**Chapter 261: Who are you? (1)**

The surroundings were so quiet that the sound of Bunny swallowing was loud.

"...Ugh..."

Even Bunny, who had swallowed the magi I handed over, seemed startled by how loudly that sound echoed.

The reason for Bunny's surprise wasn't just because of the swallowing sound.

The moment she swallowed the sloth magi, one of the chains constricting Bunny's mind loosened.

'Until now, the constraint that Zirnier had created when she made my oversized axe with Bunny prevented Bunny from going berserk has been cracked because Bunny has partially regained her original status.'

Since I, as Bunny's master, noticed it, there was no way she wouldn't be aware of the current situation.

—One day I'll escape from here and grind up all your precious connections! I'll roast and eat your three generations in front of your eyes and tear apart your nine clans, making you regret imprisoning me for the rest of your life!

I remembered how Bunny had hurled all kinds of harsh words and curses since our first meeting.

That was Bunny, who had lamented and wailed about being trapped in the axe.

The reason she tried to gain the upper hand using all kinds of contracts was ultimately to escape from this axe.

And now that the bonds constraining her to the axe have cracked, what decision would Bunny make?

'A surprise attack? Or betrayal?'

Neither choice could be viewed positively but whatever judgment Bunny makes, the current me can respond to her betrayal because Bunny hasn't fully regained her power yet.

I looked down at Bunny with calm eyes.

Bunny, who was still kneeling before me, carefully opened her mouth while swallowing.

Baaaaah—

And like a woman boasting that she had drunk all the semen squeezed out from oral sex, she grabbed the corner of her mouth with her hand, stretching it while sticking her tongue out at me.

Bunny showed me her hot, wide, red tongue that would surely feel good if sucked, and her thick throat that could deeply receive even a thick penis, before slightly furrowing her brow with an expression that seemed to ask if I was satisfied with this. At the same time.

'A signal to maintain the current system.'

Despite the crack in the constraint oppressing her, she intended to follow my orders for now.

I don't know what the reason was.

Even though one chain had been loosened, there were still many constraints binding her, so perhaps she thought it wasn't time yet?

Or was she trying to lull me into a false sense of security with this opportunity, to make me loosen more chains, and then stab me in the back when she saw a chance to escape?

If not that, then.

'Is she saying that even if the constraint were completely removed, she wouldn't betray me and would follow me?'

[Haum.]

"...Ugh."

I finally came to my senses at the warm sensation felt on my fingers.

Bunny was looking up at me while holding my index and middle fingers in her mouth.

I carefully moved my fingers inside her mouth.

As I stroked her snow-white teeth and healthy gums with my fingertips, Bunny, who had my hands in her mouth, was astonished and backed away.

[Wh-what! The teeth that consume all life are the most precious place on a living being's body! How dare you carelessly stroke that place!]

"You bit my fingers with your mouth first."

[...! Th-that's... without realizing... ugh...! Aagh! Shut up, you lesser being! Why should I explain myself to you! Lesser beings should present themselves to the great beings as they should!]

Bunny, who spat out my fingers again, backed away hastily with a flushed face and raised voice.

With an expression mixed with confusion and embarrassment, Bunny, not knowing what to do, directed her anger at the innocent Demon of Sloth.

[You traitor! Let's see about this properly someday!]

The Demon of Sloth watched Bunny, who disappeared from this space after that declaration, and scratched the back of her head.

"Who's going to see whom? How bothersome...Please don't come back again..."

After shaking her head, she turned her gaze to me.

"You. Will you be alright?"

"Pardon?"

"Giving my magi to Gluttony. Are you confident you won't regret it?"

I roughly understand what she's saying.

"Do you think Bunny will stab me in the back?"

"If she's the one I know, definitely."

I don't know much about Bunny.

We were just in a forced companionship for a short time, not even half a year.

The Bunny I know and the Bunny the Demon of Sloth knows would have very different impressions.

The Bunny I was with was a sassy, annoying brat who complained every day, and the Bunny that the Demon of Sloth would know would have been a being who reigned as the Demon of Gluttony.

"Then, how does the current Bunny appear to you?"

"...To be honest, she’s like a different person."

When asked if the current Bunny would betray me, the Demon of Sloth stared at my face and said that.

"The one I knew despised and looked down on those she called lesser beings, seeing them only as prey to fill her hungry stomach. Even now, that tendency hasn't completely disappeared, but she has definitely changed."

"......"

"This is the first time I've seen Gluttony kneel before someone else. She wasn't one to obey so submissively either. In fact, it's the first time I've seen her be so conscious of someone. Honestly, I still can't believe it."

