

REAPER SCANS

I'm Not a Regressor

[Translator – Maccas]

[Proofreader – ilafy]

Chapter 1: Return (1)

A black sky.

In the darkness of a faded sun and moon, there was a hill covered with numerous corpses.

Step, Step—

A youth's footsteps headed towards the mountain of corpses.

Wobble—

Each step shook dangerously, one after another.

Death.

The scene was filled with pulverized and crushed corpses no matter where you looked.

Gore filled the area: internal organs and cerebrospinal fluid.

At that moment—

Owoooooah!!—

—a pouring ray of starlight that brightened the darkness headed towards him.

[Goob Job, Awakener Lee Shinhyuk.]

A woman in a fluttering dress made of starlight with silver hair that came down to her waist slowly floated in midair.

“...Vega.”

In front of the eyes of the blood-soaked youth was a woman, no, a goddess.

Vega.

Star of the Weaver Girl. Goddess of Lyra.

The most radiantly shining celestial amongst the constellations that lit up the night sky looked down at him with a cold stare.

[You have killed the Heavenly Demon and saved this world.]

Emotionless, an inanimate way of speaking—as if reading a phrase off of a piece of paper.

“...Saved?”

Shinhyuk’s mouth began to twist.

Kekeke.

His shoulders shook, and his laughter exploded.

“Saved? Did you say that I saved this world?”

A cracked voice leaked out between his dry lips.

“Stop—”

Boom!

Violently stomping his foot, he cried out loud.

“—spouting bullshit!!!!”

Tears flowed down his face.

“What kind of saving is this!!!! What kind of fucking saving is this when everyone died to the hands of that monster!!!”

Thud.

Collapsing on the spot, he screamed.

“The apostles of the 12 Zodiacs! The Seven Stars!! Even those damn celestial bastards!!”

Numerous.

Thousands, tens of thousands of Awakeners had combined their strength.

The celestials that competed and fought between each other every day had held hands—all to kill the one Heavenly Demon.

To stop the one called the Sky’s Devil, that unparalleled **monster**.

But eventually—

“Ev-Everyone... they all...”

Died.

They went and died.

“All... of them got eaten up...”

He helplessly dropped his head.

He recalled the vivid image of that lone monster ripping to shreds their combined might while devouring an entire celestial.

[But, the Sky's Devil died in the end.]

That's right.

Though the sacrifice of achieving that goal had been in the thousands, if not the tens of thousands.

The apostles that hunted, the brave warriors, the noble celestials.

Most of them ended up dying.

However, eventually...

The Heavenly Demon had died.

[Awakener Lee Shinhyuk, you have killed him.]

He ended up killing him.

“.....”

Shinhyuk, with his hollow eyes, raised his head.

He could see the collapsed Heavenly Demon with a spear impaled through his heart.

A face covered with a blank white mask.

Azure eyes deprived of life could be seen beyond the mask.

Gulp—

Swallowing his dry saliva, he spat out the monster's name in a low pitch.

“...Heavenly Demon, Gwon Ohjin.”

The Sky's Devil, The Owner of the Black Heaven, The Stigma Devourer.

Although many titles referred to him, there existed only one emotion towards him.

‘Fear.’

Overwhelming, Absolute.

Fear.

The name ‘Heavenly Demon’ terrified the entire world.

Of course, it wasn't like that from the start.

The Ohjin from the past was someone who used to be a normal Awakener.

‘But.’

The power ‘Black Heaven’ Ohjin gained from awakening could absorb stigmas that celestials granted to Awakeners.

With that power, he had devoured the stigmas of countless Awakeners and even ended up devouring the owners of the stigmas, the celestials.

‘That resulted in...’

This hill covered in corpses.

It was the end of the star called Earth.

[Awakener Lee Shinhyuk, for you who has saved the world by killing the Heavenly Demon, a wish that comes true will be granted according to the ‘Pledge of Stars’.]

The low-pitched voice of the goddess rang in his ears.

Lee Shinhyuk’s cold pupils flared up.

“...send me.”

Wringing it out.

He opened his mouth that had dry lips.

“Send... me back to the past.”

[...What did you say?]

Vega’s eyebrow lifted up.

[Are you perhaps hoping to regress?]

“That’s right.”

[...Do you wish to repeat that horrendous past once more?]

