# 3 - Exam Preparation

The test this time is to survive in the Forest of Enticement. To be exact, it's about bringing back a target.

Necklaces are placed on small altars throughout the vast forest, and bringing one back earns you basic points.

Dealing with plants or monsters earns you additional points depending on the monster's level.

To get credit for dealing with a monster, you need to bring back a specific body part as proof.

These are the basic test elements... but in reality, there's much more hidden.

My goal is to bring back a Relic, defeat monsters, and come out in first place.

Anyway, with Mirnel on the same team, all that's left is to practice as much as possible to execute the plan.

Since I was taught everything about the test from beginning to end, it's only natural to practice the plan for how to act during the test.

No, if you make a plan and don't practice it, how can you execute it when the situation arises?

So, it's unavoidable, but...

The Forest of Enticement is called a dungeon, but it's essentially just a normal forest with slightly higher-level monsters than the forests around the academy... or so the setting goes, but with insect-eating plants that devour any living creature, I don't think it's a normal forest.

Anyway, they've blocked off the deep interior of the forest with a Barrier, but they've opened up the entrance area for practice, so it's perfect for a test to gauge the students' abilities.

But... there was one problem.

'I don't seem to be doing anything...'

When we're actually exploring the dungeon, I don't have anything to do. Of course, it's not like I'm doing absolutely nothing.

You could even say I'm playing the most important role.

Not only am I providing support, but I'm also using Divine Power Detection to sense everything that would normally be invisible in the deep, dark forest and guide the way.

But that's the problem.

I can't fight, and there's no one here who needs my support.

Of course, giving buffs is something I'll do to get more points, even if it's not essential, but unlike healing, which involves sacrificing myself, buffs are just about using my Holy Power to make someone stronger...

The problem is that I don't feel like I'm doing anything significant.

Huh? You might say it's good to be a freeloader if you don't have to do anything for anyone.

Normally, that would be true, since only workaholics would want to work that hard if they weren't directly healing someone...

But the situation is a bit different now.

'I'm thinking about how to get that elf's attention...' Yes.

It's because of that elf.

What will that elf think if I do nothing but give buffs and don't heal anyone while exploring the dungeon?

I don't know what she's really thinking, so I can't be sure, but maybe she only considers the Saintess who sacrificed herself and succeeded in sealing the Demon King to be a true Saintess, and she doesn't think of me as one.

It's not an impossible idea... and more than anything, I can't find any other reason for her to ignore me, so that's the only way I can think about it right now.

If I were fighting demons, I could do anything because everything I do would be a critical hit to them, but now I'm just putting up shields or giving buffs, so it might seem like I'm not doing anything.

'Would she change her mind if she saw me healing someone who was seriously injured?'

That's a chilling thought that I might have entertained in the past. But I don't want to do that anymore.

If I really have to, I'll have to beg on my knees. But I hope that doesn't happen.

"This is the Forest of Enticement..." I heard Evan swallow hard.

Mirnel had an indifferent expression, Stella looked uninterested, and Uriel was looking around with a curious gaze.

I'm sure that curious gaze will change in an instant.

At first, they're impressed by the scenery of the forest, but most people quickly abandon that thought as they go deeper.

"Ugh."

"Eek?!"

Uriel, who had been looking around curiously, tried to scream when a plant appeared, but barely managed to cover her mouth.

Fortunately, Evan, who was walking next to her, stepped forward and sliced the plant.

It was only shocking in appearance, not particularly strong, so it was easily cut down by Evan's sword and fell to the ground.

Uriel, looking down at the plant that had fallen to the ground, shouted at Evan.

"W-what is that...?!"

"...Did you not listen to any of the things we talked about regarding this test?"

Stella asked, looking incredulous at Uriel's complete lack of understanding of what was going on.

That's strange...

I thought she would be surprised because there was a scene in the game where she was surprised, but... that's beyond being surprised, she looks like she doesn't know anything at all?

I remember the professor explaining all of this when he talked about the test, so I don't know why she's reacting like she doesn't know anything.

"You really didn't know?" "Ehehe..."

Smiling like that doesn't change anything...

She must have just slept through the lecture because she didn't want to listen.

It's just like Uriel, who likes moving her body but doesn't like using her brain.

"Hmm... it's just the entrance, but it's best to be careful." Mirnel said, looking around the vicinity.

"[It's okay. I'll guide the way.]"

Not just the way, but I'll find all the traps too.

Normally, if an ordinary person falls, they'll slowly melt and die in a dangerous place, but most people wear bracelets when they enter, so even if they fall into a trap, the protective Barrier that forms when their body comes into contact with digestive fluids is difficult to break through.

It blocks everything, so you can get out easily, but the magic power inside is limited, so if it gets too dangerous, you'll be Teleportationed out automatically, so as Argent said, there's no need to worry about dying in this test.

That's how I made it.

As planned from the beginning, Mirnel is responsible for the rear, Evan for the front, Stella and Uriel for the sides, and I'm protected in the center, using Divine Power Detection to find the path, traps, and enemies to defeat the boss of the forest.

Since it's been used as a test site for a long time, there's a dungeon somewhere in the forest with a student boss that Argent created.

If you go in there, defeat the boss, and come out, first place is practically guaranteed.

Of course, these are all hidden things, so unless you stumble upon them or hear about them from seniors, there's no way to know.

In other words, it's a hidden element for earning points. There are a lot of hidden things in this test.

The reason we're walking around inside now is partly to get used to the path, but the main reason is to find the path to go in and catch that monster.

'The path itself isn't that different from the game...'

Unlike the game, where the map is limited, this is a vast forest, so I was worried that it would be difficult to find, but thankfully that's not the case.

'That's a relief...'

I was worried that it would be difficult to guide the way, but since they've completely entrusted me with finding the path, I don't have to worry about that.

Stella probably knows most of the information about this test, so if I just throw out bait like discovering a mysterious ruin, she'll take the bait.

If we go to find the ruins right now, she'll definitely wonder what it is and investigate.

And if Stella finds out that it's a hidden boss for earning points and tells us, then we'll go to catch it, that's the basic framework.

The ultimate goal is to go inside and defeat that Magic beast that hasn't fully recovered its power yet.

'Okay... let's do it.'

Mirnel will follow, so it's definitely possible.

I need to see with my own eyes how good the Divine Archer is this time.

...

No, not with my own eyes, but with Divine Power Detection.

# Exam Preparation (Intermission)

Since everyone except me didn't really know much about the dungeon, they followed my lead without much suspicion.

Even Mirnel, who had been a scout in the Hero party, wouldn't realize or question if I led them to a strange place, as long as they didn't know the geography of this place well.

Leading them to where I wanted was a piece of cake.

But that only works the first time. If we were going along the usual path and I suddenly took them down a strange road under the guise of leading them to a dungeon, they would definitely find it odd. That's why I was trying to make it seem like we discovered the dungeon from the start.

Fortunately, the dungeon that led into the deep ruins where we could hunt monsters was located at the beginning, so they didn't find it strange that the path changed.

'Even I can't memorize all the paths...'

The real Forest of Enticement and the Forest of Enticement in the game differ in size.

The paths that existed on the original map are the same, but there's no way I could remember all of them.

If it were when I had just Teleportation here from the game, I would have remembered everything, but now, three years have passed since that day, and so many things have happened here that the events in the game have faded in comparison.

There are still some things I can't remember, so I have to go back and look at the things I recorded when I first came to this world.

Human memory isn't perfect.

I'm trying to match this area with the map in the game as much as possible in my head, recalling memories that are deeply buried, and barely walking forward.

As I explored the area, I thought it was about time and opened my mouth. "[...Everyone, I think I've found a strange place.]"

"A strange place?" "What is it?"

Stella and Evan, hearing me say that I had found a strange place, approached me and asked what was going on.

I said that we would have to go and see for ourselves to know for sure, and naturally led everyone to the place.

Everyone who arrived at the entrance of the dungeon said with bewildered expressions.

"It looks... really old?"

"It looks like it's going to collapse if we go in..." Evan nodded in agreement with Stella's words.

To the average person, it looked like a building that was so old it would collapse at any moment, but Mirnel, who always researched such information beforehand, seemed to be taking the bait.

"This is... it seems Argent, no, the Headmaster, made this dungeon." "A dungeon?"

"Ah! Could it be that one?"

Evan asked what dungeon I was talking about, and Stella reacted as if she knew what this place was.

They completely took the bait.

"During the explanation, I heard that there are dungeons all over the forest, and if you go in there and defeat the boss, you'll get a score that's practically guaranteed to get you first place."

"Well, they said that you'd pass as long as you came out alive without the magic tool activating, but if we're going to go in, it's better to get first place and leave. And..."

Mirnel turned to Evan.

She didn't say anything, but I could tell what she was thinking.

'She's probably thinking that this might be an opportunity to gauge Evan's level.'

