# 9 - The Wolf That Swallows the God

The operation was simple. Simple, but dangerous.

"...Are you really going to be okay?" Uriel nodded at Mirnel's question.

After all, if things continued as they were, everyone would die, so Uriel decided to trust in her own power.

No... it wasn't just her power. "I'll make sure to succeed."

Everyone's power was contained here.

Mirnel would create an opening, and Stella would Teleport her directly.

Then, she would bring the Relic imbued with Holy Power directly to the Relic embedded in the Magic beast's head and resonate them.

It was an extremely difficult task to actually carry out, not just in words. But she had to do it.

"It'll only take a moment."

It would only take a moment.

Uriel wondered why Mirnel was speaking as if she knew so much about it, but right now, weakening Fenrir by bringing the Relic to its head was more

important than asking Mirnel about it.

"The arrows with strong power risk collapsing this chamber, so I've only been able to fire arrows with high penetration... but it should hold up for one shot."

As she said, Mirnel was only using arrows with high penetration.

It wasn't easy to blatantly fire arrows with strong power in an underground chamber that was already on the verge of collapse.

If Fenrir hadn't been about to attack, she might have considered firing a strong attack...

"Indeed..."

Since they were already on the verge of collapse due to Fenrir's powerful attacks, if they launched a strong attack here, everyone would die.

That's why she was only firing arrows with high penetration, but even that was difficult to hit because Fenrir's speed was so fast.

Only a skilled archer like Mirnel could hit it.

Even then, the attacks, which only had high penetration, couldn't inflict much damage, so they were only suppressing its movements.

"It might be tough... but I'll create an opening. The Hero won't stop attacking either, so there should be a pretty long gap."

"..."

As Mirnel said, Fenrir was currently focused on fighting Evan. But if they could inflict a significant flinch with strong firepower. If they could create even a small opening through that...

"Yes...!"

Uriel nodded and drew Demonic energy into her body.

The armor she was wearing was also a treasure of the Empire, and it had the ability to become stronger as she drew Demonic energy into it.

Even so, if she was attacked by that Magic beast, which seemed to be at least a Demon King Army executive, her defense wouldn't mean anything, and it would be brutally shattered, but it would block some glancing blows.

Uriel trusted in that and stepped forward.

"I'll Teleport you... you have to come back safe, okay?"

Stella prepared her magic, and Mirnel, confirming it, nodded and gathered Demonic energy into her bow, saying it would only be once.

"I hope it doesn't collapse. I don't know if I can control my power after so long."

As Mirnel continued to say incomprehensible things, the moment she released the bowstring,

"Milliem Rain."

The arrow shot into the sky became a rain of thousands, tens of thousands of arrows and poured down on Fenrir.

Each arrow had the power to pierce even steel. Grrr...!

Fenrir, who had been charging towards Evan, was startled as soon as he saw the rain of arrows pouring down on his head and changed direction, but...

"Wh-what, arrows...?!"

The arrows twisted in the air and turned towards the direction Fenrir had turned.

Like guided missiles, countless arrows were fired at Fenrir.

Even if he was paying attention to Mirnel, it was by no means easy to dodge guided arrows while fighting Evan.

He couldn't even deflect the arrows because of Evan. "Where do you think you're going...!"

Evan hadn't grasped the exact situation, but he knew that he had to make sure that attack hit.

He explosively drew Holy Power into his Holy Sword and swung it.

It was an attack that could have been easily blocked or evaded under normal circumstances, but Fenrir, already distracted by Mirnel's attack, could only choose between dodging Evan's attack or dodging Mirnel's attack.

In this either-or situation, Fenrir made a quick decision.

It was an instinctive judgment that it would take less damage from an attack made of ordinary Demonic energy than from an attack containing Holy Power from Evan's Holy Sword.

However, it wasn't a good idea.

Evan's attack, though containing Holy Power, wasn't a very strong attack. Mirnel's attack, on the other hand, was different.

Each arrow contained the power to tear through even steel like paper. Pshshshsh!

In the end, Fenrir's body, pierced as he dodged Evan's attack, burst open with large holes, and blood gushed out.

Grrrk...

Fenrir, instantly turned into a rag, let out a painful groan and vomited blood from his mouth.

He couldn't even make a proper sound because his entire torso was pierced.

His posture collapsed because the muscles that could give him strength were all torn.

"Now's the time!"

At Mirnel's shout, Stella cast Teleportation magic.

Uriel's body disappeared in an instant and appeared above Fenrir's head. "Ugh..."

Uriel, appearing above Fenrir's head, which was covered in Demonic energy-filled blood with his whole body turned into a rag, took out the Relics.

Relic of Purification, Relic of Healing. And...

'Relic of Barrier... was it...'

She didn't know what would happen next.

She only knew that Fenrir would be greatly weakened if she did this. "Haaaah!"

Uriel gripped the two Relics tightly with both hands and slammed them down towards Fenrir's head, where the Relic of Barrier was embedded, as she fell.

Bang!

The moment the hand holding the Relics touched the Relic of Barrier,

Hwaaaa

The three Relics containing Holy Power were momentarily connected, and the Holy Power of the Barrier was activated.

Kuaaaa! "Wa, wait..." Chwaak!

Fenrir let out a painful scream at the light flowing out from the Relic of Barrier embedded in his head and swung his claws at Uriel, who was riding on his head.

"Kyaaak!" Kwang!

Uriel's armor shattered, and she flew away bleeding and crashed into the wall.

"Uriel!"

"There's no time to worry! We have to pour all our attacks in quickly! Is your Demonic energy okay?"

"I'm okay for now...!"

Stella would have consumed a lot of Demonic energy just from using Teleportation magic, but she had drastically reduced Demonic energy consumption through a long period of research.

It didn't consume much Demonic energy to Teleport someone just a short distance.

And...

"How dare you hurt Uriel...!"

Stella said, holding a high-level magic, Lightning Sphere, in her hand. "That's enough."

Mirnel, nodding at that, drew her bowstring.

Stella also gathered Demonic energy and cast Lightning Sphere in succession.

"Die, you monster!"

Stella, confirming that numerous spears had appeared in the air, threw them at Fenrir without hesitation.

Numerous spears of lightning pierced Fenrir's entire body. Krrrrrrrrr!!

After letting out a sound full of pain from the electricity, his ferocious eyes turned towards Stella and Mirnel.

However, "Explode!"

Mirnel had already prepared a follow-up attack.

Mirnel, creating a giant arrow, fired it through the holes in Fenrir's body. Pook!

The moment the arrow was embedded inside his body, Fenrir's body began to heave.

Kking! Kking!

The arrow that had burrowed into his body was detonating Demonic energy and destroying him from the inside.

Fenrir, judging that he couldn't go on like this, widened his eyes.

With bloodshot eyes, Fenrir grabbed his bleeding body and drew Demonic energy into his entire body.

Kuaaaaaaa!

Just as Stella and Mirnel were panicking at the Demonic energy spewing out from Fenrir's entire body, he charged towards them at an incredible speed.

It was clearly faster, though noticeably slower than the overwhelming speed he had shown at first.

"Oh no...!"

Evan, who had been gathering strength while thinking that Fenrir had been greatly injured and temporarily fainted, was flustered when Fenrir charged towards the two of them.

Stella and Mirnel were also in a situation where it was difficult to move immediately because they had just launched their attacks,

"I, in this case...!"

Stella, judging that she had to use a hasty Blink even if she had to endure internal tremors, was about to reach out her hand to Mirnel.

Thud thud "...!!"

Stella, startled by the sound of someone approaching, turned her head. And there...

Swoosh!

"Where... do you think you're going..."

Drip, drip

Having thrown off the armor that had been completely shattered by the previous attack,

Uriel, covered in blood, was there.

With a limping leg, she stood in Fenrir's path and slashed at Fenrir's legs with a red glowing greatsword as he charged.

The royal family's treasured sword had exhausted its power. Kking?!

Kwagwagwag!

Fenrir, instantly losing all four legs, lost his balance in the air and rolled on the floor.

"Uriel!"

"Please... Evan..." Thud!

Evan called out to Uriel, but Uriel, who had exhausted her strength from the previous attack, knelt down and collapsed on the floor.

The final blow.

Evan, standing in front of Fenrir, who had already lost all four legs and was bleeding profusely from the holes in his body, raised his Holy Sword.

"Thank you... Uriel."

Evan looked down at Fenrir, who was lying down, breathing heavily, and looking up at him.

It was clear that there would be more casualties later.

It was right to cut off his breath here.

Evan brought down his Holy Sword towards Fenrir's neck.

The Holy Sword easily pierced through, so easily that it felt like the tough hide was a lie.

Krrk... Krrrk...

Fenrir let out a dying scream full of pain from the Holy Power entering his body, and then breathed his last.

"...It's over."

Evan slumped down in his seat.

The Wolf that Devours Gods, subjugation successful.

# The Wolf That Devours God (Interlude)

"Aria! Uriel!"

As soon as the subjugation succeeded, Evan and Stella rushed to where Aria and Uriel had collapsed.

