we eat rice together ... I gave you chickens and dogs and soon I’ll give you a rabbit.”

Lots of logic of the intimacy between them!

Seoyoon nodded as a means of affirmation.

From hearing this she became embarrassed thinking how intimate they were.

Her only friend, staying with him was comfortable and pleasant. That person was Weed.

“But you know something important, more than family members or close friends, I’m not careless with money transactions.”

“.....?”

“What I mean is the sculptures can sell for more than you know so if you repeatedly ask, you can earn a lot of money.”

Feeling sorry, without wasting any time she hastily gave back the sculpture when he spoke.

“One of these precious sculptures is worth more than 100 gold and even though it’s regretful, I’m giving it to you. Still it seems strange that only I give something. We’re both adults here. If we just cleanly exchange money it will equal trouble later, well you’ll

see. Rather than selling to someone else, I hope you will give it to someone you are intimate with. Instead, I'll take care of the japtem later."

Being intimate, it's supposed to be given for free, but instead acquire japtem with some vague yet persuasive logic!

Even though items piled up from the incredible hunting in Las Phalanx, Weed could not forsake his greed for japtem.

So Seoyoon would give him her japtem, Weed diligently made sculptures.

'Sculptures help reinforce the ability to earn money, not bad. Really, the lengths an artist goes to!'

Seoyoon had become very friendly with Rover, Geuminyi and Golden Bird.

Rather than Weed, Rover lied down on his belly next to Seoyoon with a relaxed expression. Geuminyi was the same and even Golden Bird blatantly refused to leave Seoyoon's shoulder.

Against Necromancer Weed, it revealed severe aversion and did not even approach the subject, whereas it held its head with adoration as it touched Seoyoon's head and chin.

Weed felt the need to improve familiarity with Golden Bird by a bit.

“But I can’t give up the Necromancer job.”

To endure in Las Phalanx, undead were essential, that was the thought.

Honestly, as a sculptor, dealing with several high level monsters appearing was difficult.

Through massacres, it was possible to collect a large amount of items, a wonderful job making it difficult to change.

“That’s for you. I myself will eat well and be wealthy.”

Similar to that excuse, Weed kept making excuses to keep the Necromancer job!

Eternally unable to get closer to Golden Bird, it seemed he crossed this river of no return.

While spending time carving sculptures, the summoned Elemental Angry Stone suddenly gave off a red light.

“The fire aura in Las Phalanx is getting stronger.”

Affected by nature, the power of Elementals grew stronger by association.

“Finally time for it to explode.”

Earth Expert anxious about something growled as he paced around.

“Master, land forces are in conflict.”

Essential to large volcanic eruptions, earthquakes!

When that happened, Weed stopped carving sculptures and left on the spot.

“Now it’s time to start.”

Defining a justification was not very important.

Often required to do bad things, he could have done something different that was even worse.

Indeed, Weed since the days of Continent of Magic had done a lot of tremendously bad things.

Busy making a living, he lived peacefully, but one’s nature cannot be abandoned, that is law!

“Undead get moving. Today will be your night.”

Drinfeld and the sailors settled in fortress on the hill all shook at

once.

“This, what is this? Looks like the earth is shaking. An earthquake?”

“Don’t stumble, lower your torso and get balanced.”

The first earthquake was severe and sailors fell to the ground. Under the delusion that it would quickly pass by, they waited.

Drinfeld and the users were not greatly disordered.

Even though they fell, there was almost no loss of health.

Kwareureureureu.

But from the second and third earthquakes, the vibrations gradually rose.

Rocks from the distant mountains simultaneously came rolling down. It was a difficult situation for those standing at this place.

With the collapse of the fence, clamor arose.

“The earthquakes are getting increasingly bigger!”

“Hold on to something!”

“The tents will collapse. Don’t stay inside!”

Fierce disturbance occurred.

Even the pirates' lair built around the fortress became disoriented due to the aftermath of the earthquakes.

To find Weed, the pirates chose a cave made of several intertwining caves as their lair.

Because it looked void and easy to defend, they used the cave as their base.

But when the earthquake broke out, worried about it collapsing, they scrambled to run away.

Then the earth suddenly burst into a cry.

All of Las Phalanx was shaken by the earthquake.

And the volcanoes simultaneously began to erupt in lava.

The stations' viewer forums and internet forums were all talking about the topic of the dungeon in Las Phalanx.

-The level of monsters in Las Phalanx is really high. When will we be able to go there and hunt I wonder.

-Won't it take a long time until we can hunt in parties? Even in the future, I doubt people will deliberately visit since it's too far away.

-Fire Giants, really great aren't they? Just momentarily but

terrible havoc.

-Drinfeld and the fleet getting crushed and then fleeing, keukeu.

-Even Hermes Guild had difficult problems.

-Las Phalanx of the 10 restricted zones, difficult to find at the end of the north, though considering it's a restricted zone, I'm a bit disappointed.

Besides here, there were other places with similarly high level monsters.

-Above, did you imagine that they would die within minutes in the restricted zones?

-Will Hermes Guild even want to adventure tomorrow?

Viewership was high and while the live broadcast continued, users were chatting on the forums.

But then one moment, a post on the forums suddenly began to quickly climb up.

- Finally exploded, the volcanoes of Las Phalanx!

-Earthquakes cracked the crusts. Lava's quickly rising from the land.

-Kkiya, got to watch this!

-Seems to be a scene you just can't miss.

Chapter 4: Battle In The Volcanic Eruption

From the land vicious heat and steam came bursting out. Part of the crust sank underground. Due to the earthquake, Las Phalanx monsters scrambled for survival while almost simultaneously, many volcanoes in Las Phalanx launched lava into the air.

Erupting from the volcanoes lava rained down and seeped into the Cracked Lands until it overflowed. Las Phalanx, the grand sight of volcanic eruptions. The instinct of Las Phalanx was to be full of fearsome threats. Weed watching the spectacle from afar gave a satisfied laugh.

“Really a great scene!”

When he suffered through the volcanic eruptions, it was the worst. Hunting was interrupted and he had to flee far away. In the process he was deprived of his undead, truly an infernal calamity!

But when others take damage from volcanoes and earthquakes, there was no wonderful sight better than this. It was like a funny story of a cousin’s mountain land’s prices dropping.

“Never forget this for a lifetime!”

In the sky, fragments of the volcanic eruption fell everywhere like meteorites. Lava stained rocks spewing smoke in the clear sky

hit the ground.

Syuuuuu – kwagwagwagwang!

A tremendous roar stirred as a blast to the ground made a huge hole. From the debris, the fortress created by Haven Kingdom's fleet fell. The painstakingly made fences and walls shattered like pieces of paper and users and sailors died.

“This is dangerous.”

“Come on! Run to the edge of the river!”

The piled up fortress to prevent monster raids became an obstacle when escaping. In addition to toppling over onto the ground by earthquakes, chunks of lava could be seen falling from the sky.

“Euaaaaag!”

While yelling and screaming at their maximum, the sailors died gloriously!

Dozens of volcanoes in Las Phalanx began erupting at the same time with debris falling like rain. As though thousands of small meteorites were falling, it was a dangerous yet breathtaking sight.

Until now, Weed was in safe places every time volcanic eruptions happened, but they were not guarantees. Just dozens of meters

away from him were falling rock debris.

“As long as one is here, there’s no safe place.”

Having experienced several volcanic eruptions, he confirmed safety zones for survival. Weed clung to the back of the mountain peak. The flying debris from the volcano eruption that hit the peaks did hardly any damage.

“At this rate we have to withdraw aboard the ships.”

“Let’s get out of here until the volcano calms down.”

The users and sailors fled to take refuge aboard the ships anchored at the Unfreezing River, but then they saw a massive undead legion. In the background of lava flowing in the Cracked Lands, undead legions consisting of Death Knights, Witches, Ghouls, Zombies, Skeleton Warriors, Skeleton Mages, Ghosts, etc. advanced.

“Undead!”

“All the undead legions are advancing. Let’s get ready!”

Zombie arms were swinging and shaking as they came running. Although they shattered from being hit by fireballs along the way, more undead followed suit.

“Keuheuheuheu.”

“Hikkeuk! Hikkeuk!”

Beyond the broken rock walls came the attack from the undead. Whenever lava debris fell, the bright light of flames rose. Every time it did, users and sailors could be seen fiercely fighting the undead.

Death Knights opened their mouths with predetermined words.

“Don’t flee, buried in this lava everyone will die.”

“The purpose of our lives is to catch your ankles. Don’t run away and fight us!”

With the words Weed gave the Death Knights, the enemy’s morale was destroyed.

“Volcanoes will explode even more greatly. The flooding lava will obliterate this place.”

Haven Kingdom’s fleet was at the top of the hill where the terrain made it easy to defend against the invasion of general monsters. On the contrary though, when the volcano exploded, a large number of debris covered it. Of course no matter how the lava flowed out up there, they would not be submerged, but suffering from a volcanic eruption for the first time maximized their anxiety and fear.

They had enough power to defeat the undead, yet they did not concentrate on the battle, preoccupied with escaping and avoiding lava debris. The Death Knights and undead obtained good results.

Hit by the magic of the Skeleton Mages, the sailors were gradually led into the world of death.

“Keulkeulkeul!”

Weed laughed delightedly. Committing a bad deed and indulging in the misfortune.

“The feeling of eating spicy chicken next to a hungry person.”

Geuminyi, Rover, Golden Bird and Seoyoon watched this spectacle.

While commanding the undead, he constantly laughed with satisfaction. The misery of others was considered good luck, a wonderful delight. Because that was his original nature!

Rather if Weed suddenly became kind to strangers such as dividing money and items to give beginners, they would be even more shocked and worried. Still, it was hardly possible for Weed to have changed, but even though he was setting up more bad deeds, with their relationship it was understandable.

Because the volcanic eruptions became more intense, the sailors and pirates did not come out from their cover. With the undead, sailors and pirates entangled in combat, he couldn't help but enjoy the sight. By lava debris, undead also died collapsing.

“Time to gently use new attacks.”

As the undead reduced, mana was restored. Weed held the Staff of the Fallen Saint toward the fortress and chanted curse magic.

“Though your bodies I will create undead. For eternity you shall never leave my hands. Declaration of the Necromancer!”

Weed casted 4 curse magics in a row. Physical abnormalities, itching, fear, stimulus!

Ever since the Las Phalanx volcanoes erupted, the morale of the sailors and pirates was shockingly low. Drinfeld and the Navy Knights did not make any preparations at all for volcanic eruptions. While dealing with the undead legion, the lowered morale dropped even more from the chanted magic.

“The first opponent that must be killed.....”

Weed targeted both the Priests and Wizards hidden in the fortress. The pirate users that could use divine power or magic numbered only 7. Ship classification, turning capability and cannon carrying capacity were critical offshore so Priests were not that necessary. Wizards too, but aboard when miserable battles frequently take place, it was not uncommon to turn the tide.

“Corpse Explosion!”

Weed while waving his hands gathered white mana and chanted the spell. The magic was concentrated on the Priests and Wizards

treating the wounded. Where they gathered, Weed's mana came into contact with a corpse and it violently exploded.

Necromancer's Bone Throw was their basic attack magic, but the damage of Corpse Explosion was far more powerful than that of intermediate-grade Wizards.

“Keuaaag!”

“It's a magic attack!”

“The Necromancer commanding the undead legion, where is he?”

“Weed! Weed's hiding somewhere while commanding the undead legion.”

Unable to think clearly in the midst of the volcanic eruptions, only now did they finally notice Weed.

Corpse Explosion on the living, depending on the health the inflicted damage can be up to 10 times as much. With the chain of Corpse Explosions and the weak defense of Priests and Wizards, deaths en masse. More than 60 sailors suffered both large and small injuries.

Exploding a large amount of bodies at once, related magic mastery is increased.

Widely known name in the Navy Knights, Oleuban has been killed.

Notoriety increased by 13!

Wanted in the Kingdom of Norton, pirate Ballakal has been killed.

Fame increased by 5!

Notoriety reduced by 5!

You can receive a reward if you go to the Kingdom of Norton.

Innocent people killed.

Innocent people killed.

Innocent people killed.

Level has increased.

Notoriety will increase by 1980.

Due to the effects of the Staff of the Fallen Saint, the effects of black magic and Necromancer skills are strengthened by up to 70%.

For every single living human sacrifice, all stats will increase by 85 for one week.

Maximum mana increases by 270%.

Due to the Staff of the Fallen Saint, notoriety will further increase by 2010.

Have set a record as a Necromancer.

Most humans killed in the fastest time.

At Weed's mouth, a wicked smile formed.

"Too bad, regrettable it's only to this degree."

Even bad things are ranked, that is law. Any bad thing Weed did was in another dimension. Whenever he killed sailors and pirates, he gained balanced fame and notoriety. Griffith Pirates, not to mention Drinfeld's crew, about half had high notoriety or were in

a killer state. Killing them gave more experience and fame than usual and the benefits of notoriety reduction could also be seen.

“Weed is up there!”

Weed was finally discovered. Users active in the seas were characterized by very good eyesight. They turned their attention to the exploding volcano and looked around to detect the scene of Weed chanting magic. The modified skeleton wearing robes and holding the Staff of the Fallen Saint! On his forehead, a vivid red colored name was revealed.

Weed

“Avoid the bodies, who knows when the next attack will come!”

“No, he is alone, just attack and kill him.”

In the midst of the non-unified opinions, Drinfeld made a decision. He heard that while avoiding the volcanic debris, Weed came out of hiding to attack.

“Organize the troops and catch Weed!”

He hid early on because the undead legions that dealt such great damage were not found until late. The image of sustaining major damage due to the sudden attack intensified the desire to catch Weed within his mind. But then in the northern direction, Death Knight Van Hawk rushed toward the fortress. And in the west Vampire Lord Tori came running.

The problem was the 50-60 monsters dashing right behind them! Bollards and Tairbeths had a degree of cuteness that could be felt at a charming level. Weed on the other hand ordered the undead legions to drag the enemies that repeatedly defeated them, the Chaos Warriors that continuously teleported short distances to chase them.

“This time it’s a legion of Las Phalanx monsters!”

The users in the fortress screamed in unison! Avoiding the lava debris, their spirit was nonexistent. Following the undead was the monster raid. Everything was going according to Weed.

He picked only the most detestable acts. Forced into this position of suffering, they went crazy.

“All hands prepare for battle!”

From the cover of the fortress they were forced to come out and fight. And after a while, the monsters of Las Phalanx overran them.

The elite users of Haven Kingdom’s 2nd fleet and the pirates in the worst situation brandished their weapons. Relying on their colleagues and the walls, they resisted the monsters. Despite the absence of Priests and Wizards, they stayed strong and endured with courage.

From the time they suffered through hard times during the adventure to the volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, viewership increased, and ever since Weed launched his attack, viewership won 1st, 2nd and 3rd simultaneously.

Haven Kingdom's fleet and the pirates were attacked by monsters and a Necromancer!

-Never would have guessed Weed would encounter them alone. Still, without waiting, he attacked first as they abandoned their line.

-It's not fair. As they suffered through a disaster, he launched a surprise attack. Isn't that too cowardly?

-They're stupid for not being prepared.

-Until they got familiar with Las Phalanx, they should have been careful. They're not at the age where parents still change their diapers you know.

-Gathering in large numbers sounds fair?

-There seems to be something wrong with your expectations about Weed. Did you think of a Knight or Warrior appearing heroically? I'll tell you the truth, during Continent of Magic, Weed was famous for thoroughly wiping out monster hunting grounds. Guilds that challenged them were indiscriminately trampled over and destroyed through his means and methods.

-That's Weed.

-It's useless to write about Weed's notoriety. Quite a lot of users tremble at their bad experiences with Weed from the Continent of Magic. You think it's a joke that people say Weed passing through is more frightening than a flying Dragon?

-Using monsters and the terrain is a classic technique of Weed. At the truly most contemptible tricks used without hesitation, the enemies cower so of course he's stronger.

-Cruelty is fine by me!

Not only normal users, several guilds, nobility, feudal lords and so forth watched the broadcast.

“Keulkeulkeul.”

Weed watching the sailors and pirates fight laughed insidiously.

Although getting hit by lava debris and dying, they fought the undead and monsters to defend the place. He did not feel like applauding their sublimity, camaraderie or combat ability.

Weed was the villain here.

Noticeably, common sailors and pirates seemed unable to fight.

The aftermath of the curse gave evidence that morale severely dropped and combat ability was affected quite a bit. Drinfeld's sailors and the Griffith Pirates' power weakened a lot more than normal. In group combat, invisible morale was more important.

1,000, 2,000 people collapsed from morale alone, and for a couple hundred of them, the degree of power they could exert weakened further.

“Such evil deeds, from now on better just listen to what he says.”

Death Knight Van Hawk acted like a Dark Knight. Isolated between the enemies, he fought his way to victory against the attacking Navy Knights. Using powerful attack skills, he severed their lives before they could escape, and whenever Van Hawk's health and mana fell, Weed used magic accordingly to restore them. As an undead under the command of a Necromancer, he was able to report his health and mana to him.

Vampire Lord Tori rendered himself invisible for the sake of unleashing surprise attacks. Grasping the nape of sailors, he plunged his sharp fangs in. In the midst of fighting monsters, they died from the suddenly appearing Tori. Filling his health and mana to maximum, the attack of Vampire Lords! Then appeared his subordinates, the True Blood Vampire Clan. Because they did not have to be worried about being completely destroyed by priests, they changed into Vampire Bats and attacked with their wings. However, hit by the lava debris in the air, they scattered like dust.

“The sacrifice of the True Blood Vampire Clan is huge.”

Most of the Vampires were still young. They grow through battles, but unavoidable sacrifice was bound to happen. Flying in the sky through the lava debris, they attacked from the air toward the ground. Breaking through the defense of the sailors and pirates, they plunged their fangs into their napes. For the Vampires, it was an opportunity to increase their immense power.

Weed was in a relatively calm place, but chaos surrounded the far too pitiful Drinfeld and Griffith.

Toward Weed, attacks occasionally made it through.

“Fire! Kill him!”

Blinded by fame or angry at the loss of their colleagues, users attacked with things such as arrows. Of course, such blind attacks might hit Weed so without any second thoughts, he hid himself and collected mana.

“Rover, as the one who created you, without knowing you have become truly handsome. Rover you want some snacks? Come closer and look.”

Rover sauntered over. Although dubious about Weed giving him snacks, he still moved his feet.

Weed violently grabbed Rover's neck.

“Mana Drain!”

Eummeoeoeoeo!

Absorbing Rover’s mana. Thinking about it, the preferred method would be intimacy, but alternating between Geuminyi and Rover, he quickly absorbed mana.

“Corpse Explosion!”

Calamity spread throughout the fortress and the scattered corpses exploded. In the midst of the dense barrier formation, Corpse Explosion. Within the sailor’s eagerly made fortress, rocks scattered disorderly throughout and everywhere caught fire, making it difficult to properly find traces.

Mean, nasty, dirty attack method, but the effect was perfect!

“Now, let’s gently use another magic shall we?”

Weed chanted the magic to summon Death Knights. In the middle of enemy lines he summoned undead.

Drinfeld prevented the sailors’ formation from collapsing by commanding while striking and smashing the falling lava debris with his sword.

Leading the fleet as an admiral, he was proficient in naval warfare. Utilizing warships and weaving battle formations, bombarding and destroying enemies became a specialty. Thus, on the ground he had never seen such attacks that took advantage of monsters, magic and terrain.

There was also no way for him to imagine the reason why Weed would attack them first.

Even in the midst of getting his spirit crushed in various ways, he regained his cool and prepared a counterattack.

“You get out there and kill Weed!”

“Yes, sir.”

He sent a detached force made of 2 reliable users and the best 8 Navy Knights in the fleet.

In the midst of escaping the fortress, debris fell from the sky hitting the detached force, sacrificing 2 Navy Knights! They crossed over land flowing with lava and jumped over the chasms in the earth. Plowing through the flames, 3 more lost their lives. To avoid being discovered, they took a roundabout way over a far distance, taking greater damage.

“Now we’re almost there.”

The Navy Knights drew their swords and calmly climbed the mountain. Wizards and Necromancers were vulnerable to melee.

They approached close to Weed intending to take his life.

But on the path they took, one person was blocking. Seoyoon, covered in armor up to her helmet was fully armed and waiting.

Seureureung!

Seoyoon without hesitation drew her sword.

Volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, monster raids, Corpse Explosion, etc. decreased the power of Drinfeld's fleet by more than half.

Number of survivors, 15 users, 219 sailors!

More than 30 sailors died from severe injuries, it was not an exaggeration to say they experienced a gruesome genocide. Over time, dead users can reconnect, but arduously trained sailors were inevitably lost forever.

Specifically at the end, Weed summoned the troublesome Poison Fog.

Priests and Shamans using detoxification magic were unable to detoxify the intermediate Necromancer magic, coupled with excessive injuries from battles and the inability to escape from the monsters led them to helplessly losing their lives.

Damage to the pirates was tremendous. The surviving pirate users barely exceeded 30, the pirate soldiers were only 152.

When landing in Las Phalanx, Drinfeld's fleet numbered more than just a bunch, considering that point, this deserved the be called a swarm of death.

“Weed!”

Drinfeld and Griffith ended up like this because of Weed. Anger broke out at the gruesome loss of subordinates and their genocide was clearly revealed via the broadcast to the enormous viewership.

“Without fail, kill.”

“Betting my honor as a pirate, I'll kill you.”

They resolutely decided to withdraw to the Unfreezing River for 4 days until the Priests and Wizards revived.

Weed in the meantime relaxed around the riverside and returned to sneakily hunting in order to raise the level of the undead legion.

Angry enough to cause shortness of breath, as if someone put hot red pepper powder in the water they were drinking.

“The goal now is to stab Weed to death.”

Drinfeld's fleet and the Griffith Pirates decided on a definite goal.

In both guild chat and forums, many stories were mocking them so they were trying to restore their honor.

Weed was also familiar with vengeance.

“When taking revenge on genuine bad guys, you shouldn’t be concerned about them, that is law!”

Poor execution that gives bad guys space is a major mistake, be merciful to the opponent and you end up with a large hit to the back of the head.

“Time to quickly withdraw.”

At the time the dead reconnected, Weed shrewdly moved the hunting grounds from the Severely Cracked Lands to the Sculptor’s Legacy Grounds.

Haven Kingdom’s fleet and the Griffith Pirates did not recklessly follow. They did not know if some traps lay there, but more than anything, against the vibration of the large volcanoes of Las Phalanx, they broke down into tears.

“Beware of tricks!”

“Thoroughly investigate and prepare for volcanic eruptions.”

In contrast to their carelessness last time, their figures covered

the boundary many times over. After a volcanic eruption occurred, they methodically widened the area they could chase to. Still, contrary to what was revealed on the surface, they had dispatched assassins with orders to take Weed's life.

“Those intensely prideful guys aren't going to retreat.”

Weed already expected retaliation to come in all sorts of manner. In Continent of Magic, fighting with prestigious guilds did not end with just one defeat. Weed was experienced, having suffered through many such battles.

“Master, humans are approaching.”

Vampire Lord, Ruler of Blood Tori managed to detect signs of nearby humans.

“How many people are there?”

“Ten. Coming from behind.”

“Strong?”

“Level of the guys we sucked blood from the other day.”

During a raid, in contrast your opponents shouldn't be as powerful, that is law. It was far from difficult for the Undead Legions, Tori, Van Hawk and Seoyoon to defeat the assassins consisting of only 10 Navy Knights. As the assassins were lured into the trap and annihilated, Weed picked up the loot.

“Have to obtain Knight equipment and sell expensively to many people.”

Kingdom Knights’ gloves and a belt for holding daggers acquired!

In addition, two items, a venom dagger and steel armor came out. Steel armor’s level limit was 290, making it good for midlevel knights to wear.

“Here, this is your share.”

Weed gave the dagger and steel armor to Seoyoon.

The most expensive armor was his favorite equipment, but because the items picked up at this time had important options, so when selling, it would be difficult to receive a very high price.

‘Create accomplice beforehand.’

Weed did not forget the importance of cooperation. Bad things, with 2 you can do better.

Prior to the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th raids!

When the volcanoes erupted, Weed breakfast, lunch or dinner gathered undead and monsters and tormented Drinfeld and Griffith. Ambushing only when they were hunting monsters or scattered.

Hateful, unmatched attack. Dirty and lethal, but it wasn't like Drinfeld and Griffith couldn't handle the undead and monsters. However, with the Bollards and Chaos Warriors chasing, no matter how strong the defense, at least 10 people were killed. Once reduced, sailors and pirates were difficult to replace in Las Phalanx, so Weed concentrated his attacks on them.

Undead were toying with sailors while the Chaos Warriors fought Drinfeld and the other users. Drinfeld, users and the Navy Knights suffered anguish at the teleporting Chaos Warriors, but at the end of the fierce battle defeated them and continued hunting.

Groups of 1-2 users died neatly on top of one another.

“Outstanding combat skills.”

Weed carefully observed those scenes.

Drinfeld and Griffith only defended themselves without counterattacking to avoid taking damage.

“Kill Weed!”

“Seize him. I'll give a generous cash prize.”

“Steal his equipment and quest!”