She must be curious about Evan's level, even though she's heard about it, because she's only heard stories and hasn't seen it with her own eyes.

And she seems to think that she'll be able to confirm Evan's level by going into the dungeon this time.

'That's a relief.'

I was most worried that Mirnel might be suspicious, but she dispelled my worries without a second thought.

"[Then shall we come here for the exam? It seems like everyone wants to get a lot of points...]"

How many people in the academy would dislike getting points? Everyone nodded in agreement.

"Ugh... I hope there aren't any plants like that inside...?"

Uriel shuddered as if she really hated the carnivorous plants.

It's one thing to dislike them, but she seems to be more than just disliking them, she's terrified of them. I think there was a story scene in the game where she felt disgusted, but I don't remember it being this bad.

'But it's kind of cute.'

Seeing Uriel, who is usually energetic, cheerful, and the mood maker of our group, trembling with such a terrified expression is a new feeling.

I couldn't help but laugh when she said, "Surely there aren't any monsters like that in the dungeon."

I started laughing, and everyone else started laughing as if they were enjoying the situation.

The only ones who didn't understand why we were laughing were Uriel, the subject of the laughter, and Mirnel.

From then until the day of the exam, we came to the dungeon about three times a week to practice.

Honestly, I didn't think we needed to practice this much, but I thought it would be good to practice as much as possible if we were going to practice anyway.

We needed to earn a lot of points, but it would also be good to become more familiar with the paths here, and it was important to get Uriel, who wasn't used to carnivorous plants, used to them.

After coming three times a week and being forced to see them, she no longer reacted much to the appearance of the plants or the act of cutting them down.

'Should I say she's used to it...'

I don't know if I should say she's used to it, because she still seems to flinch every time she cuts down a plant. She seems to know that she needs to get used to it, so she's trying, but I feel sorry for her every time I see that.

'I'd probably feel a little dizzy if I saw it in person...'

I can see them from afar with Divine Power Detection, and I don't have to face their disgusting visuals directly, so that's why. But just looking at how they look, I can see why Uriel reacts like that.

If I didn't have Divine Power Detection, I might have reacted like Uriel. Of course, that's not going to happen, so it's a meaningless assumption. Anyway...

'Everyone's walking around like it's their own home now.'

I thought they wouldn't know the way unless I told them, but now they're walking around on their own without me telling them.

It's definitely convenient that I don't have to tell them the way, but it feels strange because they're walking around fine without my help and cutting down plant monsters just fine, so it feels like I'm not doing anything at all.

'I think this is enough.'

Actually, they seemed to want to go into the dungeon before the exam started, but they couldn't rashly do so because they might not be recognized as having cleared the dungeon.

"Let's stop here for today. The exam is coming up soon, so everyone prepare well."

Everyone nodded at Evan's words.

Everyone was nervous about the dungeon, but on the other hand, they had already fought and subjugated high-ranking demons, so they didn't think they would be fazed by a boss monster in a mere exam.

That's true.

A normal boss is so weak that Uriel alone could beat it.

From the start, Uriel has more power than other ordinary students.

However, the owner of the dungeon we're going to enter... to be precise, the area where that monster is sealed is different.

Moreover, unlike dungeons where other mobs appear, no mobs appear in the dungeon where that monster is sealed.

If mobs appeared, they would feel the strangeness of the level of strength and run away, but everyone will face that monster without even having a moment to feel anything strange.

But that doesn't mean you should try to run away. 'We have to win.'

If we can overcome our fear and defeat that monster, everyone will be able to grow one step further.

Well, not that they're the kind of people who would do that. Above all...

'Mirnel is there in case of an emergency.'

Thanks to Mirnel's presence, it's a fight we can definitely win.

Even if it's still difficult, there's a way to call Argent, so we can fight to our heart's content without worrying.

I'll thoroughly prevent anything from happening. "[Shall we go back then?]"

"A dungeon... I'm looking forward to it."

"Honestly, it feels like cheating with our level."

In fact, everyone was worried about whether it would be okay with their level, but on the other hand, they were worried about other things.

That's enough.

# 1 - The Wolf That Devours God

“Hoo…”

In the dark room, the girl lying on the bed sighed as she rose. “Tough…”

Mirnel Halberd, an elf girl with light green hair and long ears, looked at the mirror with a pitiful expression.

“I haven’t been able to sleep properly since I came back.” She had to sleep, but even if she wanted to, she couldn’t.

Mirnel turned her head and looked down at the ring on her finger.

She fiddled with the ring, which had a unique, colorless magic stone embedded in it, then clenched it tightly in one hand and sighed deeply once more.

“You don’t remember?”

She had thought that maybe he would remember along with her.

But no matter how close she got, he showed no signs of remembering, and now she wondered if she should just give up.

Was it this painful to be the only one who remembered things that no one else did?

“Haa…”

Mirnel was going crazy.

Especially when the Saintess kept appearing before her, the memories of that time resurfaced, making it difficult even to talk to her.

Even though she knew that such a thing should not happen this time, whenever she saw the Saintess, that face from then came to mind, and she couldn’t do anything but ignore her.

‘What should I do…’

Mirnel rubbed her eyes with both hands, sighed, and got up. In any case, what she had to do hadn’t changed.

“Then shall we go?”

Today was the day of the test.

It wasn’t particularly difficult, so she should finish it quickly and return.

“[It’s today…]” I’m so nervous.

Well, it’s not just any day, but the only chance to get the last Relic, and we’re going to catch a Magic beast that’s practically one of the executives, so it would be weirder if I wasn’t nervous.

‘Hoo…’

Maleficent and the Magic beast of the End each had their own unique skills.

For example, Maleficent was a great mage, and the Magic beast of the End had the power to freeze everything and an overwhelming Magic beast army.

Maleficent could be dealt with because Argent, who was also a great mage, was there, and I succeeded in subduing the Magic beast of the End by taking the bold method of being eaten directly into its body and then neutralizing it, otherwise it would have been very difficult.

So, what am I trying to say?

What I want to say is that until now, each of them was a raid with its own gimmicks.

But the Magic beast we’re going to catch this time is a little different. ‘Overwhelming physical ability…’

It has what you can literally call overwhelming physical ability.

You might not understand why I’m suddenly talking about physical ability, but if you think of it in terms of a game, it’s just a character with insanely high stats.

Overwhelming strength, and claws that can fully add that strength to its lethality.

‘Fenrir…’

Its epithet is even ‘The Wolf that Devours Gods.’

Having your whole body torn apart by its claws is commonplace, and being eaten is also frequent.

‘So, I’m looking forward to it…’ What would happen if I got eaten?

If it has the epithet ‘The Wolf that Devours Gods,’ shouldn’t I be excited about what would happen if I got eaten?

In the case of the Magic beast of the End, its digestive system was normal, so even if I got eaten, it only smelled bad and wasn’t very pleasant, but maybe that Magic beast will be different.

Of course…

‘I can’t get eaten…’

It’s a shame, but getting eaten for that reason wasn’t a good idea.

If I actually got eaten and something happened that weakened me, I would be fighting with my existence erased, and if that happened, it would be impossible to save anyone who died unless they were subjugated without me.

The good thing is that Mirnel is here, so it’s not that difficult.

Still, it’s true that it’s something to be nervous about, so I can’t help but feel nervous.

However, unlike me, who knows that we’re going to catch that powerful Magic beast, the others don’t know that, so they don’t seem to be nervous.

Of course, for them, this test wasn’t a difficult task.

In the first place, just because they decided to enter the dungeon doesn’t mean that the dungeon was created to be too much for them.

If that were the case, even if others besides them discovered the dungeon, no one would be able to clear it the moment they entered.

“[Do your best, everyone.]” Anyway, let’s give it a try.

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In front of the test site.

I was standing in place in front of a giant magic circle, facing the professor.

“Well, we’ll start the test soon… Does anyone have anything to say before we begin?”

If I activate that magic circle, I’ll fall right into the entrance of the forest.

In the game, there was a fixed spawn point, so it wasn’t like you could get lost, but this isn’t a game, it’s reality.

If I Teleportation through the magic circle, I don’t know where I’ll fall.

But…

‘If I have Divine Power Detection, finding my way is easy.’

Fortunately, or perhaps unfortunately, I have Divine Power Detection, so it’s not difficult for me to find my way even if I’m Teleportation to a random place.

After all, finding the way is entirely up to me.

Anyway, no one answered the professor’s question about whether they had anything to say.

The professor looked around at the students for a moment and then activated the magic circle, saying that he would start the test now.

All the students were already wearing bracelets with magic applied to them, so there was nothing to worry about.

Eventually, the magic was fully activated, and just as the light spread out, all the students disappeared from their places.

“This is… the Forest of Enticement.”

We were Teleportation together in our assigned teams, so we fell to the same place.

There was no need to meet up with the kids who were assigned to the same team, but from now on, we have to walk into this vast forest and bring back the item to pass the test.