Uriel's injuries were more urgent than Aria's, who could be healed later with Holy Power and was currently unconscious and unable to feel pain.

"Haa… Haa…"

Fortunately, thanks to her armor, she was able to avoid instant death, but Uriel was in pain, wounded by Fenrir's Demonic energy-laden claws.

It was spreading through her body like poison.

"...Exposed to Demonic energy. At this rate, she'll die soon." Mirnel said with a look of pity.

Even the armor couldn't completely block Fenrir's attack. "Uriel…"

Stella muttered Uriel's name with a guilty expression.

If she hadn't been there for this subjugation… it would have been impossible to subjugate Fenrir.

Uriel had made the greatest contribution. "Am I… going to die…? Cough…"

"D-Don't talk…"

Uriel continued, coughing up black blood.

"...Actually… dying feels like something far away… The feeling of Demonic energy spreading through my body… isn't very pleasant…"

"…"

"If I die… Aria will definitely bring me back to life, right…? I didn't want to cause Aria pain…"

She could be revived.

Aria had the power to revive even the dead.

She would have to bear Uriel's wounds, but it was possible to revive the dead Uriel.

But…

'I don't want to let that happen...'

Aria would have to endure Uriel's wounds, and Uriel would have to experience something that no human would want to experience: dying and coming back to life.

Was there really no other future? Was there anything he could do? Evan pondered and pondered.

A way to save Uriel. Was there such a thing? It was then.

"The Water Relic…"

Evan suddenly thought of the Relic. Could the healing Relic heal Uriel?

Thinking so, Evan hurriedly approached the place where the Relic had fallen and picked up the healing Relic.

A subtle yet warm light flowed from the Relic.

Evan… that's…

"The Water Relic… it was definitely healing Holy Power. With this, maybe I can heal Uriel…?"

Everyone's eyes widened at Evan's words.

The thought that healing Holy Power might be able to do it. "Please, Estel. Help me."

Evan said to Estel with a serious expression.

It wasn't easy for him to use the Relic as he pleased.

So, in order to borrow the power of the healing Relic that was using Holy Power, he needed Estel's help.

But…

No. That's impossible. "...What?"

Evan… haven't you forgotten? The reason Aria can revive the dead or save those poisoned by Demonic energy… while enduring the pain and resulting wounds in her own body, is purely because Aria has accepted

the power of God, which is not suitable for a mortal body, into a mere human body.

"That's…"

The healing Relic only amplifies that power. But… I don't originally have healing power, and even if I, the Holy Sword with only the Holy Power of a Hero, use the healing Relic, I won't be able to heal Uriel with it.

"Why…"

If it were ordinary Demonic energy from a demon, it would be possible. But… if Demonic energy of a certain concentration or higher is directly injected into the body and causes poisoning, even priests give up. Let alone the Demonic energy of a Magic beast who is at least a Demon King Army executive… it's absolutely impossible.

"…"

Evan was speechless.

Even his last hope had vanished.

He thought he could heal Uriel with this, but the power of Demonic energy had shattered even that hope.

But… "...Evan?"

Evan didn't stop.

He brought the healing Relic he was holding to Estel.

Evan… what are you doing?

"Even so… I want to heal her with Holy Power. No, I have to."

Even if you know it's a meaningless act…? "Yeah… At least… I want to ease her pain." Evan was serious.

Even though she was directly exposed to Demonic energy, he thought that if he tried to heal her with Holy Power, he could at least reduce her pain.

"E… van…"

Uriel looked up at Evan with trembling eyes. Uriel's body was melting.

She was dying in real time.

He couldn't let her suffer any longer.

… Okay. I'm not comfortable either. Maybe it's better to do that.

Estel said that, sighed, and told him to bring the Relic to her Holy Sword. No, she was about to say that.

"[Wait a moment… please wait… ]" A familiar Thought-form voice.

Evan reflexively turned his head.

There was… "A, Aria…!" Aria was there.

Aria, who was trying to get up. "You… don't overdo it…!"

Mirnel shouted in a flustered voice, but Aria didn't hear it.

She was missing one arm, and she had barely blocked the previous attack and used up all of her remaining Holy Power for buffs and shields… Now she couldn't even see and couldn't even hear the Thought-form coming from her.

Aria, who barely squeezed out the last bit of Holy Power to create a Thought-form, said to everyone.

"[Could you… tell me the direction… where Uriel is… ?]" "A, Aria…"

"[I'm sorry… I can't see… My Holy Power… is depleted… ]"

In the end, Aria lost her balance and fell to the side while trying to get up. Blood splattered from her empty right arm, staining the floor.

"Haa… Haa…"

Stella covered her mouth with both hands at the sight of her groaning in pain and trying to get up again.

Evan, unable to bear it any longer, hurriedly approached Aria and helped her up, then took her to Uriel.

"A…ria…"

Aria silently looked down at Uriel.

"No… I don't want… this pain… to go to you…" Uriel burst into tears.

Blood was gushing from her eyes, and her wounds were necrotizing and rotting, but even in the midst of all that, Uriel was worried about Aria.

But Aria couldn't hear it.

Aria could no longer hear anyone's words.

She had used up all of her Holy Power to grasp Thought-forms.

She had used up even the Holy Power that allowed her to barely continue speaking her own words.

Instead of her empty right arm, her left hand reached out.

Barely maintaining her balance with Evan's help, Aria stretched out her hand as far as she could and barely touched Uriel's body, then smiled faintly.

She didn't say anything.

She just mouthed words, and then, realizing that she couldn't speak, she just gripped Uriel's hand tightly.

"Aria… no… please…"

Uriel, who had a hunch about what she was going to do, shook her head like a child and muttered.

Then, light burst forth from Aria's body.

Holy Power and divine authority were different.

If only her body was fine, if only her mind was fine.

Regardless of the amount of Holy Power she had, she could save anyone.

She just had to keep the wounds as they were, without being able to heal them until her Holy Power returned.

Evan knew that.

Even knowing that, Evan couldn't stop Aria.

He didn't want Aria to suffer.

But more than that… Evan didn't want his comrade to die.

He didn't want Uriel to suffer and die, and he didn't want Aria to have to revive her while suffering from Uriel's death.

He knew.

That this situation was flowing in a way that would bring a happy ending to everyone.

Uriel no longer had to feel the pain of death, and Aria no longer had to feel the pain of Uriel's death and revive her.

Uriel would not experience death.

Aria would not experience the pain of death. But.

But no one in this place… No one was happy.

No one… was smiling. Thud.

Aria's body fell to the floor.

Aria's hand, which had been holding Uriel's hand, lost its strength and rolled to the floor.

"Aria… Aria…"

Stella burst into tears and shook Aria's body.

The light of healing faded, and Uriel, who had been on the verge of death just a moment ago, was now perfectly fine, as if nothing had happened, and cried like a child, unable to control her emotions.

Mirnel could only lower her head silently. "What… is a Hero…"

Evan clenched his fist tightly. "Unable to do… anything…"

He muttered in a voice filled with guilt, helplessness, and despair. Then, he closed his eyes, not wanting to see this horrific scene.

Even so, Evan couldn't escape from despair.

The claw marks were still vivid in Evan's vision.

# 1 - Aselina Sunlight

Uriel's body had fully recovered.

However, Aria, who had taken on all of Uriel's injuries, remained unconscious even after a week.

It was only natural.

She was already severely injured, and then she took on the injuries of Uriel, who was on the verge of death. It was no wonder she couldn't wake up.

"Haa..."

In the hospital room where Aria lay.

Evan, who had arrived first, looked around, confirming that no one else was there, before approaching the bedside and quietly sitting down.

"Estel..."

Yes.

"I thought... if I awakened my powers as the Hero, I could save more people and Aria wouldn't have to suffer anymore... but I guess not."

Estel couldn't respond to Evan's muttering.

It was true that Evan had become much stronger as the Hero compared to before.

He showed an unbelievable level of martial prowess at a faster rate than any other Hero, standing out more than any other Hero.

In fact, there was virtually no Hero who had defeated so many executives and become so strong at Evan's age.

But the Hero himself was suffering from his own powerlessness more than any other Hero.

Previous Heroes had always grieved over the Saintess's sacrifice, but no Saintess had ever caused as much concern as this one.

Evan silently approached Aria and checked her condition. Although she was still unconscious, she was stable and doing well.

Her body, which had been exposed to and contaminated by Demonic energy, was rapidly recovering through the Holy Power generated within her.

Certainly, from an efficiency standpoint, saving Uriel before she died was better for both of them than reviving her after death.

Only...

'Was this the only result I could achieve?' The result was despairing.

Why did it always end up like this?

He didn't want to see anyone else get hurt anymore.

And... he didn't want to see Aria, the person he loved, get hurt anymore.

He had worked so hard with only that in mind to gain this much strength, but the reality remained the same.

In the end, he only realized that he didn't have enough power to defeat even a Demon King Army executive, let alone the Demon King.

"I... I'm honestly not confident anymore... Can I really defeat the Demon King... Wasn't that actually an impossible task?"