“It’ll be different.”

Grind—

Lee Shinhyuk roughly clenched down on his teeth.

“This time, It’ll be different.”

Not because of anyone else.

But he himself wanted to make it different.

[Hmm.]

The Goddess’s eyes slanted.

[So you wish to be the Heaven-defying Star.]

The possibility of going against the world's destiny.

The only existence that could write another page into a story's ending that had already finished.

A Regressor.

The human in front of her... just wished to become that Regressor.

[A world's destiny that has already been decided once will not change easily.]

"I am aware."

[A future more painful and hopeless than the first time may occur.]

"I will change it."

[There will be no second chances.]

"One is enough."

Lee Shinhyuk's eyes burned with determination.

[.....]

The goddess gently closed her eyes, lost in thought.

A small period of time passed.

Golden pupils that looked full of starlight focused on Lee Shinhyuk.

[Fine. According to the 'Pledge of Stars', I will let you return to the past.]

Clench—

Lee Shinhyuk roughly clenched his fist.

"One more thing."

[According to the 'Pledge of Stars', there is only one wish.]

"This isn't a wish, Vega. This is a proposal to you."

He continued with his crackling voice.

"Grant me the stigma of Lyra."

[.....]

The goddess's golden eyes wavered.

[Are you not aware? This lady's stigma... it's something humans cannot bear.]

As she said.

To that day, there had not been a single human that had survived after being granted the stigma of Lyra.

Since that power was simply too overwhelming, nobody was capable of using her stigma.

Even the 'Heavenly Demon'; until the end, he had been unable to receive the stigma of Lyra.

[Even if you are the hero that has slain the Heavenly Demon... The chances of being granted the stigma of Lyra and surviving is one in a thousand... no, it's not even one in ten thousand.]

"If I cannot be that 'one', then there would be no reason for me to regress in the first place," Lee Shinhyuk replied with his determined voice.

[.....]

Vega again closed her eyes in deep thought and slowly approached him.

[Alright, Heaven-defying Star, this lady will grant you the stigma of Lyra.]

She placed her hands on top of Lee Shinhyuk's shoulder.

[According to the pledge, the stigma of Lyra will settle in the moment you return to the past. In addition... this lady will come to find you personally.]

"Come to find me?"

With what methods?

Did that mean her memories wouldn't change even if he returned to the past?

[That's right. Even though you'll be the only one to maintain the memories of this world... if you are with this lady's stigma, my past self will be able to at least recognize the fact that you are a 'Regressor'.]

In other words, she, who would lose all memories of this world, would be able to recognize the stigma as a sign of him being a Regressor.

[If you are able to endure this lady's stigma, my past self should make you my apostle.]

"That's... a little reassuring."

Lee Shinhyuk's stiff face started to relax.

He expressed it as a little reassuring, but his heart was beating as if it were going to explode.

As Vega was one of the 'North Stars', becoming Vega's apostle was something that countless Awakened people had longed for.

[Then, I will start the fulfillment of the pledge right away.]

"Wait."

With Vega behind him, Lee Shinhyuk turned the body.

He faced towards the place where the Heavenly Demon had collapsed.

"Hah..."

He grasped the blank white mask that covered the Heavenly Demon's face with his trembling hands.

And then...

He removed the mask.

"...Ah."

In the mask's absence, the face of a youth with slightly droopy eyes was revealed.

"This is... Ohjin's face."

For someone who had made the entire world shiver in fear, he had the appearance of someone very gentle and mild.

"...Hmm?"

Lee Shinhyuk's eyebrows slightly scrunched as he observed the face of the dead Heavenly Demon.

'Have I... seen him before?'

He diligently searched through his hazy memories, but nothing came to mind.

'Whatever.'

The important thing was the fact that he had confirmed the 'Heavenly Demon's face.

'Ohjin wasn't that strong when he first showed up.'

He had only started to get stronger at an alarming rate by using the power of the Black Heaven to devour stigmas; when he first showed himself to the world, he was nothing but one of the common Awakeners.

'I will return to the past... and kill Ohjin.'

If only he could kill him before he became the monster known as the 'Sky's Devil'.

'...I can save them.'

The things he had lost and wasn't able to protect.

The uncountable amount of regrets he had.

'This time.'

[There isn't much time remaining, Awakener Lee Shinhyuk.]