That’s how it would normally be, but…

“Shall we go then? Do you know where it is, Aria?”

“[I’ve memorized the way well enough. I won’t have any trouble finding it.]”

In reality, far from not being able to find the way, I could tell where we were even though we had clearly fallen randomly.

At this point, it would be strange if I couldn’t find it. “[Follow me, everyone.]”

I gestured to everyone and started walking.

It’s in the entrance area anyway, so it’s not that far from here.

Most dungeons are built in the middle or deep inside, which is in contrast to this one, so it’s not impossible that others will find it before us, but…

‘How would anyone find this unless they’re a special case like me?’

In the first place, the entrance to the dungeon is narrow, and it’s not easy to find, so who would think that it would be in the entrance area?

I can find it because I’m looking around with Divine Power Detection, but if it wasn’t for me, I probably wouldn’t be able to find it forever.

When you look at it this way, Divine Power Detection is secretly a scam.

It’s harder to recognize than just looking around with your eyes, but you can see places that you can’t normally see, and unlike seeing through your field of vision, you can see 360 degrees, so there are no blind spots.

I can’t see the beautiful world as it is, but if I only consider efficiency, there’s nothing like Divine Power Detection.

That’s only if I consider efficiency, though.

Anyway, after talking about this and that and walking for a while, the dungeon was right in front of us before we knew it.

“[We’re almost there, everyone.]”

Everyone is probably thinking that they can just clear the dungeon and go back.

First of all, it might feel strange to say that I don’t know when we arrive inside, so it would be better to say that something is wrong as soon as we enter.

‘I feel bad because it feels like I’m driving them to their deaths…’

I wouldn’t have thought this way in the past, but is it because I’ve grown fond of them after spending so much time together?

On the one hand, I’m taking them to the Magic beast, but on the other hand, I wonder if I really have to do this.

But well… I have to do it to subjugate the Demon King, there’s no other way.

If I don’t, it will be much harder to subjugate the Demon King, so even if I feel a little frustrated and guilty now, I can just apologize to everyone after subjugating the Demon King, right?

I turned to look at Evan for a moment. And then I thought.

I don’t know what will happen to me when that time comes, but I must apologize.

# 2 - The Wolf That Devours God

"So this is the dungeon…"

"I've been here a lot, but I feel strangely nervous now that I'm actually about to go in."

Everyone nodded in agreement with Stella's words.

We'd been here many times before, but this was the first time we were actually entering. Even though I already knew what kind of dungeon this was, I couldn't help but feel nervous.

Well, it's just nervousness about how far we can go, not fear. It wasn't just me who wasn't afraid; most of us were the same.

There's nothing particularly dangerous even if we go in, so it's understandable to be nervous, but it would be strange to be afraid…

'Hoo...'

More than nervousness, I couldn't help but worry about whether we could do well.

Subjugating Magic beasts sounds easy, but the ground could collapse if we're not careful.

Argen Headmaster seems to be having a hard time with all the incidents happening at the academy lately. How will he react if he finds out that a very strong Magic beast is living under the place he chose as the test site?

He's managed to hold on so far with his reputation as a great mage, but this time, we really don't know what might happen, so it's important to prevent anything from happening as much as possible.

Argen Headmaster probably hopes that nothing will happen either.

'For Argen Headmaster's sake, it's best to prevent such things from happening again.'

He's already busy with so many things; I can't let him suffer from another boss popping up later.

Actually, aside from that reason, it's also largely to obtain the last Relic.

If not this time, when this guy revives, the Forest of Enticement's ground, as well as the entire dungeon, will collapse, and the chance to find the Relic itself will disappear.

If the dungeon itself collapses, the Relic that was sealing the Magic beast will also be buried in the collapsing dungeon, so how could we find it?

Unless we know the exact location and dig it up, it's impossible.

From the start, pinpointing the exact location of the Relic is almost impossible, so finding it later is even more ridiculous…

So, even in the worst-case scenario where we fail to subjugate the Magic beast, the goal is to at least bring back the Relic of sealing.

Mirnel is here, so it should be possible. "[...Shall we go in?]"

Everyone nodded at my words.

There's no need to go anywhere else; we just need to go into this dungeon, deal with the boss, and come out, so there's nothing particularly complicated.

I also swallowed hard and stepped inside. "It feels… eerie."

"Is this really a dungeon that Argen Headmaster made…?"

Uriel said with a doubtful voice, but no one seemed to find it strange.

It's understandable because who else but Argen Headmaster would create a dungeon in a place like this?

Even if Argen Headmaster didn't make it, if that were the case, they would have dismantled this structure before they came here.

Everyone knew it was nonsense, but it was on a completely different level from the typical dungeon they had imagined.

As we all walked inside, we could feel the air changing instantly. "I have a… bad feeling…"

Evan said, sweating.

As if sensing something, Evan seemed to be about to say that going any further inside wasn't a good idea, but I knew that even in the game, once you entered here, it was impossible to escape unless you subjugated the Magic beast.

I thought that was just a game mechanic and wouldn't be the case in reality…

'The front…' Something's wrong.

I could feel that Divine Power Detection wasn't working properly.

Evan said that we should go back and tell Argen Headmaster about this dungeon first, but when we followed Evan's words and went towards the entrance, the path we had come through was already blocked.

No, beyond being blocked, the path back itself had changed strangely.

"The path… has changed…"

Evan, having confirmed that the path had completely changed, turned to me and asked.

"Aria… can you find the way back with Divine Power Detection?" "[...]"

No.

It's not a lie; I think we're in real trouble. "[I'm sorry… I can't see the path…]"

Until just a moment ago, it wasn't perfectly clear, but I could still see something. However, as the Demonic energy around us gradually intensified, it was as if some unknown force was blocking me, and I couldn't see anything at all.

No, beyond that, I was blocked by an overwhelmingly powerful force, and I couldn't even use Divine Power Detection even if I wanted to.

Thankfully, I could still hear Thought-forms, so there was no problem hearing what the others were saying, but the power to spread Divine Power around and sense the surroundings through it was completely blocked.

'This… I didn't expect this…?!' Or maybe it's only natural.

In the case of the Magic beast of the end, a very wide area was covered in Demonic energy, so it wasn't a big problem to look around.

But this place is a completely enclosed area.

In a sealed dungeon, Demonic energy has been accumulating for hundreds of years, so it's impossible to look around with the shallow Divine Power used for sensing the surroundings.

You might say that we could just increase the level of Divine Power, but unfortunately, that would make Divine Power Detection itself impossible.

It meant that we were in a situation where we couldn't do either. "[I can't see ahead… Ah…!]"

I was just following what seemed to be the direction we were walking in when I stepped on an uneven spot and fell forward.

Thud.

"Are you okay, Aria?"

Fortunately, Evan caught me, probably because he thought I might fall.

But at this rate, I can barely follow the direction… I might have become completely useless.

"I'll support you."

I smiled slightly at Evan's words and nodded.

If Evan is supporting me, there won't be any problems for now…

'I didn't realize that not being able to see would be such a big deal…'

An ordinary human would have a hard time even walking around in a place with dense Demonic energy, but Stella, Uriel, Evan, and Mirnel have each reached a certain level of mastery.

Even Mirnel, who was once called the Divine Archer, possesses such powerful strength that this level of Demonic energy wouldn't cause any problems for their bodies.

Originally, the same would be true for me, but this isn't a personal problem with Divine Power Detection; it can be seen as a problem with the surrounding environment.

'If Demonic energy fills a sealed space… I can't see…'

It seems that it has to be a certain level of powerful Demonic energy for that to happen.

I'm learning good information.

Aside from that, we have to subjugate the Magic beast, but if I can't see, there's really nothing I can do…

"For now… we have to follow the path, right?"

"Normally, we would have left the pathfinding to Aria, but it seems difficult now."

"If it really doesn't work out, we can return through the bracelet, so there's no need to worry for now."

I nodded as if Mirnel's words made sense.

As they said, in a normal situation, if something were to happen, we could return through the bracelet, so there's no need to worry, but…

'If my Divine Power is blocked, the bracelet won't work…' The path is straight, and no monsters appear.

We won't be using the bracelet until we meet the boss monster.

"[Everyone… be careful… I can feel Demonic energy that even makes me tremble…]"

We really have to be careful.

When I explained that I felt an unknown ominousness and tremendous Demonic energy, everyone swallowed hard, looking tense.

Evan had probably already guessed, but when I confirmed it, he replied with a serious Thought-form, saying that he thought so too.

There's nothing I can do right now, so I should focus on giving buffs… 'Fenrir… that guy will definitely try to devour me…'

As the name "Wolf that devours gods" suggests, there's a pattern of him trying to devour those with Divine Power.

I have to try my best not to be eaten, but if I am eaten… 'Relic… I'll have to use it then…'

If I can just obtain the last Relic, the Three Divine Artifacts will be complete.