If it were possible to defeat him, it wouldn't make sense that they had been fighting the Demon King for so long without succeeding.

So many Heroes had set out to defeat the Demon King, yet none of them had succeeded, only managing to seal him at best. He couldn't understand it.

Until now, he had thought that none of that mattered.

But now that he had become so strong and still felt like he was hitting a wall, he couldn't help but have doubts.

Evan...

Estel couldn't say anything to Evan, who was suffering alone.

Knowing how powerful the Demon King was, she couldn't simply dismiss Evan's words.

The Demon King was strong. The word 'disaster' suited him.

She had even wondered if it was possible to completely destroy that monster in the first place.

But if it were impossible, there would be no reason for her to exist... so she could only believe that it was possible.

If she were to believe that defeating the Demon King was impossible, it would be the same as denying the very reason she was created.

So Estel had no choice but to believe that it was possible.

It'll be alright. Surely...

And so, she could only tell Evan that it would be alright. "I'm here."

At Stella's voice, Evan, who had been deep in thought, slightly raised his head and met Stella's eyes.

"You don't look so good." "Wouldn't it be weirder if I did?" "That's true."

Who could be happy in this situation? "Where's Uriel?"

"She hasn't come out of her room. Her roommate says she's stuck in bed and won't come out."

"... I guess so."

It wasn't Uriel's fault.

Even Evan, who had gained the power to slice through high-ranking demons with a single blow, had only managed to fight that opponent on equal terms.

Although it was an attack launched while exhausted, there was no way Uriel, who was much weaker than Evan, could have avoided it in mid-air.

It would have been stranger if she had avoided it.

The power of the attack wasn't that strong compared to the attacks he had shown so far, but it was enough to drive Uriel to the brink of death.

Especially since that attack was swung at such a tremendous speed.

But even more problematic was the Demonic energy mixed in with Fenrir's claws.

Aria was the only one who could block the Demonic energy that seeped into the wound and melted Uriel's body like poison.

In the end, it was safe to say that if it hadn't been for Aria, there would have been no way for Uriel to survive after being hit by that attack.

Since there was no way to avoid the attack in the first place, Uriel had no reason to blame herself.

But as people's minds often are... she might think it was her fault.

All they could do was hope that she would overcome it and come out again. "How's Aria?"

"She still hasn't woken up. They say it'll probably take more than a week this time too."

Later, he heard from Mirnel that it was a Magic beast with the alias of a wolf that devours gods, a name passed down only in legends.

A being called the king of Magic beasts in ancient times.

It seemed that it had been sealed by the Hero and Saintess of the past, who used Relic, when it crossed over to this world.

"For such a monster to be in a place like this..."

At Evan's words, Stella made a dissatisfied expression, agreeing with him.

But apart from Aria's sacrifice this time, the fact that they had succeeded in retrieving the lost Relic of earth, the Relic of the Barrier, was a good thing in itself, she said.

She never imagined it would be hidden in a place like this. It was then.

"You were here first. You guys."

Mirnel, who had opened the door and entered at some point, looked back at Evan and Stella and said.

"Mirnel!"

At Stella's call, Mirnel, as if already knowing, held out her hand and gestured for silence before approaching.

"I know you have a lot you want to talk about. Probably about my identity... and how I have such great power. I assume you have a lot of questions."

"... That's right. I'm honestly curious." Evan nodded at Mirnel's words.

In fact, she had hidden too much from them.

Now that she had revealed her hidden self, it was essential that she give a proper explanation.

But...

"But there's a more important story, so would you mind if we talked about that later?"

There was a more important story than that right now. "What story?"

Looking at Evan, who asked with a questioning expression, Mirnel nodded and turned to the side.

Soon, someone walked into the room. "... Who are you...?"

Evan's eyes widened as he saw the figure. It was someone he had never seen before. Someone he had never met in his life.

He was sure of it.

But why?

A beautiful woman with long blonde hair, golden eyes, and unique silver horns growing on her head.

Why did this woman in front of him feel like someone he had known for a long time?

"Ugh..."

Evan felt a headache coming on and gasped for breath, clutching his head. Memories that shouldn't exist flashed through his mind for a moment. "Who... are you...?"

Evan asked the woman with a trembling voice.

Who was she that he felt such a strange feeling and had such strange memories as soon as he saw her?

"Relic... I never thought we would retrieve all the Relic that were lost so long ago in this way."

The woman looked down at the three Relic placed next to Aria. "The Red Stone of Gwangyang... The Ancient Life Stone... And..." The woman lowered her eyes and reached out her hand.

As if responding to her, a faint brown light, reminiscent of earth, emanated from it.

"The Earth Barrier Stone..." All the Relic had gathered.

"Is all of this... the will of the Goddess?"

Everyone in the room swallowed hard at the woman's words. "Who... who are you?"

At Stella's question, the woman, who had placed the Barrier Stone back down, turned her head and met Stella's eyes.

Then, she looked at everyone and opened her mouth. "... I am Aselina Sunlight."

One of the three arrangements made by the Goddess. The guardian of the middle realm.

And...

"I am the guardian dragon of this land... and the Dragon Lord of Light."

Aselina revealed her identity... and unleashed a large but warm Holy Power that everyone could feel.

To give credence to an identity that was hard to believe.

# 2 - Aselina Sunlight

Everyone wore astonished expressions at Aselina's appearance.

However, Mirnel, who knew about this whole situation, didn't react as strongly.

But the shocking truth remained, so Evan and Stella stared at Aselina, mouths agape in astonishment.

"The guardian dragon... of this land... you say?" "The Dragon Lord of Light?!"

Stella jumped up from her seat with a surprised expression and shouted. "Is there a problem?"

"Ah, no... it's just... I've never heard of a race called the Dragon of Light in ancient books..."

"Dragon of Light... yes, that's right. We are definitely a race that doesn't exist in history. Naturally, there wouldn't be any records of our existence in your records."

Aselina nodded as if it were obvious.

"But we certainly existed. My existence is proof of that." "Then... how come there are no records?"

"We... claim to be guardian dragons, but we would have been perceived differently by humans."

Although they are called the guardian dragons of this land, their essence is to oppose the Demon realm and protect this land from Demonic energy.

Humans live on this land, but they are merely one race living on this land.

"Sometimes we are depicted as your guardian dragons, and sometimes as evil dragons that destroy everything."

They are a race that protects the land itself, not the human race.

"Above all, we don't go around calling ourselves Dragons of Light. So it would be stranger if you knew us as the Dragon of Light. Perhaps... we are recorded as various other dragons."

Originally, when races leave records, they make judgments based on their own knowledge and record them as they please.

It would be stranger to be recorded as the Dragon of Light, a race name given directly by the Goddess.

"So that's why..."

Stella sat back down with a dazed expression.

To be honest, she still didn't quite believe it, but since only Aria could unleash such powerful Holy Power, she had no choice but to believe it for now.

Then there was only one thing left to ask. "Why did you suddenly come here?"

Why would such a great being suddenly come to this place? At Evan's question, Aselina quietly closed her eyes. "Because the time has come."

"The time... you say?"

"The Hero's awakening is only one step away, and all the Relics have been gathered."

Aselina continued, quietly closing her eyes.

"Actually... I didn't expect the Relics to be gathered either. All of this is probably because the Goddess guided Aria here."

At those words, Stella and Evan swallowed hard. Come to think of it, that was true.

Obtaining this Relic seemed like a coincidence, but something was strange about obtaining the other Relics.

When they obtained the Red Iron Ore of Gwangyang, and when they obtained the Primordial Life Stone... it was as if they knew where everything was and moved accordingly.

Was that the guidance of God?

At first, they didn't believe it, but now that they thought about it, perhaps all of that was true.

Evan felt goosebumps all over his body.

"Someday, I too must join you to defeat the incomprehensible terror, the Demon King."

Defeating the Demon King would require everyone's efforts.

Even the mighty Fenrir was ultimately just a pet of the Demon King, which showed how powerful he was.

'Can I do it...?'

Evan swallowed hard.

To be honest, he wasn't confident.

At first, he thought he would definitely defeat the Demon King, but he felt keenly that he was too powerless.

He was still weak.

Evan's power was not enough to overwhelm even that Magic beast.

Considering that he could only fight on equal terms at best, it was natural that he didn't feel confident.

Even that was only barely blocking attacks with his strength, so the word "equal" might not be enough.

He might have been much weaker than even Fenrir.

"Evan... I understand the fear that you might not be able to defeat the Demon King... the fear that you might not be able to do anything..."

Aselina narrowed her eyes and stroked Aria's forehead. "... You have to overcome it. Because you're the Hero."

"No... I didn't come here to tell you the cliché that you have to overcome that feeling."

At Aselina's words, Evan opened his eyes wide and looked up.

Evan had thought that she was simply going to say that he had to overcome it because he was the Hero.

But Aselina hadn't come just to say that. There was another reason.

"You must do everything you can to defeat that being." Aselina approached Evan.

As he looked up at Aselina approaching him, he met her golden eyes. He felt an unknown, sacred power in her eyes.