The hurrying voice of the goddess.

Raising his body, Lee Shinhyuk nodded his head.

'I don't have any information besides his face, but...'

It didn't matter.

He knew the location of where he had first registered himself as an Awakener.

If he knew his face, he could simply wait in that place and kill him.

“Alright. Return me to the past.”

Lee Shinhyuk stood and started to approach Vega.

An enormous array of lights started to wrap around Lee Shinhyuk’s body.

‘Heavenly Demon.’

For him.

The bastard who took his everything.

‘I will definitely kill you.’

And with that...

He lost consciousness

* * *

‘Ah...’

The feeling of floating through a vast sky.

Amidst that feeling, a memory from the past flitted through his head.

That day.

The memory of him losing everything.

-The sky is too dark.

Looking up to the sky with a smug smile was the Heavenly Demon.

The blue sky on that day was blindingly bright; the sun’s light shone down without a single sign of clouds.

-Isn’t that so?

The Heavenly Demon asked him, ignoring the sun’s blinding light.

In the hands of the Heavenly Demon that was excitedly shaking his shoulders,

-No.

—he heard the voice of his younger brother’s decapitated head.

-Woohyuk, Woohyuk...

Lee Woohyuk,

his younger brother that was powerful enough to be selected as an apostle of one of the 12 Zodiacs.

An intelligent and wise younger brother, different from his foolish self.

That younger brother died,
in front of his eyes.

-Why, why are you doing this!!

He screamed. He wailed.

He begged with tears flowing down.

-Just why are you doing this to me!!!

Grin—

With a wide smile, the Heavenly Demon threw the younger brother's head towards him.

“-Don't you know?”

Inside the blank white mask,
the azure eyes gazed at him.

-On that day... wouldn't none of this have happened if you hadn't thrown me away at that place?

“Kyuaaah!!!”

The feeling of floating in midair ended, and an intense pain started to violently shake his body.

-Ring!

The stigma of Lyra is being granted to the body of Awakener Lee Shinhyuk.]

[As the stigma of Lyra is being granted, the existing stigma of Pyxis will disappear.]

[Warning! As the stigma is too powerful, Awakener Lee Shinhyuk's body is collapsing!]

[Entering an unstable state.]

A blue message appeared before his eyes amidst the sound of clear bells.

However, he was in no state of being capable of reading the message.

“Kyhuk!! Kyaaakk!!”

Cr-Crackle! Craaackle!!—

A blue lightning bolt started to burn his body.

A torrent of pain shook him.

“-Ah.”

A very familiar voice...

A voice that he could never forget.

‘Wh-What?’

With trembling eyes, Lee Shinhyuk raised his head.

There was no doubt.

The face behind the mask he had taken off moments ago.

The face he couldn’t—and shouldn’t—forget.

In that place.

In front of his eyes.

Was the ‘Heavenly Demon’.

“Ah, ugh.”

The moment he saw him breathing just fine, a torrent of emotions that could drive him crazy shook him.

[The disturbance of emotions is intensifying your unstable state!]

‘Why is the Heavenly Demon...’

‘Just why is Gwon Ohjin in front of my eyes?’

The first face he saw after regressing was... the face of the nemesis that took everything away from him.

“Kyhak, Kyhuk!! Kyaaaaahhh!!!”

On that spot, Lee Shinhyuk’s limbs shook as if having a seizure.

Cr-Crackle!!—

Every time a blue spark flashed, his body roughly bounced around.

[Due to your unstable state, the stigma of Lyra is becoming erratic!]

[Your body is completely destroyed!]

Kadum! Kadududuk!—

The body of Lee Shinhyuk that looked like it was having a seizure began to twist.

“Kraa!! Krrg! Krrrgg!!”

Blood erupted from his throat, flowing down his chin.

‘Ah.’

Inside his dying mind, he recalled the voice of the goddess that had warned him.

-The chances of being granted the stigma of Lyra and surviving is one in a thousand... no, it isn't even one in ten thousand.

It was for a very elementary reason.

The cause was surprisingly simple.

‘I... couldn't be that ‘one’.

A hollow sensation weighed down on him.

His entire consciousness started to flicker.

He could no longer feel the intense pain that shook his body.

“Why... couldn't I.....”

And, with that final regret,

Lee Shinhyuk took his last breath.