Griffith directly led his suicide corps organization and charged through a detour. Regardless of undead or monsters, the organizations only purpose was to stab Weed to death.

“Be ready to suffer damage. Unconditionally sever Weed’s life!”

Some remained as opponents to block the undead as the rest advanced. They had to make do with monsters attacking their bodies and two to three pronged roads that scattered them up allowing Weed to shake off his pursuers. The fight between the pursuers and the pursued!

Weed diligently ran with his clattering joints.

“I tell you I will never be caught!”

A good point about undead, stamina doesn’t fall. In addition, although his strength was weaker and his physical blow ability was reduced, his light body ran nicely.

“All Fours Run!”

Running around rocky mountains on all fours to escape, Skeleton Lich!

“Seize him!”

“What kind of Necromancer is fast like that!”

“Why isn’t he tiring out?”

The pursuit team ran up with all their might.

Until now, he virtually did not feel the need to use the All Fours Run skill, but even when moving he considered the situation and appropriated his skill mastery.

Once the skill level reached Intermediate, it changed, allowing him to move very effectively in mountain terrain. He was able to nimbly move around like a lion or tiger. In addition, when the skill level reached Advanced, a sound effect occurred.

Ttagakttagakttagak.

Those words he heard sounded of hoof beats stirring and galloping.

Weed knew the geography of Las Phalanx well and was familiar with the location of monsters. Larger scale tracking units naturally attracted the attention of monsters when the raids took place.

“Van Hawk, Tori! Fight!”

The men mobilized in the pursuit team were tormented.

“Harsh Wave Attack!”

Whenever Griffith used his skills, Bollards and Tairbeths sprang up everywhere. But in the midst of doing that, Weed could earn a considerable distance. With the gap between Griffith and the

suicide corps, he cast curse magic that quickly depleted stamina. Griffith could no longer keep chasing him and returned to the Unfreezing River.

Despite the risk, Weed pressed on with the raids.

“Several times is a difficult road.”

The suicide corps went to great lengths blocking across the horizon even after dying. Repeating the chase through escape paths, they developed techniques day by day to elude monsters. Even when Weed tried luring monsters, rather than turning away some went forward in a straight line. The chased side had limited options to escape whereas the pursuing side increased their skills day by day. Damage of the sailors and pirates increased, but they quite literally with their dying effort chased him.

“You followed with appropriate force and incentive, but too bad you handled it poorly.”

Seoyoon, Rover and Geuminyi ambushed and ended them.

Only a handful followed to the end, clearly trying to kill and steal his items, unconcerned that it was tougher than expected. Even if he tried to take the undead and monsters on a raid, Drinfeld's reconnaissance team in contrast operated in advance. Solid defenses like iron walls driving Weed into a trap with a seizing attitude evident.

Until the 6th raid, rather than closely matching with the undead, he dragged them around while using schemes! Weed smacked his

lips.

“Easy and simple tactics, is this the limit?”

But going that far, he was not disappointed.

From Continent of Magic he had numerous ways of dealing with prestigious guilds in Las Phalanx and merely used tactics with the fastest visible effects!

“7 more remain but making preparations is time consuming for me and damage can also occur so.....”

Even if you kill 10 times, die once and you lose money.

Weed took Seoyoon and his men to the Sculptor's Legacy Grounds and completely retreated.

Drinfeld continually failed on these grounds. He believed fighting head on and defeating the monsters and undead legion would be enough to kill Weed.

“This proves he's a tanuki.”

He was clever enough to prepare at least half a dozen escape paths before attacking. Due to factors such as crowds of monsters, traps, terrain, etc. a large number of troops were working.

“Don’t chase the crowds. Broaden our area and catch him here.”

Drinfeld obviously had an ulterior motive.

‘When we just arrived in Las Phalanx he was here. Even if he is more familiar by coming before us, there’s no evidence he can wander in a very wide area. And above all, to return to Versailles Continent, he has to pass through here.’

Drinfeld’s fleet took total control of the ghost ship and the Unfreezing River.

“If we go out and broaden the hunting area in Las Phalanx, we will definitely meet him.”

Drinfeld’s reckless pursuit caused enormous damage to his subordinates. Because ultrahigh level monsters lined Las Phalanx, patience should be exercised, but his mind had no intention of forgiveness.

“In the end I will kill him. I will prevent him from returning to Versailles Continent ever again.”

For the sake of redeeming his shattered pride, Haven Kingdom’s 2nd fleet admiral had to kill Weed. Drinfeld requested reinforcements from Hermes Guild. With most of them now consisting of only Navy Knights or sailors, they could not effectively chase the fleeing Weed hurling undead at them.

- About the proposal to stab Weed to death, I request to be borrow support troops.....

After a short discussion, Hermes Guild sent a positive answer. They were ready for the soon to rise prelude of their Hegemonic alliance, but Drinfeld's failure was instantly Hermes Guild's failure.

-Weed's acting as a Lich. I'll send 15 Senior Priests, 10 Senior Wizards and 10 Knights as escorts.

The level of support troops was beyond the scope Drinfeld hoped for.

-Thank you. I'll definitely get Weed.

-For smooth tracking, I'll send 8 Assassins, 4 Thieves and 1 Excavator together. Be sure to kill Weed as well as dig up the dungeons of Las Phalanx.

In order to take total control of Las Phalanx on air with a show of force, Hermes Guild decisively dispatched troops.

“Those bastards, are they cursing me somewhere?”

Weed roughly scratched his ears. Although his cursing reduced much, not until 1-2 months of Royal Road did he finally start eating well.

“In Versailles Continent I have been living well-mannered but... your side touched first.”

Weed had been living much restraint. Overcharging and selling sculptures and several other products, relentlessly thrashing the price of goods others sold at, to the extent of handling beginners with the act of eating grass porridge, all done in order to live!

“Anyway, I will never be able to return without breaking through those bastards.”

From the beginning, it was not a problem that could be solved by asking for forgiveness. Not even entering with their waists bent bowing down would accommodate him.

“First, for the sake of preventing those bastards from catching me, I have to continue observation. Tori, Van Hawk, Rover, Geuminyi!”

“Yes, Master-nim!”

“Get combat ready.”

Increasing the undead legion to maximum, Tori, Van Hawk and the sculptures of life, fight preparations were completed.

“Finally, time to hunt Chaos Warriors.”

To solve the quest, exploration of Las Phalanx began at that moment. He instructed Seoyoon on how to fight the Chaos Warriors.

“These guys absolutely do not take defensive postures unless they are trying to teleport short distances. In particular, when several of them have most of their health lowered, they gather around each other, so you have to be careful.”

He sufficiently observed the combat preferences of the Chaos Warriors when fighting with undead and when Griffith fought against his traps.

“Dangerous monsters, but unless you make a mistake, you can catch. Even if all undead are sacrificed, hunt them down.”

Van Hawk aboard Rover boasted of his strong muscles, ready to exhibit maximum power of Knights. Last time Geuminyi fought the Chaos Warriors with Rover, but they were no longer committed so now he just walked.

Blocking the route to the place where the Armenian Pirates were annihilated, 8 Chaos Warriors!

To increase leadership, Weed’s Lion’s Roar exploded.

“Undead together with me, Blood Lord, Death Knight, those I’ve granted life to, Rover, Geuminyi! Everyone attack!”

“Keuaaaang!”

Weed yelled and the undead stirred their arms as they rushed toward enemies! To inspire courage for the difficult battle ahead,

the Necromancer's battle cry.

‘Pretty cool. If she sang along at this moment, it would be most wonderful.’

Weed stole a glance at Seoyoon. After many battles together, she was blocking her ears with both hands. For Seoyoon, it was just a loud noise only! After the yelling sound ended, she drew her sword and advanced. The prey was 5 Chaos Warriors.

Chapter 5: Seulroe's Story

“There are no monsters that do not die when beaten a hundred times. Attack!”

Weed commanded the undead legion to attack the Chaos Warriors while at the same time preparing to cast curse magic.

The axe wielding Chaos Warriors took down half a dozen of the undead, in order to successfully defeat them Weed must quickly cast the curse magic.

“Dark and damp air, blow the wind that carries the rotting stench of the dead.”

Curse magic that can only be used when there are a lot of zombies!

It reduces mana, stamina, and vitality as well as lowering immunity towards various negative effects.

Weed directed both of his hands towards the Chaos Warriors.

“Breath of Decay!”

The magic casted gave off a foul odor.

The Chaos Warriors were directly affected by the curse since they are within the full range of the Necromancer's contaminating magic.

Seoyoon was unaffected by the curse since a spell immunity was prepared in advance.

The undead continued to charge but as expected they were slain by the Chaos Warriors.

But even so, the large quantity of zombies attacking steadily reduces the health and stamina of the enemy.

With their arms bent, the undead continues to rush blindly with no fear of dying which resulted in lowering the enemies' morale.

"Cloud of darkness gather and take away their sight. Blinding Jinx!"

Weed directed the curse magic towards the Chaos Warriors but failed to affect them.

The Chaos Warriors used teleportation to avoid the curse as soon as it was casted.

"Cloud of darkness gather and take away their sight. Blinding Jinx!"

Weed didn't gave up on using the curse magic on the Chaos Warriors and observed their movement each time they teleported to avoid the curse.

The purpose of the curse magic was to limit their sight.

By clouding their field of vision by darkness they will not be able to see the Necromancer.

Same thing with the movement of the enemy, position of their comrades, incoming magic attacks but the effect does not last very long.

Weed memorized the teleportation patterns of the Chaos Warriors while keeping a tab on the mana consumption of his spells.

“They are now separated!”

The Chaos Warriors suddenly set fire to the undead legion.

The undead are being destroyed from the hits of the flaming axes.

When the Chaos Warriors swings their axes to the ground blazing fire walls are erected.

With the combined offense and defense of these attacks, the

battle had become even more difficult.

Casting curse magic while maintaining the undead legion had cost a lot of mana, Weed cannot afford to waste more of it.

“But now I know how to counterattack. Skeleton Mages, Archers attack!”

Magic and arrows were focused on the Chaos Warriors that produces the fire walls.

Seoyoon, Tori, and Van Hawk riding aboard Rover charged at the remaining 5 Chaos Warriors.

The moment the enemies use teleportation the curse magic had already been prepared to be casted.

The locations with high chances of them appearing have all been determined!

“Blinding Jinx”

The Skeleton Archers and Mages targeted the possible areas.

Those locations are now being bombarded by arrows, magic, and curses.

The Chaos Warriors received the curse as soon as they appear and a dark blue haze covered their eyes.

“Two!”

It successfully affected two of them.

“Concentrate attack.”

The Chaos Warriors that were cursed focused their attacks on the Skeleton Mages and Archers.

Though Necromancers fight using only spells and the undead, being able to assess the situation and fast decision making is also necessary.

The two cursed Chaos Warriors could not avoid the arrows and magic due to their clouded field of vision.

Attacks done by the Skeleton Mages and Archers are now showing their effects.

Fighting with 8 Chaos Warriors is quite difficult.

It's scary at how they greatly reduced the quantity of the undead.

Tori and Seoyoon as well as Van Hawk fought one each while the

numbers of the undead continue to decline.

Geumini commanded a Skeleton Archer unit to help by concentrating their attacks at one point.

“I guess now is the time.”

The health of the two Chaos Warriors had been drastically reduced.

“5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Now.”

As soon as one-third of their health is left Weed began collecting mana for casting the curse magic.

“Cloud of darkness gather and take away their sight. Blinding Jinx!”

The magic was casted again towards the weakened Chaos Warriors!

Though it's hard to notice the effects at first but the curse magic showed its results when the Chaos Warriors teleported themselves towards the undead legion.

The curse magic had again successfully affected the Chaos Warriors!

Though one-fourth of the undead had been defeated along the way.

“Burn the Zombies! Do not sacrifice yourself pointlessly. Attack!”

They began to concentrate their attacks on a single area.

The Chaos Warriors showed a strong sense of camaraderie.

“Focus your attacks on one of the weakened enemy.”

“Okay, golgolgol!”

A method of attack that takes advantage of the behavioural patterns of the Chaos Warriors!

The Chaos Warrior Seoyoon was fighting against with is a named monster.

When the Chaos Warrior detected that its allies were in danger it immediately tried to use teleportation but failed to activate.

It was one of the Berserker's job skills which binds the enemy to continue the fight and prevents them from escaping.

Seoyoon fought using her sword skills but then as the battle continues a blazing red was encroaching the area.

With health and mana declining, the Berserker continues its onslaught towards the enemy.

Blow after blow the sword continues to strike, an advanced sword skill that allows one to relentlessly attack.

The axe wielding Chaos Warrior was forced into defense.

The surrounding area had now become a sea of fire but Seoyun showed no care at all.

Until the health of a Berserker is reduced to zero the enemy must continue the battle unable to escape.

The same applies to the Berserker, the battle must go on until one of them dies, a very dangerous profession indeed.

- Chaos Warrior has been defeated.
- Due to the success of the hunt Seoyun and the party members' Fame rises by 2.
- Experience has increased.

The Successful Hunt of Chaos Warriors!

At the beginning of the hunt Weed explained to his party that when Chaos Warriors received certain amount of damage they tend to regroup with other Chaos Warriors via teleportation.

“Have to stay vigilant, they are even more dangerous when they’re about to die. Carelessness will only lead to death. Although the undead can be sacrificed, they can be brought back to life again but if a sculpture of life dies then it will be a huge loss. Must prepare an escape route when fighting them.”

Weed repeated this lecture 17 times.

Seoyoon was now fighting another Chaos Warrior and when its health was less than half of the original value she launched a powerful attack.

A Berserker’s unique skill that increases the damage done by an attack but consumes twice the mana of an ordinary skill.

When they enter a state where it is hard to follow their movements the delay when using skills are reduced by half, such is the characteristics of a Berserker.

The damage done from the attacks had greatly fastened the hunt of Chaos Warriors.

Even if Weed doesn’t support her she can definitely clear up the monsters from dungeons and hunting grounds all on her own.

Seoyoon was quite resourceful but it is mostly thanks to Weed's lecture.

He did not have to worry about her since he already explained things.

He was even secretly proud of her since she listened to him 17 times.

Now there is one less Chaos Warrior and two are in a state of imminent death!

Weed had the confidence that they can win.

‘The undead took less damage than I had thought.’

The undead legion has been reduced by 30% but the Death Knight and the elite units are still in good condition.

The corpse of the Chaos Warrior Weed obtained was very useful.

Step 4 undead summoning magic.

A large amount of mana is needed to resurrect a corpse.

“Soul of the warrior that fell to the depths of hell, come and take advantage of this flesh. Animate Dead!”

An undead Chaos Warrior had been produced from the corpse.

It looks similar to when it was alive but the eyes showed a deep blue luster.

A soul of a warrior, Nayideo, has been summoned.

Specter of the mercenary Nayideo, died without leaving a name in the history of the Versailles continent!

Nayideo had good skills and survived through countless battles but eventually lost his life in exploring a dungeon.

The nobles that led the dungeon expedition did not compensate the family of Nayideo.

Nayideo had been neglected and his soul harboured great hatred towards the nobles.

Characteristics:

Warrior Mercenary, fear of dungeons, aversion towards nobility, can use different types of weapons.

It has all the physical abilities of a Chaos Warrior!

Two of the Chaos Warriors stayed behind to protect the two

injured allies.

The other three teleported between the undead legion and setting them ablaze.

Seoyoon was responsible for fighting one of them as well as Tori while Van Hawk with Rover was charging at another.

It was now time to give command to the named undead.

“I’ll just call you Chaos Warrior. Now go handle the one Vampire Lord Tori is chasing.”

“Yes. My. Lord.”

Nayideo the Undead Chaos Warrior used teleportation to instantly close in and attack the enemy Chaos Warrior.

Fire axe against fire axe, whenever those two weapons met sparks and explosions occur.

It is difficult to fight against a Chaos Warrior but the undead Nayideo has limitless stamina giving him the upper hand in the battle.

Even if the enemy teleports away, Nayideo will just follow him with teleport as well.

The two teleports while striking each other 5 to 6 times!

“Tori, you fight with Van Hawk!”

“But I want to finish off that guy.”

“Disobeying my orders during battle? Shall I beat you? Or shall I kill you? Which do you prefer?”

“I will follow master’s order!”

While Weed let Nayideo do battle with one of the enemy, he took charge of the rest.

Tori had difficulty fighting against the Chaos Warrior alone.

However, with the combined forces of Tori, Van Hawk and Rover the battle with the Chaos Warrior had become easier.

The summoned undead though they do not level up they still provide experience to the enemy.

“It’ll be much harder to defeat the Chaos Warriors later but I will definitely get more experience from this.”

Weed was overjoyed with the prospect of growth!

In order to increase the margin of safety, Weed added one more unit to attack the enemy.

Geumini leading a unit full of Skeleton Mages, Archers, and other undead hunted the enemy and soon Van Hawk delivered the final blow.

Riding Rover with tremendous speed, he demonstrated his swordplay and cut the neck of the Chaos Warrior.

“Well done!”

Now two more had died, Seoyoon had just defeated another one.

Only five more are left and two are wounded.

One of which has a serious injury, death is imminent.

The situation doesn't even have the need to attack.

“Rupture!”

A simple curse magic.

Blood continues to shed from the injuries reducing both health and stamina.

“A little more of the mana I used for the Animate Dead has been restored.”

Weed's five remaining battle is successfully nearing its end.

Excitement filled the area.

When Weed spread open his jaws, Seoyoon blocked her ears.

Weed was singing!

“Offer to me the corpses of my enemies! I am the Lord of the Undead! The glorious power of the undead will lead the battle to victory!”

The Chaos Warriors, in desperation, tried to run away but in the end they could not escape death after all.

Hunted a group of Chaos Warriors.

Reputation has increased by 24.

Pioneering in Las Phalanx had increase by 0.3%. Pioneers have a 100% increase in adaptability.

When dealing with monster on the area, defense and resistance are increased. Pioneering can be increased when exploring

dungeons.

Due to the combat experience, fire resistance will increase by 1.7% for the next 100 days.

The increase in resistance will accumulate as you continue to hunt.

As the fire resistance increases, deterioration of health can also be reduced.

Hostility from the Chaos Warriors increases. Familiarity towards Fire Giants has risen.

Pioneering, very useful in hunting areas that it can even make you don't want to leave.

But it doesn't have enough significant effect yet and due to the volcanic eruptions, hunting had become even more tedious and difficult.

“Fire resistance and familiarity with the Fire Giants.”

Weed had seen a lot of videos about exploration adventures like being woken up in the middle of a dungeon only to see a Fire Giant in front of you.

The power of the Fire Giants within the lava streams combined

with the volcanic eruptions is definitely beyond that of a King Hydra's poison.

“Though I'm not sure, this might become useful later. It'll be great if it does.”

Weed decided to think positively.

At the place of the dead Chaos Warriors, items are scattered.

“The most thrilling moment.”

When checking for items, one must remain calm and get rid of idle thoughts.

“Please hit a jackpot.”

From the spot where the first Chaos Warrior had died were some gold coins and minerals and a horned helmet.

It had a lot of decent options adding to strength and defense but can only be worn by Dwarves and has a level limit of 440.

“Secondly, we have...”

The equipments gained were not something to be desired.

Weapons and armors worn only by Chaos Warriors, torches and cooking utensils, and some fire balls.

“Identify!”

Flame Orbs: Durability 3/3 Explosive Power 205

Handle with care. Removing the seal and throwing it will make it explode.

It can cause a great deal of damage towards low fire resistant monsters and it can also be used to destroy buildings and terrains.

It was very valuable and it would be a waste to just divide it between Seoyoon and himself.

This item can be highly utilized depending on the situation.

“Hmm, this stuff should be distributed fairly. Since there are six flame orbs and six of us then we’ll each have one.”

Weed, Rover, Geumini, Tori, Van Hawk, as well as Seoyoon.

Even if divided like this, Weed didn’t hear any complaints from Seoyoon.

Though the distribution was kind of unfair, she seemed to have

no obsession towards the item.

To have battled directly with monsters in the hunt but then showed no interest in the item.

Weed felt ashamed so he decided to give 2 to Seoyoon.

“You have fought hard so I will give you my share.”

Tori, Van Hawk, Rover, and Geumini recovered after awhile from gazing the received flame orb.

At the spot where the third and seventh Chaos Warriors had died, there were blue axes that shone.

Weed’s heart suddenly started to pound.

“Finally... Something tangible, an axe.”

I must not be careless while looking for items.

Weed picked up the rest of the japtem on the ground while approaching the axe bursting with emotions.

“Identify!”

Chaos Axe:

Attack: 175 – 191

Durability: 130/130

Axe of the warriors from Las Phalanx. This weapon created from the mixture of metals and minerals emits an aura of chaos.

Imbued.

Restrictions:

Limited only to combat related professions.

Advanced Axe Mastery is required.

Strength must be 1,300 and above.

Minimum level limit is 420.

Options:

It can deal a fatal blow towards enemies with weak defense.

Can launch a consecutive series of fatal blows.

Has a 3% mana absorption.

The chaos aura imbued in the axe allows teleportation within a short distance.

“Jackpot!”

A unique item has appeared!

The axe is a heavy weapon that has a lot of destructive force.

Though swords are versatile, an axe deals a lot more damage as a weapon.

Of course, it has its disadvantages as well due to its short length and difficulty to use but when a player use an axe it can speed up the hunting.

And among the players there are many axe users in the Warrior class.

“Excellent.”

With the addition of the two axes, only the flame orbs are worthy of mention amongst the japtems.

Animate Dead was used on the rest of the corpses.

In order to maintain the 8 new undead, 30% of the mana was consumed.

Weed skills consumes a lot of mana but he compensates it with increase mana regeneration from his equipped items.

Time to go up the volcano of Las Phalanx and hunt the Chaos Warriors again!

With his high class Undead Chaos Warriors and experiences points from the last battle, hunting became much easier.

Obtained an axe and 14 flame orbs!

But Weed was frowning.

“Axe of the Chaos Warriors, it is a great weapon but the drop rate isn’t very high. This is quite a rare item.”

The numbers of high-level users are limited.

If this axe didn’t have a low drop rate, its value may not have been that great.

“There’s only one way. Hunt and pick up a bunch of the axes then sell them as first of its kind.”

The first one to use, it’s the best way of selling to others.

While repelling the Chaos Warriors, the undead legion had been dramatically reduced.

For their replacement, high class undead were summoned using Animate Dead.

The level of the Necromancer's step 4 undead summoning magic was still low. Weed still needed to maintain his undead.

The mana consumption was huge but quality was better than quantity.

Furthermore, the summoned undead retained the teleportation ability which was very useful for chasing the enemy Chaos Warriors.

Weed has now gathered 20 Undead Chaos Warriors around him!

Weed uses Shapeshifter to turn into a crow to observed the location where the Armenian Pirates were wiped out.

Originally, Golden Bird that was restored from the Niflheim Empire should have been the one to observe the area but for some reason it did not want to cooperate.

“This should be close enough.”

While Weed was wandering, Rover scratched and smelled the ground.

In the area where the land overlaps due the earthquake, corpses of the Armenian Pirates lay scattered.

Amongst the dead bodies one was wearing a high class robe.

“That’s the guy.”

Weed has good instincts.

He is the one he needed to find after coming a long way in his quest to Las Phalanx.

“This commission sure is ridiculously hard.”

While hunting for Chaos Warriors, the Tairbeths and Bollards are slowly approaching from a not too far distance.

“The degree of difficulty of this Sculptor quest is hard to comprehend.”

A Sculptor definitely could not have arrived this far without the assistance of high levelled colleagues.

At that moment, a thought went straight to Weed’s head!

“Could it be that I have to take advantage of the sculptures in this quest?”

Stage 1 of the quest had him fought against the Embinyu Church and he even had to make use of his Shapeshifter ability just to get to where he is now!

Even if a Sculptor had somehow managed to arrive alone in Las Phalanx it would have been difficult due to the profession's poor combat ability.

But the Sculptor's Heritage was here.

Give Life to Sculpture!

“So this quest made me come all the way out here to acquire the sculptures left behind by the late Emperor Geihar.”

Learning how to make sculptures through practising with wood was the norm but Weed must learn the art of sculpture from the late Emperor Geihar through Sculpture Memories.

Must give life to the Sculptor's Heritage!

They were sculptures of life which sustained the beginning of the Versailles continent.

The sculptures that survived were all masterpieces.

Rover was sitting quietly while Weed walked over and rubbed his head.

‘This guy and Geumini are useless, 10-20 of those sculptures should be much more useful!’

Masterpiece sculptures.

The Sculptor's Heritage, many of the late Emperor Geihar's work were unexpectedly found there.

The sculptor who struggled to come to Las Phalanx with an exhausted body just to give life to sculptures and the conclusion of the touching story at the end of the quest.

But for some reason, Weed could not increase his familiarity with Golden Bird ever since he became a Necromancer.

“No, no, that can't be.”

Weed strongly shook his head and denied it.

“That is just ridiculous. I'm just speculating things, there's no way that in can be true, could it?”

The world would have definitely disliked the idea of getting close to an undead but Weed isn't someone who could think like an ordinary person.

As a course of his actions, he had to shapeshift into the Lich Shire and named himself as Deoreol to become the captain of the ghost ship, and then later, he modified and improved his transformation of the Lich Shire.