"What..."

Evan was flustered by Aselina's casual approach and took a step back, but it was already too late.

Aselina raised her hand and looked down at Evan with a pitiful expression. "I hope... this memory will be helpful."

With those strange words that she hoped this memory would be helpful, Aselina put her hand on his forehead and gathered Holy Power.

Soon, "Ah..."

Evan's eyes rolled back and he lost his balance and fell. "E, Evan!"

Stella hurriedly stepped forward and barely caught him as he was about to fall backward.

"Evan! Hey! Hey! Wake up!"

She tried desperately to wake Evan up, but no matter how much she touched him, he didn't respond, as if he were dreaming.

"What did you do?!"

Stella, flustered by Evan's unresponsive state, shouted at Aselina. However...

"Stella. There is someone else I would like to introduce to you." "What... did you say?"

Aselina continued as if nothing had happened.

Stella pursed her lips and glared at Aselina. Then she fell into thought.

The being in front of her was the Dragon of Light.

Just the name "Dragon" was enough to know how powerful she was.

Moreover, she wasn't a Hero like Evan, so she could be disposed of if she was seen as a hindrance.

There was no point in arguing here. And...

'He seems to be sleeping...'

Looking down at Evan, who was sleeping peacefully, she was able to calm down a little.

"I don't know what you did... but Mirnel brought you here, and if you were going to do something, you would have done it already, so there's no point in stepping in here..."

Stella said that and got up from her seat. Then there was only one thing left to do. "Who do I have to meet?"

There must be a good reason for making such a proposal to her.

She didn't know what the reason was, but she was sure that it was an important reason, since it was a proposal from the Dragon of Light, who protects this world.

So she decided to accept Aselina's proposal for now. And at that moment...

"Why make me wait outside when you could have just let me in..." The door opened and in came familiar pink hair.

Stella's eyes widened as she recognized the face. "A, Argen Headmaster...?!"

"Hmm." Argen Isis.

The headmaster of this academy. "Could it be..."

There is someone you have to meet.

At first, Stella wondered who she was going to meet, but she soon understood.

The person she had to meet, and if that person was the one who had reached the highest level as a magician in this world.

There was only one possibility she could think of.

"Well, I don't think I need to explain it at length... I'll make a direct proposal."

Won't you become my disciple? "A disciple...?"

"I'm thinking of laying the foundation for you to become a great mage. Well... reaching that level depends entirely on your efforts."

At those words, Stella gaped in astonishment, speechless. She couldn't believe the situation she was in.

"So... will you become my disciple?" "..."

Her answer was already decided.

"... I look forward to working with you, Master." There was no reason to refuse.

She too... had a reason why she had to become stronger.

# 3 - Aselina Sunlight

Inside the room where no one else remained, Argent, who had first sent Stella out, saying she had something to discuss, turned her head to look at Aselina.

"Putting on airs in front of the kids." "P-Putting on airs, you say…"

Aselina replied with a troubled expression to Argent's chuckling remark.

To Argent, it felt like thorns were growing in her mouth whenever Aselina continued to speak formally and respectfully, as it wasn't her usual way of talking that Argent was used to hearing.

It was a miracle she had managed to endure it so well. "But I can't act like I usually do with you, can I?"

"I don't think they're the type to care about that~"

"Even if they don't care… there's still the atmosphere and stuff." "Hmph."

Argent wanted to tease her more, but she decided to stop, thinking Aselina might get angry if she pushed it further.

"Anyway… what are you going to do?" "…"

"You can't hide it forever… no, you could hide it. It's just that you don't want to, right?"

"Yeah…" Aselina nodded.

As Argent said, she didn't want to hide it from Aria any longer. But even more than that, the desire to hide it was strong.

If Aria were to find out that the grandfather who had taken care of her was not even human, how would she react?

"Well… I haven't known this Saintess for long, so I can't be sure, but… I don't think this Saintess would care much about that kind of thing?"

Argent said, stroking Aria's hair as she lay sleeping with her eyes closed. "I can't just assume what this child will think."

"Mr. Wise Guy."

In reality, she was a dragon even wiser than a sage. Argent chuckled and recalled past memories.

The epithet of the Light Guardian Dragon, Dragon Lord, was by no means in vain.

It was no exaggeration to say that most Hero parties reached the Demon King thanks to her help. Even when she was active as a Hero party, it would have been impossible to seal the Demon King without Aselina's help.

In other words, the Demon King's power was beyond imagination, even with her presence, they barely managed to seal him.

'No… is it even right to call that a "Demon King"?'

【Incomprehensible Terror】

That was 'it's' epithet.

'It' was something whose form could not be discerned.

A monster that could drive an ordinary person mad in an instant.

"I don't want to remember it anymore, so I've erased half of its appearance, but who would want to remember that?"

A living being?

Could 'it' even be called a living being? Incomprehensible terror.

It was a disaster in itself. "Well, I remember it." "Ugh, you remember that?"

"Of course, I remember it. At least for me, it's a terribly vivid memory. Even Eris's sacrifice."

Mirnel muttered with a pitiful expression. Elves live for a long time.

Of course, Argent had also become a great mage and twisted the laws to live an incredibly long life as a human, but that didn't make her the same as an elf.

Unlike Argent, who now mostly kept the events of that time as memories, they remained vivid in Mirnel's mind.

Perhaps the reason she was working harder than anyone else to defeat the Demon King stemmed from that.

For Mirnel… the memory of Eris still remained, tormenting her. But,

"Even so, isn't it all in the past? What's the point of dwelling on something from hundreds of years ago?"

If she were going to despair over such things, she would have stopped long ago.

Her journey was not over yet. Mirnel truly believed so.

"You… you're making it sound too easy."

Mirnel quietly turned her head at Argent's sighing words. In fact, she had never simply brushed it off as nothing.

Every time she looked at Aria, she clung to the memories of the past more than anyone else.

"Mirnel is an elf, so it can't be helped that she remembers it vividly." "…I know."

Argent said in a dissatisfied tone.

"So? Do you think we can defeat him this time?"

"I shouldn't be certain about such an important matter, but… now that we've recovered all the Relics, the possibility is high. Even many Heroes haven't been able to find all the Relics."

It was the first time that they had all gathered in one person, Moreover, in a Saintess.

It was that unbelievable.

"I'm still suspicious, are you sure that Goddess guided you to the Relics? If that was possible, she should have told us sooner."

Argent said with a voice full of dissatisfaction.

It wasn't certain, but if that gift had existed, if she had it during her time, things wouldn't have turned out this way.

Argent thought so.

"…As you said, if we had gathered those Relics when the Savior Hero party was active, things might have been different."

"If we had that, Eris wouldn't have had to die. Even if you can't know everything about people… even though that Eris… wasn't as good as the current Saintess, she still endured and tried to save many people, but it seems that wasn't enough for that Goddess?"

Aselina shuddered at Argent's barbed words. It was true that she was angry.

Aselina was created directly by the Goddess and descended to protect this world.

She was the one who had the most reason to be angry at the current situation where the Goddess was being insulted, except for the Goddess herself.

But…

Aselina couldn't get angry. Everything was true.

If the Relics had been given to the Savior Hero party during their time… if those Relics had been given to Eris, including Aria, the only two beings she regarded as daughters.

If only they had those Relics… perhaps they could have defeated the Demon King.

Aselina sincerely wanted to ask her God. 'Goddess…'

Was she harboring some plan that even someone like her couldn't dare to anticipate?

She wanted to believe so. No, she had to believe so.

As a direct creation of the Goddess, she could never commit the absurd act of doubting her God.

It must have been so…

'Why did you turn a blind eye…'

Even so, doubts couldn't help but arise in one corner of her heart. Why was there still no answer?

It was clear that the Goddess was still descending. The Goddess existed.

But… her intentions could not be fathomed.

'Relics… the location of the Relics that no one could find… but she only gave the revelation now…?'

Eventually, doubts arose.

All three Relics had been gathered.

Of course, it wasn't that they hadn't found Relics in the past either.

Even this Barrier Stone had traces of being used by a Hero party from the distant past, who originally possessed the Barrier Stone, to seal Fenrir, the

wolf that devours gods, didn't it?

However, the strange thing was that the three Relics had never been gathered at the same time.

Even the location was cut off from information before being passed down.

Having lived for a long time, at least thousands of years, Aselina had never directly seen the Relics.

Was such a thing even possible? Aselina turned to look at Aria.

A girl who couldn't see or hear.

She was surprised that she was still alive when she first found her.

At first, she only had doubts, and Aselina didn't ask what had happened to her.

Logically, if she was born with disabilities in both sensory organs… it didn't make sense for a child without parents to live to this age.

'Could it be…?'

Aselina soon reached a conclusion. No way.

No way…?

It couldn't be…?

Aselina turned to look at Aria with trembling eyes.

She knew the location of the Relics that no one else knew and found them.

And until now, she had defeated several executives and even Fenrir, the wolf that devours gods.

Not only had she lived to this age with disabilities in both sensory organs from birth, but she had also performed miracles and became a Saintess faster than any other Saintess in history.