* * *

“Noooooooo!!! Why is this bastard like this all of a sudden!!

Gwon Ohjin roughly grabbed the collar of the collapsed Lee Shinhyuk that had spontaneously had a seizure.

“Hey! Breathe! I said, *breathe*, god dammit!!”

Of course, he wasn't sad about Lee Shinhyuk's death.

It had only been a couple of hours since meeting him in the first place; it was nothing but a short meeting that didn't even have the time to develop any affection.

The problem wasn't Lee Shinhyuk's death, but...

“If you're going to die, at least kill those bastards first, you fucking dumbass!!!”

Surrounding them were a group of 2-Star monsters.

“Grrrrr.”

The low-pitched growl of a beast.

The ferocious gazes of the monsters surrounding him steered towards him.

‘I wouldn't say anything if you had died desperately fighting a heroic battle.’

‘What do you expect me to do if you die suddenly at the critical moment when the monsters surround us!’

On top of that—

“Fuck! Fuck! Fuckkkk!!!”

Ohjin wasn’t even an ‘Awakener’ that could fight monsters.

“With what method...”

Jackshit to methods.

A powerless ordinary person surrounded by monsters really had no need to think.

‘Still.’

He couldn’t go down without a fight.

Gwon Ohjin searched Lee Shinhyuk’s body to try and find something useful for this situation.

“This is...”

At that moment, the stigma on Lee Shinhyuk’s left chest caught his eyes.

A stigma he had never seen before.

He instinctively touched the engraved stigma with the tip of his fingers.

It was at that moment.

-Ring!

[The Black Heaven’s first transformation will start!]

[The Black Heaven is absorbing the stigma of Lyra!!]

“...What?”

‘Black Heaven?’

‘What’s that?’

Rumble!—

Without allowing him the opportunity for any more doubts, from the tip of his fingers, a black cloud started to cover the engraved stigma on Lee Shinhyuk’s chest.

And then.

“Keukk!! Kyhaaaaak!!!”

Crackle!! Cr-Crackleee!!—

A blue lightning riding a black cloud started to permeate his body.

“FUCKKKK!!!! IT FUCKING HUURTTTSSSS!!!”

To add a little exaggeration, the pain was as if his balls were exploding

“Krgaaaaackkk!!!”

Ohjin let out an unsightly scream while his body twisted.

Just how much time had passed.

-Ring!

[You have completely absorbed the stigma of Lyra]

[The power of the stigma is too strong!]

[The power will be adjusted according to the stage of the Black Heaven.]

With the blue message window appearing in front of his eyes, the pain settled down.

“Haa, Haa!”

Ohjin let out a rough breath and got up.

He reached out his hand towards the message window he couldn't believe he was seeing.

‘Isn't this... the system window that only Awakeners can see? Why can I...’

‘Is it possible that I've just become an Awakener?’

While he was caught in shock, he could feel the stigma on his left chest, which could be said to be the symbol of Awakeners.

‘This was definitely on that bastard a moment ago...’

A stigma that he had never seen.

While he was touching the stigma with a frown,

Owoooooong!!!—

A radiant starlight poured from a rip in the air before him.

The figure that appeared out of the starlight was—

[Hmm, I could definitely feel the energy of my stigma in this place.]

—a silver-haired Goddess that was as beautiful as the Milky Way.

Turning her head around, her shining golden pupils started to head towards him.

[The fact that you have my stigma, which I haven't given to anyone before... I understand.]

'Just what does she understand?'

The Goddess that had suddenly appeared out of the ripped space looked at him and nodded her chin.

[Heaven-defying Star. The existence that goes against destiny. The one and only savior of a world that is destined to meet its end...]

'What kind of bullshit is this woman spouting?'

[You must be a Regressor.]

"...What?"

'No, I'm not.'

T/n : Vega was the North Star several thousand years ago, and will replace Polaris as the North Star in approximately 10 thousand years.

Looking up the stories and meanings behind constellations while reading will make the trip more enjoyable :).

Celestials are the stars that represent the constellation they belong to.

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REAPER SCANS

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Chapter 2: Scamming Bastard (1)

'Heaven-defying Star? Regressor?'

'What kind of bullshit is that?'

'By Regressor... Is she referring to someone who has returned from the future?'