He then used its advantage in hunting.

“That shouldn’t be the case. It is only natural that the sculptures of life be useful and should show gratitude towards their master. So what do those that I granted life should respond?”

Mooooooooo!

Rover was dragging his feet across the floor while crying, Geumini suddenly stood guard holding a bow. They were the living proof of those granted with life.

Weed did not actively grant life to his sculptures due to the art stat penalty and the level drop but they were an absolutely necessary factor in this quest.

In order to solve the quest, the Sculptor’s Heritage must be given life but as to how much level must he sacrifice worries him.

Constant concern of profit and loss!

After suffering from this difficult quest, wouldn’t the reward be worth it when it’s completed?

“Keoheoheoheom! Anyway, I’ll see what happens when I arrive at my destination.”

As the old saying goes, if you are stupid, your body will suffer.

It's quite pitiful that Weed fully realized the meaning of that phrase through his own actions.

Weed stretched his hands while erasing his worries.

- You have acquired Barb Robe.

- You have acquired Fire Giant's Eye.

The robe was an expensive item. It was an item from the quest that means it will not disappear so it was necessary to loot it now since someone might take it later.

There was a figurine at the bottom of the robe.

Its figure was very similar to that of Golden Bird and it has accumulated a lot of dust and dirt.

Weed poured water from a canteen and washed the sculpture.

It revealed a beautiful silver color. The sculpture was made from a mixture of platinum and mithril.

Kkirururu!

Having found its lost partner, Golden Bird suddenly rushed towards the sculpture and rubbed its head. It then looked towards Weed with pleading eyes.

‘What?’

Weed decided to check the sculpture.

“The completion of the quest... Identify!”

Seal of the Ahreupen Empire, Mysterious Bird:

Durability 130/130

It symbolizes the authority of the Ahreupen Empire’s Imperial Household which ruled the Versailles Continent with grace.

It was made as a pair together with the Golden Bird Senoria Ruseroni. Made by a master sculptor.

Artistic Value: 51,300

Options:

Fame +4,500.

Nobility +150.

Honor +90.

Charisma +45.

Charm +100.

Affects the range of leadership and charisma.

Has an increasing effect. Increases familiarity towards female residents.

If used as an ornament, the loyalty of the nobles will increase by 15%.

Has a ruling effect. 5% increase in diplomatic advantage.

30% increase in luck when defending from a siege or from a large scale battle.

Can summon a mysterious fog. It cannot be damaged.

A historical treasure, due to having found one of the Seal of the Ahreupen Empire the Art Stat increases by 51.

Then the story of the cherished Seal of the Ahreupen Empire began to flow.

The Archmage Seulroeo.

He came to the Imperial Palace of the Niflheim Empire when it was being burned down by monsters.

Suddenly the Imperial Palace was covered by a dense mist!

The Honored Imperial Knights were waiting to start an ambush but Seulroeo, having a large amount of mana, blew them away.

The story from the Mysterious Bird!

Seulroeo can observe the whole area from his position.

Mordred, the glorious Imperial Capital of the Niflheim Empire, was being trampled and destroyed by monsters.

The Embinyu Priests and Barbarian Mercenaries were the ones that commanded the monsters.

Wandering around the Imperial Palace, Seulroeo found two swords that were sealed on the ground of the Imperial Villa.

A sword with clouds and thunderbolts drawn on it and a red sword without a scabbard!

After that, Seulroeo went to sea and became the captain of a pirate crew.

He then threw the sword that had the clouds and thunderbolts drawn onto it into the Black Sea, and together with his fully prepared pirate crew, arrived at Las Phalanx.

But then a sudden unknown poison attack wiped them all out!

The scene from the sculpture still continued.

After a long time had passed, a young Chaos Warrior had picked up a sword.

He then immediately went towards the entrance of a nearby dungeon.

Ttiring!

Completed the Agents of the Niflheim Empire (2)

The Archmage Seulroeo played a crucial role in the downfall of the Niflheim Empire by conspiring with the Embinyu Church.

He wanted to take revenge for his disciples and families that were killed but his actions still cannot be justified.

Seulroeo had taken the Red Star sword.

Made from the magic of a Red Dragon, as for the origins of how it came to the world, it is still unknown.

Fame increases by 3,600 as a reward from the quest.

All stats increases by 5 as a reward for the adventure.

Received 20 bonus stats. Can be distributed to any desired stats.

Title acquired!

Explorer of the Polar Region.

No one can stop you on the land you set your foot on.

Title is granted for the completion of a difficult quest in one of the continent's restricted zones!

When walking on rugged terrains, stamina consumption will be reduced by 60%.

Whenever in a restricted zone, resistance is increased by 10%.

Effects of skills are also increased by 7%.

Increase in stats was given as compensation from the mysterious sculpture. The final stage of the S-class quest was also revealed.

Ttiring!

The Recovery of the Red Star (3)

The sword by which a young Chaos Warrior took is a very dangerous weapon.

Created by a playful Dragon, a vast amount of mana is sealed within it.

When taken to the magic circle left behind by an Ancient Wizard in Las Phalanx, the monster that possessed it will gain tremendous power.

Imbeol's Circle is located in the deepest part of Las Phalanx..

Recover the Red Star before it absorbs the power of the magic circle as soon as possible.

If successful, you will be able to receive the appreciation of the northern races.

Difficulty: S

Quest Restriction: Last of the 3-stage quest. Limited only to Sculptors with Advance Sculpting.

If you accept the quest, you can view the story of Seulroeo.

Since Weed has come this far, he nodded immediately.

“I will make the Red Star mine... No, I will preserve the peace.”

You have accepted the quest.

In the Niflheim Empire, there was a rising genius, a young wizard

named Seulroeo..

He succeeded in every research he started.

He was the first to have fought against invading monsters. He was also acquainted with many races that are not human.

He had a charming fiancée named Letia Evelynn.

“You are the only one for me. I will endure everything just to be with you.”

Seulroeo promised to marry Letia and join the Aristocracy of the Niflheim Empire.

He has the typical characteristics of a hero.

A handsome face, a good house, a beautiful fiancée, and gifted with magic.

Seulroeo had so many gifts that any of his friends would be envious of!

“By the decree of the Emperor, Seulroeo will join the army to exterminate the monsters in the outer regions in one month’s time.”

“I accept.”

Seulroeo, together with the army, had killed a lot of monsters in the outer region using his magic.

Weed saw the giant and now extinct monsters being crushed by a display of powerful magic through the video.

Then Seulroeo went back to the capital hoping for a big reward for his meritorious deed.

“Letia’s family has been beheaded due to treason.”

His fiancée’s house had been cut into pieces.

Because the evidence was all too obvious, Seulroeo was helpless and could not do anything.

Seulroeo was sobbing in front of his fiancée’s grave.

Thereafter, due to his grief, he secluded himself in his laboratory together with his magic.

Rather than having thoughts of revenge against the Niflheim Empire he had cut off all attention towards the world and he immersed himself in his magical research.

And so, several seasons had come to past.

Within the shadows, voices can be secretly heard.

- He cannot move on with his fiancée's death.
- Seulroeo's despair will only make him more corrupted.
- Why would he still be on our side?
- He might try to overthrow Niflheim Empire, he and his disciples must be removed.
- Get rid of his families.
- Then we should go on with the plan.

While Seulroeo was still secluded in his laboratory, his family members had all lost their lives.

It was either caused by an unknown illness or an assassin's attack.

Even if the Niflheim Empire had investigated, the cause was never found.

While Seulroeo fell to an even greater despair, his disciples had

died having contracted a disease of unknown origin.

Amongst all this tragedy, an assassin tried to attack Seulroeo but he had caught him with his magic.

“Who are you? Tell me the one who ordered you to do this!”

“It was the Niflheim Empire!”

Then the assassin had suddenly committed suicide.

A necklace was found from the assassin.

Seulroeo started to doubt and quickly checked the back of the necklace.

And at the back of the necklace, he had finally found what he was looking for, a certain mark of a secret organization in the Niflheim Empire.

“Are they trying to dispose of me?”

A conspiracy led by the Niflheim Empire threatens the life of the Archmage.

Since that day, Seulroeo decided to run away and hide but this only led to a rumor within the Niflheim Empire that he was

secretly planning for a rebellion ever since he had lost his family and fiancée.

“I see, they really were behind all this.”

The frustrated Seulroeo had settled in a place where there were no humans and lived in solitude.

All the while he continued his magical research.

Due to his grief, he would sometimes be on the verge of losing his sanity.

One day, priests of the Embinyu Church came to him.

“We would like to grant you the opportunity to take revenge on the Niflheim Empire.”

Seulroeo, due to him living alone and having no contact with people, had become sober.

“A chance to get revenge....”

“Seulroeo, even though you have not sinned, isn't what happened to you unfair? According to our investigation, the fall of the House of Evelynn was staged by the Imperial Palace.”

The priests had provided a rusty necklace as evidence.

“This was found on the ruins of the house of Evelynn.”

“.....”

“You, who loved that woman and your family, even after losing them together with all of your disciples, you chose to become a hermit, now decide whether you want to take revenge or not.”

Magic of the Embinyu Church was casted upon the necklace.

Seulroeo was dazzled by the necklace and then images of Niflheim Imperial Knights burning the house of his family and his fiancée were shown.

“Revenge... I want vengeance.”

“You have chosen well. Together we will destroy the Niflheim Empire.”

“But who are you?”

“The Embinyu Church.”

“I think I’ve heard that name before. Where... have I heard of it? Ah! Are you the ones that worship an Evil God?”

“People are misinformed. We are trying to correct their

misperceptions about us.”

Seulroeo had been successfully brainwashed, the reason being his mind had weakened.

“I want to join.”

Seulroeo had joined the Embinyu Church. He took care of their weapons and armors and he had also given them all of his magical research.

War had been waged against the Niflheim Empire!

The Embinyu Church had made use of monsters as well as a regular army to randomly kill the citizens.

Having lost his reasoning, Seulroeo had become a pawn of the Embinyu Church and watched the massacre unfold before his eyes.

Seulroeo’s old friends had tried to protect the empire but they all lost their lives in his and the Embinyu priests hands.

“Finally I have returned.”

Seulroeo entered the now burning Imperial Palace.

Blinded by greed, he randomly stole the treasures while defeating

the knights he encountered.

The magic barriers were all destroyed and the Imperial Palace is now being overrun by the invading monsters.

Within the Imperial Palace, two swords can be found.

It was sealed there by the Niflheim Empire.

The Red Star.

And the sword that caused a great disaster to befall on the Versailles Continent in the past, the Asmodian Sword Drawer!

Drawer:

Durability 96/180.

Attack 218-249

The material used to create this weapon does not exist in the Versailles Continent. It is speculated that it had been used by the Asmodians.

Imbued. Can summon lightning and thunder storm.

Restrictions:

No level limit.

Applicable to all professions.

When used in battle, it will exhibit curse magic attributes.

No fixed properties.

If an Evil God worshipper were to possess this weapon, then this weapon's properties will change.

Options:

Can summon a monster from the Underworld by offering a sacrifice.

By offering a sacrifice, stats will increase.

Increases the power of dark magic by 200%.

Specializes in curse magic! Will be able to use all curse magic.

User will be immune to all curse magic. Can be use to rule over lesser monsters.

The moment his hand clasped the sword, Seulroeo face was filled with bitterness.

The brainwashing magic of the Embinyu Church was removed and his reasoning had returned.

“What have I done?”

Seulroeo had regretted his actions.

Joining the Embinyu Church that worshipped an Evil God then engaged in a conspiracy to destroy the Niflheim Empire and to dominate the continent.

His actions now cannot be undone.

Looking back, he realized he unknowingly joined the Embinyu Church when they visited him.

“The Embinyu Church must have been behind everything!”

From this point on, Seulroeo decided to devote the rest of his life in fighting against the Embinyu Church and reconstruct the Niflheim Empire.

“I must gather forces to fight against the Embinyu Church.”

He then threw away the Asmodian Sword Drawer to the sea but brought the Red Star with him to Las Phalanx.

In the history of magic, Imbeol was the most powerful master of fire magic. His magic was enough to melt down a whole castle.

He was one of the 12 greatest Wizards.

Seulroeo tried to go to Imbeol's Circle and absorb the mana stored there using the sword but due to him not returning to the Embinyu Church for a long time, the dormant poison spell that

was placed on him suddenly activated causing him to have a seizure.

“To actually die like this...”

Finally, Seulroeo’s demise fell into the hands of the incoming monsters from Las Phalanx.

“At last, the conclusion of the story.”

With the catastrophe that had befallen unto the continent, the name of the Embinyu Church had risen!

Weed finally learned the story hidden behind the quest.

Finally found the connection which ties the difficult S-class quest, the investigation of the fall of the Niflheim Empire which was caused by a large scale invasion of monsters.

“After fixing all the loose ends of the past, the reconstruction of Niflheim Empire can begin.”

In the process of completing the quest, details about the late Emperor Geihar von Ahreupen had came to light, as well as secrets of the sculptures of life, the Golden Bird and the Mysterious Bird, and having found the Sculptor’s Heritage.

It can only be commissioned to a Sculptor, what a great and

intangible asset.

It would be perfect if a lot of gems and minerals from Las Phalanx can be acquired as a reward for the quest.

“I must reclaim the dragon’s sword from the hands of that young Chaos Warrior. Anyway, that should be the most pressing matter.”

Good thing that place is not too far from here!

“If the quest is successful, I can obtain that Dragon Sword.”

While Weed was imagining getting his hand on the sword, his heart started to beat fast while having a shortness of breath and saliva drooling over his mouth.

The Dragon Sword that wasn’t created on the Versailles Continent was better than any other swords he had seen.

“Identify!”

Weed did not forget to check the robe of the Archmage Seulroe.

It can increase magical damage and reduce 30% of mana consumption of spells, with these effects, it can be considered a high class equipment.

“Jackpot!”

Weed had a wide smile but then he noticed Seoyoon. He suddenly felt pressured since he had monopolized the items.

But it was acquired through the quest, it was too valuable to be divided fairly.

Weed saw Seoyoon indifferently nodded her head.

There was an open hole in the torn robe Weed equipped that he obtained from the Wailing River.

Even if he repaired using the sewing skills, without the necessary fabric, although the increase in mana is fixed, there will be damage.

Weed had been wearing the robe for its effects but having his ribs exposed is quite unsightly.

“Thank you.”

Weed had never once felt this good when he had spent his time with Seoyoon.

Weed was very pleased that he could take all the items.

“Identify!”

Fire Giant’s Eye:

Durability 30/30

Superior magical material.

Can expand the range and power of a fire magic wand.

It is a raw material used as a magical reagent.

If one owns this item, Fire resistance will increase and will not be attacked by Fire Giants.

Options:

5% Fire resistance.

Receive recognition from Fire Giants.

Drinfeld had suffered huge damage from their attacks and was forced to retreat!

It was an item that ensures your safety against them.

Weed then equipped the barb robe.

“With this, will I be ready for the last part of the quest?”

However, Golden Bird was still looking at him with sad eyes.

Kkukku kkukku kkukku.

Weed alternatively looked at Golden Bird and the other sculpture made from mithril and platinum, the Mysterious Bird.

As soon as he noticed, Weed was able to quickly judge the situation.

“You really like this guy, huh?”

The Golden Bird suddenly twisted its thin legs and wings feeling shy when Weed pointed this out.

The late Emperor Geihar sculpted the Golden Bird and the Mysterious Bird around the same time.

However, the Golden Bird was brought to life and had a mission of protecting the late Emperor Geihar’s artifacts.

Weed would be able to gain a lot of familiarity from it using the Mysterious Bird!

Graceful and elegant, having a high charm that only the

Mysterious Bird can exhibit.

Emperor Geihar was already long dead and his sculptures in the continent continue to degenerate, but this one is different and is still in perfect condition.

Regrettably, Weed had transformed from a Sculptor to a Necromancer and due to this he could not increase his familiarity towards the Golden Bird.

Then in the midst of it all, it found the Mysterious Bird and begged Weed to grant life to it.

Kkuru kkuru.

Weed had already planned to take advantage of the situation.

He must have the upper hand in the negotiation since the Golden Bird is a tough opponent to persuade.

Then Weed began speaking his scripted lines.

“The art of sculpture is indeed a hard and difficult world. One has to suffer and must persevere in his constant search for beauty. A sculptor has to work for who knows how many night and days but still had a hard time making a living out of it.”

“...?”

Rover and the Golden Bird showed a puzzled expression.

Weed had a hard time in increasing his sculpture skill proficiency and he had to constantly make those cute animal sculptures along the way but only to be taken away from him by Seoyoon.

“I sacrificed a lot just to carve sculptures and you’re hoping that I would grant life to this sculpture if you just ask? When I’m in battle, you just stood there and ignore my situation, so why would I fulfil your request?”

Kku.. kkukku.

“Tell me, from the very beginning, was there anything wrong from what I said? Not once have you offered your help.”

Using a few words that delivered a threat but resulted to arouse guilt, truly a high level of persuasion!

The Golden Bird reluctantly made some noise for a while.

Weed nodded.

“Hmm, I can’t hear you well.”

Kkukku kkukku!!

Rover was happy that Golden Bird had now become his new colleague while Weed looked as if everything had gone according to plan.

He even acted to be meek.

‘To think that a hardhearted man like him could show such an expression.’

‘Maybe he might have a tender side after all.’

Rover started re-evaluating his owner but the sudden command of Weed cut off his thoughts.

“Lie Down.”

“...?”

Though the command was unexpectedly abrupt, the Golden Bird immediately lay down.

“Too slow. Do it quickly! Now roll on the ground 5 times!”

Orders were being issued by Weed!

The Golden Bird, trying to gain Weed’s favour, rolls on ground.

‘First I have to bring down his defiant side.’

Increasing the familiarity and at the same time having it work its worth, Weed had completely taken advantage of the favour.

“You can stop now and rest.”

Golden Bird stretched its wings while lying on the ground.

Seoyoon also wanted it to perform a few leaps but watching it lay down and rest was just too cute and adorable.

She had a firm belief that Weed would not order it to do something extreme.

“Chirp if I say one then tweet if I say two.”

Kkukku kkukku.

“One.”

Kkuwoo.

“Two.”

Tweet.

“Alternate!”

Kkuwoo – Tweet, Kkuwoo – Tweet.

Since Golden Bird’s level exceeded 500 it can swiftly moved tirelessly.

The bird heard Weed clapped loudly.

“Okay, you can stop and rise now.”

Golden Bird suddenly jumped up and within its sapphire-blue eyes showed an intense light of expectations.

The Mysterious Bird.

It had now been many years since the Emperor Geiher died and no one else but Weed can grant life to the long lost partner of the Golden Bird.

“I’ll grant you life, look forward to it.”

But Weed was still not satisfied and he plans them to work further from here on.

“Just like raising chickens, the taste of the meal will depend on how you raise them.”

Weed has acquired 1 more subordinate for battle!

‘Golden Bird’s level is 519... it is quite high.’

Emperor Geihar’s Sculptor’s Heritage will be granted life while on the quest!

Judging from the races’ special characteristics, they will have excellent combat ability.

Their levels would be definitely better than Rover and Golden Bird.

‘I must give life to the Mysterious Bird and have it do work later.’

They are the sculptures which symbolizes the Ahruepen Empire.

If life is given, they will definitely be high levelled.

Even if Golden Bird hadn’t requested it, Weed would still grant life to it since it is a part of his quest.

“I don’t feel like doing it right now. Golden Bird, depending on your performance I’ll grant life to it. So work hard from now on.”

Kkukku!

Chapter 6: Inferno Dungeon

Weed decided to go hunt first before tracking the young Chaos Warrior.

“I need to prepare before entering the dungeon.”

Fire resistance increases with every hunt of the Chaos Warriors in Las Phalanx.

The corpses of the Chaos Warriors were also valuable assets towards the Necromancer and Golden Bird, at the same time, was earnestly assisting in the battle.

As the battle goes on, Weed was surprised to see Golden Bird being surrounded by light and then its body and legs started to grow.

Its neck, wings, waist, all had started to enlarge!

It had transformed itself gaining a size of 3 meters and 20 centimeters.

Its golden flowing feathers were embedded with beautiful jewels.

A diamond crown was worn atop its head.

Golden Bird can use polymorph, the ability to change the body.

Mooooooooo!

“Golgolgolgol!”

The other sculptures of life gave out a shocked reaction when they saw Golden Bird.

In a way, they were wondering why they weren't created like that.

As sculptures made by Weed they have high pride when it comes to their appearance but they can only feel ashamed after seeing the difference.

“You guys are still good. Just do not forget what the Wyverns looks like.”

“.....”

Rover and Geumini became quiet when they heard about the Wyverns.

They were lucky that they weren't as hastily made like the ugly Wyverns.

Weed then led the undead.

“Chaos Warriors, let’s go!”

The Chaos Warriors makes use of short distance teleportation during the battle making them hard to hit but then Golden Bird suddenly brandished its claws in an empty area.

“Keek!”

The moment the location of the teleporting Chaos Warriors had been predicted, the claws and beak was used to attack the vitals points.

Ttadadadadadak!

Golden Bird has launched a series of deadly attacks like a woodpecker!

The Chaos Warriors could not hold against the attacks and have quickly died.

Golden Bird soared into the air after tearing and discarding the monsters.

It had a terrifying combat ability.

The transformed Golden Bird then engages Weed in a conversation.

“Weed-nim, we have won.”

“Well of course.”

Monsters in Las Phalanx have their fire attribute magic and skills increase for almost two times.

For this reason, high fire resistance is required.

While hunting for Chaos Warriors the fire resistance had been raised up to 22%.

“If the 10% increase resistance in a restricted zone is included then it is now at 32%.”

Weed originally has good resistance and this is due to him having a high amount of fortitude.

Weed, Seoyoon, and the sculptures of life move along with the undead.

Resistance wasn't the only thing that increased while hunting Chaos Warriors, 18 axes were acquired along the way and because of that Weed's backpack had an increase in weight.

Due to Weed's Skeleton status his power to carry the backpack

has been reduced.

Items that are worth a lot of money are not meant to be left behind!

Weed usually hides and leaves his japtens in hidden caves and blind spots but he doesn't want to do that to the expensive ones.

And with a large backpack against his shoulders and collarbone, Weed walked silently towards the dungeon.

It is now time to resume the quest and enter the dangerous dungeon.

“Tori, Van Hawk.”

“Yes master!”

“At your call master.”

“You two head first in the dungeon.”

Weed putting his servants to use!

Since this is an extremely dangerous dungeon there are sure to be a lot of Chaos Warriors together with their subordinates.

Meanwhile, Drinfeld and Griffith were expanding the area of

their exploration in Las Phalanx.

Their reinforcements from the Hermes Guild in Haven Kingdom have yet to arrive at Las Phalanx.

In the meantime, they were trying to increase their adaptability in fighting in a terrain full of volcanic eruptions and cracks on the ground.

“Compose yourselves and let’s show them how the elites will conquer this land.”

The coalition of high level Navy Knights and Pirates has united themselves.

Although the hunting wasn’t very efficient, if they were to be ambushed again by Weed they could immediately launch a counterattack.

“I don’t care what means and methods you use just bring me Weed’s head at any cost. The Hermes Guild will give out a handsome reward.”

They no longer have the pride they once shown.

Drinfeld’s group then successfully hunted a bunch of Bollards.

Great volcanic eruptions followed awhile later.

CTS media and LK game broadcast aired the adventures in Las Phalanx live!

They have suffered great humiliation and intense mockery in the board but it soon calmed down.

The expedition led by Drinfeld advanced towards the fissured grounds of the Sculptor's Heritage.

Excitement filled the viewers watching the footage CTS media broadcasted.

“The Sculptor's Heritage, now this is a totally unexpected place. Do you think Weed came here?”

“It seems so.”

The expedition continued their hunting and due to the effects of the Sculptor's Heritage it had become much easier.

“Drinfeld, you mainly use a large knife as a weapon same as with the other Navy Knights, why is that?”

“The damage it deals is big and it has high durability which is necessary when fighting against sea monsters and Pirates.”

“So that’s why you use it though it is still hard to fight here in Las Phalanx.”

“I agree. It takes a very long time to sail here and the levels of the monsters are quite high.”

“It was dangerous to fight while avoiding the volcanic eruptions wasn’t it? Seeing them directly sure is a terrifying experience.”

“I, Drinfeld, together with the 2nd Fleet was chosen by the Haven Kingdom because we can adapt well with dangerous environments.”

“What about Weed? He seems to have adapted well after coming here first.”

“In an adventure, having a large scale exploration group is different from going alone. The risks between these situations can’t be compared.”

Conversations between Drinfeld and Griffith’s Pirates were being relayed in the broadcast.

The live broadcast was aired twice a day and it took first place in the ratings.

Due to the contract with Weed, KMC Media have yet to show the broadcast of the quest.

Since the quest is still ongoing broadcasting it will increase the chance of Drinfeld and Griffith in interfering.

This is also done in order to hide Weed's current location.

Windows of KMC Media's head office were still lit late at night with the entire staff working overtime.

They were preparing to edit the video since they do not know when will Weed's quest finish.

On the Versailles Continent, the citizens and priests began to speak.