When that time comes, even if I'm eaten by Fenrir, I'll be able to operate Divine Power from the inside.

If it really doesn't work out, I'll have no choice but to use the Divine Power of the Relics that I've worked so hard to collect in that way once again.

I clenched the Relic tightly and vowed inwardly.

# 3 - The Wolf That Swallows the God

Walking through the dungeon, I can't help but feel a certain eeriness from the Demonic energy.

I've been in places filled with Demonic energy before, but I was usually too busy to really feel it like this.

'It's kind of funny that I'm even thinking about feeling Demonic energy with my whole body...'

A Saintess is supposed to find Demonic energy ominous and hate it, but I actually enjoy being exposed to it. If a past Saintess saw me, wouldn't they be shocked at how I could be like this?

Of course, I'm not outwardly showing that I like it, but rather that I find it ominous...

In the first place, it's so dark here because of the dense Demonic energy that I can't see anything.

"[...Thank you.]"

"I'll protect you no matter what happens." Is it because of the anomaly?

I can feel that the Thought-form coming from Evan is very stiff.

If Evan is this anxious, it seems he thinks the situation is very bad. It's probably because I can't see anything, and the Demonic energy is so dense that I can feel it directly on my skin.

If it weren't for me, Stella and Uriel would have suffered significant deterioration in this Demonic energy.

"[Are you two... alright?]"

"Yeah, uh-huh... I think it's thanks to the thin Barrier Aria put up." I nodded, relieved at Stella's words.

In fact, putting up such a thin Holy Power Barrier was half a gamble.

With my Holy Power, I can block most Demonic energy, but the opponent is a huge Magic beast with the nickname "Demon King's pet," and this is a strong Magic beast sealed here, so this level of Barrier might not be enough.

'I can't tell what's going on around me, so I can only judge by Thought- form...'

I couldn't hear anything to begin with.

The only way I can perceive my surroundings is through Divine Power Detection, which allows me to check 360 degrees, and I've already figured out anything that might make a sound with Divine Power Detection.

But now I can't even use Divine Power Detection, so I can only perceive my surroundings with Thought-form, and unfortunately, I can only perceive what Evan, Mirnel, Stella, and Uriel are saying.

At this rate, there's no way to know what's going on around me. 'Divine Power Detection... it really was important...'

I knew it all along, but it's even more serious now that I can't see anything around me.

It's not like there's no way at all.

If I spread strong Holy Power enough to penetrate this thick Demonic energy, it wouldn't be impossible to look around...

'Not now.'

It seemed better not to use it until I started fighting.

Until then, I'll have to rely on Evan to move around, even though I feel sorry for him.

And...

'Just in case, I should give them a warning soon.' Now is the perfect time to give a warning.

I sent a Thought-form to everyone.

"[Very dense Demonic energy is flowing out from inside. It would be good to be careful from now on.]"

Everyone tensed up at my words.

In fact, if we go a little further inside, we'll reach the section where the boss monster appears.

Anyway, we really need to be careful from here on out. "What on earth is inside that..."

Evan said with a tense expression at my words.

If I'm saying this much, it means there's something really unusual inside, so it's only natural that he's so nervous.

Mirnel, Stella, and even Uriel swallowed hard and looked up at the huge door that was presumed to be the last room.

"It seems like there's something in this room..."

Stella, who was looking up at the door and tapping it, raised her hand and concentrated her Magic power.

"I'll check what's inside."

A huge amount of Magic power seemed to flow from Stella's hand and went into the wall.

A moment later, Rumble!

"Wh, what?!"

"The dungeon... is shaking...!"

Perhaps because it started shaking as soon as she put her Magic power in, Stella was expressing her doubts with a look full of embarrassment.

It's possible that Fenrir woke up because of Stella's Magic power, but even if it wasn't Stella, he would have felt our presence and attacked us a long time ago, so it didn't really matter.

Anyway, the fact that the dungeon started shaking greatly was true, so it seemed like it would be good to get away for now...

'...!!'

"[Do, duck everyone!]"

Everyone reflexively ducked at my words.

At the same time, I heard a sound like something cutting through the air, and then the floor vibrated greatly as if something huge had fallen to the ground with a thud.

"Wh, what's going on...?!" "Th, the door..."

"The door was cut off...?!"

I heard it was a very big door, but it was cut off...?!

'The stats were incredibly high in the game, but I didn't think it would be this much...'

But in the game, it didn't show him breaking through walls or smashing huge doors.

I guess it's a limitation of the game, but the damage you take when you get hit is unbelievable, so I said that you have to avoid patterns and attack with physical skills, right?

'Well, if those stats are applied to reality as they are, this is natural...!' Maybe this is even with reduced power.

If he used all of his stats to run wild, it would be natural for even a wide underground space to collapse, because the stats themselves were unbelievable.

'Wait... can we even win this...?'

In the case of the End of the World Magic beast, the power was commensurate with its size, but it was only a huge Magic beast, so the moving speed and swinging speed weren't that fast, so fighting wasn't that difficult.

But now it was different.

The size itself is only a few meters at most, not tens of meters, but the speed, destructive power, and strength are incomparable.

Of course.

He poured all the Demonic energy he had into his overwhelming physical abilities, so it would be strange if he wasn't strong.

Bang!

"Ugh... Stella, take Aria for a second!" "Wa, wait Evan!"

'Ah...!'

I can see.

As the dense Demonic energy dissipated due to Evan swinging the Holy Sword with Holy Power, Divine Power Detection began to work little by little.

'I'll just have to use it.'

I took out the Relic I had brought. The Relic of Solanis, the Sun God.

I took it out and gathered the Holy Power I had, including the Holy Power stored inside, and spread it around.

Since it's the room where the boss is, it was good to spread it here to look around.

As I consumed Holy Power and spread it around, I could finally see my surroundings clearly.

And, "...?!"

A huge wolf the size of an ogre was charging towards us.

Evan shot out like a bullet and swung his sword, but Evan looked embarrassed as the wolf easily caught the sword in its teeth.

"H, he caught it...?!"

Oww! That hurts! It hurts!

Dense Demonic energy flowed from Fenrir's teeth, and Estel screamed, perhaps because she was bitten by strong teeth.

"E, Estel!"

I, I'm okay, so give me more Magic power!

As Evan poured Magic power into her, it was converted into Holy Power and tried to eat away at the Demonic energy, and Fenrir jumped back in surprise.

"Now."

Mirnel, who had already taken out her bow, created arrows of light and fired several shots at an incredible speed.

However...

"He, he dodged that...?!"

As if stepping on the air, he kicked off the air and jumped up, easily dodging the arrows that went in several directions, and then landed back on the ground far away.

"F, fast...!"

As Evan said, he was showing incredible speed, but I know. That's also a lot weaker than it should be.

'The Relic of the Barrier...!'

The jewel embedded in his head.

I could tell at once that the jewel was the Relic of the Barrier. "[Now is your chance everyone...! That Magic beast is weakened!]"

No matter how you look at it, now that he's weakened by the Relic of the Barrier, it's a great opportunity to catch him easily.

Maybe I can catch that Magic beast much easier than I thought, with almost no damage.

Thinking that, I gave a satisfied smile and gave them buffs. 'Let's fight once.'

It's a fight worth trying...!

# 4 - The Wolf That Swallows the God

Fenrir glared at us, moving in a circle.

Evan and Uriel, who were at the forefront of the fight, also moved together, drawing a circle.

'Even weakened, it has this much power... is it insane?'

Even with the Earth Barrier Stone, a Relic of the Barrier, embedded in its head, it possessed claws and strength that could create wind pressure capable of blowing away this massive door.

It was fine for Evan, who could directly engage in melee combat, but with Fenrir's level of power, Uriel could easily die, so I had to be careful.

But…

'Why is she so confident…?!'

Rather, she was confidently stepping forward.

Thinking that Uriel might be in danger, I reflexively moved forward to put a shield on her, but Fenrir had already pounced on Uriel, an easier target, long ago.

No matter how strong it was, it was basic to rush in if an opening was presented.

I was flustered by Fenrir's appearance, intending to cut off her breath in one blow and target the next opponent, and I gathered Holy Power to stop it somehow…

At that moment.

Krrrk?!

Fenrir was momentarily horrified and stopped with its hand raised towards Uriel.

Then, it jumped back and moved far away from Uriel.

Regardless, Uriel still held the huge sword in front of her, not backing down at all.

"Too bad… it would have succeeded if you had come a little closer." Then, she muttered as if she was truly disappointed.

"W-what was that just now…?" What had happened?

No one understood.

Fenrir had only tried to rush at Uriel, but for some unknown reason, it couldn't rush in and was trembling in fear behind her.

However, I could tell what Uriel was trying to use just now. No, there was no way I couldn't know.

'Was she trying to use the special skill in the sword…' I know that can only be used once.