If that were the case, she was seriously mistaken.

Since, rather than returning from the future, he was in the immediate situation of not knowing if he was going to be alive tomorrow.

No, was there even a reason to think about lasting until tomorrow?

If this situation continued, the monsters surrounding him would rip him to shreds.

‘Stay calm. Let’s not panic.’

A person that wasn’t even an Awakener would need to think, comprehend, and decide faster than anyone else in order to stay alive in this fucked up world.

Gulp. He racked his brains while swallowing his dry spit.

The thing he needed to do first of all...

‘I need to comprehend the damn situation at hand.’

Ohjin glanced at the corpse of Lee Shinhyuk that had been completely burned to death.

A couple of hours ago.

The first time he met Lee Shinhyuk came to mind.

* * *

“Alright~ Let’s see if I can find just the right pushover for today.”

An afternoon like any other.

Ohjin stretched his stiff body and started to move his feet.

He headed towards the gate novice Awakeners frequently visited while looking around.

“Oh~”

There were Awakeners hanging around in front of the gate, looking to find a party.

Among those people, one person stood right out in his eyes.

‘Just right.’

Thigh protectors with leather armor that had useless accessories hanging. In his hand was a two-meter long spear that seemed to be quite an expensive product, judging from the fact that it had a subtle blue light glowing from its blade.

Ohjin slowly moved his feet towards the one that seemed to be stating that he was different from the other ‘novices’ hanging around.

‘Has it already been eight years since I started doing this?’

Eight years ago.

He searched for a job in order to continue living just after leaving that hell-like orphanage, but as if the heavens were pulling a mischievous prank, the entire world became hell this time.

‘This world really has gone to shit.’

After the first fissure was observed in the North Pole, gates that connect to a distant space appeared worldwide—as if a dam had broken down.

Humanity was helplessly swept away by the monsters that poured out of the gates.

And around the time when over half of the earth had been taken over by monsters...

Transcendental beings called celestials appeared.

They granted stigmas that gave humans the strength to fight against the monsters;

those humans became the supernatural beings commonly known as Awakeners.

‘Although I couldn’t become an Awakener.’

A world of upheaval.

Inside the world of never-ending chaos and confusion, there weren’t many ways for an orphan child that couldn’t become an Awakener to survive.

‘However.’

He survived.

“Oh my~ You, it’s obvious you’re not someone who should be in a place like this!”

‘I will continue to struggle.’

‘I will leech off the blood of others...’

‘and survive.’

“You are...?”

“I’m Gwon Jinoh, a 1-Star apostle of Aquarius.”

“Did you say A-Aquarius?!”

The youth’s pupils enlarged.

Well.

That was an understandable reaction.

Among the hundreds of constellations, Aquarius was regarded as one of the top-grade constellations known as the ‘12 Zodiacs’.

“An apostle affiliated with the 12 Zodiacs... It’s my first time seeing one.”

“You speak too highly of me. I’m only a 1-Star apostle, even if it’s from the 12 Zodiacs.” Ohjin rambled on with a friendly chuckle.

“May I have your name by any chance...?”

“Ah! I’m Lee Shinhyuk, a 2-Star apostle of Pyxis.”

“An apostle of Pyxis!” Ohjin exclaimed loudly while clapping without reason.

“Kyaah! That’s so cool! The stigma that has complete freedom over direction and orientation! I’ve heard that Awakeners of Pyxis can handle any weapon—no matter how difficult—as if it were a part of their limbs!”

“Haha. It’s not to that point. Compared to a stigma of the 12 Zodiacs, mine is nothing.”

Even though he tried to hide it, Lee Shinhyuk’s rising grin could be seen.

‘That’s right, my one ability to analyze people is extraordinary.’

Looking at Lee Shinhyuk reacting just the way he expected, Ohjin couldn’t help but grin.

‘Alright.’

‘Now that I’ve decided my prey, should I start the operation in earnest?’

“Haha! Meetings like these can also be called having a connection; should we perhaps party up?

“You want to... form a party?”

Lee Shinhyuk had a flustered expression that said that he couldn’t believe an Awakener affiliated with the 12 Zodiacs would even think of proposing a party with him.

“Of course, I’ll welcome it, but for you, Jinoh...”

Jinoh, an alias created by simply reversing his real name.

