

# The Legendary Moonlight Sculptor

## (달빛 조각사)

Volume 14

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### Story Description:

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

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

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

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

# Chapter 1: 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 recieved 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 Kendellev 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 Kendelle?’

‘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 to 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 Kendellew 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 Kendellew'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 Kendellev’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 discouraged 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.

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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 Kendellev’s quest would have bragged about it.”

“We’ll, have to wait and see.”

The Dwarves were closely watching Weed. The users who accepted Kendellev’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.

“Your 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 influenced 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.

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“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.

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“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 japtem 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 underground.

\*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 chooses.”

“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, Lavias, 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 any 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 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 Kendellev. At the very least, he had confirmed the existence of the Dwarven Sculptor, Kendellev.

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 Kendellev.”

“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 Kendellev. 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 Kendellev 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.

“Heueeeng! 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!”

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 commission 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 veins.”

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 of 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 japtem 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 dug 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.

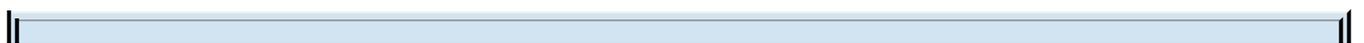
“I wasn’t even trying to make this... My luck sure is good.”

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.

\*

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 picked, he would probably regret it later on, but he would chose 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!’

\*

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.

\*

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.”

\*

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 Palangka 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 be 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 58/60  
The 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 an everlasting rest.

He could become a Resurrection Priest.

Once he gets 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.”

“Oohhehehhng!”

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 Amour: 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 Kendelleev.

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.

Kendelleev, 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 Kendelle'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 Kendelleev 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.

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“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.

CRRRAASH!

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.

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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.

“Kendelle’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 Kendellew 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.”

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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 Kendelle'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-That’s 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 you 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 an 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 brethren 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...

# Credits

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