At this point, she couldn't help but be suspicious. 'Could it be… could it be…!!'

Aselina gasped and covered her mouth with her hand as soon as she reached the conclusion.

Drip, drip

"Ah, Aselina? Are you crying?" "Ah…"

Rumania Goddess.

The Goddess she believed in had given up her divine power and was reborn as a Saintess with incomplete power in her body.

As a girl named Aria… as a human.

And eventually, to become a Saintess herself, to break this long chain of hatred.

# 4 - Aselina Sunlight

At first, I thought it was absurd.

Who could have imagined that the Goddess herself would choose to be reincarnated and descend?

Especially Aselina, who believed in the Goddess more than anyone else, found it even more unbelievable.

Aselina thought it was absurd even as she speculated, but she couldn't find any other explanation.

As a God, she couldn't reveal everything. There were limits to giving Divine Revelations. However…

If she were to be reincarnated into this world and lead her destiny directly, it wouldn't be impossible to gather all the Relics, which had never been collected in one place at the same time until this era.

"Hey, what's wrong…? Why are you like this…?"

Argent asked, bewildered by Aselina's sudden tears and sorrowful weeping. Aselina had no idea how to explain this.

How could she possibly make them believe the preposterous idea that Aria, the Saintess of this era, might be the Goddess herself?

But she had to explain.

Aselina swallowed hard and cautiously began her explanation.

"Um… Argent? Mirnel? You might not believe it, but… please listen carefully."

"What is it?"

"Judging by how difficult it is for you to say, you must be thinking of something outlandish."

"O-Outlandish thought, you say…"

Aselina spoke with a hint of dissatisfaction at Mirnel's words, but it wasn't entirely wrong.

Honestly, Aselina thought the conclusion was strange.

Considering everything, the fact that there was no other conclusion made her believe in this absurd speculation.

“…Just listen once. Do you know where I first met this child?”

“Now that you mention it, I am curious. Although it was a few years ago, it's hard to believe that a child who couldn't see or hear has lived for so long."

“At first, I was curious too, but I didn’t bother asking the child. Actually, it's probably because I was so purely filled with amazement at Aria while seeing it with my own eyes."

When Aselina first saw Aria, she thought that this child might become a Saintess.

Not only did she possess such great potential, but despite being blind and deaf, and therefore unable to do anything, and not even knowing the language, she maintained a brighter personality than anyone else in her conversations with her.

Even though she thought it was absurd, Aria's appearance, which seemed to express overwhelming talent and pureness itself, made her unknowingly take her to the cathedral and make her a nun.

And… soon after, she found out about the Pilgrimage and came to her, asking to be allowed to go on the Pilgrimage.

She even sacrificed her own life to save someone, becoming a Saintess.

Since then, she has continued to sacrifice her body to subjugate many of the Demon King Army's executives.

Of course, Aselina hadn't seen all of it from beginning to end, but otherwise, she wouldn't have been able to subjugate the strong Demon King Army executives one by one.

And above all…

"The fact that she has collected all the Relics is the biggest proof." “…I can’t deny that.”

As she said, it was true.

If Aria wasn't the reincarnation of the Goddess, then guiding the Relics was no different from the Goddess's will.

However, the problem was that there were more than one or two strange things if that were the case.

The fact that she was revealing the location of the Relics now meant that there was a reason for doing so…

The problem was that the era when the Hero's party of salvation was active was the time when the Hero was the strongest.

"He was the only Hero who had achieved the final Awakening… so you're saying he wasn't good enough in the Goddess's eyes."

That was hard to believe.

No, the desire not to believe it was even greater.

A Hero who had achieved the final Awakening, a great mage who spanned the era, an elven archer with the alias of Divine Archer, and a Saintess who, although not to the extent of Aria, had the highest potential among the Saintesses of all time.

They lacked nothing, yet they were ultimately defeated by the Demon King and only managed to seal him away for a long time.

“…Yeah, maybe you’re right.”

Gods cannot greatly interfere in this world.

It was an unwritten rule that had been established as a law since the creation of this world.

That's why the Goddess didn't come down directly to inform them, but instead provided information through the unnecessarily troublesome process of Divine Revelation.

If she threw all that away and came down to end the era of the Demon King and the Hero…

If the Goddess came down directly, the story would be different. "Does that make sense? A God came down directly?"

"Of course… she won't be aware that she's a Goddess. She gave up all her memories and was reincarnated as a human to subjugate the Demon King. I've never actually seen it, and I doubt it's even possible in the first place, but."

“…I see. As you said, if she wasn't the incarnation of the Goddess… the Goddess reincarnated into this world, it would be difficult to explain her actions so far.”

Mirnel also had an expression of disbelief at first, but soon realized that there was no other way to explain it except for this assumption.

"I don't want to believe it, but… it's a reasonable judgment."

He was a guardian dragon who had lived for a long time.

The fact that Aselina, who was like that, had such an absurd thought meant that there was no other way to explain it.

Argent and Mirnel had no choice but to believe it. “…Goddess.”

Normally, even daring to put a hand on her head would be blasphemy, but…

Wasn't she asleep now? Even for a moment was fine.

Aselina swept Aria's hair back and gently stroked it, giving a small smile. "Looking at it like this, she looks like a mother."

"They do resemble each other." “…How rude.”

She might be the reincarnation of the Goddess, so wasn't that a rude remark?

She was saying that, but how could she not feel joy at the thought of looking like the mother of the reincarnation of the Goddess, who was her creator and like a mother to her?

Aselina was saying it was rude, but a smile was plastered on her face.

‘What is it?’

At that moment.

I couldn't hide my confusion as I listened to all this.

Normally, I wouldn't have failed to notice that I was awake, but the story just now was so shocking.

Above all, they were so happy that it wouldn't be easy to recognize that I was listening to their Thought-form with a very small amount of Holy Power.

Should I be glad that they didn't find out that I was awake? Or should I be glad that I was awake at this moment?

What kind of story had I been listening to until just now…? ‘I’m… a Goddess…?’

No, I really didn't know.

Of course, I knew the inside story as a game, so I was just acting knowing the facts that everyone else didn't know.

I thought that was the only way to subjugate the Demon King, and in reality, subjugation would be impossible if I didn't do that.

That's why I took the risk of being discovered and went out to find the Relics myself.

But…

‘I’m… a Goddess…?’

I thought they might misunderstand something.

I had expected that someone would definitely think something was strange because everything I had shown so far was so absurd.

But… ‘Even so…’

Calling a perfectly normal person a Goddess or an incarnation.

Saying that the Goddess came down directly and was sacrificing herself to subjugate the Demon King was so absurd to me.

What was even more absurd was… ‘Why does it sound so true…?’

If I didn't know the knowledge of the game, the problem was that there was virtually no other way to explain it except for that assumption.

Frankly speaking, if I was really trying to subjugate the Demon King, it would have been better to reveal the location of the Relics during the Hero's party of salvation.

In reality, they failed to subjugate him by a narrow margin, and in the end, the only option was to seal him, so the Saintess of that era sacrificed herself, according to the setting.

If there were Relics… if these three Relics were all gathered together, this era would have already found peace.

So, they had no choice but to reach the conclusion that the transmission of information was difficult due to the restrictions received as a God, so she had no choice but to come down directly.

‘Is this… the wisdom of a dragon who is thousands of years old…?’ I don't know the exact age, but I guess she must have lived that long.

Anyway, I think it's really amazing that she came up with such an idea, whether it's close to the truth or not.

Even I thought for a moment, 'Is it me…?'

But…

‘What should I do?’

It would have been better if I didn't know, but I found out. How should I act?

I think I'm in big trouble… Really…

# Aselina Sunlight (Interlude)

“Hmm…”

In the end, everyone left without properly resolving the misunderstanding.

Just in case, I sensed for Thought-forms again to see if anyone was still in the room. Only then was I sure that everyone had left, and I carefully got up from my seat.

I still felt like my right side was empty. ‘My arm… it hasn’t grown back yet.’

It would regenerate soon, but since it was directly attacked by Fenrir and even eaten, the regeneration time was very slow.

Natural healing would take a few days, and if I used Holy Power, regenerating my arm would be a piece of cake, but…

‘Right now, it’s much better to put Holy Power into the Relic.’

It would regenerate on its own over time without me having to put Holy Power into it, so I didn’t feel the need to heal it by consuming my power right now.

More than anything, I could still feel the lingering pain from having one of my arms torn off.

‘This isn’t so bad…’

It wasn’t bad because there was a subtle, pleasant, cozy feeling. Right now, there was something more important to do.

‘I need to start thinking about how to deal with this misunderstanding…’

Resolving the misunderstanding.

Leaving it as it was wouldn’t be a bad idea, but if the misunderstanding grew this big, there was a high chance they would leave my side.

Of course… it wasn’t all bad.

If they thought I was the reincarnation of the Goddess, or that the Goddess had directly descended, they would understand how I found and retrieved the Relics… they would understand all my actions so far, and I wouldn’t have to deal with annoying things.