“Have you heard of Emperor Geihar? He was the first emperor of the Ahreupen Empire that united the whole Versailles Continent. Anyone who has studied history would recognize him.”

“The Archmage Seulroeo, they say he would use any means and methods to achieve his ambition. The Matam Wizards are even talking about him and remaining records say he was a genius. There are also rumors about him that say he was the key to the

collapse of the Niflheim Empire.”

“Wasn’t there a reason that gave him no choice but to do so?”

“You got to believe this. There is a land where only the courageous can go! In it there is a monster that possesses a very powerful weapon. This will definitely cause a huge disaster... and the only one who can stop it is a single Sculptor.”

Dwarves, Elves, and Fairy warriors were summoned. They were preparing for an expedition to go to Las Phalanx.

“If he fails that monster which threatens our peace will definitely begin to move. Dwarves bear arms for battle.”

“Elven Archers make preparations for battle, we will show them the true power of the fire spirits.”

Videos of the movements of Dwarves and Elven race were posted at the Royal Road homepage.

And with just closing the eyes players will be able to see what is happening within the Versailles Continent.

Weed’s adventure was definitely becoming a hot topic in the continent.

You have become the first discoverer of Inferno Dungeon.

Benefits:

2,100 Fame increase.

For a week, experience and item drop rate are doubled.

The first monster hunted will have the highest possibility of dropping rare items.

“Woah!”

Weed let out a surprised cry.

The Fame it gave out was ridiculously high.

“What the hell!? Just how dangerous is this dungeon to award such high Fame?”

It can be guessed that the next area will be quite formidable even with the summoned undead.

“Nevertheless, it is best to earn money while one is still young since that money will be useful when you grow old.”

Weed ordered his subordinates to move forward.

The internal passage of the dungeon was wide enough to be able to fit multiple troops.

Flames were gushing forth underneath the ground and were reflected by the cave walls creating a marvellous sight.

“Walk carefully and go through there.”

Weed took the right path where the flames are coming out while Seoyoon took the left side.

With this small act Seoyoon was very grateful towards Weed's consideration.

But it was actually far from the truth, the motive was quite different from how a gentleman acts toward a woman.

‘There's no way I'm taking the left side of the path. Who knows when a monster will come out there.’

Instinctive reflex for self-preservation!

The fire resistance Weed gained was quite high so that level of flame is still tolerable.

On the walls of the cave there were a lot of crystals, agates, and garnets.

Although classified as jewels, they were of the inexpensive and the common kind.

“This is a good place for making sculptures.”

Weed lingered for awhile looking at the wall.

“Soft skinned humans have come here!”

“I smell the rotting stench of the undead!”

On the other side of the passage, 6 large-sized Inferno Knights came out running and shouting.

The Inferno Knights were much larger than a Barbarian and their height rivals that of the Ogres and they were brandishing their swords.

Every time they took a step the dungeon shakes a little.

Weed immediately began to issue commands.

“Chaos Warriors, attack!”

The 20 high class undead was given an order to attack.

The risk was dangerously high since they were engaged in a close

distance battle.

“The rest of you keep watch and prepare to retreat!”

Think before you leap, it is best to confirm whether a persimmon is ripe before taking a bite.

If the undead cannot match the Inferno Knights in the battle then they will be used as scapegoats for retreating.

Tori and Van Hawk did not join the battle instead they were on standby.

‘If we’re going to be chased by those monsters then I’ll use them to buy some time.’

The Chaos Warriors that were made from the Animate Dead skill made use of their teleportation to keep out of the Inferno Knight’s line of sight.

They also use their axes to deal damage.

And of course, those axes were equipments that came from Weed’s backpack.

In order to enhance the power of the undead Weed made them equip powerful weapons!

“Grrrr, abominable Chaos Warriors!”

“These rotting undead are annoying.”

The ongoing fierce battle between the undead and the Inferno Knights only irritated Weed.

Since the Step 4 undead summoning magic creates superior undead which has high intelligence but the most they could do in the battle right now was just simply to avoid.

Using his tremendous leadership over the undead Weed had thought of something to use against these strong monsters.

One bold plan.

A battle of attrition.

There were a lot of undead that Weed commanded directly, they were chosen to play an active role.

With repetitive battles these undead continue to learn.

The elite undead taught by Weed continue to annoy the Inferno Knights and pushes them back.

This was due to their numbers which were considerably much higher compared to the engaged high level monsters.

“Among the Chaos Warriors there are those whose decays are getting worse. Seems like the Chaos Warriors are starting to wear out.”

From observing the battle he had arrived at a conclusion.

Noticing such details are not that difficult for Weed.

“Tori, Van Hawk, what are you doing? Don’t just stand there, go and fight!”

“Understood master.”

Weed, being their owner, scolded them without remorse even though he originally ordered them to standby and prepare for retreat.

Van Hawk and Tori immediately rushed to join the fight.

While the two engage the Inferno Knights in a pincer attack Geumini was given an order as well.

“Shoot them with arrows from here.”

“Golggol!”

Golden Bird also participated in the battle and using its

incredibly fast speed it was able to deal an attack at the vital spot of an Inferno Knight.

Seoyoon pulled out her sword and decided to join the battle as well.

Weed, not participating in the battle directly, started to curse the enemies.

Then one of the Chaos Warrior was defeated and the mana used to maintain it was recovered.

“Have to make them last a little longer.”

Relaxing while observing others battle, this was the privilege granted to the Wizard and Cleric class.

“Their large size sure isn’t just for show.”

Suddenly the marks engraved in the Inferno Knights’ armors started to shine and due to this they gained a great increase in defense.

With their excellent defense and high stature it was even more necessary to exercise caution in hunting them.

Though they were now mostly weakened due to Weed’s curse magic.

“This battle is rather long.”

8 minutes have now passed!

The Inferno Knights were getting tired and Weed's mana has been depleted.

Large amount of mana was needed to resurrect the undead and the Chaos Warriors continue to deplete their mana every time they use teleportation.

The undead, Seoyoon and the others have now started to encircle the Inferno Knights creating a wall.

With Golden Bird luring one of them away the hunt had slightly become easy.

“Have to end this battle quickly. Chaos Warriors, seven of the bravest of you go and interject that Inferno Knight.”

Weed being the Lord of the undead commanded them with great charisma.

The Chaos Warriors that were pointed out by the Fallen Saint's Staff and Bar Khan's Tome were greatly honored and started teleporting immediately towards the isolated Inferno Knight.

“Corpse Explosion!”

Kwagwagwang!

Chaos Warriors that showed great valour and loyalty towards Weed were rewarded with an order to explode!

Using Corpse Explosion on the corpse of high level monsters would definitely result to high destructive power.

A bright red pillar of fire was erected from the ground up to the ceiling in just an instant!

Finally with the collapsed of the enemies formation Weed gave out a short and precise order.

“Kill it!”

Everyone concentrated their attack on the badly damaged Inferno Knight.

Due to the death of a comrade the Inferno Knights are now in a state of fear.

Curse magic effects are enhanced by 35%.

All resistance are now reduced by 60%.

Aggression is lowered but will be more focused on defending.

Only four out of the remaining enemies did not succumb to fear.

Weed focused his curse magic on the ones that entered a state of fear and launched a concentrated attack on them one at a time.

Weed did not conceal his joy whenever he catches the items he saw falling.

- You have levelled up.

- Your Fame has increased by 6.

- Necromancer's skill proficiency has increased.

Pioneering did not increase unlike with the hunt of the Chaos Warriors. This was most likely because the race that truly dominates Las Phalanx were the Chaos Warriors.

“Anyway gotta check the items.”

Among the armors acquired there was one that stood out.

An exclusive item fitting the large physique of Barbarian Warriors!

Although the restriction was at level 460 Weed did not worry.

“It’s not that I have fewer things to sell. If it’s difficult to sell then just smelt it and recreate it later.”

The Inferno Knights gave out various minerals as well and also a small amount of Mithril and jewels.

Weed divided the items he collected exactly in half and gave it to Seoyoon.

While it is a fact that she took an active role in fighting together with the undead, if she had not come along to Las Phalanx then Tori would not have helped in clearing the dungeon.

Of course, hunting the Chaos Warriors would have been difficult as well.

Weed eyed the piece of Mithril with extreme greed.

“It is very hard to obtain the rare Mithril... Once I have gathered enough I’ll make them into armors, is that okay with you?”

Seoyoon nodded.

“I’ll make the best armor later.”

Although Weed was showing his best good-natured smile, with the countenance of a skeleton it can only be seen as an extremely rotten smile.

‘Half of the jewels were given since she did a good job.’

Weed’s mood then brightens up when he took Seoyoon’s share of the Mithril since he does intend to make the armor.

Weed aims to increase his blacksmithing skill.

The amount of Mithril he might find here could speed up his skill by more than a few days than what he normally does.

He could gather a lot of Mithril in this dungeon hunt and then creating a sculpture made out of pure Mithril wouldn’t be just a pipe dream.

Of course for a Sculptor this would be quite an achievement.

“I’ll have to replenish the undead... Animate Dead!”

With the number of Chaos Warriors greatly reduced the corpses of the Inferno Knights were ideal candidates for replacements.

The 12 remaining Chaos Warriors then started teleporting to gather the rest of the Inferno Knights corpses to replace the fallen

8.

Inferno Knight's body have resisted the dark magic.

Necromancer Skill must be at least Advance Level 2 to raise the body.

Summoning of the undead has failed.

The corpse did not turn into an undead but Weed's mana was still consumed.

“At my current state I cannot use these corpses.”

Weed wasn't very satisfied and decided to take a rest.

Mana and stamina must be recovered, same goes to Seoyoon and the other sculptures of life.

The party still hasn't rested and recovered completely and yet another battle is about to commence!

“Humans and undead challenging this place, what a bunch ignorant fools. This is no place where you can just recklessly enter.”

“This is not a place for you lowly humans. I'll have to eliminate

all of you here.”

Inferno Knights have reappeared.

Due to Weed's and Seoyoon's name bearing a red mark other monsters in the dungeon were aggressive towards them.

Weed's Infamy had already surpassed 6,000.

If someone has a murderer's mark then monsters will most likely not flee in battle.

If you don't kill them fast enough then they might even call for reinforcements.

And since your name will be exposed you will be chased all throughout the dungeon.

Thus with the sacrifice of 8 more Chaos Warriors the two Inferno Knights were successfully hunted.

Chapter 7: Fire Giant

Having ventured deeply into the dungeon, a flowing river of lava came into view.

An underground lava river having a width exceeding 400 meters!

Harsh high temperature were being emitted enough to exhaust anyone getting near it.

Seoyoon stayed as far away from it in contrast to Weed who was marching towards it.

If not for his high fire resistance he would've suffered high amount of damage by now.

While Weed and his undead didn't show much change on their bodies, Rover and Seoyoon were sweating out a lot.

Also their stamina was now consumed at a faster rate.

After confirming that there were no alternative ways to go around the lava river Weed made an announcement.

“We will have to go across using that.”

Rocks and metals were found sticking out in the middle of the

lava river.

The smallest ones were barely enough to fit a foot while the larger ones were around 13 square feet.

A lot of them have flat surfaces.

Though that was not the only things found in the lava river.

Fire Giants that made the expedition group run away with tails behind their legs were sleeping in it.

And what connects the two sides from the lava river was a rope bridge probably used by either Inferno Knights or Chaos Warriors.

Weed examined the rope which seems to be made of twisted Bollard leather.

“Hmm, not sure if it’s safe, better test it with the undead. Chaos Warrior 1, you go first.”

“Yes. My. Lord.”

With the undead Chaos Warrior’s rigid movements it started to cross the rope bridge.

It was rather easy for the undead to cross since it didn’t have any

fear of death.

After having crossed three-fourths of the rope bridge it then used its teleportation to reach the other side.

“Good. Let’s get moving.”

The other undead then took turns in crossing while Tori fly over carrying Geumini and Rover.

Rover, after seeing the hot flowing lava, got frightened and started to struggle but after much effort they were able to go across.

Now it was Weed and Seoyoon’s turn.

Out of concern, Weed suddenly asked Seoyoon.

“Are you scared?”

Seoyoon shook her head and then walked quickly towards the rope bridge.

Weed walked along behind her. He then grabbed the rope and gazed downwards, what he saw was quite a terrifying sight.

Popping bubbles from the red lava were producing intense heat.

One wrong move means a one way trip to hell!

Weed, feeling anxious, started muttering.

“You’re a guy who has live through worst situations than this. Just keep going straight, there should be nothing to be afraid, right? Though crossing the rope bridge maybe risky and dangerous but the monsters here use it and there seems to be no problem. In a way, I should consider myself lucky.”

As soon as Weed finished muttering 10 Chaos Warriors emerged from the other side.

It seems that a group of Chaos Warriors were scouting the area.

“I can sense someone’s presence.”

“Undead!”

“Purify the invading undead. Kill the guy that defiled our fallen brethren!”

The red axe wielding undead Chaos Warriors, Tori, Van Hawk, Golden Bird, Geumini and Rover got ready to attack.

They were the only ones that could directly intercept them for the meantime.

“Defensive formation! Chaos Warrior 1, 2, and 3 focus your attacks on one of them while using teleportation.”

Weed commanded the battle while staying on the rope bridge and got ready to cast curse magic but then giant eel like figures suddenly emerged from the lava.

These eel like monsters then started spewing fireballs.

And those fireballs blasted Weed's robe and Seoyoon's armor.

- You have received fire damage from the Baovant's attack.

Immolation!

If the fire is not put out the damage will continue to accumulate.

While the two of them were recovering from the sudden attack another group of Baovants appeared and spitted more fireballs.

Due to the increase of fire resistance, the damage was light but the current situation proves to be much more dangerous.

Moreover, each time the fireballs from the Baovants hits them the rope bridge would sway making Weed stumble every 2 to 3 meters when he tries to run.

Balancing to stand is already hard enough and now crossing had become an even more arduous task!

“The master is in danger!”

Van Hawk yelled when he noticed Weed’s crisis.

Weed was dealing with different sets of monsters while staggering to maintain balance but he deemed the Baovants to be a greater threat and decided to deal with them first.

‘They’re in the lava so I can’t attack them directly. Dark magic is all I could use since I don’t have any spells that could counter their fire attribute.’

Water magic series, it would have been a great help in this situation if a water or ice spell could be used.

Though Weed would only be able to use the basic spells even if he had a spell book.

And since he is not of the Wizard class he wouldn’t be able to deal the maximum magic damage from using those spells so using that method cannot defeat the Baovants.

‘I do not want to jump down on the rocks.’

Though the protruding rocks have flat surfaces it was still very unreliable since it was possible to slip into the lava river upon landing.

Fighting the Baovants in the lava river is definitely not an option!

Even if things turn out as a direct battle while equipping the Daemon Sword, as a Necromancer the physical damage would be weak.

‘This is not good.’

Weed is very fast when it comes to decision making but Seoyoon acted first before he could decide.

‘I don’t want to see him die.’

The Baovants started carpet bombing them but Seoyoon blocked the attacks reducing one-third of her health.

Weed was surprised with Seoyoon’s actions.

Light Sword!

One of the sword skills of the Berserker class.

After receiving the damage, she immediately activated this

powerful skill. This was the new sword skill she learned after gaining experience from the previous battles.

Seoyoon's sword was now wrapped with bright red light. She then swung it towards the Baovants.

Kwagwagwagwang!

By consuming mana the sword created a powerful blast.

Light Sword was a simple skill.

It only needs mana to activate and it can directly reduce monsters' health neglecting their defense.

Since running away from this battle would be very disadvantageous, the only option left is to face them.

So Seoyoon devoted herself in using the sword skill.

Though there were a lot of them the skill was still very efficient to use due to its fast attack speed and high destructive power but the Berserker's mana is being rapidly consumed.

Keee.

Kkwaeaek!

Baovants that were hit by the blast fell one after another.

Even if they try to defend the Light Sword skill will still successfully hit them robbing away tremendous amount of health.

Now there was no need to directly attack the Baovants since the skill was a long range attack using mana.

And due to the characteristics of the Berserker class the monsters fighting them were now being pressured.

The Baovants then started retaliating using their long range attacks as well.

In the meantime, Weed was clinging on the rope bridge suffering from ongoing battle.

“Damn it.”

Each time Seoyoon attacks, the rope bridge would shake violently.

Baovants spewing fireballs were rapidly decreasing due to Seoyoon constant swing of the sword.

Since they were affected by the Berserker’s curse of madness, the monsters could not escape the barrage of the Light Sword skill.

They now have lost physical control and even if their bodies grew tired and collapse they will still unconditionally attack their surroundings.

A skill that will not stop until all enemies have been obliterated.

Seoyoon intended to stay in order to make a way out for Weed.

Even if the rope bridge was destroyed and she falls to her death, she will still continue using the range attack until all of her mana was depleted.

‘Run away quickly.’

That was the message she was trying to convey in her eyes but Weed interpreted it way too differently.

‘Somehow do something to make us win.’

Weed thought she was being unreasonable.

And the thought of Seoyoon staying behind so that he could go to the other side never came to his mind.

It was hard for him to accept but he must fight together with his colleague.

He must now devote his life to his colleague because he cannot run away.

Weed totally thinks that Seoyoon doesn't want to be the only one fighting until the very end.

‘With the rope bridge swaying I can't concentrate on casting magic. What the heck can I do?’

The High Elf Bow!

“Earth Expert, give me support.”

Earth Expert was resummoned then footholds were created on the bridge.

The undead were still continuing their battle with the Chaos Warriors but Weed cannot afford to use mana to help them.

“Water Spirit!”

Weed equipped High Elf Yeurika's Bow and fired arrows towards the Baovants.

Arrows infused with the power of the water spirit hit the Baovants!

Though the arrows weren't powerful since he was in the skeleton Lich Shire form it was still enough to help Seoyoon.

The Baovants still continues to attack Seoyoon with their fireballs.

And due to the loud noises they were making the Fire Giants woke up.

“Too noisy, can't sleep.”

Fire Giants waking up can only mean trouble.

With their arms, measuring tens of meters, caught the Baovants and then threw them away.

Each time they moved the currents of the lava river would change and the ground would shook.

A Fire Giant then took out a sword in the lava river and pointed it towards Weed and Seoyoon.

Upon seeing the mighty swing that killed dozens in the expedition group escaping it would be impossible.

Weed then quickly pulled out an item.

He held out the Fire Giant's Eye then the incoming swinging sword suddenly stopped.

“You...”

Weed swallowed his saliva with a gulp.

“Are not an enemy.”

Then it changed its attention towards the Baovants.

Weed approached Seoyoon to make sure it would not attack her.

Every time one of the Baovants dies a great number of unknown golden powders would fall into the lava river.

They were precious items but they were not worth the risk!

With the Baovants being disposed of Seoyoon stopped using her skill and was now free to move.

Seoyoon then quickly run across the rope bridge and joined the battle of the undead against the Chaos Warriors.

Only nine of the enemies were left, the undead were able to kill one.

Rover, Geumini, Tori, and Van Hawk were enduring the battle but now help has arrived.

Now that there were no more dangerous factors, Weed has no need to cross the rope bridge in a hurry so he began casting curse magic to aid the undead.

Curse magic that targeted large area were used since it was hard to target them due to teleportation.

And since the part of the dungeon the Chaos Warriors appeared at wasn't very wide it was easy to hit them with those curse magic.

The current battle had made the Chaos Warriors fall into a state of panic because of the awakening of the Fire Giants but because of that Weed was able to take advantage of it and finish the fight.

Weed then heard the sound of the Fire Giants going back to sleep not too far away.

"I... shouldn't make too much noise like the Chaos Warriors and Baovants."

Fire Giants like to soak in the hot lava and doesn't want to be disturbed!

Weed must now reorganize the undead since he had just lost a lot

of undead Chaos Warriors along the way.

There were also new bodies to use for summoning but Weed did not yet leave the rope bridge.

“...?”

Seoyoon, Rover, and Geumini had puzzled looks unable to understand Weed’s current behaviour.

“I can’t just leave those precious ores behind.”

First class jewels and large chunks of ores such as Mithril, diamonds, ambers, and adamantiums, were protruding on the surfaces of the rocks in the lava river.

It’s not that often that one can see such large amount of ores and so Weed started climbing down.

Upon safely landing, Weed again took out the Fire Giant’s Eye and placed it in plain view.

He then equips his hammer and chisel and started chipping off the protrusions making a lot of noise.

Kkang, kkang, kkang, kkang!

Weed decided to work carefully but making noise at the moment was a necessary step.

After a while, the Fire Giants opened their eyes.

“Silence is the best.”

Words for sleep suggestion!

Weed continues extracting the ores while trying to hypnotize them.

Each time a Fire Giant is in a half sleep state he would try giving them suggestions.

“There are too many Chaos Warriors. Kill, kill as many as you can. Why? Because your race is the one that truly dominates fire.”

“This lava river flows on the entire continent. Surely this would lead to some of their bases.”

“Besides, the Fire Giants are the true rulers of Las Phalanx.”

“If you guys don’t make the initiative then this land will be taken from you.”

“Also those annoying Chaos Warriors are noisy. It would be best

if their numbers are reduced.”

When they were about to completely wake up Weed would pretend to drowsily yawn and it would successfully suggest the Fire Giants to doze back to sleep.

During all this, 15 different types of high class jewels and ores were acquired and enough Mithril to create two swords.

A large profit was obtained in Las Phalanx.

Yurin was scattering paint on a clear lake.

A scene that would clearly shocked a nature conservationist!

Living near the lake were large and small herbivorous animals and monsters.

With their glossy eyes they were carefully watching Yurin.

The Aqualight Painter was painting and a crowd was gathering.

“What picture should I draw?”

Yurin was muttering to herself while trying to find a theme.

Pale's party were on a quest related to Mordred, the Imperial Capital of the fallen Nilfheim Empire.

But she wanted to freely travel to many different places so left the party for a while.

“Animals and monsters seem to live in harmony here.”

Yurin began painting trees with abundant fruits on the lake.

Then a field with sweet potatoes in it followed, the idea was so that the monsters here will not starve.

Surprisingly the painting did not spread in the water.

By the time Yurin's hair covered by her hat fell down to her shoulders, her brush had finished painting.

- Aqualight painting was used on the lake!

- You have completed 'Nature's Bounty'!

A beautiful landscape drawn on the lake, it depicts nature's overflowing abundance as viewed by the artist.

A scene that calms the mind.

The precise coloring and delicate brush strokes shows that it was made by a maturing painter.

However it did not completely integrate with nature and when rain comes the painting will be disturbed.

Artistic Value: 98

Special Options:

As long as Nature's Bounty is reflected in the water there will be a temporary increase in the nearby plants' growth rate.

Animals will tend to gather near the lake.

4% increase in mana regeneration for Cleric and Wizard classes.

- Beginner Illustration skill level rises to 7. Drawing lines are much more accurate and can take advantage at the characteristics of drawing tools.

- Dye Painting skill proficiency has increased.

Yurin was now admiring her work.

She was glad that the animals were delighted.

But suddenly the water on the lake started to undulate.

“Uh, what’s happening all of a sudden?”

Yurin became flustered and tried to run away from the lake.

But then the ripples in the water calmed down and water droplets started rising.

Since it was night time, she relied on the stars and the moonlight to see.

And upon seeing the picture of the night sky reflected on the water she was mesmerized.

Then the water droplets that were rising from the lake surround her and started spinning around.

With the moon and stars reflected on the water, the water droplets were sparkling!

But the marvellous sight did not end there.

The painting drawn by Yurin was changing into something different.

A never before seen mountain and a castle beyond imagination

appeared.

The water droplets that were now floating seem to lead Yurin towards the beautiful painting.

Yurin then approached the painting.

Even though the water in the lake was rocking, the painting was undisturbed.

“Where is that place?”

It was a very beautiful castle.

And its gates were wide open as if it was trying to invite her in.

Deciding to take the risk, Yurin painted her appearance in front of the castle and then activated her skill.

“Picture Teleportation!”

After a few moments, Yurin’s presence disappeared from the lake.

The power that kept the water droplets floating also disappeared and it fell down towards the lake.

At first, the castle in the painting could not be seen but then...

“Wow!”

Yurin uttered a voice of excitement.

It was the most beautiful castle in the Versailles Continent!

It was built on a windy hill of a mountain with a wide field in its background.

Yurin walked on the golden fields and head towards the castle.

It seems to have been built a hundred years ago and somehow had magic protection since the castle was clean and has received little damage.

It was the same as the majestic castle found in the painting.

- You have seen St. George's Castle.

-Fame increased by 350.

- You have appreciated the beauty of the building, Wisdom increased by 10, Art Stat increased by 25.

It was an amazing gain for Yurin since both Wisdom and Art Stat

got an increase.

If this was Weed, he would surely have a rotten smile on his face while looking at scenery.

“Excuse me.”

There were no guards guarding the opened gate.

“I would like to go inside!”

She gallantly exclaimed her intentions and walked passed through the gate.

There were many flowers and trees growing in the garden and fishes swimming on the clear pond.

One could even smell the faint scents of the flowers.

And now the awaited interior detail tour of the castle!

There were a lot of rooms inside such as a study, a library, the maids’ room, the guards’ room, and up on the second floor are the knights’ room.

On the second floor, there exist a large room with the name Petrov written on it.

Surprisingly, the room opposite to it has Yurin's name written on it.