You could say it was a sloppy disguise, but there was a saying: “The sloppier the disguise, the harder it was to notice.”

‘Right under one’s nose.’

Who would think of using such a sloppy alias to scam?

And above all, most of the Awakeners that got ‘scammed’ didn’t even realize in the end.

‘I’m only going to leech until right before I get caught’.

He opened his mouth towards Lee Shinhyuk, who looked towards him with a puzzled expression.

“Hmm... this is something that’s hard to say directly, but I don’t have the talent to become proficient with my stigma.”

Ohjin said this while scratching his head as if he felt embarrassed.

“To be honest... I’m in a situation where it’s hard to join other parties.”

“Ah,” Lee Shinhyuk spat out while nodding his head.

The strength of the celestial that granted the stigma was important, but how proficient you were in the stigma was just as important to Awakeners.

“That is why even though it has been a year since I have Awakened, I still remain as a 1-Star...”

Ohjin let out a deep sigh.

The rank of ‘Stars’ was what divided Awakeners.

It was a similar concept to levels.

An important factor of evaluation existed, a rank from 1-Star to 12-Star that determined how adept you were with the stigma.

“If it’s one year... that is definitely a long period of time.”

Lee Shinhyuk said while nodding his head.

On average, it took about six months to advance from 1-Star to a 2-Star.

“It’s all my fault for being incapable.”

“That isn’t so, Jinho. Hasn’t it only been one year? There are cases of people having a rough start and having a large promotion in one go after all,” Lee Shinhyuk said consolingly.

“Haha. Thank you.”

Ohjin bent his head down while brightly laughing.

His concealed eyes shone sharply.

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Translator – Maccas

Proofreader – ilafy

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‘Now that I’ve said this much, even if I’m not much help, I’ll be able to gloss over it easily. Let’s see... I should continue the operation a little more.’

“When I first saw you, Shinhyuk, I could feel it immediately.”

“Khmm. W-What feeling are you referring to?”

“From you... I could feel that you have a special talent that is different from other Awakeners.

“A...Special talent...?”

“Yes. Even though I’m in this state, I’m confident I have talent for judging other people.

“Ha, haha. Well... I did promote to 2-Star a bit... just a bit faster compared to other Awakeners.”

“Indeed!! I knew it would be like that!!!!”

While Ohjin clapped his hands every time he made a compliment, the corner of Lee Shinhyuk’s mouth going up could be seen.

Even if they were supernatural beings that had been granted stigmas from celestials, they were essentially still humans.

If they heard compliments, of course they would feel happy and get excited.

“Then how is it? Will you form a party together with me?”

“Hmm. Before that...” With an embarrassed expression, Lee Shinhyuk turned his head.

Usually, the first time Awakeners partied up with each other, they performed a sort of ritual action.

A bit of an embarrassing ritual to do between adult males.

“Should we confirm each other’s stigmas?”

Ohjin took off the armor around his chest.

It was an implicit rule between Awakeners to check the stigma on top of each other’s chest before joining a party.

“Yes, let’s do so.”

Lee Shinhyuk took off his leather armor and pulled down on his clothes.

The stigma of Pyxis could be seen under his left collarbone.

“I’ve confirmed it.”

Now, it was his turn.

Ohjin also pulled down his shirt towards his shoulders.

Under his left chest, the stigma of Aquarius could be seen clearly.

“Wow... so this is a stigma of the 12 Zodiacs...” Lee Shinhyuk’s heavy exclamation flowed out of his mouth.

Watching Shinhyuk exclaim, Ohjin couldn’t help but grin.

‘That’s right, considering how hard of a time I had inscribing it, there’s no way you would be able to notice.’

It was a fake stigma he had cut into the skin of his chest with a knife when he first decided to get into this field of work.

At least, there was no way you could tell by looking at the surface.

“Haha, it’s kind of funny how we’re checking each others’ stigmas just to enter this low-level dungeon,” Lee Shinhyuk said after fixing his clothes back to their original position.

“Even if it’s just a low-level dungeon, it’s better to be careful since we are Awakeners after all. This much is a given,” Ohjin answered while shrugging his shoulders.

The dungeon they were heading to was filled with mostly 1-Star and very occasionally 2-Star monsters fitting that of a low-grade dungeon. However, if you were taking fatality rates into account, it would be considered a very dangerous dungeon.