But on the other hand…

‘If I leave it like this, there will be a problem when they find out I’m not the reincarnation of the Goddess…’

What if that Goddess mentioned the Relics?

If that Goddess in Romania was flexible enough to say yes even if she didn’t teach me, then it would pass, but…

If even that Goddess said she didn’t know, then I would be the only one who knew the location of all the Relics, and the problem is that I wouldn’t be able to answer where I found them.

I wish that Goddess would just keep quiet about how I found the Relics…

But even if I said that here, I couldn’t be sure if she would keep quiet or not.

In the end, all I could do was hope that the Goddess would be flexible and answer well, or exercise her right to remain silent as she had done so far.

Anyway, there was nothing I could do but pray that she wouldn’t say anything.

Praying didn’t necessarily mean it would happen, but what could I do when there was nothing I could do?

Bring on the popcorn…!

‘Ah… this is really complicated.’

I ran my remaining hand through my hair and lamented inwardly. I couldn’t reveal my identity, or the truth about this world.

It’s really complicated.

I sighed and lay back down. Let’s think positively.

‘Anyway, I defeated Fenrir… and I managed to collect all the Relics somehow.’

There’s really not much left now. ‘There’s really not much left…?’

There were a total of four Demon King Army executives.

Originally, there should be four, but I defeated Fenrir, the wolf that devours gods, who was an executive and the Demon King’s pet, so there were only three left…

I had already defeated two of them.

The Magic beast that was trapped in the Glacier of Eternal Frost below the Wailing Cliff in the northern Demon Realm.

The beast of freezing cold that brings about the end. I defeated it.

And Maleficent, who reigned as the lord of Nastron, the land of death, and lived for a long time as a lich and a great mage, one of the Demon King Army’s greatest forces.

Although she had been reckless, even making an absurd plan to completely destroy the academy due to personal grudges, and was defeated by Argen Isis, another great mage, if she had erased her emotions and moved to destroy the world, I couldn’t even imagine how crazy of a boss she would have been.

It was fortunate that she had personal feelings for Argent.

So now, finally…

‘The Succubus Queen, huh.’

Her epithet was the Dream Empress.

From the point of view of the Succubus Queen, she was also the boss monster in charge of service in this game.

There were some good elements, but many users liked the Succubus Queen very much. Frankly speaking, no matter what method you used, there was no way to catch up with the favorability that went up when you were affected by the Succubus Queen’s abilities.

If you made a mistake, you would go straight to the bad ending, but if you used it well, you could raise your favorability very quickly and watch various scenes, which was a very big advantage.

‘Favorability, huh…’ I’m already worried.

Anyway, I have to do the Trial of Courage next, so it’s a long way off before I face the Succubus Queen…

Hearing about favorability makes me feel strange.

Living in this world, the word favorability itself feels strange… because I consider this world to be reality.

‘This is Stella’s chance with Uriel… or maybe Mirnel.’

I don’t know which one she’ll end up with… but this is basically the last chance.

If I do well here, Stella, Uriel, or Mirnel… one of the three will end up with her instead of me.

And if that happens…

‘There won’t be any problem going back to the original world.’ I should definitely think that way.

Originally, I was thinking of finding a partner for Evan this time and going back home, but…

I’ve been thinking about it for a while now. Is it really right to go back?

Is there really any meaning in going back? I keep thinking about that lately.

But…

‘No, no. I don’t want to think about it now…’

I curled up like a shrimp and decided not to worry about it for now. Thinking about this here was even harder for me.

Living here wasn’t bad, but worrying about whether I should go back home or not would only get in the way of my future plans.

It’s not like I can definitely defeat the Demon King. Maybe even I’ll end up being sealed.

Instead of thinking about this, I should think about what to do about my identity first.

The best thing for me is to maintain the status quo, but I can’t be sure that it will stay that way.

‘The best thing would be to talk to the Goddess once…’ Something’s strange.

Anyway, the Goddess must have chosen me as the Saintess… but I’ve never even met or talked to the Goddess once while living as the Saintess.

But it’s hard to believe that she hasn’t thought about talking to me even once when I’m the Saintess.

Frankly speaking, it doesn’t make sense.

‘Did she use up all her power bringing me here…?’

If she brought me from the original world to this world, and even brought me in as the character I created, it would be hard to explain without some kind of divine intervention.

If that’s the case, then there’s a valid reason why she hasn’t said anything to me yet… but I don’t know anything.

I probably won’t know unless she tells me. ‘Death… huh…’

I’ve died once before.

Dying as a Saintess is basically not dying, but even before I was a Saintess… I sacrificed my life to save Danas and came back to life.

I don’t think I met the Goddess then either. ‘Probably not…’

The Goddess isn’t mentioned in the game either, so I don’t know anything. Seriously… isn’t this game too hard?

Even though I’m a hardcore gamer, it doesn’t make sense to tell me to defeat the Demon King in a world that has completely become reality without teaching me anything.

Frankly speaking, how did I manage to get this far as a Saintess who basically doesn’t have the concept of death? If I were a Hero, I would have died and ended it a long time ago.

Looking at it this way, I guess it’s fortunate that I, who originally had a perverted tendency, became a Saintess…

I should think about it after I sleep.

Originally, I had to pray in the game to recover the Holy Power I had used.

I don’t know if it’s because I firmly believe in the existence of God now… or if it’s because I subconsciously believe in the existence of God, but anyway, it recovers when I wake up, so that’s convenient.

I closed my eyes and tried to sleep.

# 1 - Incomprehensible Fear

"Ugh… My head…" Where am I?

Evan's last memory was of a blonde woman introducing herself as Aselina, poking him on the forehead with her finger.

After that, he lost consciousness as if a string had been cut, and when he came to, he had fallen into a strange place he had never seen before.

"What… Where is this?" A forest?

No, something was strange about calling it a forest.

This appearance…

"I've definitely seen it before… This forest's appearance…" Half a year ago,

It was when Maleficent's attack engulfed the academy's back mountain in Demonic energy.

He remembers that time when all the plants withered and were dyed in dark colors.

Although the place has changed, it is clear that the plants, the entire forest, have been altered by Demonic energy.

He could recognize that much.

Evan looked around with a confused expression.

"What the hell is going on…? Where am I?!"

He doesn't remember exactly what that woman said, but he remembered the last words he heard.

Didn't she say she would show him memories of the past? It felt too vivid for him to call it a memory of the past.

In the first place, can this even be called a memory?

As Evan looked around in embarrassment, he suddenly lowered his head. "Come to think of it, my body…"

The feeling of his body was strange.

A strange feeling as if it had grown much larger than his original self.

He definitely felt like it was his body… and his limbs were moving as if they were his, but somehow he felt an awkwardness as if they weren't his.

He was confused and looking around his body when it happened.

Fzzzt

"Are you okay? Evan?!"

A blue-haired woman appeared from a distorted space next to him and immediately approached Evan, calling his name.

"Wh, what…"

Startled by the voice calling him, Evan turned his head and saw a familiar- looking woman.

"St, Stella…?" It was Stella.

Although her appearance had changed a lot, Evan knew that the woman in front of him was Stella, whom he knew.

"Are you crazy?! You almost died!"

Only after Stella's scolding was Evan able to look around.

A body covered in dirt, a vision stained red, and a throbbing head. And the surroundings were completely destroyed.

He had been blown away here by some kind of attack.

He didn't know what kind of attack it was, but if it had such an impact, it couldn't have been an ordinary attack.

Cold sweat ran down Evan's back.

"Haa… I'll help you, so grab my hand quickly. Aria is somehow holding on, so we have to go back quickly!"

"Uh, uh?" Whoosh!

Before he could properly grasp the situation, the surrounding scenery changed.

Evan was startled as he suddenly entered a dark place and looked around. He was still in the melted forest he knew.

But…

Twitch Twitch Something… Glug Glug

Something was wrong… “…?”

The moment Evan raised his head and looked at something. Evan stared blankly at something and froze on the spot. "What… is this…"

No.

It wasn't a dark place.

This place where he was was definitely not a dark place. Something… an indescribable, huge something was blocking the sun. Evan rolled his eyes with trembling eyes.

【Incomprehensible Horror】

He was only then able to realize the meaning of that epithet.

No, perhaps even that epithet, which was filled with awe, mystery, and fear, became meaningless the moment he confirmed the reality with his own eyes.

How could something like that exist in this world? This…

Is this the Demon King…?

No way it's the Demon King…

"Ugh, why are you suddenly like this!" Paak!

He felt something hit the back of his head.

Stella, who still had terrified eyes but looked somehow different… no, more like she had grown, was still sighing and looking at Evan.

"Everyone here will die if you don't get your act together!" "Th, that's…"

"Aria, who you like so much, is fighting that monster, are you going to keep being scared like that?!"

"…"

Evan felt wronged.

Just a moment ago, he was worried about Aria lying in the hospital room.

Suddenly, a woman named Aselina, who introduced herself as the guardian dragon of this world, came and poked him on the forehead with her finger, and when he came to his senses, he was here.

But suddenly, he has to catch the Demon King? What is all this about?