I rubbed the back of my neck while listening to the Demon of Sloth.

The feeling was somewhat strange.

"As for why she's changed so dramatically, well...I don't think I need to explicitly say whose influence it is."

The Demon of Sloth chuckled and gave me a strangely suggestive look.

"I'm also curious about how that arrogant one changed so much..."

That insinuating gaze slithered over my entire body like a snake.

I felt no particular emotion at that gaze, which had become all too familiar now.

It was thanks to the Stigmata of Patience that Serif had engraved on me, suppressing my sexual desire.

Even at the moment when I was directly teasing Bunny, although my semen storage tank enlarged and a lot of sperm was produced, I didn't get an erection, so mere visual violation was nothing.

"If you're so curious, let's look forward to next time."

"Heh. That's right. I hope you return safely after successfully completing the next contract. Only then can I regain peace...and you can receive the remaining reward."

My contract with her wasn't over yet.

Kill the worshiper of sloth, eliminating the possibility of the Demon of Sloth's revival.

If I complete that contract too, I can take one step closer to my goal.

When I opened my eyes, I was submerged in the grand fountain.

"Owww, my head...Master. Are you alright?"

Perhaps due to the unstable landing, Denshi was checking on my condition while stroking her head, which had hit the floor.

As soon as we passed through the descent portal from the 16th floor to the 15th floor, my consciousness was sucked into where the Demon of Sloth was staying, so I had expected our party to fall into the grand fountain.

But I didn't know that the meeting with the Demon of Sloth would be a momentary event.

'I thought I was there for at least an hour.'

As I felt last time, the sense of time in that unidentified space is completely jumbled.

[......]

When I touched the axe on my back, Bunny's small breath sounded in my mind.

Perhaps she hasn't completely recovered from her embarrassment? She continued to maintain her silence. At times like this, she shows a lot of shyness.

"Master?"

"I'm fine. What about the other party members?"

"Everyone arrived with all limbs intact. The expedition members too. All thanks to you, Master."

Looking around, I could see the party members and the expedition members we had rescued from the 19th floor.

"Ahh. It's healing...The part stung by the poison jellyfish was really itchy..."

"Thanks to the grand fountain, I'm saving so much on potion costs. I'm saved..."

"I almost had my left arm completely destroyed too. Ahh, it's slowly mending..."

All of them, suffering from the aftereffects of the battle with the Elder Lich, were recovering by splashing the healing water from the fountain onto their wounds.

Given the intense battle with numerous undead, some of the necromancers who had been captured by the Elder Lich were sacrificed, but more were still alive.

The voices of those who were tending to each other's painful wounds by splashing healing water began to gradually subside.

Relief finally came as the fatigue and pain that had been destroying their heads disappeared.

Tears began to well up in their eyes at the realization that they had survived and returned from that hellish place where they had been exploited by raising countless undead, where they had only been waiting for the day of their death.

There was no point in trying to suppress the sadness.

The sobbing that began to be heard one by one eventually turned into wails that filled the entire fountain.

Explorers, who had aged as much as they could, cry and wail like children, hugging each other.

Even for explorers, or rather, especially for explorers, the relief of escaping the fear of death can only feel greater.

The fact that they had safely returned from this labyrinth expedition meant that they could dream of the future, looking forward to the next day as usual.

"Thank you, Balkan."

Amel Drexia approached me and bowed her head.

Behind her, more than a dozen expedition members were lined up.

"Without your help, our party would have had to pretend not to see these people even if we found them. That Elder Lich would have been impossible to catch with our party's strength."

"No, not really—"

"There's no need to be modest here. Everyone here has seen and felt your battle with the Elder Lich. These people might as well have been saved by you, by your party."

Seeing more than a dozen people bow their heads with serious faces to express their gratitude, an unfamiliar emotion rushed over me.

It was a kind of tickling feeling in a corner of my heart, and a strangely embarrassing feeling but that feeling wasn't bad.

No, it was more than not bad.

'I saved these people.'

People who would have died if it weren't for me, if it weren't for us, bowed their heads deeply to express their gratitude for saving their lives.

I feel a deep sense of fulfillment in this unfamiliar emotion, one that is hard to come by in the life of an explorer, which is marked by torn flesh, pierced bodies, blood, pain, and betrayal.

"Then, Ms. Amel."

"Yes. Just say it."

"As Ms. Amel said, I think we can expect to receive what we deserve."

"...Huh?"

But fulfillment doesn't put food on the table.

One must look after their practical interests.

"Now, shall we calculate the contribution?"