“Somehow this does not seem like a coincidence.”

Carefully, Yurin decided to look for the room's owner and opened the door without letting out a sound.

Inside was a spacious living room with marble floors of elaborate designs worthy for a noble!

On the open windows one could see the castle's garden and the magnificent sight of the mountains.

In the bedroom, there is a bed large enough to fit 5 people and sleep comfortably.

In the bathroom, a large tub filled with warm water had rose petals scattered in it!

The room was like a high class hotel suite.

And on the wall hangs a blank canvas.

It seems that she had the room of the fairy tale like castle all to herself.

Time seemed to have slowed down for Yurin but it was cut short for footsteps could be heard climbing the stairs.

“Someone who lives in this castle has just returned, too bad I can’t enjoy this place alone anymore. Since that person has received a saint’s permission to live here does that mean his not a bad person? But then again, there were no magical alarm devices installed in the castle against illegal entry.”

When Yurin entered the room she had left the door open.

And standing in that opened doorway is a man with shaggy hair and clothes dyed with various paints.

He then let out a loud discontented voice.

“Hey you, Aqualight Painter, don’t just walk in here as you plea–”

The moment the man saw Yurin’s countenance, his face stiffened and his heart stopped beating, he was utterly speechless.

Aqualight Painter Petrov!

He was a man that inconspicuously painted in Royal Road.

His paintings are known by the fairies and spirits but the rest of the world has yet to see them.

Though he had gained tremendous Fame, it was only limited to the fairies and spirits.

And all of his accepted quests were only related to increasing his painting skill proficiency.

It was also he who has found St. George's Castle.

"I don't give a damn about people's recognition."

Petrov lived his life only with pride and passion.

And now due to an uninvited guest he has a very awkward expression on his face.

"Hello, you are my neighbor Petrov?"

Yurin started talking to him but then immediately apologized as an afterthought.

"I'm so sorry I came in without the owner knowing, I'll leave now."

"No, it is okay. I am not even the owner of this castle."

Petrov then anxiously explained the situation to Yurin in a hurry.

The St. George's Castle was actually a castle not built on the Versailles Continent.

It was originally the painting on the blank canvas.

Marvelled by the painting, the fairies gave it a suitable space to be built and used dragon magic to level the land.

“I’ve been here for a year now, currently on a quest to restore this castle.”

“Uhm, I was painting on a lake when suddenly a painting of this castle showed up.”

“I see and since you’re an Aqualight Painter you were able to get here. Though the skill of the Aqualight Painter is one way to travel here, other painters should also have some other means of getting here but that’ll require triggering certain quests.”

“Hey, this room...”

“It’s Yurin’s room. It should be pretty comfortable inside.”

“It is possible to return to this room from anywhere in the Versailles Continent, you can also bring your own items and leave them here. In addition, you can also export the items you own from here.”

Petrov the painter that had reached intermediate painting skill took advantage of this castle due to his quest and he has no desire in revealing any of his known information to the public.

But whenever he would look at Yurin his heart would start racing.

Petrov normally had an arrogant and self-righteous nature and he would frequently ignore other people.

But from the moment he met Yurin he fell in love at first sight.

As a painter, it was natural for him to appreciate the charm and beauty of women.

Yurin's soft and delicate facial lines and her clear deep eyes were just too beautiful beyond compare!

She is already very beautiful as is but she gave off an impression that she will be even more beautiful in the near future.

She was the perfect beauty a painter would want to continue painting for the rest of his life.

And so Petrov told everything he knows to Yurin.

“When you leave a painting in your room you will continue to

receive its effect wherever you are.”

“What do you mean by receive its effect?”

“Ah, I’m sorry for saying that all of a sudden without any proper explanations. What I meant to say was the effects of the painting the grants blessings to players. Paintings drawn by other artists are exempted from this only from your own paintings will you receive its effects. For example, if you place my paintings in your room you will not receive any of its effects.”

Petrov had a pathetic expression on his face.

He wanted to look good in explaining things but got awkward and started hurrying up the explanations.

But every time he converses with Yurin he would occasionally observe her beauty especially each time she changes her facial expressions.

Petrov had completely fallen for her.

Having crossed the lava twice, they are now deep within the Inferno Dungeon.

They continue to fight the Inferno Knights and Chaos Warriors

along the way and now they were experiencing a volcanic eruption.

Experiencing the volcanic eruption while deep underground in Las Phalanx gave off a new sense of excitement.

Even if one hides in a safe zone one will still feel the shaking like those in thrill rides.

“Keueeeek!”

Rover, Geumini, and the undead were stumbling all over the place while Weed and Seoyoon barely manage by sticking to the walls.

“Summon Earth Expert. Provide support to the undead and the rest.”

Thanks to Earth Expert the party have stopped stumbling.

Wall collapse in the passages of the dungeon was also prevented guarantying their survival.

Weed had gathered a lot of information about Inferno Dungeon.

For many years, the inhabiting monsters were in constant strife against each other.

Since in Las Phalanx the various races of monsters were only born on their own respective dungeons. This had caused them to solidify their own group.

And Inferno Dungeon was the main passage that connects all dungeons of Las Phalanx. Things turned out that way because of the deformations made by the volcanic eruptions, either creating new paths or blocking them.

But the most frightening of all was the amount of lava that flows out during volcanic eruptions!

The lava that came from deep underground runs through the passages at terrifying momentum.

And right now a certain change occurred in Weed's safe zone, signs of small cracks were appearing.

Hot air was coming out like that of a steamer.

It seems as though lava will burst out from it but it's actually still relatively safe for awhile.

"It had erupted today so I guess it will be dormant for a few days."

If one doesn't waste this chance then one can freely explore the dungeon.

Though it was vague whether what occurred was a minor earthquake or an eruption, Weed was able to confirm that it was indeed an eruption through the various signs.

Weed being able to completely adapt to the volcano's nature started sculpting a rock!

“If the world gets destroyed by tomorrow, I’ll be able to stop paying taxes.”

After waiting for the flowing lava to calm down, the speed of the exploration had tremendously increased.

Before letting the monsters settle down during the aftermath, the undead struck them first.

While continuing the hunt for Inferno Knights they battled a certain group of Chaos Warriors.

Among them, a Chaos Warrior uttered some strange words.

“Kubichya will avenge me.”

“You will definitely experience death in his might.”

Weed was intrigued so he inquired.

“What are you talking about?”

“What do you think? I have nothing more to say to you.”

The Chaos Warrior, even though held as a captive, still has its pride and refused to give information.

“Tori, go suck his blood.”

“No matter what you do I will never spill anything. Just kill me already!”

It seems that even with torture the Chaos Warrior still wants to keep its secrets to the grave.

So Weed changed his approach, though difficult, tried reading his opponent's facial expressions and thus he started his provocations.

“Hooo, so you'll even keep your mouth shut about Kubichya's Dragon Sword. I guess it really is a fact that Chaos Warriors have high regards with each other.”

“You... How did you...”

“So it really is true.”

The Chaos Warrior flinched as if it was being stabbed.

While hunting in the dungeon, Weed's party have been wandering for a few days.

Since the already complicated passages continue to change like upon reaching a dead end the path to return to the previous one would disappear.

They have been travelling for a long time so to some extent they should be nearing their goal.

“For a long time he had the Dragon Sword in his possession but why is it that he has yet to go to the magic circle?”

“.....”

The Chaos Warrior closed its mouth once again.

“Chaos Warrior Kubichya, he had an incredibly fast growth. With the Dragon Sword in his hands there were no opponents that could match him.”

“.....!”

The Chaos Warrior could not conceal the look of amazement in its face.

Seoyoon and the other sculptures of life were also surprised of how clever Weed is in getting a reaction out of the Chaos Warrior.

“A lot of time has passed since then... Kubichya has now become the leader of your race didn't he?”

The Chaos Warrior let out a derisive laugh.

Weed then changed his wording.

“No, preceding that he is the Daejeonsa. The most distinguished warrior among the Chaos Warriors!” (T/N: Daejeonsa – using endic.naver.com as reference this can mean as ‘a mighty warrior’, this is also the name of a Korean Buddhist Temple)

“.....!”

“So far the conflict between the Chaos Warriors and Inferno Knights has yet to cease to exist and the reason you guys are trying to invade the Inferno Knights' territory is because the magic circle is located somewhere there.”

“.....!”

“That's the main reason why your race wages a territorial war on them isn't it? Even though the Inferno Knights have high fertility rate you must still struggle to kill them so that your race will get their hands on the magic circle!”

“Chaos Warrior, even if you don’t speak that exaggerated expression you have right now is enough to tell me everything.”

Weed then gave out a brief explanation.

“Anyone who has eagerly watched morning and evening dramas could easily guess it at this degree.”

“.....”

South Korea’s massive drama fan base!

Weed had watched a lot of TV dramas together with his grandma. In those dramas, it is common to see a storyline that involves someone about to die and another one trying their best to save that person. Since those dramas had a lot of emotional scenes, you don’t even need the dialogues, just seeing their expressions is already enough for you to know what’s happening.

“Anyway, I got to arrive there first before Kubichya obtains its power.”

“It is already too late.”

“What makes you say that?”

“When the volcano erupted a small passage heading straight to

them has opened. Right about now, Kubichya leading the army of Chaos Warriors should be at location of the magic circle.”

Ttiring!

- You have obtained information relating to the quest.

A cinematic appeared in front of Weed.

In it there was a large cave.

Found in the corner of a boiling lava lake, it was the Inferno Knight's largest settlement!

In the center of it was an altar with a magic circle drawn. A colossal amount of red mana is gathered around it which seems to continuously expand and contract.

“Kubichya has invaded!”

“Kill the Chaos Warriors! Protect our sacred land!”

Inferno Knights versus Chaos Warriors!

Both sides mobilized at least 500 troops for battle.

But the Inferno Knights fell one after another from the mighty

swing of the Chaos Warrior that was wielding a red sword instead of an axe.

It seems that the Chaos Warriors were 1.5 times the number of Inferno Knights and were proving to be difficult to defeat.

An intensive battle was unfolding between the races.

- The quest The Recovery of the Red Star has been updated.

Goal: Stop the Chaos Warriors.

Kubichya aims to absorb the power gathered by Imbeol's Circle from all over Las Phalanx and using it he intends to make the Chaos Warriors unstoppable.

Fight against Kubichya together with the Inferno Knights.

To see the battle in the Inferno Knights' point of view, close your eyes for 4 seconds.

The quest will fail if Kubichya successfully absorbs the mana of the magic circle.

Weed still has the murderer's mark and his Infamy has exceeded 7,500. His name was still in red and was exposed so he was thinking of ways where the Inferno Knight's will not attack them but then a pattern of overlapping small and large circles emerged

and was engraved in his forehead.

The symbol of the Inferno Knights!

The same symbol also engraved itself to Seoyoon, the sculptures of life, and the undead.

Weed was the one leading the quest but because they were part of the same party they also received the symbol.

- You have been engraved with the Inferno Symbol.

You are no longer hostile to Inferno Knights.

Weed then closed his eyes and watched the ongoing battle.

Kubichya showed an impressive display of skills.

Just by swinging the Red Star fireballs were hurtling towards his enemies.

Advance fire magic was casted freely.

No incantation, wide range of explosions, fire arrows made by the Red Star was a very powerful magic!

Chaos Warriors led by Kubichya were driven with great

momentum.

Looking at the current battle, the Inferno Knights can probably last for about 3 to 4 hours.

If this has only been a one on one battle then they wouldn't have been driven to a corner.

“Hmm... I do not have much time left. Angry Stone, Earth Expert, summon.”

“Is there still work to do, my Lord?”

“Lately, all we do is drudging.”

Without listening to their complaints Weed began to give orders.

“Angry Stone, locate the place where a large battle is occurring. Earth Expert, find the nearest shortcut to that location.”

“For us, that'll be an easy task.”

Angry Stone and Earth Expert soon disappeared and then reappeared.

“I have located the place. It will take about 30 minutes to get there by running so follow me, I shall lead the way.”

Time is gold!

Even these 30 minutes is enough to make the tides of battle irreversible for the Inferno Knights.

But since there are physical limitations for both sides, there will most probably be intermissions during the battle.

They should be able to hold out for about 3 to 4 hours, the worst case scenario of reaching the magic circle will not happen just yet.

“Let’s go!”

Weed, Seoyoon, and the rest started to run.

But of course, Weed did not forget to kill the imprisoned Chaos Warrior and picked up the japtems.

Dadadadadak!

Weed, Seoyoon, and the rest of the party were making loud noises as they run.

It seems that all of the remaining Chaos Warriors and Inferno Knights were involved in the current battle so they did not encounter any of them along the way.

Weed closed his eyes briefly in the midst of running to check the situation of the war.

“This will be quite difficult.”

Kubichya and the Chaos Warriors were too powerful.

“A completely different race, they should be stronger than the Lich Shire and should be around the same level that of Bar Khan.”

Kubichya was a great warrior.

At the forefront of the battlefield, with near infinite stamina and superior battle prowess, the Inferno Knights were utterly crushed.

Fitting for the title of Daejeonsa!

The fire magic of the Red Star was used again but due to the high fire resistance of the Inferno Knights they did not fall easily.

“Before I arrive, I need to do something beforehand.”

Weed briefly stopped and pulled out the Mysterious Bird.

Immediately realizing what was about to happen, Golden Bird flapped its wings with delight.

“O seal of the Ahreupen Empire sculpted by the great Emperor Geihar, I shall share my life unto you, the soul of a noble artist. Now rise from your endless sleep and become my comrade-in-arms. Give Life to Sculpture!”

- You have granted life to a sculpture.

The level of the sculpture will be based on the Art Stat.

The Art Stat is currently 1,889, so the sculpture's base level will be 447.

Additionally, due to being categorized as a historical treasure, the Seal of the Ahreupen Empire made by the Master Sculptor Emperor Geihar will have 35% of its level added. Level is increased to 603.

However, certain level penalties shall be applied.

There will be a 10% level penalty due to the monster being a flying-type.

There will be a 10% level penalty due to the monster having transformation ability.

There will be a 7% level penalty considering that the sculpture had a long history thereby having its durability reduced through

time.

Three attributes has been granted.

The attributes will vary in power according to the form and quality of the sculpture.

Jewel Attribute (100%), Wind Attribute (100%), Art Attribute (100%)

Jewel Attribute is a special charisma that increases political influence.

Wind Attribute will increase the monster's flying speed.

Art Attribute will increase the effects of sculptures and other works of art by 150%. This is applicable to all of the monster's party.

Due to being categorized as a historical treasure, it will have extraordinary grace and dignity.

Since it is a work done by the Master Sculptor Emperor Geihar, health and mana will be increased. Other additional effects of the Master Sculptor will not be applied due to the lack of talent by the one granting life.

Additionally, being the seal that symbolizes the Ahreupen

Empire, special abilities will be added.

Can summon a mysterious fog, favourable to use for defense during a siege.

Strengthens the ability to conduct soldiers and improves reconnaissance.

5,000 mana has been used.

Due to the increase of efficiency in the use of the skill Give Life to Sculpture, the consumed level and stats will be reduced by 20%.

6 Art Stat is permanently decreased.

The decreased stat can be recovered by creating sculptures or other art related activities.

1 level has dropped.

Due to the decrease of level, most recently raised stat will decrease by 5.

The stats can be raised again upon level up

Please care for the sculpture with life.

Upon death, the sculpture must be granted life again to return its soul.

The sculpture cannot be revived if it has been completely destroyed.

For hundreds of years, the Mysterious Bird had symbolized Ahreupen Empire's Imperial Household's majesty.

And now that sculpture that is made of Mithril and Platinum had began to move.

Kkirurururu.

The Mysterious Bird blinked its eyes and was greeted by the sight of Geumini and Rover.

Then it looked at Weed and Seoyoon alternatively.

Just like a newborn chick looking for its mother!

Weed caught its attention so he then started talking to it.

“I'm the one that bestowed life unto you. I am your father.”

The Mysterious Bird with eyes made of beautiful jewels walked unsteadily towards Weed.

But unlike the Golden Bird, it was able to immediately speak with its beak even at its current form.

“Father, please grant me a name.”

“A name... I need a good name...”

Weed then skimmed the figure of the Mysterious Bird and was able to come up with a name.

“I’ll name you Eunsae.”

In a way, it was a good name but the nuance was no different from the name Rover.

“Eunsae, it’s a pretty good name. I like it. Thank you, Father.”

After that, it immediately nestled itself on Seoyoon’s shoulder.

Weed was the one who granted it life but pretty much prefers Seoyoon than him!

From the looks of it, its nature seems to be that of a female.

“Anyway, let’s go!”

Weed can't afford to waste time anymore.

“This way.”

With the guidance of Earth Expert, they didn't have to hesitate in which path to choose when they encountered forks on the road.

After 25 minutes, they finally arrived at their destination!

The Chaos Warriors and the Inferno Knights were still engaged in the large scale war.

With deafening explosions, the flames soared through the battlefield.

Weed knew roughly the situation of the battle but Seoyoon and the sculptures of life had no idea.

Kubichya, wielding the Red Star, displayed tremendous battle prowess.

Under his leadership, the Chaos Warriors fought using different formations. Weed, at first, calculated that the Inferno Knights should be able to hold out for 3 to 4 hours but by looking at the situation now, it is quite apparent that they aren't going to last that long.

If they fall here, the power balance in Las Phalanx will start to

crumble.

“Keuheum.”

Weed was now quite hesitant.

But then Fire Giants suddenly emerged from the lava lake.

“Waking me from my sleep, I shall kill all of you!”

“Annoying bastards disturbing our sleep, you shall all face our wrath!”

The five intruding Fire Giants brandished their swords!

But in spite of that, the Inferno Knights and Chaos Warriors did not back away.

In addition, massive numbers of Baovants have also joined the fray.

They began spewing fireballs adding more to the confusion.

The chaotic battlefield has now gathered all of the monsters of Inferno Dungeon.

“The Inferno Knights seems to be still around 300. Ah, another

two just died... Chaos Warriors seems to be getting more reinforcements and are now about twice the numbers of Inferno Knights. Though I knew that the Fire Giants will appear at some point but I didn't expect for the Baovants to join in as well."

Weed was able to estimate their numbers and has now been assessing the battle.

Rover was hiding due to fear while Geumini was losing his will to fight.

"Golgolgol, we'll only end up dying if we engaged with the battle right now."

Weed was being reminded of the impending death!

Seoyoon calmly watched Weed. She had decided to follow whatever decisions he will make in his quest.

The S-class quests had only been leading to extreme hardships one after another so is continuing it right now worth the risk?

Weed must now make his decision.

Chapter 8: Las Phalanx's Race War

“Fight.”

Weed finally decided.

Golden Bird and Eunsae, the two shared the same opinion in disregarding Weed's choice.

Since he is a human with lower level than them, they do not properly view him as their master.

However, Weed clearly expressed that he wants to join the battle so they have to voice their thoughts.

“That's suicidal.”

“You just gave yourself a death sentence.”

They don't have any faith in Weed at all!

“All of your opinions don't matter, we are all in this together and there is not much time left.”

Upon realizing what was about to happen, both Tori and Van Hawk hang their heads.

‘I’ve met the wrong master.’

‘How could I have gotten myself involved with this man again?’

Weed’s servants fell into deep despair.

Geumini and Rover were both stricken with fear in contrast to Seoyoon who didn’t even show a hint of it.

That’s because the harsher the conditions the brighter Seoyoon shines on the battlefield.

Weed shifted his gaze from Seoyoon and returns back to observing the battle.

“Though I did say we will join the battle but for now let us wait here.”

The Chaos Warriors led by Kubichya that were fighting against the Inferno Knights were now divided.

Some of them broke off to fight the Fire Giants while others targeted the Baovants.

While the Fire Giants and Baovants retaliated to their attacks, the Inferno Knights were somehow granted temporary respite.

Each of the races was trying to dominate one another, truly a war to see who reigns supreme.

Whenever the Fire Giants displayed their strength, the entire dungeon would shake while the massive concentrated fire attacks of the Baovants were extremely hot enough to the point of melting the rocks.

If Weed were to make his move now together with his party and undead, influencing the flow of the battle would prove to be difficult.

Weed only has a handful of undead Chaos Warriors left and even if he has Golden Bird and Eunsae with him, they will still face enemies whose numbers are far greater than them.

“Will the Inferno Knights follow me if I command them? But even if they did, it is still not enough to guarantee our victory against the Chaos Warriors.”

Weed thought of using his Advanced Necromancer skills to produce an undead legion but they will most likely not last long if pitted against the Chaos Warriors.

Making the Inferno Knights emerge as the final victor at the end of this race war was truly difficult.

While Weed was brooding over the battle, 30 minutes have

passed.

By now, about a hundred Chaos Warriors have fallen but at the same time 50 more would arrive as reinforcements.

Meanwhile, the Inferno Knights had gain 70 casualties.

It was quite clear to see which side is losing even if one watched the battle from a distance.

“Ah!”

“Why isn’t he doing anything?”

Ever since the start of Weed’s quest in Las Phalanx, the staff of KMC Media were always working overtime.

The Operations Team stayed behind to edit the audios and videos. Even the completely unrelated General Affairs, Human Resource, and other Department Staff also remained in the station.

No one wants to leave because they all want to watch Weed’s adventure.

The staff even have warm coffees and lap blankets prepared.

If Weed fails in his quest then the entire Versailles Continent will be greatly affected.

Therefore, everyone's interests were only focused on the quest.

Not only was Royal Road popular to the young of both genders but also to the old.

“Kill! Kill them!”

“Destroy it!”

“Items! Just now, what items did they drop?”

“Jackpot!”

Pyeon Seong Gu, also known as the beautiful female mascot of the station, has been constantly filling the entire cinema room with her yelling, cheering, and whacking to the point that everyone present has already gotten used to it.

Even though the staff are just watching from a screen, the adventure in Royal Road is still too vivid.

It was a good thing that the time in Royal Road is 4 times than that of the real world since they could just skip the boring parts like when the party is eating, walking, resting, etc.

Since they were watching the live broadcast, they were getting a lot of video materials.

That is because it was Weed's adventure so there weren't that many parts to cut out.

Also, the adventure in Las Phalanx has a lot of sudden earthquakes which leads to disastrous events such as the grounds cracking and walls collapsing which does not fail to surprise everyone each time.

“Weed, why haven't you attacked yet?”

Every one of the staff thought of the same question as Director Kang.

This was now the last stage of the S-class difficulty quest. If Weed succeeds then his name will go down in Versailles Continent's history.

But the viewers in the room are now beginning to worry since the quest might end in disappointment.

KMC Media couldn't help but place low expectations after seeing that the final adversary was a hard wall to break through.

But if it can't be done by Weed then who else is there that can

clear such difficult quest?

“Hmm, aren’t you going to make a move soon?”

Director Kang was feeling anxious so he tried calming himself down by guzzling his glass of water but his secretary that was watching beside him got him bewildered when she suddenly said a few words.

“I think he gave up.”

“Gave up?”

Director Kang asked in doubt.

“Weed having gotten this far, going to give up now? If he wins this battle then he will gain tremendous rewards so I don’t think there is any reason for him to just give up.”

“However, it is now certain that he cannot win. He has no options left except giving up.”

“That may be the case but.....”

Director Kang had a bitter expression on his face.

Despite the hopeless situation, he can’t help but have these vague

expectations that want to root for Weed!

Chaos Warriors, Inferno Knights, Fire Giants, and Baovants, if you look at the situation, it's like Weed's party is a group of lobsters challenging a sea full of whales.

“It's best to abandon the quest and come back alive.”

Even a kindergartner would have arrived at this rational and reasonable conclusion.

But even still, Director Kang and the staff of KMC media were still feeling tense in anticipation for Weed's actions in the video.

‘Quest is too difficult. Just give up on this one since there are still other quests out there.’

It was common to see players doing a challenging quest abandon it midway due to high difficulty but the current adventure right now involves Weed so they want to see it until the very end.

Because Weed would always produce extraordinary results!

Weed's eyes never left the battlefield, always calculating his next course of action. He continues to assess the battle without taking any breaks.

‘Not yet....’

The Chaos Warriors led by Kubichya were slaughtering the Inferno Knights one by one.

The Fire Giants were still running rampant and swinging their swords fissuring the ground and making the ceiling and walls collapse.

Due to the ceiling collapsing, large numbers of Baovants in the lava lake were killed by the falling debris.

In the midst of this pandemonium, Weed still remained focused so as not to miss the opportunity to strike.

Kubichya’s skills in fighting were very diverse.

During the battle, he picked up an axe and was now wielding two different weapons in both hands.

He even performed a seven consecutive combo strike using the axe.

And whenever he swings his axe in empty air, a powerful blast would hit an Inferno Knight.

“Wrath of Fire.”

Fire magic of the Dragon Sword Red Star was used.

The Inferno Knights tried to block the fire magic with their shields but the destructive power was so strong that they were blown away.

Kubichya was even able to knock down a Fire Giant. He then launched a flurry of attacks by alternatively striking the Fire Giant with his axe and sword.

“RAAAAAAAAAA!”

The moment the Fire Giant collapsed, the nearby hordes of Chaos Warriors shouted in unison signalling the charge for their attack.

The dying Fire Giant was rolling back and forth due to severe pain!