Well, it's best to use it now when she hasn't grown properly yet.

In the game, Uriel started with a good greatsword from the beginning.

After all, she was a princess of the Empire and the Emperor's beloved daughter, so from the time she grew up as a knight, the Empire gave her a sword that was no different from a treasure.

In other words, it was a national treasure-level greatsword, so it was bound to have special skills.

However, it wasn't rated very well. First, she used a good greatsword, but she couldn't use any other swords besides that one, and unless Uriel awakened and grew, the sword's specs would remain the same.

The special ability was a crazy skill in the setting, but in terms of balance, it was a skill that didn't work on Demon King Army executives or the Demon King, and it only worked on those other than them, so there weren't many places to use it.

If she could switch weapons, she could use a sword of legendary grade or higher from the start, so the evaluation would have been reversed, but since she couldn't switch, giving Uriel a greatsword was like a white elephant.

However, the skill was fraudulent.

A skill that unleashes a sword aura that cuts anything, but only once… So it's not strange that she tried to use it in this situation.

However, even if a Magic beast like Fenrir was hit by that attack, it wouldn't die immediately unless it hit a vital point, but anyway, its body would be cut…

No matter how tough and strong Fenrir's recovery power was, it would inevitably suffer some damage.

It didn't know what would come out of that greatsword, but it recognized that it was a threatening skill to itself, so it had a really good sense.

"It seems to be afraid of this sword…?"

Uriel, who immediately noticed that it was looking at the sword and backing away, said that, and Evan said to Uriel as if it was an opportunity.

"Yes! With that, you can corner it…!"

Unlike me, who knew the inside story, the situation was that Fenrir's actions were incomprehensible except for Uriel, but it was true that it was afraid of Uriel anyway.

I didn't know what was going on, but if we used this, we might be able to catch Fenrir more easily.

Evan, who thought so, seemed to be asking Uriel to drive Fenrir.

For Fenrir, who was inducing melee combat by moving around quickly, this dungeon was originally virtually its home ground.

If a very fast guy kicked off the walls or ceiling of the underground chamber and rushed at us quickly, attacking us frantically, it would not be easy to respond.

In other words, originally, it was right that we were at a disadvantage, but conversely, if we gradually drove it to the corner through those who could respond… even if we drove it to one corner, it would become a disadvantageous situation for Fenrir.

That's why, for some reason, he was telling Uriel to come forward to drive Fenrir, who was running away in fear, to one side.

"[If you corner Fenrir and make it difficult to run away!]"

Of course, the other side wasn't just going to be hit, and it wouldn't be easy because it could just escape, but just reducing the range of action would make it much easier for Mirnel to predict and hit the arrows, so it wasn't a meaningless act.

I explained it in an easy-to-understand way for Uriel and drew out Holy Power to give her a buff so that she wouldn't get hurt as much as possible.

I gave her a pretty strong buff, so if it was this much, she wouldn't be seriously injured by the wind pressure alone unless she was hit directly.

And…

Whoong! Kwang!

Krrrk?!

Fenrir, who was embarrassed by Uriel's appearance, who not only easily avoided the attack but also launched a counterattack, jumped back, and Mirnel, who aimed for the timing, created arrows of light again and shot several of them in an instant.

'The power is… focused on penetration after all.'

Well, if I had committed the atrocity of blowing everything away, the underground chamber would have collapsed and we would have been buried in the ground together, so that's right.

Fenrir wasn't stupid either, so it was thinking about that much and avoided it easily…

"Hap!"

In the meantime, Evan couldn't just stand still.

Evan also moved quickly according to Fenrir's movements and checked it with the Holy Sword.

For Fenrir, if it dodged to avoid Uriel, Mirnel's arrows would fly, and Evan would jump up and attack from the air where Mirnel's arrows were not free.

Uriel couldn't get close because she was afraid of being attacked, Evan didn't back down in melee combat, and Mirnel was also checking from afar.

Fenrir would probably be frustrated.

'This… is there even anything for me to do…?'

If this continues, I might be able to give it enough damage before going to the next phase and catch it easily.

At that moment,

Kieeeing!

The moment a huge Demonic energy poured out from Fenrir. Chwaak!

“…?!”

There was no time to react.

When I came to my senses, I felt like my upper body on the right side had been torn off.

"Kuh, ha…"

I was possessed and focused Divine Power Detection behind me.

There was Fenrir, who had moved behind me in an instant and was standing with its claws stuck in the wall, and in its mouth was what used to be my arm, dangling.

Soon, it swallowed it as it was and arched its body as if it was howling. "Aria!"

"W-what, what was that speed just now?!" I made a mistake.

I never intended this situation.

Rather, I was trying to work hard with the intention of showing the appearance of a competent Saintess here and getting Mirnel's recognition.

However, because I was trying too hard, I only thought, judged, and planned with the knowledge of the game, so I didn't expect any unexpected situations at all.

The ones I had faced so far were easy, but most of them only had patterns and no specific phases.

But Fenrir was different.

'No way… it's already using phase 2… I didn't know it would take it out right away…'

I had forgotten one thing.

In the game, it gets stronger by taking out new patterns as its health decreases.

Depending on the health, it moves on to the next phase and becomes stronger, showing more diverse patterns.

But that's just a game.

It's just a story that works in those kinds of games that adjust the difficulty through intuitive values called health.

Reality was not like that.

I should have predicted that it could take out hidden power and launch a surprise attack if necessary and acted accordingly.

I thought too much like a game.

I lost my balance with the pleasant sensation flowing in from my right upper body and fell to the floor.

I know I shouldn't be doing this… 'Haa…♡”

After all, it seemed that I couldn't resist my instincts…

# 5 - The Wolf That Devours God

"What in the world is going on…?!"

Evan turned around and muttered with a bewildered expression.

In an instant, Fenrir seemed to flash, and before he knew it, Aria's body was torn apart. Fenrir stood with his claws dug into the wall, biting into Aria's upper body.

"Aria!!"

"A, arm…!!"

Stella and Uriel screamed, calling Aria's name. It was only natural that Aria was attacked first.

Even if the Saintess was attacked, she would regenerate anyway, but in the end, the one moving that body was just an ordinary person.

Although she had intelligence, unless they knew about the Saintess's abilities, they seemed to have only recognized that she was just a healer and buffer, so they had to kill her first.

But…

'He ate Aria's body…!!'

Blood poured out of Aria's upper body, which had been torn apart alive, as if a faucet had been turned on.

Aria, who had fallen to the floor, clutched her bleeding right upper body with her opposite hand, groaning.

The situation was not properly understood, but Evan was sure of one thing.

Aria was attacked.

Even though Uriel and he were holding out in front, Fenrir had moved faster than them and succeeded in attacking Aria.

Evan stared at Aria with trembling eyes. Life was slowly draining from her body.

The black Demonic energy, visible to the eye, was hindering her recovery and causing tremendous pain at the same time.

"Ugh…!"

Uriel stood guard in front of Aria, and Stella, who had approached from behind, cast a shield.

A determination to cut down anyone who came here.

Uriel had the power to cut down Fenrir, who was approaching, but only once.

But even so… 'I… can't react…'

Uriel's legs were trembling.

A speed that she couldn't even react to.

If he attacked again at a speed that she couldn't even see, Uriel had no confidence that she could react, even with her special ability.

She was tormented by the fear that she might become like Aria. However, Fenrir had no intention of targeting Aria.

As the Demon King's pet who had lived for quite a long time, he naturally had intelligence and knew very well what kind of weapon he possessed.

There was no reason to target Aria, who was already incapacitated.

In addition, he had become even stronger than before by tearing off Aria's arm. In that state, Fenrir's next target was already decided.

Fenrir's gaze shifted.

Even if he was fast enough to move to the very back in an instant, it would be annoying to have an opponent attacking him from afar.

In other words, what Fenrir was aiming for was… 'Mirnel…!!'

"Mirnel! Run away!"

Evan, who immediately judged who Fenrir was trying to target, shouted at Mirnel, but Mirnel was staring blankly at Aria, visibly confused.

No, that's…

'Something… is dangerous…!'

He didn't know what state Mirnel was in right now, but he could tell that she was in danger.

It had happened so quickly that he hadn't noticed it a moment ago, but now he could step forward and block Fenrir faster than Fenrir could attack Mirnel.

He moved faster than Fenrir's attack speed and stood in front of Mirnel.

Immediately after Evan stood in front of Mirnel, Fenrir kicked off the wall and swung his claws at Evan in an instant.

And, Clang!

"Kuh…!!"

Owwwww!

Estel's scream was heard.

An enormous power that even the Holy Sword was in pain, of course, even considering that Estel was just exaggerating, it meant that it had that much power.

Even though he was holding the sword, Evan thought that if he had lost his mind even for a moment, he would have dropped the Holy Sword and his body would have been torn apart by those claws.