He was confused, but Evan was guessing. This world was not reality.

Evan recalled the last words that woman, Aselina, had said to him. 'I hope these memories will be helpful.'

Memories?

Didn't she say memories? 'This isn't a memory…'

As if he had already experienced it… Throb!

"Ugh…"

Evan felt his head ache again.

It was the same pain as when a fragmentary memory he didn't know about came to mind a while ago.

Evan looked around.

Holy Power was gathering in the body of a blonde, long-haired girl, somehow pushing back something called the Demon King.

It won't last long.

He had to prevent 'that' from taking root in this world. "Okay, I got it…"

There were still many things he didn't know. But why?

Evan gripped the handle tightly.

At least… he knew what to do in the current situation. "I'll do something about it."

Facing that monster in front of him. That was his duty.

And "Evan" knew how to deal with that monster.

"Haa… Haa…" Strong.

Even though he had poured everything into it, that amorphous monster did not stop trying to spread into the world.

'That's… the Demon King…?'

Can that really be called the Demon King? Doesn't Demon King mean the king of demons?

It was a big shock for Evan, who thought it would at least be a king-like existence.

It's called the Demon King, but it was practically a disaster. It corrodes and contaminates just by touching it.

As if it couldn't tolerate something existing in this place where he exists, it was trying to devour everything.

And it was expanding even more, using it as nourishment. What he was doing now was not subjugating the Demon King. A struggle to survive.

It was just a human's struggle to escape from disaster. "Damn it, it won't budge…"

Mirnel said, sweating profusely.

Even though he poured out all his attacks, that part would disappear, but it would regenerate and encroach on the surroundings.

It seemed like it didn't have a shape, but it definitely had a shape.

It was clearly injured, and when it was damaged by strong attacks or Holy Power, it would shrink and that area would be purified and disappear.

But more than that,

"It's constantly increasing itself by using this continent as nourishment… At this rate…"

Mirnel said, sweating profusely. With a confident yet desperate voice. "This world… will be destroyed."

A disaster has come to the land of life.

An existence that only eats everything and proliferates itself. But that existence was enough to be called a disaster. "Why… did it invade first…!"

Mirnel muttered with a resentful expression. The Demon King… invaded first?

Wasn't that a natural thing?

He had poured his strength into somehow stopping the Demon King, and he was so breathless that he felt like he was about to collapse, but Evan sensed it.

He had to ask about this.

"What are you talking about, Mirnel…? Wasn't it originally the Demon race who invaded first?"

“… Are you finally out of your mind?”

"…"

Evan froze at the sudden curse.

"Come to think of it, I wouldn't have told you."

However, Mirnel soon sighed as if he understood and answered.

“… The Demon King has never invaded in history. In the first place, the Demon King was not a conscious being. Even in the era of the Hero party of Salvation, when we sealed the Demon King… we went directly to the Demon realm where the Demon King existed and attempted to subjugate it, and failed."

『Incomprehensible Horror』

The meaning is incomprehensible horror.

From the beginning, the Demon King Army executives were not executives. It was just a story of those who worshiped the disaster gathering under it. “… Th, that means…”

Mirnel nodded at Evan's question.

"That's right. It is the first time that the Demon King has descended on this land where humans… life breathes."

Even though it was a calm voice that only told the truth, why? Evan had goosebumps all over his body.

As if he had missed something.

# 2 - Incomprehensible Fear

“There’s no way to subjugate that monster now that it has descended upon this world.”

Evan lowered his head at Mirnel’s despairing words.

He couldn’t believe what Mirnel was saying. The Demon King he knew wasn’t a Demon King at all, but simply a word for a monster.

He especially didn’t want to believe that the fight was already lost the moment that monster descended upon this world.

“Why…? What changes when it descends…?”

“It wasn’t this strong when it was in the Demon realm. Not only has it descended, but this absurd power… it must be growing stronger by consuming the power of this world. I don’t know all the details myself, though.”

Even Mirnel, who had faced the Demon King once before, couldn’t understand the reason for its overwhelming strength.

No, could it even be called strength?

It felt like fighting a legion that endlessly revived no matter how many times you killed them.

Seeing as it wasn’t this strong when he fought it, there was only one reason. ‘It’s because it descended upon this world…?’

Mirnel seemed to have given up on subjugation long ago.

It was an opponent that couldn’t be defeated even if he poured everything he had into it.

Mirnel had already poured out everything long ago. It wasn’t just Mirnel.

Stella, Uriel… everyone had poured out everything they had, yet they hadn’t inflicted any significant damage.

Even Evan himself… even after pouring all his mana and unleashing Holy Power, he couldn’t stop the monster’s advance.

It was as good as saying that they had been fighting a meaningless battle from the moment it descended upon this world.

‘Ah…’

Is this really how everything will be destroyed?

Will everyone have to die like this, without being able to do anything?

He desperately wanted to do something, but he didn’t know what to do in this situation, and even if he did, he didn’t know if he could do it.

It was the first time he had felt so powerless since becoming the Hero. ‘I thought I could do something if I just got stronger…’

Evan, who had always thought that his powerlessness was due to his weakness, felt even more despair in the current situation.

He had definitely become much stronger than when he was in his original world, yet he was still trapped in the despair of not being able to do anything.

Stella’s magic didn’t work.

Even when Estel’s sword cut it, it only split apart, and even when Mirnel’s arrows pierced it, it quickly regenerated as if the previous attack was a lie.

Even when Aria gathered Holy Power and purified it, it only detached that part and multiplied again.

And even the Holy Sword attack, imbued with all of Evan’s Holy Power. The Demon King didn’t care, as if it was nothing.

It was truly overwhelming. Evan clenched his fist tightly.

What about the Hero party of salvation…?

No, before that, hadn’t the Hero parties of the past, who always faced the Demon King, always faced this monster?

How on earth were they able to seal it against this monster? “[…After all, I think this is the only way.]”

It was then.

Evan heard a Thought-form that felt all too familiar.

He reflexively raised his head and turned towards the direction of the Thought-form, and there he saw Aria, who had clearly grown a little but still looked like a girl.

“[I will step forward.]”

“Step forward… what can you do in this situation…”

As Evan said that, he suddenly felt something was wrong.

Although the current Demon King had descended upon this world, he had heard that the Hero parties of the past had gone to the Demon realm to face the Demon King.

Was the Demon King weak when it didn’t descend upon this world?

That couldn’t be.

If that were the case, the previous Heroes wouldn’t have failed to subjugate the Demon King and would have continued to only seal it.

And… Argen Headmaster and Mirnel, who were in charge of the party at that time, said that a Saintess named Eris had sacrificed herself to seal the Demon King.

He had brushed it off without much thought back then, but now that he thought about it, something was strange.

The fact that the Saintess Eris sacrificed herself to seal the Demon King… meant that the Saintess herself had to sacrifice her life to seal the Demon King.

Evan’s body began to tremble slightly.

These were things he was experiencing for the first time. But everyone’s appearance, this current situation.

And his memories were clearly telling him. “Wait… Aria…?”

If Aria was stepping forward in this situation, there was only one possibility.

Evan called out to Aria in a trembling voice.

Having heard about what happened to the Saintesses who had sealed the Demon King in the past, and what they had done, he could see a future he didn’t even want to think about.

He felt like his body wasn’t his own. Evan was flustered.

‘M-my body…’

His body, which had been moving as he pleased just a moment ago, was now moving on its own.

As he approached Aria, Aria turned her head slightly and met his eyes. For the first time, Aria’s eyes were open.

Although her eyes had lost their light from birth and were completely blurry, he could feel her strong will.

“[I think I know what I have to do now.]” “You… you don’t mean…”

“[Evan, you told me before… that you liked me.]” “Yeah… I like you. So please…”

“[You said you’d tell me your answer after we subjugated the Demon King, but… I don’t think that’ll be possible.]”

Aria said with a bitter smile. Evan gritted his teeth.

“[I’m sorry, Evan. And everyone. I don’t think I’ll be able to be with you in the future.]”

Aria, looking at his location with her blurry eyes, closed her eyes again. Then, she looked around.

Stella and Uriel… and Mirnel.

In the distance, there were countless imperial soldiers and mages, priests and holy knights of the Holy Kingdom, and professors of the academy, the

archmage and headmaster of the academy, Argen Isis, all barely managing to block the Demon King’s attack.

This place where they were was the front line.

Only the Hero party had come to this place to subjugate the Demon King. Aria, looking around at everyone, said with a smile.

“[I’m sorry for causing you all so much trouble…]” “Aria… you…”

Stella, as if sensing what Aria was about to do, was slowly making a look of astonishment.

Mirnel, knowing that the situation had already gone too far to do anything about it, and knowing that there was no other way, simply turned his head away without a word.

“You, you can’t… no… that… that…”

Stella tried to stop Aria with a dumbfounded expression, but it was already too late.

Light was erupting from Aria’s body.

“[Should I say it’s fortunate that I collected all the Holy Relics… They say that if all the Holy Relics are gathered, they will grant any wish, just once.]”