By the time one of the Fire Giants finally died, about less than half of the original numbers of the Inferno Knights were left guarding Imbeol's Circle

The other Fire Giants rages even more intensely and the Inferno Knights wielding their swords and shields were yelling and desperately struggling.

Once Kubichya absorbs the mana of Imbeol's Circle, he will

evolve into an even more powerful monster.

Weed having superhuman patience still continued to wait even with the worsening situation happening before him.

“Still... It is not yet the time.”

Waiting just like a robber preparing to rob a bank, Weed culminated his concentration.

In the sea of fire, about a thousand fire attribute monsters were still engaged in the chaotic war.

After a while, Kubichya again was able to kill another Fire Giant.

Passing for even more time here will only let the Chaos Warriors gain the upper hand so it was now the time to act.

“Now.”

Weed finally made his move.

“Rover, Geumini, you two will not engage in battle so stay here. If things don't look good then run away.”

“Understood, golgolgol!”

“All of the undead shall follow my orders. Undead Commander!”

Necromancer skill!

With the skill active, it was now possible to gain complete control of the undead ignoring their wills as if puppets connected to strings.

After waiting silently in the side line for more than one hour, Weed began his attacks.

“Blink!”

Raising their axes, the undead Chaos Warriors began to run.

Using their teleport skill, they went straight to Kubichya’s location.

But that was not the only thing Weed had in mind.

Before his undead arrives he aimed his magic towards the body of the Fire Giant Kubichya just killed.

“Corpse Explosion!”

From the body of the Fire Giant, a large deafening explosion occurred spreading all throughout the area.

“Keuaak!”

Kubichya got hit by the explosion and the other nearby Chaos Warriors was blown away.

- Corpse Explosion skill proficiency has greatly increased.

Hostility from the Fire Giants increases by 55%.

A lot of system message windows were popping out.

That’s because Weed has been casting curse magic to Kubichya in rapid succession. About two-thirds of those spells were resisted and only the Blinding Jinx and three other curse magic took effect.

Before the smoke and flames even disappeared in the area, the undead Chaos Warriors began hitting Kubichya with their axes.

“Kuaaa!”

Assault of the undead!

The undead commenced an all out attack before the enemy Chaos Warriors could intervene.

Kubichya was able to counterattack with his sword and burn

some of the undead but not before taking some damage.

After all, Weed was very fast in conducting the undead.

“Golden Bird, carry me and fly. Eunsae, you go straight to Kubichya. Tori, Van Hawk, you two follow.”

““Understood””

Using both of its feet, Golden Bird grabbed Weed in the shoulders and began flying over the battlefield.

Passing through between the legs of the Fire Giants, superb flying that could even avoid the teleporting Chaos Warriors chasing them!

Tori with his black cloak spread out followed suit in flying carrying Van hawk with him.

“Put me down now!”

They were still 10 meters above where Kubichya is but upon hearing the order Golden Bird released its claws that was holding Weed.

Passing through the smoke and flames, Weed successfully crashed onto Kubichya.

Weed had used his undead to draw Kubichya's attention while confusing him with his curse magic. This was Weed's plan in order to take advantage of Kubichya's huge build and successfully land on his back.

However, Kubichya also has long arms so he uses his axe to swing it upon Weed that was clinging on his back.

“Damn it! Equip shield, Closed Eyes!”

At this moment, Weed can only rely on his endurance.

The axe smashed through the shield and struck Weed.

An extremely powerful impact!

- You have received a heavy shock.

You lost 38,900 Health Points.

Until you have healed and make a full recovery, you will have a 2,590 decrease in your maximum health.

You are stunned for 7 seconds.

You cannot use magic due to the loss of sense of balance.

Even upon receiving such damage, Weed still persisted in clinging onto Kubichya.

He made a desperate struggle to stay there by grabbing Kubichya's giant helmet.

If he falls here, he will die with a useless death.

Even if he was not killed by Kubichya it is still possible that he might be stepped on by a Fire Giant or get caught up in the bombardment of fireballs by the Baovants upon falling.

Weed was desperate to avoid the variety of death that awaits him.

To Weed, it was the longest 7 seconds in his entire life.

Kubichya was very fast, Weed could feel it due the intense movements of his body.

The undead continued their distraction making the target of Kubichya's axe and sword switch to them instead of Weed.

With the support of the undead Weed barely manage to endure the 7 seconds!

Weed's vision and his sense of balance have now returned to normal.

So far, he was still clutching on to Kubichya's helmet.

And while his hands were still on the helmet he activated his magic.

“Life Drain! Mana Drain!”

These spells of the Lich were very useful but the downside is it can only be activated in close proximity but Weed just pulled off an insane stunt and was able to utilize these spells in battle.

Hanging onto the back of an ultra-high level monster, the Chaos Daejeonsa wielding the Dragon Sword, and absorbing its health and mana, a move no one would dare think of!

“Annoying and cowardly skeleton, you're still not dead?!”

Kubichya was still busy fending off the undead unable to stop Weed.

If the undead weren't there parrying and disrupting Kubichya's attacks, Weed wouldn't have lasted this long.

Weed chained down Kubichya on the spot with such a risky move!

Though Weed may have the advantage in position it was still

hard for him to attack or activate offense magic such as Dark Spear.

“Kuaaaa!”

Kubichya yelled as he channelled all of his anger on his attacks reducing the numbers of the undead!

It was never easy for Weed to maintain his position in Kubichya’s back.

Whenever Kubichya moves, Weed would need to apply more force to continue clinging and when Kubichya swings his axe at the back of his head Weed would narrowly avoid it by nimbly moving back and forth.

Like a cicada clinging to a rampaging rhino!

The act of riding on the back of Daejeonsa Kubichya was so full tension that the hair in one’s skin would definitely stand up.

Also, even just touching him is already enough to burn someone.

“Blink.”

Kubichya tried to use his teleportation skill but failed.

Since Weed has been constantly draining his health and mana, he could not use any of his skills.

“Damn skeleton! You dare make a saddle out of my back, I’ll kill you next!”

Kubichya now intends to focus on killing Weed but just like before, he was able to avoid his attacks which constantly annoys him.

Suddenly from within the smoke, Golden Bird and Eunsae appeared.

Using their transformation ability they turned into a spear and a sword.

Attaining their maximum speed, the transformed weapons were aimed at Kubichya!

The attacks were like two beams of light flashing through the air.

Though the attacks might deal a huge damage, the conditions weren’t enough to warrant a hit.

Kubichya would definitely try to evade the attack so Weed needed the undead to pin him down.

Weed calculated the time before Kubichya starts his evasive

actions. Planning to be one step ahead, Weed shouted his command.

“Undead, rush him!”

The undead Chaos Warriors made a mad dash and crashed into Kubichya obstructing him from doing any necessary actions.

Unable to evade, both the spear and sword stabbed him in the shoulder and flank.

“View Status!”

While being a Necromancer, Weed was able to use a skill that can reveal Kubichya’s status.

Chaos Daejeonsa Kubichya

One of the boss class monsters in Las Phalanx.

By chance, he was able to acquire the Dragon Sword during his childhood. Since then, he was able to win myriads of battles in Las Phalanx and became the Chaos Daejeonsa. Possessing great power, he has a burning desire for domination.

*Able to use a part of the magic that was sealed in the Dragon Sword.

Whenever in a fire attribute area, health regeneration shall increase up to 3 times.

*Clouded vision, near death, tired, and confused due to the effects of curse magic.

* Due to severe injuries, combat efficiency is slightly reduced.

Health: 21%

Mana: 9%

Having high leadership, Kubichya was able to lead the Chaos Warriors killing two Fire Giants within just a span of one hour.

But the accumulation of damages he received from that fight plus from the Corpse Explosion, the pincers attacks from the undead, Tori, Van Hawk, Golden Bird and Eunsae reduced his health to 21%.

But even so, the boss class Chaos Warrior still proved to be a formidable opponent because of its insanely high recovery rate!

However, Kubichya was also getting desperate so he called for reinforcements.

“Kuaaaaa! Enemies are attacking me. Warriors, come here!”

Nearby Chaos Warriors responded to the call.

“Daejeonsa is in danger.”

“Annihilate the new enemies!”

Using their teleportation skill, the Chaos Warriors rushed to where Kubichya was however, Inferno Knights and Fire Giants obstructed their paths.

Weed needed to deal more damage to Kubichya before his reinforcements arrives since there was no guarantee that those monsters can hold them off for long.

But having taken the situation into account, Weed already thought up of a countermeasure beforehand.

“The situation is getting worse by the second. Corpse Explosion!”

The body of the first of the Fire Giants to die was used for the spell.

The shockwave shook the entire dungeon leaving behind smoke and flames to fill the area.

- Corpse Explosion has increased by 1 level.

Hostility from Fire Giants has reached maximum value.

The effect of items that lowers hostility will be weakened.

It is advised that you should avoid attracting the Fire Giants' attention.

Some of the debris that came from the Fire Giant's corpse flew towards Weed's location.

Because of the huge explosion that occurred, six Chaos Warriors were killed.

And a lot of the other enemies were lying on the ground.

Weed has now gained more time so he cannot afford to waste this chance.

Van Hawk began his attacks taking advantage of the opportunity together with Tori.

Weed also manipulated the undead to charge at the wounded Kubichya while Golden Bird and Eunsae prepared another pincer attack at both sides.

“Cut him down!”

Golden Bird and Eunsae came flying down at an extremely high speed clawing Kubichya and dealing huge amount of damage.

“How could my warriors easily fall here? Damn dogs of the Inferno Knights! I shall thoroughly crush you and you’re undead here.”

The undead continued their attacks but this time Kubichya made a powerful counterattack with his axe.

The undead could do nothing but die in vain.

Only about seven undead Chaos Warriors survived.

“Aerial Bind!”

A tempest formed surrounding the area with Kubichya as its center. It was like a barrier that confined the area preventing Van Hawk and the undead from escaping.

“Keuheuheuheu, I’m going to kill you first!”

With Van Hawk trapped inside the wind barrier, Kubichya initiated a one on one battle.

Kubichya swung his axe with tremendous speed. Seeing the attack, Van Hawk focused into defense but he was unable to handle the power and was blown away.

Finally Kubichya, after disrupting Van Hawk's stance, slashed him with his sword.

"Ku... uugh."

After countless battles, Van Hawk finally died.

But since his body and soul was sealed by black magic inside a necklace it was still possible to resummon him after the item's cooldown.

However, since he had died early, a major force in Weed's party had disappeared from the battlefield.

But at the very least, he was somehow able to decrease Kubichya's health by 3%.

'We're completely isolated.'

Weed already deemed that the odds of winning were now very slim.

Kubichya's remaining health is still very high and he having a high level and high defense is only making things worse.

'I should let Golden Bird and Eunsae retreat before it's too late.'

With the situation as is, Weed is unable to escape so he instructed Golden Bird and Eunsae to fly through the gaps of the wind barrier before they join him in his impending death.

As for Seoyoon, she immediately rushed towards Kubichya passing through the dense smoke created after the Fire Giant exploded.

Her sword was now emitting an intense red light.

While Kubichya had his health and mana constantly drained, a meteor shower like barrage went hurling towards him.

A volley of attacks that ignores all sorts of defense.

In the cinema room of KMC Media, everyone was busy working.

“I want that part cut off. Focus at the direction where a lot of monsters can be seen on the screen. The view from the lava is too bright.”

“Should I lower the brightness?”

“Let’s make the lava part a little darker. We should avoid having the viewers hurt their eyes.”

An enormous amount of video material was being transmitted from Weed's battle.

So KMC Media was trying to cut as much unnecessary parts as possible.

During this time, Drinfeld and Haven Kingdom's 2nd fleet together with Griffith and his pirate crew were still hunting above ground in Las Phalanx.

A video clip was then suddenly aired on television showing a volcanic eruption then shifting the scene to where a lot of Chaos Warriors gathered.

“Chaos Daejeonsa Kubichya instigated a race war.”

“If they win this war then they will become the dominant race of Las Phalanx. Currently the Inferno Knights, Fire Giants, and Baovants are engaged in a battle royal with them.”

Afterwards, two huge explosions occurred in the underground of Las Phalanx.

Underneath the sky of Las Phalanx war clouds are gathering.

“We are interfering with that skeleton.”

“Gather more of the troops!”

“We will not let him stop Kubichya.”

Everyone who saw the video immediately recognized it as Weed’s quest.

Audience of CTS Media flocked over to KMC Media’s forum requesting to broadcast the whole show.

Rumors of the continuation of Weed’s quest went viral on the internet.

Director Kang deemed that both Drinfeld and Griffith can neither interfere with Weed’s quest at this point.

“The problem is whether he will succeed or not.....”

Whether the quest will be a success or a failure, it was still worth to broadcast.

And if he does not broadcast the quest soon, the viewers that kept on asking when the show will air will soon start flaming them.

But the information about the program that will feature Weed's quest was still hidden with strict confidentiality, he even told the advertisers to just prepare.

Even enterprises that don't usually advertise favourably complied.

"Our company is affiliated with several groups now... So which five should we advertise first?"

"How many hours will it take to finish editing? And what time can we start the broadcast? As for the ads, process the ones from our new sponsors, I would like to have them air first."

"The ones with high advertising rate, understood. With this, our rival companies can't beat us in the ratings."

The advertising contracts were already done all that was left was to balance out the broadcasting time.

The program will start from where Weed's party started exploring Inferno Dungeon to volcanic eruptions to eating stir fried beans and finally the participation in the race war.

After awhile, several teams were having difficulty doing the last minute editing of the broadcast.

“Begin the broadcast at part one. After the opening, insert the ads in-between every ten parts intervals.”

“Starting the show now.”

The program that was about to air was the one the staff prepared beforehand.

As for the rest of the quest, since it was still ongoing, it will be edited while they simultaneously do the broadcast.

“Hit!”

“Ahhh, it wasn’t enough to deliver a fatal blow.”

“Such a pity!”

The Operations Team were having a hard time while the other staff that had nothing to do were all busy watching the video.

President Jeong Deuk Soo was reading the report submitted by Dr. Cha Eunhee from the Saemaul Rehabilitation Hospital.

“She has made quite a lot of improvement. It’s like a miracle.”

The daughter that he had thought would never say a word again had spoken to someone.

Though it was awkward and short, the act of speaking has a special meaning in and of itself.

The doctor had written all of Seoyoon's progress in the report. If she is able to put her trust on people again then eventually she will regain her voice.

It's only a matter of time until she fully recovers.

President Jeong Deuk Soo was smiling upon seeing the results.

"Does Seoyoon really spend most of her time with that man?"

He had received all sorts of information relating to Seoyoon from the members of her bodyguards.

From the time she visited Lee Hyun in his home to any other relevant events were reported without exception.

"Yes, she does."

"So, not once had they gotten into a dispute?"

“Seoyoon seems to have a friendly relationship with him.”

Without meeting Lee Hyun directly, the bodyguards did a thorough background check on him.

Lee Hyun had a miserable childhood due to the huge debts his poor family accumulated. He had developed a skinflint personality due to being constantly harassed by the loan sharks. But despite all that, he seems to deeply care about his family's well being.

He seems to despise the prospect of dating any woman since he thinks it is just a waste of time and money. In a sense, his character was somewhat similar to Seoyoon in that he does not easily opens up to others but in Seoyoon case, she is just afraid of getting hurt so she tries not to get involve with other people isolating herself in the process.

He had trained in swordsmanship in a dojang. Has been raising a lot of animals at his home but rather than having them as pets they were raised as food supplies. Seoyoon seemed to have taken a liking to his dog named Mohm Boshin and is currently taking care of it and the vet didn't seem to find any health issues concerning the dog.

He doesn't have any particular hobbies and his life seems to be just a repetition of going to the dojang from his home then to school then to the market afterwards.

On a special note, he has a character named Weed in the popular virtual reality game Royal Road and seems to be quite famous.

The data gathered for his character was relatively huge and all the records show that he had performed quite a number of impressive and unbelievable feats.

President Jeong Deuk Soo played Royal Road a few times when he was on vacation but during those times he had never heard of the character named Weed.

“He seems to be a good companion for Seoyoon.”

“I think so too... So should we continue to allow them to meet?”

“I’ll allow it for the time being. I don’t want to forcefully separate them and end up hurting Seoyoon.”

President Jeong Deuk Soo does not wish to see Seoyoon getting hurt and suffer again.

However, he will put a complete stop to their relationship if that man decides to become a couple with her later on.

Appearance, wealth, lineage, there is a vast difference between the two in those aspects.

“According to the investigation, his weakness is money so I can just give him money as thanks for being her benefactor. I’ll give him enough money to last in his entire lifetime. I’m sure he’ll

come to an understanding to never cross the line and just stay as being a good friend.”

Chapter 9: Weed Does It Again

Seoyoon's salvo of meteor like attacks struck Kubichya in rapid succession.

Peobeobeobeobeok!

The high paced attacks bypassed all defences dealing a huge amount of damage.

“Keueeek!”

With the onslaught of attacks, Kubichya could do nothing but receive all of it.

Seoyoon, in a frenzied state, recklessly bombarded Kubichya!

As Kubichya continued to take dozens of hits, he slowly retreated.

A Berserker will continue to attack until all of its health and stamina are depleted. However, continuous use of the skill rapidly increased mana consumption as well as increased physical fatigue, yet Seoyoon showed no interest. Smooth and intense, the swordplay by which she poured all her might continued to remain active even though she was nearing exhaustion. And even in that state, Seoyoon still displayed agile movements which could already be considered to be at extraordinary levels.

- You are within the area of effect of the skill.

You lost 1,396 Health Points.

With Weed still clinging onto Kubichya's back, he also suffered damage from the successive hits of the skill.

The battle then turned into a match of endurance, with Kubichya still at the receiving end of the successive blows however, Seoyoon was simply attacking in a fit of blind rage, not caring for her decreasing stamina, which could give Kubichya a momentary opening for a counterattack.

“Life Drain!”

Weed continued to struggle to hold onto Kubichya's back while casting Life Drain.

He was scared of losing his life since Seoyoon was just rapidly and recklessly shooting off her skill at random. Added to that fact, Seoyoon bore the Murderer's mark exposing her name, which was written in an intimidating red.

So each time Kubichya's body received the shock from the impacts, Weed felt sorely terrified.

Typical for a Berserker, Seoyoon never thinks when she attacks!

Due to the relentless attacks, Kubichya was now in a precarious state, but even with that he still intended to retaliate.

“Fearless human! To think that you can drive me into such a corner.”

Though he treated Skeleton Weed as someone cumbersome, annoying, and dastardly, the way he treated Seoyoon was far too different. The Chaos Daejeonsa Kubichya venerated those that possess strength but clearly he despised the undead wizard. Weed was now a Lich and had very high Infamy, therefore it was normal for monsters to only show disdain for him.

At any rate, it was still necessary to avoid Daejeonsa Kubichya’s attacks at all cost.

If a character were to be struck by either his axe or Dragon Sword, the only outcome would be death.

‘This is bad.’

Weed tried to warn Seoyoon but it seemed that she couldn’t be swayed and continued to swing her sword. Her onslaught couldn’t be stopped. Mana had been gathering in her sword which by now was emitting a blood red light.

‘She is about to do something.’

Seoyoon had been preparing for a large-scale attack.

And when her blood red sword slashed through the air it wreaked havoc to the surrounding area, as if a storm had just passed through. Despite that, Kubichya just took a step back and then swung widely his sword, producing a force capable of repelling Seoyoon's attack.

“Female Warrior, I commend your courage. Killing you here would be a great honor.”

Kubichya then kicked the ground and began running towards Seoyoon.

However, the blood red sword once again cut through the air slashing both Kubichya and Weed.

The blood red light had yet to dissipate and still she continued to attack.

A difficult skill yet easily executed!

Chaos Daejeonsa Kubichya did not immediately panic from the attacks but instead tried to block them using both his axe and sword.

“Kuaaaaaah!”

Kubichya screamed in pain but so did Weed.

“Euaaaaak!”

Upon seeing Seoyoon launching that many attacks without hesitation, Weed had been constantly regretting.

‘If I had known this was what would have happened, I should’ve cooked the long expired ingredients and fed that to her! No, I should’ve taken more of her japtoms, since every time we finish hunting monsters she just goes stealing my sculptures, this is so unfair!’

Seoyoon concentrated on her skill in order to deal maximum damage. The skill formed from the condensed red mana was then unleashed.

“Kkwaeaeaek!”

Struck by the skill, Kubichya was blasted through the air. The situation was now reversed, with Seoyoon doing the chasing instead of Kubichya.

Kkwagwagwagwagwang!

Whenever Kubichya was hit, the same applied to Weed.

Left and right, up and down, Kubichya’s body was spinning like a

top!

Weed then re-evaluated Seoyoon's combat skills.

‘Very strong.’

She had been fighting together with Tori recently, but after experiencing countless battlefields alone, it had made her this strong.

‘Not good in cooking nor in creating sculptures, but she is extremely powerful at fighting.’

The characteristics of a Berserker, showing no hesitation in battle; the more aggressive she attacked the greater the increase in power to her skills.

Seoyoon was definitely in a league of her own!

As Kubichya's health continued to decrease, Weed also suffered the same fate. But even with that much damage Kubichya's remaining health was still at 11%.

“Save the Daejeonsa!”

Chaos Warriors that were blown away due to the detonated Fire Giant had then returned!

The devoted Chaos Warriors once again started teleporting towards Kubichya.

From just 10 enemies, it suddenly reached 20. They were growing in numbers and went to target Seoyoon and the three now remaining Undead. Other Chaos Warriors also gave chase to Golden Bird and Eunsae by teleporting; however, the two did not come down to attack on the ground, instead they flew even higher.

Unable to hold out against the numbers of the enemy, the undead were wiped out by the Chaos Warriors. From the beginning, the situation was never favourable for Weed.

“Seoyoon, just run away already!”

Seoyoon received several wounds from the Chaos Warriors but her focus in fighting never once wavered.

“Tch, I’ll try this then. Animate Dead!”

The battlefield was overflowing with hundreds of corpses.

With every current undead destroyed, 15 newly produced undead Chaos Warrior were there to replace them.

Weed didn’t have to worry about the mana cost for he was getting a steady supply of it.

‘Because of Mana Drain.’

After being relentlessly attacked, Kubichya was now unable to move his body and was in a state of confusion. Using this opening, Weed began casting his spells once again.

“Animate Dead!”

17 more undead Chaos Warriors were produced.

Ttiring!

- Intermediate Undead Summoning skill level 10 has converted to Advance Undead Summoning skill.

You can now summon the spirits of Elven Warriors on special bodies.

Undead are now more flexible and faster.

You can gain complete dominance over the lesser undead.

If you have high Fame in the Versailles Continent, you will be able to command myriads of undead.

- Your Undead Summoning Skill has reached the Advanced level.

Due to the influence of being a Lich, physical abilities of the undead shall increase.

The skills of the Lich, Mana Drain and Life Drain shall increase in efficiency by 15%.

- You are to proceed as an Undead for the remaining duration of the Dragon Sword quest.

However, if you cancel out of Sculptural Shapeshifting, you will lose the quest and never get it back.

- Due to the current condition imposed on Sculptural Shapeshifting, all stats shall be increased except for Fame.

Due to having high Art stats, the undead are now able to dance.

The undead can now perform a very bizarre dance underneath the moonlit sky.

“Of all the rotten luck! Why of all things did these appear?!”

Undead Summoning Skill was now at advance level.

But the current undead were produced while his skill was still at the Intermediate level.

It would be a complete waste of time to have them revert back and resummon them again.

“Fight! Kill all the enemies of your master!”

20 undead Chaos Warriors teleported to provide support for Seoyoon, the rest stopped the enemy Chaos Warriors in their tracks. Weed continued to absorb mana from Kubichya in order to maintain the undead but still saved enough to cast his spells.

“Corpse Explosion! Corpse Explosion! Corpse Explosion! Corpse Explosion!”

Corpse Explosions with extremely high explosive power were activated in a row.

“Get in there and latch onto the enemy!”

The group of undead Chaos Warriors exploded one after another.

Using the high quality corpses of the Chaos Warriors as walking bombs to create more havoc was Weed’s plan of desperation. With the help of the undead Chaos Warriors, Seoyoon was able to break free from the enemies’ assaults, and leapt towards Kubichya.

Unfortunately, Kubichya had already recovered from his confused state, and began chanting.

“O souls of the burning warriors that dominated this land! Give me the strength to fight!”

Warrior's Rampage!

All of Kubichya's muscles suddenly bulged.

Due to the induced rage, his heartbeat will now be faster, increasing his strength, agility, and stamina recovery!

“RAAAAAA!”

In a flash, Kubichya struck Seoyoon a dozen times.

With his incredibly fast speed and power, Seoyoon was completely overwhelmed and her injuries from the previous assault of the Chaos Warriors added more to her disadvantage. Also, due to her skill consuming most of her stamina, she had become extremely weak.

“Human female warrior, I shall have you die now!”

Kubichya struck Seoyoon with his axe several more times and then dealt the last blow with the Red Star.

Weed regretted as he could only watch Seoyoon die!

Weed greatly roared.

“All undead attack Kubichya!”

It was already a hopeless situation.

Before her death, Seoyoon was the only one capable of dealing a great number of injuries on Kubichya.