If Mirnel had been hit by that head-on, she probably wouldn't have been able to exist in one piece and would have been torn to shreds.

Cold sweat ran down his entire body. Grrr…!

Evan channeled Holy Power into the Holy Sword that was blocking the claws, and Fenrir, who had concealed his claws, jumped back and created distance.

'I barely reacted…'

Even that was just reacting to some extent. He didn't even know exactly which direction it was flying from, so he barely managed to block it by holding the sword out long.

If he had been unlucky, he wouldn't have been able to block it and Mirnel, who was behind him, would have been torn to shreds at the same time.

"S, strong…!"

He hadn't even received a proper buff from Aria, but at this speed, he couldn't react properly.

Evan wondered if he should retreat, but he was reminded that he couldn't even retreat because the door was closed.

'Hold out until Aria recovers…?' That wouldn't work either.

Evan glanced at Aria.

Stella had already approached and cast a shield to prevent her from being attacked any further, and was anxiously looking around at Aria.

"Oh, what do I do… the recovery is slow…"

Uriel took out a potion with trembling hands and tried to spray it, but it had no effect.

It was only natural.

In the first place, even with the body of the Saintess, which heals quickly from this level of injury, she was not regenerating properly.

Fenrir.

He couldn't have known that he was a monster with the epithet of a wolf that devours gods, and therefore had Demonic energy that was strong against the power of God.

If things continued like this, it would be as good as annihilation.

Even in that situation, Mirnel… was still looking back at the fallen Aria, her eyes shaking violently, without even recognizing or acting on the fact that she was being attacked.

Evan couldn't just stand by and watch, so he gritted his teeth and shouted at Mirnel.

"Please come to your senses! Mirnel!"

“…?!”

Mirnel's eyes widened at Evan's shout.

"I understand that you're worried about Aria. Maybe… it's because of what happened during the Hero party days. I don't know why…"

Evan raised his sword towards Fenrir and said.

"If we don't defeat that monster now, we'll all die! Far from saving Aria… we'll all be eaten alive by that Magic beast!"

Evan's shout.

As if responding to it, the wolf, which had been growling lowly, jumped at Evan once again.

The same speed as before. Fenrir, who wasn't confident in breaking the shield that Stella had set up with all her might, thought it was reasonable to target Evan first, who was the strongest but couldn't block properly and wasn't receiving any backup.

However…

I can block this much!

Estel, who directly moved the sword path that Evan had extended to block, said so.

She was, after all, the Holy Sword.

If she used Demonic energy converted into Holy Power, she could slightly twist the sword path.

Unlike Evan, whose reaction speed was inevitably slower because he was a living being, the Ego Sword Estel could react sufficiently to Fenrir's attack.

"Estel…!"

It was an attack from Fenrir that he almost failed to block, but he barely managed to block it.

And…

“… Right. I have to come to my senses.”

Mirnel, who had been wearing a blank expression for a moment, muttered as she got up from her seat.

"I'm sorry for showing you such an unsightly appearance in front of my junior, after talking so well…"

"If you know so well, do something…!" "I understand."

At that moment, Evan felt that Mirnel's atmosphere had changed. Evan smiled with satisfaction at the sight.

Soon,

"You lowly demon dog. I'll show you the difference in class."

Mirnel, who had taken out her bow, shone her eyes and shot an arrow. However…

It was different from before.

Just as a light arrow was about to be fired, it split in the air and an enormous number of arrows flew towards Fenrir.

It was as if they had a will of their own and were flying.

Fenrir, who was flustered by this, moved at an enormous speed once again, but the moment he moved, the arrows bent at an impossible angle and flew towards Fenrir, who had moved.

"G, guided arrows…?!" It wasn't slow either.

It was only slow because the underground chamber was so wide, but the arrows were flying as they were without weakening their power.

Kuaang!

Fenrir, who had stopped moving several times, finally couldn't stand it and swung his claws.

Kwaaaaaa!

With an enormous air pressure, the magic arrows lost their light and disappeared.

Was that all?

At the moment when he was about to be a little disappointed, though he didn't show it,

"Weakness… found it."

Mirnel, who had been quietly looking at Fenrir, said something completely unexpected.

“… Excuse me?”

Evan couldn't help but ask back stupidly at those words.

He couldn't understand what she meant by finding a weakness.

# 6 - The Wolf That Swallows the God

That monster also has a weakness.

Evan wondered if such a thing existed, but on the other hand, he thought it was possible.

If it could move around at that speed without any problems, why wouldn't it move continuously to target them?

If it kept moving at a speed that they couldn't even react to, it could have annihilated them a long time ago, but for some reason, it was repeating the process of moving once and then resting.

Until just now, he hadn't been able to make proper judgments due to the shocking situation, but now that he thought about it, there were more than one or two strange things.

"... Could it be?!"

Only then did Evan realize what Mirnel's weakness was. Mirnel nodded at Evan's reaction.

"That Magic beast can only move quickly for a moment. And it rests for a while by digging its claws into the wall."

However, it couldn't be seen as a weakness, as the problem was that it didn't need to rest for that long if you looked at the interval.

There was an interval of about 2-3 seconds, but considering the tremendous speed of movement and its power, that amount of interval was not a big problem.

In addition, as if it knew its weakness well, it was on a high wall where it could dig its claws and look around widely.

In the case of Evan, who usually fights up close, the attack would not reach, and in the case of a long-range attack that inflicts sufficient damage, the interval would have already passed and it would have evaded it, so it was a situation where they could do neither.

In other words, it was difficult to see it as a complete weakness.

But…

"The fact that you mentioned it means there's a reason why it's called a weakness, right?"

"... Yes."

Mirnel nodded at Evan's question.

There is a reason why it can be called a weakness. That was enough.

It was an urgent situation.

It was too difficult to listen to the explanation right away in this situation, so Evan nodded and asked Mirnel to explain what he should do.

Mirnel's answer to Evan's question was simple. "Just block the attacks."

Just block the attacks. "... What?"

What exactly does that mean?

Just as he was about to ask Mirnel, thinking that he had to hear the detailed reason,

"Look ahead!"

Mirnel shouted, seeing Fenrir rushing towards Evan, who had briefly turned his gaze away.

At Mirnel's shout, Evan turned his head again and prepared to defend against Fenrir, who was rushing towards him, by pouring Holy Power into the Holy Sword.

As Estel supplemented the magic power so that Estel could move comfortably and block the attack, Estel moved the sword in the direction Fenrir's claws were flying and blocked it.

Clang! "Kugh...!!"

However,

Fenrir seemed to have already predicted that the attack would be blocked, and this time it attacked in a different way.

A sharp wind pressure that the sword could not completely block flew and tore Evan's body to pieces.

Swish! "Ugh..."

However, Evan gritted his teeth and endured it.

Aria had even experienced the pain of having her upper body torn off.

He couldn't bear to be in pain from just having his arms and legs cut by the wind pressure, so he had no face to see Aria.

And… "Good job!"

Mirnel, who had been preparing an attack, fired an arrow at Fenrir.

Fenrir, who had grasped the attack, tried to escape, but it was already too late.

Thwack!

Kieeng?!

Fenrir, who had not completely avoided the arrow and was pierced by several arrows, let out a painful groan and jumped back greatly...

"You're simple."

Mirnel had already predicted where Fenrir would escape and had been raining arrows from the sky for a long time.

Pshushushushushushushuk!

Countless arrows pierced Fenrir's back. Grrr...

Fenrir, who was full of arrows like a hedgehog, staggered and let out a painful groan.

"We, we did it...!"

Shouldn't we consider it over at this point?

Evan, who was covered in blood, looked back at Mirnel as if relieved, but... "No way..."

Mirnel's expression was not good.

"Why, what's wrong?"

"He should have died from that just now. The fact that he's maintaining his strength even with those injuries means..."

It meant that he wasn't going to die from just this.

What the hell is that monster that exists in a place like this?

The arrows of Demonic energy that were stuck in his back disappeared, and the back, which was full of holes, began to heal.

Soon, Fenrir's body began to be enveloped in Demonic energy. "An ominous energy..."

Evan didn't know what that was right now, but he was sure of one thing. "It's dangerous...!"

That it was dangerous.

Evan gathered Holy Power into the Holy Sword and stuck it into the ground.

Holy Power flowed along the floor and formed a Barrier to protect everyone.

This isn't efficient, are you okay?!

Estel asked Evan as if she was really okay, but there was no way right now.

Aria, who was covered in Demonic energy and in pain, couldn't be asked right away, and Evan's intuition was telling him that he had to block that attack even if he used too much power.

Evan grabbed Mirnel and immediately moved to where Stella, Uriel, and Aria were lying down, and then stuck the sword into the ground.

W, wait a minute, Evan?! "Estel! Barrier!"

Wh, what?!

Estel was flustered, but she seemed to have made up her mind from the moment she stuck the Holy Sword into the ground.