‘Since the new Awakeners who frequented the dungeon often ended up dying after running around.’

Still, Lee Shinhyuk wasn’t an Awakener that was that inexperienced.

“Then, let’s enter.”

“Yes.”

Ohjin, who had just created a party with Lee Shinhyuk, went through the gate.

The scenery suddenly changed into a very dark forest.

A forest with a gloomy atmosphere and thick otherworldly trees could be seen.

Grrr—

Rustle, Rustle—

Ohjin could hear the sound of the bushes shaking. Glowing eyes watched them from the foliage.

Lee Shinhyuk lowered his stance while holding onto his spear.

“Please wait a moment.”

Ohjin held onto Lee Shinhyuk’s shoulders—who seemed to want to pounce right into the monsters.

Lee Shinhyuk looked at him with doubt in his eyes.

“I’ll cast a buff before you enter combat.”

Awakeners that have received the stigma of Aquarius rarely entered direct combat and instead were specialized into either healing or buffing supporters.

Lee Shinhyuk nodded his head with an expression fitting of ‘Oh, that’s right!’.

“Yes, then I’ll leave it to you!”

“Celestial of Aquarius, heed my call.”

Closing his eyes with the most serious expression in the world, Ohjin started to recite his chant.

Uuooooom!—

A bright light started to shine out of the stigma on his left chest.

‘Though it’s only a micro-LED I’ve hidden inside my clothes.’

‘Well, it should look like mana is flowing out of the stigma for the spectators.’

“Please shine a starlight that brightens up the dark road for this humble apostle.”

After sending the prayer, he spread his arms out wide.

He sent the sparkling star powder towards Lee Shinhyuk’s direction.

“ #The Daylight of the Lake# “



A spectacle appeared as if shining glass powder was scattered into the air.

No.

‘It really is just glass powder mixed with luminescent powder.’

The glass powder mixed with the glowing blue powder appeared brighter than normal against the forest’s darkness.

“This is...”

“Phew. This is the most basic buff. How is it?”

“Hmm.”

“You might not be able to feel a big difference right now, but—”

“No.”

Lee Shinhyuk looked towards him with a serious expression.

He repeatedly gripped and released his grasp on the spear and continued with a low voice.

“The change... I can feel it.”

‘Huh?’

‘Really?’

“My throat stung a bit at the start, but now my body feels like it’s starting to burn up.”

‘Oh, he swallowed the glass powder; that can’t be good for your health.’

“As if each one of my cells is coming to life, this mysterious feeling...”

‘Is he sick somewhere?’

“This must be... the power of the stigma of Aquarius that I’ve only ever heard about!!”

‘No, it isn’t.’

“Thank you for the buff, Jinoh! Now it’s my turn to show my strength!!”

‘Good luck!’

—

T/n : The constellation Pyxis got its name from the magnetic compass that navigators and seamen used, which is why it is said to have freedom over direction and orientation.

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REAPER SCANS

I’m Not a Regressor

[Translator – Maccas]

[Proofreader – ilafy]

Chapter 3: Scamming Bastard (2)

“Hyat!”

Was it called the placebo effect?

Lee Shinhyuk charged into the monsters with nimble movements as if he had actually received a buff.

“Grrrr!”

What emerged from the bushes were monsters that looked like a hybrid between ants and wolves.

Although their figures were closer to those of wolves, they were covered not in soft fur, but a hard shell—like that of a crustacean.

1-Star monster ‘Ant-horn’.

It was the monster that appeared the most frequently in this dungeon.

“Ch-hat!!”

Bam!—

As if it were water, the spear flowed and dug into the crevices of the Ant-horn’s hard shell.

“Grrk!”

Although the Ant-horn aimed its sharp, sawblade-like chin towards Lee Shinhyuk, he dodged the attack as if he had already foreseen it.

“Haha! My body definitely feels a lot lighter!”

Lee Shinhyuk exclaimed while facing the Ant-horns.

‘Hey, it’s a relief the imaginary buff worked that well for you.’

Ohjin couldn’t help but naturally let out a laugh.

Although he had thought Lee Shinhyuk would be a good pushover to take advantage of, this was beyond his expectations.

‘Kyaah! Sweet, how sweet!’

Just thinking about how he caught himself a pushover caused sweetness to flood his mouth.