Undead Chaos Warriors launched an omnidirectional assault against Kubichya!

“Aim for the left side! Five of you attack the upper right!”

Due to Weed being positioned at the back of Kubichya, he could see things from the same point of view. Thanks to Weed's directions, the undead were able to put up a good fight against Kubichya.

However, that did not last long. While attacking with their axes, Kubichya counterattacked them by blasting a fireball, burning the undead.

“Blade Tornado!”

Tori charged towards Kubichya using his ultimate skill!

Golden Bird and Eunsae also came down to the ground to attack, but they were all repelled by Kubichya, and enemy Chaos Warriors pursued them while they retreated to the sky.

“Feeble skeleton, it is now your turn.”

Kubichya gloriously announced this, now that all the hindrances had been removed.

Though his body might be battered and was full of wounds, Kubichya still had amazing health regeneration.

With his life at stake, Weed continued to suck Kubichya’s life just like a mosquito.

“Die, skeleton!”

The moment the axe was brandished, Weed immediately retreated to Kubichya’s flank.

“Mind Hand!”

A Sculptor’s skill that enables one to create a third hand. With the hand grabbing Kubichya’s arm, the attack was narrowly avoided. Though the attack was stopped midway through, Weed still received some damage so he once again started absorbing life in order to recover. So each time Kubichya attacked with his axe, Weed would avoid it using tricks and movements just like a monkey.

“I’m going to continue harassing you until the very end!”

With Kubichya’s relentless attacks, Weed’s bones began to crack and when they broke his health drastically dropped.

’Am I gonna die like this?’

If Weed were to be thrown off from Kubichya’s back then he would definitely die from the spells that would come after.

“Golgolgol!”

In his near death state, Weed heard the familiar voice of Geumini.

Moooooooooooo!

Even the cry of Rover was mixed in.

Weed remembered that he had ordered them to not to engage in battle and if things got worse, they were to retreat.

“I am Geumini. We will not let you kill our master, golgolgol!”

Riding on the back of Rover, Geumini charged in like a brave knight.

“You haven’t left yet?!”

“Halt!”

In order to stop them, hordes of Chaos Warriors went to tackle them.

“Charge, golgol!”

Geumini, swinging his sword, broke through the enemy lines.

Each time they passed through the Chaos Warriors, cracks and scratch wounds would be engraved on his smooth body. Some parts were chipped off while some areas melted, but that did not stop him from moving forward.

Rover took on the fireball attacks and plowed through the hordes of Chaos Warriors!

Geumini, using his jewel attribute pulled out five shining blue sapphires from his body.

They were high class jewels that could pitch a high price in the stores of the continent.

“Jewelry Destruction, Sapphire Orb!”

A blizzard of ice and snow centering on Geumini swept away the surrounding Chaos Warriors!

The storm of icicle shards then slashed through Kubichya.

“Keeek! What are these attacks.... Blink!”

Kubichya tried to teleport away from the blizzard but due to Weed still clinging onto him, the skill failed!

Engulfed by the sapphire's blizzard spell, Kubichya incurred a high amount of damage. Weed was also included in the attack. In order to reduce as much damage as possible, Weed fastened himself on Kubichya's back.

- Due to the extreme cold, your body is now frozen.
- Health is drastically falling.
- Physical ability is reduced by 87%.
- Extreme harsh condition! Due to being an undead, you are unable to resist the cold.
- Jaws and fingers are now frozen, you cannot cast any spells.

- You have now lost all senses in your body. Skin and nerves will undergo necrosis but since the body is only made of bones, the condition will not be applied.

- Your body is now immobile.

- All casted spells are now cancelled. All protections casted from magic are now removed. Life Drain and Mana Drain are now cancelled.

System message windows were popping out in rows.

Unable to escape the area of effect of the sapphire spell, Kubichya's health was drastically falling as well.

Amidst the blizzard, an ice fragment struck one of Weed's eye sockets. With one of his eyes gone, Weed watched Geumini as he casted powerful spells against the Chaos Warriors.

Geumini then suddenly exclaimed.

"Master, I'll show the world how grateful I am to you. Golgolgol!"

He then once again casted the magic Weed had prohibited him to use.

"Jewelry Destruction!"

Risking his life for his master, Geumini pulled out 5 more sapphires and activated the skill.

Anymore use of the skill and his body will run out of jewels.

Finally, Geumini used his body to create an explosion that filled the area with golden brilliance blasting away the Chaos Warriors and Kubichya.

This was his last resort; Geumini had blown up his own body just to save Weed and defeat the enemies.

At that instance, Weed's head was filled with a kaleidoscope of memories of Geumini.

He then spoke his final words to him.

“Why are you so damn incompetent? You have yet to earn your keep.”

Like a brother, Weed had shared his equipment with him. Weed was not required to wear his beginner outfit and clay sword anymore, so he handed them down to Geumini.

“Who do you think made you painstakingly.... For you to end up like this, pathetic.”

“Golgolgol.”

Even though he was always treated harshly, he had hunted and grown together with the Wyverns without being dissatisfied. With his handsome face, he was occasionally smug but he learned to be submissive, he did it in order to receive praises from Weed.

“Kuaaaaaah!”

Geumini died but Kubichya still lived.

“Kill, I shall kill you!”

Kubichya howled like a wounded beast.

Rover was still rampaging around while crying, killing the already injured Chaos Warriors in the vicinity.

Desperate times call for desperate measures!

Weed immediately pulled out Zahab’s engraving knife and stabbed himself in the chest.

Personally reducing what little health he had remaining, but just before dying he took out his Copper Plate of Rest.

“Aahh.”

“How could this happen....”

The staff of KMC Media were devastated.

The last stage of the quest had failed and only genocide awaited Weed’s sculptures of life.

Tears of sorrow and sadness can be seen among the staff. Even Director Kang had a bitter expression.

“Weed’s undefeatable streak has come to an end.”

Even if it was Weed, the quest was still unsuccessful. Moreover, the difficulty of the quest was very high so no one could really blame him for the failure.

Being able to lead the undead in a fight against Kubichya and treacherously using the corpses of the Fire Giants as his powder kegs. The way he challenged the army of Chaos Warriors was truly remarkable.

“Phew, I feel so empty though.”

Director Kang was still idly watching the video feed.

Kubichya, having accumulated large amount of damage, fell to one knee and was resting, with Chaos Warriors gathered around him forming a heavily guarded wall.

The Inferno Knights still had sufficient numbers to resist the Chaos Warriors, though the Fire Giants were now weakened; but all in all, the situation of the war had changed little.

When Weed had joined the battle it was truly a breathtaking moment. As they continued to watch, more Chaos Warriors died in battle but many more would spring up and join the confusion later. As the Inferno Knights and Fire Giants continued to hold their ground, a lot of Chaos Warriors by then had gotten exhausted from the battle; some of which had even started to rest. This observation wasn't that surprising; due to the game's nature, such a situation was quite possible to happen.

“So this is how it comes to an end.”

Due to the dramatic moments, not only Director Kang but also the rest of the Operations Teams were all glued to the screen. In order to get everyone back to their senses, Director Kang clapped his hands.

“Wake up everybody. We still ought to finish our work. The quest has failed, we will have to put out this caption and choose an appropriate bgm. Programming Department, how is our viewer ratings at the moment?”

“Yes, please wait for a moment.”

The staff of the Programming Department looked at their monitors and surveyed the results.

“Right now, among the 17 game broadcasting companies we have 92.5% of the market share. Even with our program competing with news channels over the airwaves we still got 8.9% of the ratings.”

Home shopping, comedy, drama, these are what currently being aired on the tv channels but the ratings still reached 8.9%.

If you count only the ones doing game broadcasts then the ratings has reached a whopping 92.5%.

No other stations had ever recorded such high audience ratings, except for KMC Media that is.

Among a hundred people only 7-8 people were not watching the Royal Road broadcast of KMC Media.

“These ratings are absurd....”

Some KMC Media staff immediately checked whether there was some mechanical failure in their machines while the rest were already in an uproar.

A flood of calls was coming from advertising sales representatives

of different companies, and even the International Division was having a field day due to the calls of broadcasters from other countries.

Users were now running out of control and were flooding every message boards.

- KMC Media definitely hit it big.
- Weed's adventure is currently on air. Now, turn on your televisions and go watch it on KMC Media.
- For those who cannot view it on television, you can go to their website and watch the internet broadcast.
- Watching on the internet is not recommended. There are too many people trying to gain access making the video unable to buffer.

CTS Media and other broadcasting stations were very jealous of KMC Media.

Short intermittent rises in ratings may be dismissible but once a big issue is created, the increased number of viewers is secured. KMC Media even added effects in their program garnering an even more increase in viewership. Especially now that Royal Road was gaining more popularity to the public.

Initially, due to the high price of the capsules, people were

reluctant in buying them despite the popularity and benefits of virtual reality. But right now, even if you have an expensive car and a good house to live in, it was still much better to have it, with the widespread recognition in Royal Road.

Families hunting together with their young children are now already a common sight in Royal Road. Royal Road had definitely brought great change, not only in Korea but all over the world.

With the increasing broadcasts of the game to the public, its influence in the media grew as well.

And on this day, Weed and KMC Media would be especially remembered.

Others stations were having increased difficulty trying to reverse their drop in ratings. This included CTS Media, Jachang and a certain number of other stations that were greatly affected. It's because they chose to air the live broadcast of the expedition instead. At first, they held the interest of lots of viewers and had plenty to advertise. But as soon as Weed's adventure was aired on television, the audience immediately abandoned them and flocked to KMC Media's channel.

- Weed's adventure is finally here.
- Time to go to KMC Media. Goodbye.
- Me too. Keukeukeu.

Viewers never missed any information, that was because the Internet was only filled with stories about Las Phalanx.

Everyone had payed close attention to the long awaited program of Weed's adventure.

While continuing to watch the screen, Director Kang muttered to himself.

“It's a pity that such a sensational quest ended up in failure.”

Weed just died a while ago after going through such an intense battle and with his death, took along a huge deal of the excitement away. But it was not yet the time to relax, not until Weed's special program in Las Phalanx reached to the end of the live video feed. Though the battle had ended, many of the staff of KMC Media were still rooted in their seats watching the video.

As for the staff that went back to work, they once again glued their eyes towards the screen.

There was still plenty to watch in the race war that will determine who reigns as supreme in Las Phalanx.

Director Kang suddenly had a question.

“Weed already died, so why are we still receiving the video feed?”

The other staff had similar thoughts as well.

“Yeah, Weed definitely had died....”

“If he had died then the video would have been cut off by now.”

The staff that had become avid fans of Weed continued to watch the video without saying a thing.

Thump. Thump.

Their hearts were now racing.

Shortly after the scene, they had already guessed what was about to occur.

Ever since Weed took his own life, these anxious staffs had their eyes only at the screen with their chests beating loudly.

‘Come.’

‘Now is the time to get up..... Keukeukeukeukeu.’

*

Dense smoke was rising!

And then a huge beam of green light flashed through like lightning.

When Weed suddenly came to, he was looking down at Kubichya who was relaxing far below him. Weed was revived through the skill Power to Reject Death but somehow the way he felt with his body was far too different than when he was revived as Origin of the Skeleton.

He had bones thicker than a building's steel frame.

Had wings and a tail, and an enormous head with a snout.

Weed had revived as a Dragon.

- You have returned from the darkness of the abyss. The skill level of the Power to Reject Death has increased by 1.

Skill has reached Beginner level 3. Strength and Health will gain an additional 2% due to the power of darkness.

Additional effect will be granted by fighting more wickedly.

The possibility to raise more undead increases.

After resurrection, the number of available race-specific skills increases as well as the skill level.

- You have been resurrected as a large monster.

Penalties will be applied to racial skills.

Because of your failure to match the basic stat conditions of this race, your body will deteriorate over time.

You will have relatively poor health.

A large amount of power will be exhausted in order to maintain the body weight.

Any sudden movements can cause damage to your body.

Before Weed could get used to his new body, he had begun searching for Rover.

‘Good, he’s not dead yet.’

Rover, nearing his imminent death was running amok. Due to his last ditch resistance, the Chaos Warriors could not apply the final blow.

‘I can’t let you die yet.’

Weed took a one step forward, which measured more than 10

meters in length.

Kkwaaaaang!

Extremely large footsteps.

The large steps resonated, shaking the whole dungeon. Just by moving his new joints showcased tremendous power. But even with just a walking pace, a significant amount of his health dropped.

The suffering of a large monster!

Weed used his jaws to catch Rover.

Rover, not knowing what just happened was lifted into the air.

- Golden Bird, Eunsae, if you guys are still alive then take Rover away with you.

Jjaejaejaek!

Golden Bird and Eunsae burst out through the smoke with a loud cry. Flying in the air and navigating through the gaps, they both rescued Rover by swiftly grabbing him away. Weed then lifted his claw to shoulder height to help Rover, who he spit out in order to make him fly up even higher, as he blocked the path of the Chaos Warriors that might have taken to give chase.

‘Now it’s Kubichya’s turn.’

Weed then turned.

Inferno Knights and Chaos Warriors were stunned as they continued to look up.

Though Weed was hesitating for a bit, he must not waste more time. He must not give Kubichya time to recover, and it would be very effective to use his current body to fight against him now. But since there was a ceiling blocking him, Weed was unable to fly.

- Kuooooooooo!

Dragon’s Roar!

Weed moved instinctively, taking advantage of the stunned state of the Chaos Warriors.

Using his hind legs, he suddenly trampled Kubichya. It was an attack that he had put all of his weight in. Due to his severe injuries, Kubichya was unable to use his teleportation skill, giving him no options for escape. However, he did not die after being trampled and was slowly recovering.

But Weed then tossed him into the air like a ball before chomping him with his jaws.

“We must save Daejeonsa!”

“Attack the Dragon!”

The Dragon’s Roar effects did not even last for five seconds.

Chaos Warriors raised their axes, teleporting towards Weed and started hacking away at his body.

Neck, spine, flanks, and legs, all were being hacked by the Chaos Warriors’ axes.

The whole body of the Bone Dragon was burning!

Large monsters were strong due to their high strength and health. But being born with a huge body also had its drawbacks. Though they had enough power to kill enemies in a single swoop, they had slow attack speed. And their attacks were so full of openings.

In addition, Weed was still not used to the current state of his body.

‘It would have been nice if I could have practiced using this form first...’

He was feeling strange due to having a tail and a pair of wings.

Wrapping his front limbs around his body and covering his head with his folded wings, Weed hunched over.

This can be called as the best defensive position for a Dragon!

Enduring all of the attacks and unable to counter, Weed focused only on his goal.

‘The front fangs and molars seem to be pretty strong.’

Just like chewing a rock there were a lot of cracking sounds, but Weed didn’t care whether his teeth broke.

Becoming a toothless Dragon or not, he was desperate to finish off Kubichya!

Due to receiving simultaneous attacks, Weed’s health rapidly declined.

Since Kubichya was unable to use teleportation, he was still being grinded in Weed’s jaw.

And in the midst of crunching through Kubichya, system message windows popped out.

Ttiring!

- You have levelled up.
- You have levelled up.
- You have levelled up.
- Chaos Daejeonsa Kubichya's ambition of dominating Las Phalanx has been put to a complete end.
- Due to the great achievement in battle, your Fame rises by 1,875.
- Achieved victory against Kubichya. The entire Versailles Continent will praise you and your adventure in Las Phalanx.
- Bards from all over the continent will sing praises of you. Every time your songs are spread, your Fame will rise and Infamy shall slightly decrease.
- Grace has increased by 35.
- You will receive the favour of most of the nobles and kings.
- Charisma has increased by 11.
- Fighting Spirit has increased by 7.

- As a result of this glorious victory accomplished in Las Phalanx, all who participated in the battle will have an increase of 6 to all stats.

- Chaos Warriors now have an irreversible enmity towards you. Hostility is now permanently at maximum value.

Title acquired!

The Immortal Warrior.

Title is granted to the warrior who seized victory after defying death, surpassing his own limitations.

You have gained special respect from the Undead, Necromancers, and Dark attribute Knights. Death Knights will now favourably serve you as you lead them in battle.

When fighting against enemies stronger than you, health, strength, and agility will increase by 5%.

The effects of the skill Power to Reject Death will increase by 10% upon resurrection.

- You have acquired Chaos Daejeonsa Boots.

- You have acquired Chaos Daejeonsa Plate Armor Set.

- You have acquired Las Phalanx's Underground Area Map.
- You have acquired the Dragon Sword, Red Star.
- You have acquired Seulroeo's Pair of Wedding Rings.

The acquisition of items!

But Weed quickly realized that his remaining health was only 12%.

“Master, I shall come to save you.”

“I can't bear to watch anymore.”

Golden Bird and Eunsae came back for Weed after moving Rover to a safe location.

But Weed stopped them with his whisper.

- There is no need to worry about me. Go back to Rover. That is an order.

Weed knew that even if Golden Bird and Eunsae came back for him, he still cannot be saved. All of the remaining Chaos Warriors were now coming for him. Though the Inferno Knights were still busy fighting some of the Chaos Warriors, the group of Fire Giants

changed their target and aimed to take Weed's life.

Weed's demise was inevitable but he had no regrets. Weed has already prepared himself for this.

- Damn bastards! I'm taking you all down with me!

Weed took a deep breath. He inhaled as much as he could. His Dragon chest bloated hideously.

After pouring all of his mana into it, he then unleashed his skill.

Acid Breath.

The Bone Dragon's Acid Breath surged through the Chaos Warrior-ridden battlefield.

Chapter 10: Seulroeo's Wedding Ceremony

KMC Media was so quiet that you can even hear the sound of saliva being swallowed by the person sitting next to you.

When Weed had revived, everyone focused solely on the video feed.

Even the departments responsible for video editing stopped working.

From the screens installed inside the General Manager's office to the President's office, all were showing the same footage and from the moment Weed resurrected as a Dragon, everyone watching the video was awestruck.

The Power to Reject Death combined with the effects of the Copper Plate of Rest had resurrected him into a Dragon!

“This is absurd.”

“H-How is this....”

Due to the effects of the Copper Plate of Rest, Weed had been resurrected as a Dragon despite the low level of his skill Power to Reject Death. But due to the huge penalties applied, Weed could

not use the full potential of being a Dragon in battle.

Also being in an underground dungeon had been very unfavourable for the large flying-type monster.

However, despite the numerous shortcomings, his eyes still gleamed threateningly.

Weed's resurrection as a Dragon had caused everyone to shudder.

Just watching it as it is had caused the station's staff to be left in a daze but what about the viewers that will watch the enhanced version of the video after being edited!

Royal Road viewers will definitely be shocked watching this epic moment.

“Oh, how I envy you.”

“After all, this is Weed were talking about. No other person can go on such an adventure.”

The video was so full of excitement it had the station staff fully engrossed.

Director Kang, together with his assistants, was now deliberating on how they will configure the video for broadcast.

“Captions... no, we don’t need to put those in. It’s already good as it is.”

Placing captions doesn’t give the impression that it will stand out. It’ll just make it look frivolous.

Everyone was captivated as they continue to watch Weed as a Dragon but unfortunately, Weed still died a second time.

But with Kubichya finally defeated, the difficult S-class quest has been completed.

Soon, the inhabitants of Versailles Continent will start clamouring once more as the news of Weed’s success dawns upon them like a divine message from heaven.

To think that from the beginning, Director Kang and the rest of the KMC Media staff doubted the probability of success of the S-class difficulty quest!

After Weed had died, the video feed in the cinema room had cut off. There were no more images being relayed nor was there any sound.

All was quiet for a while.

And as if struck by lightning, they immediately began yelling as they return to their respective tasks.

“Change the title of the special program. ‘Weed’s Crusade’! No, wait! Not that one. ‘The Ultimate Undead’, how does that one sound?”

“We will have an increase in broadcasting time, facilitators are asking for consent to modify the broadcasting schedule in our homepage.”

“Calls from various companies are pouring in though we’re just lashing out with each other for the cover ads’ unit pricing.”

The advent of the Dragon was about 2 minutes and 56 seconds!

For just about 3 minutes, this will become a legend not only to the viewers but also in the whole game broadcasting industry.

Lee Hyun exited from his capsule and sat idly while feeling a huge sense of loss.

“Now I don’t have access till 24 hours have passed.”

He had used Acid Breath to take down as much Chaos Warriors as he could. But even if he was able to do a breath attack, he doesn’t know the full extent of damage it dealt.

In addition, he was resurrected as a Dragon but with skills only that of a Beginner level!

His Flight skill, Dragon's Roar, and Acid Breath were at Beginner level 4, level 6, and level 3 respectively.

He could not afford prolonging the battle against the Chaos Warriors for his health rapidly declined so he resorted to use one huge breath attack.

“Anyway, it was quite difficult.”

Lee Hyun stood up and started cleaning.

If he had turned on his television, he would have seen the contents of his quest playing in full swing but he was only interested in watching the news and the show ‘Unveiling Versailles Continent’.

Watching television other than that is only a waste of electricity!

“Now that I’m done with housecleaning, it’s time to do some sweeping and polishing.”

Washing the bed sheets, cleaning the refrigerator, maintaining the chicken coop, there were many things that he still needed to be done.

The season was now in autumn with plenty of fallen leaves accumulating.

“Autumn sure comes by so fast.”

Lee Hyun had always been very sensitive and sharp to dry and bleak winds.

“I’ll need to start soaking kimchis soon.”

Before winter arrives, it is important to start preparing kimchis!

Just as he was about to do more maintenance in the house, he was suddenly interrupted.

Ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong

Somebody was incessantly pressing the doorbell at the front door.

No Peddlers.

No Religious Solicitors.

The doorbell looks like it’s about to break.

I’m going to charge whoever presses and breaks it.

That person had definitely seen the warning sign but still continues to persist in pressing the doorbell.

Lee Hyun went to open the front door and was surprised to see Seoyoon there. It seems that she hurriedly came to his house as beads of sweat were forming in her forehead.

When she had first visited, she had taken the chickens but now it seems she wants a rabbit when he had asked for an exchange for Tori.

“Hello, how long has it been? Come on, step inside.”

Lee Hyun greeted her like a close friend and invited her inside the house. He then gave her a cup of naengnokcha (T/N: cold green tea).

“Nowadays, the weather is starting to get cold and I should be serving others hot green tea but for now, this should help cool you down.”

“.....”

“Shall I bring some honey?”

Seoyoon had a very worried look on her face and showed little interest for the green tea.

‘Although I died... Why did he gladly welcome me?’

When Seoyoon had died, she immediately came out of the capsule.

Earlier, KMC Media had contacted her regarding the part of her appearance at the core of the quest. But of course, she did not do any direct negotiations but instead left it to the lawyer in charge of her.

Normally, they don't need the consent of a person to air their appearance but since this was a quest concerning Lee Hyun, they needed her consent for the show.

Afterwards, they came to an agreement to limit her appearance to only where she had a mask on her face and had her thin leather clothes covered with her armor.

She had then enquired KMC Media about the situation in Las Phalanx.

Geumini had died while Weed experienced death twice.

Seoyoon by then had been far more concerned on how to console the grief-stricken Lee Hyun than to care about the drop in her level and skill proficiency.

But Lee Hyun just welcomed her when she had arrived.

“Don’t want to drink green tea? Oh, how rude of me. I haven’t served any fruit.”

Normally, Lee Hyun would display a completely different behaviour.

But in Royal Road, Seoyoon lost her life fighting against Kubichya. Her valiant efforts led to the successful hunting of the Chaos Daejeonsa.

Naturally, he was thankful but as he turns around his head, he quickly began to formulate a scheme for the item distribution.

‘I’ll feign ignorance for the time being.’

As he was peeling an apple, Lee Hyun was drooling over the idea of gaining more items.

Not even a shred of guilt as he began to scheme!

“Ah, damn it, he was broke. How can he not drop many items when he died?”

He carefully peels the apple as he speaks in guile.

Even if she were to watch the broadcast, she still wouldn't be able to know what items he had acquired. It was because Kubichya died while he was inside Weed's mouth.

'Is it too much if I say only one item came out? But it was a boss.... it was also a monster related to a quest, she might doubt my claims later.'

Lee Hyun then spoke in a small voice.

"Still, it wasn't all that bad. What came out were 5 equipment items, or was it 3? Ah, it was 4. Anyway, that's what he dropped when he died."

He originally got 5 items but thought of reducing it somewhat by 2. However, if there were only 3 items to split up, one person will only get one item.

Eventually, he compromised with 4 items so it can be divided by 2 while looking less suspicious.

"I think Kubichya was wearing very good equipments. But frankly, I think that it is unlikely that we will be able to wear those equipments."

As Lee Hyun continued to speak, he was also feeling frustrated. It was because he wasn't able to check the items that he had acquired.

‘In order to divide them, I needed to properly determine their value first.’

In Versailles Continent’s time, they had approximately spent a few months of hardships together. In the course of their adventure, Seoyoon had contributed a lot so anymore deceit would be unfair to the effort she had displayed.

After all, it is only common sense to divide the items equal to the contributions.

However, one item was removed so she only gets 2 items where 3 items would have been a proper reward!

‘Good. It seems she has no complaints.’

Seoyoon covered her mouth with the tea cup and gently smiled in relief. Her natural smile was like from a different dimension compared to Lee Hyun’s rotten smile.