“Is that… possible…?”

The Holy Relics, treasures bestowed by the Goddess.

Objects that Rumania Goddess divided into the three gods of the sun, water, and earth, corresponding to power, wisdom, and courage, and bestowed upon this land, the very foundation of this world.

If the power within these Holy Relics is full and they are all gathered, they can grant any wish.

That’s what they said.

“[But the wish has already been used.]” At that, Evan’s eyes widened.

Clearly, the power within the Holy Relics was empty from the first time he saw them.

That was why Aria had to infuse Holy Power to activate them.

Evan, anticipating what she was going to say next, tried to call out to Aria, but soon noticed that Aria’s body was fading.

“[If I pour the Goddess’s authority… everything I have into the Holy Relics… we can destroy the Demon King.]”

Aria raised the Holy Relics.

Soon, the three Holy Relics flew into the air and merged together as if they were one.

Whoosh…

A huge light began to erupt from the Holy Relics.

The light flowing from Aria’s body flowed into the Holy Relics, emitting an even greater light.

The more the light flowed out, the more Aria’s body faded. “I have one… request.”

It was the first time.

Aria’s body was fading, but for some reason, her blurry eyes were slowly coming to life.

“Please don’t think that I sacrificed myself for you.”

Aria’s voice, which had only communicated through Thought-form because she didn’t know the language, was now directly audible.

“Are you going to die…?”

Stella asked Aria in a trembling voice. Aria simply smiled without answering.

“Why… why… why does it have to be like this…?” Uriel knelt down in place and sobbed.

Aria shook her head as if it couldn’t be helped. Who could have predicted this situation?

“…”

Aria looked around and found Evan, then approached him. Then, she brought her hand to Evan’s face.

“It’s the first time I’ve seen your face…”

Swish “Aria…”

Evan, who had grabbed Aria’s hand with one hand, then grabbed Aria’s hands with both hands and began to weep.

“Evan…”

“I’m sorry… if… if I was just a little stronger…” Aria silently looked at Evan.

While holding Evan’s other hand as he lowered his head and wept, Aria replied.

“…Don’t be sorry.”

Aria said, closing her eyes.

“Don’t blame anyone. It’s no one’s fault.” It was no one’s fault.

Evan had worked harder than anyone else to subjugate the Demon King. He was just unlucky.

“I hope you forget me… and live happily in a peaceful world.” “No… I… I…”

“Ah, I almost forgot to say this.”

As if she had just remembered, Aria said softly in a tearful voice. “I love you, Evan.”

With the tears that fell on his hand as the last of her warmth, Aria’s body completely disappeared.

The tears that had felt Aria’s warmth were cooling down. “Ah…”

And he opened his eyes.

# 3 - Incomprehensible Fear

“What…”

When I opened my eyes, it was a familiar ceiling.

I hurriedly sat up, feeling a familiar yet foreign sensation in my body. It was definitely a familiar movement, but the events of just now felt like a dream, as if it were myself, yet they felt familiar.

What on earth is going on…?

The things that happened just now feel so vivid…?! Evan raised his hand and touched his eyes.

For some reason, tears were flowing. “What was that…?”

Could it be that everything I experienced just now was something that would happen in the future?

What would happen if I, who did nothing, just let time pass?

To feel the helplessness of not being able to do anything… to have to watch the woman I love sacrifice her life to save everyone again?

“Haa… haa…”

I don’t want that.

I absolutely can’t let that happen.

I don’t want to see Aria like that again. “Ugh… my head hurts…”

Everything that happened just now is vividly remembered. And everything feels so vivid.

Familiar yet different… the feeling of holding the Holy Sword… I vividly felt every moment of fighting the Demon King.

I know it all sounds impossible… but Evan instinctively knew.

Everything that happened just now happened to him, or rather, will happen. “The past… the past…?”

You said you’d show me the past, but what I saw wasn’t the past, but the future?

Is that possible?

Can something like that happen?

Aselina clearly said that she would bring back memories of the past, so why did I experience something that hasn’t even happened to me yet?

Evan looked down as if possessed.

The necklace that had been shining just a moment ago lost its light. “Necklace…”

I don’t know what this necklace is.

All I know is that it’s a necklace that inherited something. And that it made my growth rate much faster.

Most of all…

‘That Hero I saw back then…’

Until recently, I thought the Hero in that white space was the previous Hero.

But he looked like me, but more grown up… I had been suspecting it for a while, but after experiencing this, I couldn’t not know.

‘Was that… me…?’

Who would believe that the illusion from the necklace was his future self?

Even Evan himself can’t believe the situation, so who else would believe him?

It’s not like we’re talking about a good future… we have to watch Aria sacrifice her life, not only failing to defeat the Demon King in the future.

And that we barely succeed in defeating the Demon King that way… Who would believe such nonsense?

If an ordinary person said that, no one would believe it, but Aselina touched his head and this happened, and he’s the Hero, so they would believe it to some extent…

Still, he couldn’t be sure if they would completely believe him. No, who could be sure?

That the future would be so bleak… But…

‘I have to tell them…’ I had to tell them this.

I’m still confused, but I have to tell them everything that happened there, what’s about to happen.

“Hard to believe…”

Argent muttered after hearing the whole story.

Aselina also looked like she didn’t know that her actions would cause this result.

“Aselina, do you know?”

“… I don’t know either. I only meant to show the Hero memories of the past.”

“Memories of the past? What did you do?” Argent asked, dumbfounded by Aselina’s words. “I really just showed him the past…”

“Which part did you show him?”

“I just showed him some memories of the Savior Hero party. I thought it would help him awaken…”

“…”

Argent looked shocked.

“Why did you have to show him that? It’s not exactly a memory I want to show…”

Then he sighed, saying that.

“Well… you ended up seeing something different, so don’t blame her too much.”

Evan stopped Argent and Aselina from talking, realizing that the atmosphere between them wasn’t good.

Right now, it was more important to know why he saw different memories.

And that too… “Your future self…”

“Is that what’s going to happen in the future?”

It doesn’t make sense that you can see what’s going to happen in the future, but there’s one problem.

“I clearly used magic to show the past.” Aselina said with a serious expression.

She clearly used magic to show the past, but the fact that she saw the future means one of two things.

She not only nullified the magic used by the Dragon Lord of Light himself, but also cast magic to show the future…

“Or… the things I experienced were in the past.”

When I brought up the assumption I was thinking about, Aselina and Argent’s expressions hardened.

If everything that was shown at that time was in the past, it wouldn’t be absurd to see the future when using magic to show the past.

But…

“That’s absurd.” Argent was firm.

“What you’re saying is the same as turning back time in this world. That’s impossible unless you’re a god.”

“I know that too. But…”

There was no other assumption.

If this assumption is wrong, it means that she erased or even used the magic cast by the Dragon Lord, which is…

“It’s impossible at my level right now.” Evan could say firmly.

At his current level, it was impossible to nullify the magic cast by Aselina, no matter what he did.

It was foolish to even think about using it when he couldn’t even nullify it.

Not only Evan, but Argent and Aselina also seemed to think that it was absurd.

“Difficult…”

Argent crossed his arms and pondered.

No matter how much he thought about it, he couldn’t figure out the reason.

While Aselina and Argent were struggling and worrying, Evan, who was watching them, took out the necklace and handed it to them.

“What’s this?”

“It’s a necklace I got from the Trial of Strength. It was shining from this necklace when I woke up.”

In other words,

There may be a secret hidden in this necklace, which is presumed to be an ancient treasure.

That’s what Evan was saying.

It was hard to believe, but right now, he had no choice but to rely on this. Above all, this necklace was quite interesting.

It had given Evan new power temporarily several times… if this necklace was the reason he saw the future…

Then there was only one thing to do now. Start investigating this necklace.

“I’ll take a look.”

Argent took the necklace from Evan and answered with a serious expression.

He wasn’t sure if he could find out the reason, but he had to be satisfied with the fact that he had at least found a way to find a clue.

“You’ll be busy teaching your new disciple this time.”

At Aselina’s words, Argent waved his hand behind his back, saying that he shouldn’t worry too much because he spends most of his time solving the problems he gives her.

‘Is that teaching…?’

Of course, he’s a great mage, so it’s natural that he knows more about how to teach magic than anyone else, but I can’t help but wonder.

Isn’t that right?

Who would see someone who just throws a problem at you and tells you to solve it as a teacher, even though they said they would take you as a disciple?

Well… it’s okay as long as Stella is satisfied.

While I was suppressing my doubts, Aselina, who had been looking at Argent, who had completely disappeared from the room, turned her head and looked at Evan.

Then she bowed her head.

“Then I’ll be going now…”

With those words, Aselina disappeared as if she had never been there in the first place, and Evan went back to his bed and sat down.

“The future…” The future.

If that’s really what’s going to happen to me in the future. “I have to… strike first.”

I can’t be late.

If I’m late, there’s a high possibility that they’ll attack this world first.

I have to grow fast enough that they can’t respond and invade the Demon realm and attack the Demon King.

“… Let’s do it.”

I have a new goal.