"Hurry!"

Estel was hesitating whether to deploy the Barrier or not even at Evan's shout, but...

Oh, I really can't help it...!!

She judged that everyone here might die if she didn't deploy it, so she pushed the Demonic energy flowing in as Evan said to the floor and formed a Barrier as it was.

Awoooooo!!

Kwaaaaaaa!

After Fenrir's howling, Evan gritted his teeth and tried to endure the huge wave of Demonic energy that was spewing out, but...

"Kueueueuk...!"

Although it was a Holy Power Barrier that was not very efficient, it was difficult to simply withstand the wave?!

Did he have this much power?

Mirnel was also shocked as if she had never thought that the Magic beast would have that much power.

"How can he have this much Demonic energy... He should be a cadre or more with this much...!"

Evan looked around blankly at Mirnel's shocked words.

The Demonic energy was so strong that it was causing waves, and the entire underground space was about to collapse.

Fortunately, the space was built solidly, so it was only cracking, but it was foreshadowing that it wouldn't be long.

Not only that, but Crack, crack

"Th, the Barrier...!"

Thanks to Evan's power being greatly strengthened compared to before, it was not breaking through immediately, but it was a powerful impact that was cracking the Barrier.

It was because the efficiency of the Barrier was not very good.

In the first place, the Holy Sword was not designed to create a Barrier.

It's, it's going to break!!

Evan tried to make the Barrier stronger by pouring in more magic power at Estel's scream-like shout, but it was far from enough.

Kuaaaa!

He was already struggling with the storm, but in the meantime, it seemed like he had charged up the power to attack, and Evan could see the dark energy gathering on his claws.

"That's..."

He didn't know what that was, but he was sure of one thing.

The moment he got hit by that, it wasn't an exaggeration, but his whole body might really be torn to pieces... That the attack he was currently

deploying with this Barrier was not an attack that he could block at all. He had to run away.

His survival instinct was screaming that it was dangerous if he didn't run away right now.

That he would die if he didn't run away... Such thoughts filled his head. He felt like death was looming close in front of him.

However…

Evan stood still with a venomous expression on his face. He couldn't run away leaving his loved ones behind.

In the first place, it was a space where he couldn't even run away. 'I'll protect them...!'

He doesn't know if he can block the attack that's flying right now.

No, it's an attack that he's rather convinced that he won't be able to block. But he had to block it.

How could he grow more here and defeat the Demon King if he couldn't even block an attack of that level?

Even the attack he's seeing right now is an attack that's embarrassing to even compare to the real Demon King, so if he's afraid of such an attack and can't even block it...

That was no different from not being qualified as a Hero. 'I'll definitely block it...!'

Evan glared and waited for Fenrir's attack to fly.

Fenrir, whose eyes were completely red, swung his claws at Evan. A storm full of black Demonic energy was fired at Evan.

And then, Kwaaaaaaa!

A huge storm of Demonic energy struck the Barrier.

# 7 - The Wolf That Swallows God

After the attack subsided,

The thick smoke dissipated, and Evan, who appeared through it, released the hand that had been holding the Holy Sword and exhaled the breath he had been holding in.

"Haa… haa… Wh-what happened…?"

He looked down at the Holy Sword embedded in the floor with trembling eyes, expressing his bewilderment.

As soon as he saw Fenrir preparing to swing at him, he instinctively knew that he wouldn't be able to block it.

The reason he didn't back down was because he knew that if he retreated from here, there would be nowhere else to retreat to.

Evan tried to endure with all his might, thinking he would somehow block it, but Evan himself knew better than anyone that it was beyond his capabilities.

So why was he standing here unscathed? Evan looked around.

Only the area where he was standing was untouched, as if nothing had happened.

Most of the area, except for Evan and his surroundings, was on the verge of collapse, swept away by the Demonic energy's wave.

And…

"Th-the underground chamber…"

The wall was completely torn apart by claws.

It was a wonder it hadn't collapsed immediately. Evan swallowed hard.

'If I had been hit by that kind of power…'

He probably would have been swept away without leaving a single bone fragment behind.

Thinking that far, Evan felt goosebumps all over his body.

Fortunately, Fenrir's condition didn't seem too good either, as he seemed to have used up quite a bit of energy in the previous attack.

Of course, it was only to the extent that he had gathered his strength to unleash a single blow, so it seemed certain that he would attack again after a short rest.

Even so, it was hard to imagine a Barrier that could block an attack with such power that it could exhaust such a monster to that extent…

How on earth did they block it? Cough, cough…

As Evan was lost in thought with such questions, he heard a coughing sound in his ear.

A familiar voice, and… "[I'm… not too late…]"

A familiar Thought-form's voice.

Evan reflexively turned his head to look in the direction of the Thought- form.

And there…

"[Is everyone… alright?]"

Aria, clutching her still-unhealed arm and gasping for breath, was asking them.

Only then did Evan begin to understand the situation. Could it be that Aria had blocked the previous attack?

If Aria had stepped in and blocked the attack directly, it wouldn't be so strange that everyone was safe and unharmed.

While relieved that Aria was alright, Evan felt a sense of powerlessness towards himself.

'I couldn't even… react…'

He couldn't even react to the Magic beast's attack.

Even though he had said he would protect them from the previous attack, he was the one who was being protected.

He felt so sorry for Aria. Evan hung his head low.

"[I'm sorry… If I had been a little more careful, we wouldn't have been attacked like this…]"

Even so, Aria was lamenting that if she had been a little more careful, she wouldn't have become such a burden.

Evan bit his lip.

Even though he had become this strong, it was still not enough? 'Don't be ridiculous…'

Evan tried to calm the seething emotions inside him. It wasn't just Evan.

Everyone was feeling powerless.

Stella was devastated that she couldn't block it with her magic.

Uriel was tormented by the fact that the power of her weapon was not her own and that it hadn't been of much help.

Mirnel was averting her gaze, not even looking at Aria.

Judging from how she had been out of her mind for a while after seeing Aria get hurt earlier, it was clear that something was bothering her.

Evan clenched his fist tightly.

No matter how angry he was, he couldn't get angry at Aria, who had gathered all her strength to protect them.

After somehow suppressing his seething emotions, Evan reached out his hand to Aria with a seemingly nonchalant expression and said,

"No, it's okay. Can you stand up?" "[…I'm alright.]"

Aria replied, trying to get up on her own, but she seemed to have a lot of trouble balancing because one of her arms was gone, and she staggered as she tried to stand up.

"Be, be careful."

Stella, who was next to her, grabbed Aria and carefully helped her up. "[The… fight isn't over yet, everyone…]"

The fight with Fenrir had barely lasted five minutes, and even though it was a severe injury for an ordinary person, Aria's wound, which should have healed a long time ago, was still not healing.

It was probably because of Fenrir's power, which had the power to destroy gods, but since they didn't know what that Magic beast was, except for Aria, there was no way they would know what kind of power it had.

But they could sense the seriousness.

It wasn't just that one of her arms was gone, but Aria's upper body, all the way to her shoulder, had been torn off.

It seemed that even the part where her lungs were had been torn off, and her breathing could barely be heard.

It was a natural result, as her upper body had been completely twisted because she had been forcibly twisted and pulled apart while moving at an incredible speed.

"Hoo… hoo…"

Fortunately, her recovery was progressing, and flesh was gradually growing back, but it was still taking time to fully recover, as it seemed to be a powerful Demonic energy, and she was still panting and groaning in pain.

It was hard to watch with open eyes, but they had gotten somewhat used to it over the time they had spent together, so they could somehow endure it and face it.

'I don't want to get used to this…'

He didn't want to get used to seeing Aria get seriously hurt. Even now, he wanted to turn away, but he was just enduring it. Meanwhile,

Aria reached out and touched Evan's arm.

Evan was momentarily taken aback, but a faint Holy Power flowing from Aria's hand began to heal Evan's body.

The wounds that Evan had sustained when he failed to completely block the attack that Fenrir had unleashed after becoming stronger were being healed.

"This is…"

As the wounds disappeared from Evan's body, wounds appeared on Aria's body.

But she wasn't being healed.

Normally, she should have been healed quickly, but now Aria was under attack from Demonic energy, so she was too busy blocking it to be properly healed.

'If she can't be healed by Holy Power because of the Demonic energy… that means it's at least a cadre-level…!!'

Evan bit his lip.

He had been thinking that it was too strong to be a monster he had met in this underground chamber, but if Aria couldn't heal properly, it was at least on par with or above that level.

'Is there a way to call Argen Headmaster…?' As of now, it was safe to say that there wasn't.

Evan tried to activate the magic tool on his wrist, just in case, but there was no response.

That meant it was impossible for now.

As he was agonizing over the hopeless situation, Aria raised her arm. "[Evan… there's a place… that you and everyone else must aim for…]"

"A place to aim for…?"