When Lee Hyun created the Freya Statue, he had imagined the beautiful Seoyoon smiling.

And right now, in front of his eyes, her smile exuded such a charm that he can’t help but feel attracted to her!

But Lee Hyun could not even look at her straight in the eye.

It was not because he haphazardly lied about the items he acquired from Kubichya but because of her expression, the look in her eyes contained a sign of deep affection.

‘This is getting awkward.’

Lee Hyun then tried changing the topic.

“I’m going to return to cleaning... would you like to help?”

Not even entertaining her but instead gave a proposal to clean the house. Nevertheless, Seoyoon just nodded.

“Let’s sweep the yard first. There are so many leaves collecting.”

While sweeping the yard, Seoyoon was being playful unlike her usual self.

She even tried to sneak some piles of leaves to Lee Hyun’s area!

With the relationship they built up from attending lectures in college and going on to adventures in Royal Road together, she was able to play around.

They then went to clean the chicken coop and as they release the chickens, the smell reeked into the yard.

A perched rooster with an upright comb then went to attend the hens which were accompanying their chicks.

With a lot of cleaning to be done, Lee Hyun had realized that there would be a lot of water splattering so he immediately check the clothes Seoyoon was currently wearing.

‘Approximately around 200,000 won.’

She was wearing quite an expensive coat.

“I’ll clean up this place, how about you do the dishes? After you’re done putting them away, take out the pots and bowls and wash them clean.”

Seoyoon nodded and went inside the house.

With the windows open, the sound of water flowing from the sink can be heard.

A man cleaning the chicken coop and a woman washing the dishes, it was like a scene resembling a young married couple’s life.

‘Having her clean had been a great help so I’ll have to prepare something delicious for dinner.’

Lee Hyun then decided to make a large serving of sweet and sour pork.

CRASH!

Silence then returned, only the sounds of flowing water drifted for a while.

Then the sound of washing dishes could be heard again. But not even a minute has come to pass and yet it happened again...

CRASH!!

While cleaning the chicken coop, Lee Hyun had tears in his eyes.

“A-Are those my dishes?”

Without any sign of a reply, the sound of washing the dishes continued.

Seoyoon earnestly tried to wash the dishes. Although she made a mistake of putting them away with wet hands which had caused it to slip but fortunately, there were no longer any dishes breaking that ensued.

On that evening, Lee Hyun showcased his sweet and sour pork and ate it while watching television!

After watching art and drama programs, it was time for Seoyoon to go home. Lee Hyun then hastily wrapped a book in a newspaper

and gave it to her as a gift.

“This book has a lot of life lessons.”

This was the first time in Lee Hyun’s life that he had given a gift to a girl aside from his sister.

“This is absolutely not for the items I obtained in Las Phalanx, just thought you might like to give this a read.”

The title of book was called <<Non-possession>>. (T/N: Probably refers to this book)

In the Versailles Continent, users were listening in the temples of the Dwarves and Elves.

“A divine message has descended upon us. An indomitable warrior had put a stop to the scourge that threatened the peace of the continent.”

“Damn, that’s one extraordinary human.”

“Warriors of the forest, let us go back.”

Warriors that were gathered to organize an expedition have

disbanded.

KMC Media have achieved the highest recorded audience ratings and the people watching their broadcast couldn't even fall asleep until dawn while Bards, in homage to Weed's adventure, wrote and sang songs.

Oh, Great Hero

We will always remember that in the land of the forgotten was where you had an adventure

Your steps will become the milestones for those who wish to venture

Your sculptures that remained in the various parts of the world

Grants us courage to make our paths unfurled

While Weed reaches the highest of praise, Drinfeld's reinforcements arrived at Las Phalanx. They were the elites of the Hermes Guild composed of Priests, Wizards, Knights, Assassins, and Thieves.

A representative Knight then began speaking with him.

"If these people aren't sufficient enough to kill Weed then I shall message Rafael."

Drinfeld confidently replied:

“These men are enough. With these many Wizards, we’re sure to make this land into Weed’s grave.”

“The pride of Hermes Guild is at stake, handle this flawlessly.”

Facing the Necromancer has been their constant worry but now with the additional Priests, the natural enemy of the undead, they will be able to cleanse them.

Through the broadcast of KMC Media, they were able to know that Weed can transform into a Dragon so they were now extremely wary of him.

“For the honor of the Hermes Guild, we must kill him.”

“Wizards, Priests, and Knights.... we will certainly stab him to death.”

When Weed had reconnected, he was back at Inferno Dungeon where the race war took place.

The aftermath of the fierce battle has left the area disfigured with plenty of melted rocks and scattered remains.

“Ahem.”

After dying twice while in his modified Lich form, Weed has now returned as a human.

“I have to check how much level and skill proficiency I have lost as well as the items I acquired from Kubichya.”

Level and skill proficiency were confirmed first before the items acquired.

“Stat Window, Skill Information Window!”

Two levels had dropped making his current level at 383 while Sculpture Mastery dropped by 25%. Handicraft, Tailoring, Smithing, Sculpting Blade, and his other skills had a dropped between 10-17%.

While brimming with frustration and grief about the reduction of his skills after all the hard work that he has done, Weed immediately pulled out the items he acquired.

The heavy Chaos Daejeonsa Boots and Plate Armor Set, a map, and a sword with a reddish glow, the Red Star!

A smile escaped Weed’s lips.

“Identify!”

He had decided to check the armors first.

Kubichya’s Boots:

Durability 37/105

Defense: 68

The boots worn by the Chaos Daejeonsa Kubichya.

Imbued with a special authority that compels warriors into submission.

Restrictions:

Level 500

Strength 800

Chaos Warriors and Barbarians only

Options:

Able to use Blink spell.

Health +8,000

Can intercept attacks rising from the ground.

Warriors are forced to submit.

Depending on the level and the scale of subordinates, there will be a temporary increase in Leadership.

As for the Plate Armor Set, its Defense is 280 and had a level restriction of 550.

“I wouldn’t have died if I was wearing such armors.”

Next was the Las Phalanx’s Underground Area Map, it had a complex structure that much like of a spider web and had a lot of holes drawn on it.

There were a lot of other areas which leads to the underground passages of the dungeon. The entrances of the dungeons in Las Phalanx have special structures and midway through the passages, another passage would be created.

“Having a map is useful in various ways.”

Finally, the long-awaited moment of checking the Dragon Sword.

At this moment, Weed could not suppress his emotions any longer as his heart leap with excitement.

“I-Identify!”

Red Star:

Durability 192/210

Attack 190-215

A sword created by a Dragon.

The sword was made using a part of its bone.

A portion of the Red Dragon’s power is imbued within and is resistant to magic.

This sword was stolen from the Dragon and has been looking for it ever since.

Restriction:

Level 570 or higher

100% Fire Resistance

Must have the ability to control fire.

Options:

Very light.

Reduces the consumption of stamina when using skills.

Agility +10%

Durability does not easily diminish.

Attacks can pierce through armors.

Increases the chance of inflicting a maim status by 250%, reducing the opponent's fighting ability.

Can penetrate through any magical defense.

Power of fire is amplified by 100%.

Absorbing the fire attacks of fire attribute races will increase your strength.

Magic Resistance +30%

Monsters below intermediate level will be extremely intimidated.

Enhances the power of sword based attack skills.

Can remove all negative buffs.

Grants the user the special skill 'Red Star'.

Whenever you take out the sword for battle, there is a 0.01% chance that you can summon a Dragon.

Skill Red Star:

Unable to verify.

Difficulty in identifying.

Deeply related to fire attribute magic.

Seulroeo's Wedding Ring (♂):

Durability 40/40

An emerald ring that symbolizes hope, youth, and eternal love.

Crafted by a Dwarf artisan who had poured all his heart and soul into this work.

The ring obtained by Seulroeo filled with his aspirations to marry the woman he loved.

It is a set together with its other ring (♀) counterpart.

Restrictions:

Unmarried young man.

The female partner should be the one to place the ring.

Options:

Enhances mana concentration and increases magical damage of spells by 27%.

Speeds up the rate of learning spell incantations.

35% increase in Mana Regeneration.

Fame +1,200

Grace +40

Culture +40

Intelligence +40

Wisdom +40

Charm +150

Grants the user the barrier magic skill 'Shield'.

Weed had mixed feelings about items.

“I didn’t think I’d acquire Seulroe’s Pair of Wedding Rings. But as expected, I now have the Dragon Sword.”

The Red Star can deal high damage and has many Options. However, the level restriction is very high.

It was something that cannot be easily sold due to its fire resistance wearing restriction.

Furthermore, it would be difficult to put up a price for such extremely rare loot!

“I don’t even know who to sell this to.”

Weed felt greatly disappointed as he looked around the ground for his scattered items. He had died twice and so did the amount of his dropped items, among them were his Talrock's armor, some sewing tools, and several sculptures.

Due to Weed having accumulated a lot of Infamy and having the Murderer's Mark, he had dropped a lot of items more than usual.

As he was recollecting his items and the ones obtained by his undead during the battle, Seoyoon appeared having just reconnected together with the arrival of Golden Bird, Eunsae, and Rover.

“Good to see you are safe and sound.”

Weed caringly stroked Rover. Rover then heartily rubbed his face and licked him with his tongue, something that he would normally not do.

‘Master, thank you. I did not know that you were keeping an eye on me and saved me. Sorry.’

‘I would’ve died in at that place. How can I ever repay you....’

To the outside, this would’ve been seen as a very touching scene but never in their wildest dream would they be able to think of what was Weed’s true intentions.

Eunsae, flapping its wings, landed on Weed’s shoulder. It was a

gesture of affection.

Among the sculptures of life, only Eunsae had a nature of that of a girl. And this time, it seems to have a change of heart about Weed.

“I should be distributing Kubichya’s item drops by now but since we can’t wear the boots and plate armor set, I’ll sell it first and give your share later, ok?”

Seoyoon nodded. Since she has yet to return to a town or castle, the number of items she had acquired in the fields previously and the ones she received here has been stockpiling, exceeding her current item capacity.

“But you can take this one.”

Weed handed over the male ring of Seulroeo’s Pair of Wedding Rings to her while he held onto its other remaining female ring half.

“I’ll distribute this equally between the two of us.”

“...?”

Due to the wearing restrictions, Weed must be the one to give a proposal and while he offers the ring to Seoyoon, his face had become bright red as an apple.

The meaning of a ring is never a small deal to a woman especially if its wedding rings!

Ttiring!

- Wearing Seulroeo's Pair of Wedding Rings will fulfil his dearest wish.

If worn, the effects of the ring will let you act out his long-cherished and unfulfilled desire.

Seulroeo's wish is to have a wedding with his fiancée, do you wish to proceed?

The unmarried man and woman will enact the part of Seulroeo and his fiancée Letia Evelyn in order to fulfil their wishes and release them from their regrets.

Weed, of course, had no other choice but to proceed.

The unique class item has an effect of increasing Mana Regeneration which is very essential to hunting.

And after a while, the two which were inside the Inferno Dungeon of Las Phalanx together with the sculptures of life had their surrounding area suddenly transformed into a majestic castle.

- You have arrived at Castle Evelynn of the Niflheim Empire.

This place is the manifestation of Seulroeo's dream, an illusionary world called 'Magus Phantasm'. Although illusionary, the items acquired here can be owned.

Weed and Seoyoon was then approached by butlers and maids.

"Ahh, this is what happens when I'm late in waking you up. Today is the wedding, we must prepare quickly. The clothes sent by the tailors have already arrived, come quickly Master Seulroeo."

Weed's appearance was the same way as before, just plain ordinary, but the maids see him as Seulroeo.

Weed was then forced by the maids to get moving. Seoyoon as well was led by the other maids to another room.

"Oh my, you have such smooth skin."

"Just one look at Lady Letia and you can already tell that she is a peerless beauty. Master Seulroeo is truly one lucky man."

Weed could hear the voices of the maids talking to Seoyoon while walking down the hall.

A maid then asked Weed.

“Are you properly taking care of your skin?”

“Ah, there’s eye-wax stuck in there. Hurry and go wash your face.”

Rover, Golden Bird, and Eunsae were left standing idly in the hall. But soon after that, a ranch manager and a garden custodian appeared and took them along somewhere else.

Weed was taking a bath inside a bathtub filled with hot water with his head swathed in a towel. In Royal Road, taking a long bath will make one feel refreshed.

- You will recover from fatigue much faster.

After the bath, if you eat a meal, you can recover up to 20% higher than that of your maximum stamina.

After a comfortable bath, Weed then rested for 30 minutes. He had then put on the suit the tailor had sent though it was very uncomfortable to move on.

Taking advantage of the situation, Weed used his Identify skill to check the wedding suit during the era of the Niflheim Empire. The

item grants an increase in Grace and Charm and gives a considerably good impression towards the opposite sex.

- You have acquired the methods for producing wedding suits for high nobilities.

For Weed who have the sewing skill, it was a great opportunity for him to learn how to make a new suit although what he learned seemed to be rather useless.

Defense is almost zero, it easily wears off due to low Durability and its special effect is to inflict a minor charmed status. To make matters worse, getting it wrinkled will lead to a drop in the Grace and Charm stat!

‘Collecting the suit materials and creating it is difficult.’

After donning the suit, the maids then started fixing his hair.

By applying a strange pomade, his hair had become smooth and shiny and was combed in a hairstyle that he had never done before.

‘Just apply shampoo on the hair and rinse it then dry it using a towel.’

To Weed who prefers a pragmatic way of life, this was an unfamiliar experience to him.

Combing through his forelocks, his hair was then parted in a 7 to 3 ratio.

Weed was very embarrassed as he looked through the mirror and awkwardly made a request.

“Wouldn’t it be ok to just let down my hair like normal?”

“Oh, would you like to have it done in the usual style, Master Seulroeo?”

“.....”

With that as the maid’s response, Weed was unable to reply.

‘I’ll revert back my hairstyle after the wedding. For now, I’ll just have to endure until this is over.’

In Weed’s entire lifetime, he had not once experienced putting on makeup.

The maids then let Weed look into the mirror.

“I think Master is looking very handsome.”

Hearing them speak about his appearance made Weed frown for he knows that everyone was forcing themselves in speaking words

of praise.

And then, soothing music began to flow.

“The wedding is about to start, Master Seulroeo.”

“I should be going then.”

Weed wanted to finish this event fast.

Any man would definitely be able to sympathize with him. It's like feeling the accumulated fatigue of accompanying a woman in a department store while keeping up appearance.

“You should go and exchange greetings with the guests but pay a visit to the officiant first.”

“Can't I just have the wedding proceed immediately?”

“Lady Letia needs a lot of time to get ready. In a wedding, the bride must be distinctively beautiful.”

With Seoyoon still undergoing a bridal makeover, Weed was unable to hasten the schedule.

Weed's wedding was going to be held in front of a blue fountain hall where the guests were currently standing looking at him.

‘Anyway, this is not even my wedding... I should go and greet the guests.’

“Seulroeo, your theory on the arcane arts that reduces the time of spellcasting is amazing. It’s already enough to qualify you in winning this year Matam’s Scholar Award.”

- You have acquired a magical ingredient, Blue Lizard’s Tail.

Weed hastily straightened his suit and offered a handshake.

“Thank you for coming to my wedding.”

“I can’t believe that Count Byron’s successor is already marrying, time sure quickly passes by.”

- You have acquired 800 Niflheim Empire gold coins.

Wizards and nobles came to attend as guests. From them, presents and congratulatory money were pouring in so Weed gladly and courteously greeted them.

After that, the officiant, Bishop Cyprianus, began the invocation.

“We are gathered here today to join this young and promising wizard-nobleman, Sir Seulroeo Byron and the gem of our Niflheim Empire, Lady Letia Evelyn in holy matrimony.”

The wedding ceremony was then started with a pompous musical performance.

After the first song ended, the officiant then introduced himself to the noble well-wishers.

A symphony expressing the joys and sorrows of life then played afterwards.

Weed was surprise to know that a wedding ceremony had so many processes involved. He had wanted to finish the ceremony as soon as possible but then the servers arrived serving the guests at their tables their dinner and glasses of cold drinks.

‘I guess it would be inadequate to brew Samdasoo Green Tea Bags during a wedding day.... The preparation process would be too long.’

Rover, Golden Bird, and Eunsae were among the guests.

Rover was served with fresh vegetables while Golden Bird and Eunsae were served with a meal of cooked eel and snake cuisines without any seasonings.

“Entering the groom, Sir Seulroeo Byron.”

After the words of the officiant, Weed gallantly walked into the

wedding aisle.

‘I’ve gained a lot of profit.’

Weed had made a killing and now, all that is left to do to complete the wedding is exchange the rings.

There wasn’t anything to it apart from Weed putting the female ring in Seoyoon’s finger and receiving the male ring so it was easy peasy.

After presenting himself to the officiant and the guests, Weed now stood still.

“And here come the most beautiful bride in the world.”

The orchestra then began playing a clear melody. Slowly walking down the aisle was Seoyoon wearing a pure white wedding dress.

Her appearance right now cannot even be compared to when she wore a wedding dress during the school festival.

She could only be described as all the beauty in the world combined as she walked down the aisle.

Weed then began to reminisce.

‘Back then, I was the one who took her veil off.’

Their relationship already has come a long way.

‘Come to think of it, we have gone to many different places together.’

It all started with their chance meeting in the instructor’s cabin during his novice days in Rosenheim Kingdom. Then when he shapeshifted into Orc Karichwi, they travelled together in the Plains of Despair. After that, they went into an adventure together in the north, planting the Wood Elf Seeds and hunting the Bone Dragon.

And in Las Phalanx, she fought together with him though it ended up costing her life.

Although it had been difficult for Weed to do his work since Seoyoon is nearby.

But it is not an exaggeration to say that the many sculptures he modelled after her were by far the most beautiful creations that he had ever done.

After all, the first Grandmaster Piece that he had created was a sculpture based on her. Even his first Moonlight Sculpture was also based on her.

Upon realizing that the wedding dress-clad Seoyoon was drawing

near, Weed forcibly stopped his recollection.

Through various coincidences, his fate is now once again intertwined with Seoyoon's though he is still afraid to accept it. It was because he believes that another man well-suited for her existed somewhere. Weed then reminded himself:

‘Grandmother once told me, a woman's appearance doesn't mean everything.’

While these many thoughts were running through his head, Seoyoon was approaching closer.

With the words of his grandmother in his mind, Weed decided to calmly evaluate Seoyoon.

- If the girl is pretty then you'll be happy for 3 years, if she is a wonderful cook then you'll be merry for 30 years, and if she is smart then you'll have 3 generations of bliss.

‘Seoyoon is extremely pretty so there should be an additional number of years. So 6 years of happiness?’

Even after becoming her boyfriend or husband, it would still be hard to ignore Seoyoon's lovely appearance. You'll even think you're in heaven if you see Seoyoon's sleeping face next to you when you wake up!

However, such dazzling appearance would wane in 6 years,

although he wasn't very sure whether this would even apply to her.

‘After 6 years, she would still be on her 20's and I have this feeling that she will be even more beautiful as time goes by.... Anyway, marrying a woman that knows how to cook will have 30 years of happy life at best.’

He had already tasted the food Seoyoon expertly prepared complete with condiments inside a lunchbox with a note written from her. It was a meal done with considerable skill, not inferior to even Weed's.

‘I guess 30 years of bliss since she knows how to cook.’

They would be able to cook together if Weed had such a wife and spend the rest of their years developing and improving recipes.

Seoyoon also has good enough grades in the University of South Korea even without attending a class, although when she took on a lecture together with him, she was actually a good listener and always taking down notes. During exams, she would give him the notes on the parts he didn't understand and when he took a peek inside her bag, what he found were foreign theses and technical books.

She reads a lot of books during her spare time.

‘She has a good head on her shoulders.’

Even with his grandmothers evaluating criterion, he could not lower Seoyoon's score.

‘Obviously, there are demerits. It is just simply concealed, every people has their bad points somewhere. Like snoring... and so on. Although, she was sleeping quietly during our MT.’

In a flash, Weed remembered that certain moment.

‘She leaned over to my side when she had fallen asleep back then. That is quite a bad sleeping habit. She also eats and drinks a lot of my meal, didn't even exercise proper moderation of only picking up 2 side dishes with her chopsticks.’

Weed was somehow trying to nitpick at Seoyoon's faults. He is even trying to point out any minor faults in her habits. Even way back when he hunted together with Seoyoon, his mind was fixated on misunderstanding her as a wicked person.

After Seoyoon did a light greeting they then held hands.

The officiant then clapped his hands to proceed with the ceremony.

“It is truly an honor to officiate such joyous occasion.... The groom, Sir Seulroeo, born at Herod's Castle, came to an early realization on how to control the flow of mana and later became the disciple of Master Montau.... The bride, Lady Letia, born in the

prestigious House of Evelynn, cultivating flowers and trees as an avocation.... This wedding ceremony holds great meaning for the Niflheim Empire.... The wedding of this virtuous man and woman....”

Weed let out a sleepy yawn as he endured the boring procession. There was no point in memorizing the contents of the officiant’s message like as if it was going to be on a test.

The shorter the officiant’s message was the better but it only got even longer when he started glorifying some kind of Saint who can make nature bloom flowers with butterflies flying before him.

‘In the end, it all just comes down to being honoured and blessed.’

Weed barely managed to endure as it finally reached the last portion of the officiant’s message. After that, it was finally the Exchange of Vows, the very highlight of the wedding ceremony.

“Do you take this woman to be your wedded wife? Do you promise to be true to her in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health, to love her and honor her, forsaking all others and holding only unto her as long as you both live?”

For the sake of not ruining the wedding, Weed must answer properly and place the ring on Seoyoon.

“I do.”

Weed clasped Seoyoon's hand.

As a Berserker, her hands have been accustomed to many battles but contrary to that, it was very slender and had a flawless complexion.

He even finds the nails on her fingers to be very pretty when he placed the ring on her.

This time, Bishop Cyprianus turned towards Seoyoon and asked her the question.

“Do you promise to be true to him in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health, to love him and honor him, forsaking all others and holding only unto him as long as you both live?”

Having a well-groomed hair with makeup applied, Seoyoon wearing the wedding dress had been contemplating on a lot of things.

Her first meeting with Weed to up to this very moment.

They have spent a lot of time together. She became intimately acquainted with him through the animals he raised with Rover, Geumini, and the other sculptures of life included.

She has been scared and wary of others but with Weed, she was

not.

Cha Eunhee once concernedly said to her:

“Are you going to continue living like this?”

“.....”

Seoyoon wanted to say something but she was still terribly afraid to talk. It was still yet not possible for her to have a conversation with someone and convey her feelings.

“Life isn’t just about grasping drifting clouds. As a teenager, you should go attend school and get involve in school activities. Go get yourself occupied with something to do every day. Don’t worry about what to tell to your parent even if your grades fell short of a few points.”

It wasn’t that she was saying to waste things after coming out of the examination hell.

“You should go experience the sense of freedom one gets when entering college. Although you need to start preparing for employment during your second year since competition is fierce in trying to land a job.”

The employment war only gets more intense every year. If you don’t prepare beforehand, you’ll only have a hard time getting a good job later.

“Look, right now, I am on my late 20’s and all I’ve been doing is work ever since I went out and fitted into society. But I’m still unmarried so I have to go through those annoying marriage interviews during holidays at my house to quickly find a prospective man to marry.”

Time will make you sensitive to aging, becoming conscious every day that youth is escaping from your body.

“Seoyoon, it’s still too early for you to give up and have your life expire in a cage. After all,”

Cha Eunhee tenderly smiled.

“Happiness can be found even on the simplest of things. You should live like the others and make friends while you’re studying, friends that will walk along with you as your lifelong companions. And if you find club activities in college to be lacking then you should immerse yourself with a hobby.”

“.....”

“Also, once you enter into a company, there will be times when you’ll feel stressed, angry, and irritated to the point of wanting to write a resignation letter immediately after but if you were to succeed, wouldn’t you develop a sense of accomplishment? As you get older, you’ll start looking for marriage and after that, raising a child during your 30’s and 40’s wouldn’t be so bad.”

“.....”

“Passing through the age of adulthood is where you experience most of life’s happiness. However, what I’m worried about is that you’ll miss that opportunity.”

Although her expression never changed, she still listened to what she said.

“You aren’t living an ordinary life. If you live in your own world without making any friends.... then you might not be able to make many happy memories. That’s such a waste. You must work up the courage when the time comes. If you don’t, the things that you really like and what makes you happy might disappear.”

Seoyoon understood Cha Eunhee’s words but her heart was rejecting it.

However, being together with Weed had greatly reminded her of those words. Especially during at that time when the destitute village of Morata held a festival, her heart felt warmth just by being near Weed and made her very happy.

That warmth was comparable to the warmth radiating from their held hands, not a stove running on fuel.

After eating the food that Weed made, going on adventures together and seeing his sculptures, Seoyoon felt that she wanted to

become his companion, not just a distant spectator. She had a frozen heart, but she wanted to convey that she loved that warmth so much.

Although it was something she hasn't prepared and could stumble, she mustered up her courage now that she had to.

Embracing the great fluttering feelings and the nervousness inside her, she spoke with a quavering voice.

“Y-Yes, I do.”