Even while gasping for breath, Aria raised her remaining arm and pointed at Fenrir.

"[If you look closely… at its head… there's a jewel…]" "A jewel…?"

Evan turned his head and looked at the area around Fenrir's head.

As Aria had said, light was flowing out little by little from the jewel embedded in its head.

"[That's a Relic of the Barrier… I don't know the details, but it was probably used to seal that monster.]"

Come to think of it…

Evan had felt light flowing out of that jewel whenever Fenrir tried to use its power.

At first, he had briefly thought that it was the source of its power, but he couldn't really tell if it was right or not because he didn't feel any ominous energy…

'If what Aria says is true…'

If they could reactivate that Relic, could they seal the Magic beast again? 'No… sealing it is not an option.'

If such a dangerous monster was sealed deep inside the academy's testing grounds, resealing it would be insane.

Evan decided that it would be much better to fight with all their might and subjugate it rather than seal it.

In that case…

"[If you put Holy Power into the Relic, you can definitely weaken Fenrir's power even further. You have to aim for that.]"

"… I understand."

Evan nodded and replied to Aria's explanation. For now, doing as Aria said was the best option.

Evan raised his sword and met the eyes of Fenrir, who had just finished recovering.

A desperate battle with an overwhelming difference in power. There was no way to escape from this place.

But they couldn't back down.

Evan gripped the hilt tightly, glared at the jewel embedded in Fenrir's head.

If he could somehow inject only Holy Power into that place, it would be a manageable fight.

The two, who had been staring at each other and quietly gathering their strength, then…

Bang!

Kicked off the ground and charged towards each other.

# 8 - The Wolf That Devours the God

Inserting Holy Power into a Relic.

In truth, that alone allows the Relic to exert its power.

Simply injecting Demonic energy wouldn't work, but since Evan is the only one here capable of handling Holy Power, there's no other way to infuse Holy Power into the jewel embedded in Fenrir's head except for Evan to step forward himself.

And Evan has to succeed. Otherwise, they're bound to lose.

It's unfortunate, but… 'Ugh… haa… I'm happy…'

She's too busy enjoying herself.

No, of course, it's not that I'm deliberately refraining from intervening, even though I could, because I want Evan to grow.

It's not that I don't have that intention, but if things go wrong, everyone is in danger of dying, so naturally, I would have stepped in and done something if I could.

As the epithet "Wolf that Devours Gods" suggests, it's a matter of reverse compatibility.

Aggressive Demonic energy devours Holy Power, but conversely, it suffers significant damage when attacked with Holy Power. To put it in game terms, Fenrir has the characteristics of a glass cannon.

In terms of offensive performance alone, it's on par with or even surpasses the Demon King.

Being devoured doesn't mean death, but it means being completely neutralized by Demonic energy.

From the start…

'Regeneration is really not working…'

Even though I was only bitten on the arm, instead of regenerating immediately, so much time has passed and it still hasn't properly regenerated. Doesn't that show how powerful that damn wolf is?

Regeneration isn't something I can control at will.

In other words, I can't regenerate purely because of the power that Fenrir possesses.

Of course, I could focus Holy Power on my arm and make it happen, but it's not like I'll die from losing an arm, and it'll heal on its own if I wait a bit, so there's no point in focusing on intensive care with my power.

More than anything…

'I think I used too much power blocking that attack just now…'

Being bitten by Fenrir, especially with teeth instead of a hand, put me in an even more weakened state. Forcibly drawing up Holy Power to deploy a Barrier consumed too much power.

I was already struggling because of the wound, and that attack was the final blow.

I thought that attack might sweep everyone away, so I drew out as much power as possible to block it. Now, I barely have enough power left to scatter Holy Power to survey the surroundings.

Fortunately, I gave Evan buffs and a shield beforehand, so there's no need to expend Holy Power again now.

I need to conserve as much power as possible so that I can step in and resolve any unexpected situations that may arise.

Well, honestly, I gave Evan buffs and deployed a shield, and he even blocked that attack before entering the third phase, didn't he?

I think I've done all I need to do. Wouldn't asking for more be shameless…

I think I've done everything a healer can do. If they can't defeat Fenrir after all this, it's as good as not being able to defeat the Demon King.

I took out the Relic from my bosom. "[Everyone… this…!]"

"This is… a Relic…?"

It's much better for Evan to have it than for me to have it now.

After all, I'm barely managing to heal my own body right now, so nothing will change if I have it.

It would be much more helpful for Evan, who can directly use the Relic, to have it when fighting Fenrir.

"H, how can I…" "[… Please…]"

"Aria…!"

Stella called out to me, but I was already starting to lose my hearing. Ah, I'm really losing strength…

'I need to rest a bit…'

Actually, it's not resting, but lying down and enjoying the pain for a while. You can call me irresponsible, but I can't help it.

It's not like I can do anything by stepping in here, and I've already run out of Holy Power. What can I do?

Since it's come to this, shouldn't I at least feel as good as possible? "…"

Ah, before that…

I cast a Holy Power shield on Stella and Uriel, who were holding my hand.

Since I have so little power left, I could only create a weak shield, but this much should be enough.

"[It will… block one attack…]"

How much does it matter that it blocks one attack? The two of them will do well.

More than that…

'There's really not much time left now…'

After giving Uriel and Stella the last Holy Power shield, I really didn't have any Holy Power left to survey the surroundings.

In the pitch-black darkness, using the pain in my arm as a pillar, I completely closed my eyes.

'Ah… comfortable…'

The strong but subtle pain…

The Demonic energy slowly seeping in, yet slowly being healed by the Holy Power coming from my body…

This isn't bad…

I chuckled inwardly and thought so.

"…"

Stella looked down at the unconscious Aria and got up from her seat. Nothing would change by continuing to look at Aria here.

"S, Stella…"

"I can't just stand by."

I have to do something.

Stella looked down at the Relic in her hand and then looked ahead. Evan and Fenrir were clashing.

And Mirnel was providing support fire from behind. "I don't want to do nothing."

Uriel, at least, could see them if she enhanced her body, but as a mage, it was all she could do to keep up with their speed.

But that didn't mean she couldn't do anything. Passing the Relic of Purification to Evan.

And…

'Inserting Holy Power into Fenrir's head…'

Originally, she would have to attack directly to insert Holy Power, but even Evan was being pushed back in the close combat with Fenrir.

If it's space magic…

Perhaps it's possible to use the magic she possesses. "With this…!"

Stella clenched the Relic in her hand and brought it to her shield.

Then, the new Holy Power was quickly absorbed into the Relic, which had completely lost its Holy Power, as it touched the surroundings.

Stella didn't care that the shield that had been protecting her had disappeared.

After all, that didn't matter.

"With this, directly… above that monster's head…" "Wait a minute."

Just as Stella was about to use space magic. Uriel, who was next to her, stopped Stella. "Uriel…?"

"Let me do it." "… No."

I didn't want to make my friend do something like this. "I, I still have a shield left."

"The moment you hold this Relic, the shield you have will disappear. Because… there's still a lot of Holy Power missing."

"Then shouldn't I use this Holy Power that's protecting my body as well?" "…"

She wasn't wrong.

I was vaguely thinking of bringing the Relic to share Holy Power, but the problem was what would happen after that.

If she was hit directly by Fenrir's attack, Stella would definitely not be safe. "I can… endure it."

"No…! If you die, then…"

"Then do you want me to watch you get hurt?" "…"

Stella couldn't say anything. Someone had to step up.

Fenrir was barely being dealt with by Evan and Mirnel, so she couldn't ask them. She couldn't ask Uriel to do it either, so she was going to do it herself.

But Stella also knew.

The moment she teleported to that side, where a tremendous amount of attacks were being exchanged, even if she succeeded in sharing Holy Power, her body would be torn to shreds.

She wasn't a great mage yet, so there was no place for her to intervene. But Uriel was different.

If she quickly inserted Holy Power and got out, she might get hurt, but there was a high chance she wouldn't die.

If you consider efficiency, that was the best option. Stella gritted her teeth.

'Is this… all I can do…?'

To have to send a friend she had just made to her death.

Stella was biting her lip, but she was painfully aware that there was no other way.

There was no other way. "Please… Uriel…" "Leave it to me."

As she handed the Relic to Uriel, the Holy Power that had been protecting Uriel was absorbed into the Relic.

Stella turned her head and looked back at Mirnel, who was providing cover fire from afar.

"Ugh… it's not easy to hit…"

Her arrows had great power, but hitting was the problem.

It wasn't easy to hit Fenrir, who was clashing at supersonic speeds that ordinary people couldn't even see, with just a bow.

"Mirnel."

"What?"

"I have a favor to ask." Just a moment.

Just a very short moment would do.

"I've come up with a plan." "… Tell me."

At Mirnel's words, Stella nodded.

She began to explain the plan to neutralize Fenrir.