Thomp—

“Graaa...!”

With the horrible shrieks of its last breath, the Ant-horn’s head was decapitated.

“Phew...”

“Nice work”

“Haha, it’s all thanks to your buff.”

“No. Even without my buff, you would have taken them down without much difficulty.”

Technically he wasn’t lying, since he had never given him a buff in the first place.

‘His skills aren’t that bad.’

Although it was too early to determine his strength with just one 1-Star monster, the movements that Lee Shinhyuk showed during the short battle were exceptional among most of the Awakeners he had met.

Lee Shinhyuk was skilled.

To be more accurate, he was a skilled pushover.

‘Very nice.’

‘Finding a talent like this is a rare occurrence.’

“Then, the harvesting of the starstones...”

“Ah, I’ll do the harvesting of the starstones.”

“But—”

“I’ll do it since my ability to directly affect combat falls behind. You should rest in the meantime.”

“...Thank you.”

Lee Shinhyuk sat down on the spot after bowing his head.

Ohjin started to rummage through the corpse of the Ant-horn with a smirk.

Soon, he was able to find a fingernail-sized fragment that had a radiating bluish light.

‘Starstone’.

A stone fragment imbued with a star’s power.

Since starstones could contain a portion of a stigma’s power, they were traded at a very high price.

They were the main source of income for Awakeners.

‘Well, even if that’s the case.’

You couldn’t expect much from a starstone out of a 1-Star monster, as the size and quality were lacking.

‘Will this fetch us around \$20?’

If they split the earnings, it would be \$10.

Considering that it was a reward from a battle that didn’t last even a minute, it wasn’t all that bad.

‘If everything works out, I’ll be able to bring in around \$300 today.’

It couldn’t be thought of as high earnings, considering the fact that it required him to scam with his life on the line, but that couldn’t be helped.

It was already incredible for a powerless commoner without support to earn this much a day in this fucked up world.

“...Incredible, huh.”

With hollow eyes, Ohjin looked down onto the starstone grasped within his hand.

Something incredible.

That’s right, just being able to earn this much with nothing but words was something incredible.

‘However.’

‘In order to buy what I want.’

‘In order to reach the goal I set’.

‘A lot more money is— ‘

“Jinoh?”

“Ah.”

Shinhyuk’s voice broke him out of his thoughts, Ohjin quickly turned his head.

He could see Lee Shinhyuk looking towards him with eyes full of doubt.

“Is there perhaps a problem?”

“No, it’s nothing.”

Ohjin headed towards him while slightly nodding his head.

“Then, let’s proceed.”

Because he had already confirmed Lee Shinhyuk’s skill, he had no problem with heading a bit deeper into the dungeon.

* * *

“Grrr! Graaak!”

“Grrr!”

“Gyraak!!!”

Three Ant-horns surrounded Lee Shinhyuk.

Between them, a 2-Star monster, an Elder Ant-horn, was mixed in.

“Haat!!!”

Lee Shinhyuk moved as if he were gliding across the ground and went around the Ant-horn herd without hesitation.

Soon after two of the Ant-horns were decapitated, he confronted the Elder Ant-horn, which had a huge body—one step larger than that of the other Ant-horns.

“ #Blessing of the Lake#!!”

Behind the fiercely fighting Lee Shinhyuk, Ohjin was diligently sprinkling glass powder into thin air.

The blueish glass powder rode the wind and reached Lee Shinhyuk.

“Hyaaaaat!!”

Stomping the ground, Lee Shinhyuk explosively shouted out with energy.

Crack—!!

“Graa!! Gahak!!”

The Lee ShinHyuk that had jumped high up with his spear grasped in both of his hands descended like a meteor.

The Elder Ant-horn that had its head pierced by the spear's blade screeched out with its final breath.

“Hah... hah...”

Lee ShinHyuk, who had defeated the Elder Ant-horn, sat down on the ground and gasped for breath.

Four hours of fierce hunting later.

No matter how much monster-like stamina Awakeners had, it was more than enough time for him to get tired.

“Huu... Are you alright?”

With an expression full of fatigue, Ohjin also let out a heavy breath.

Of course, he wasn't actually tired, since all he did was watch from behind—it was simply an act to avoid needless suspicion.

“Ah, yes. I'm okay.”

Lee Shinhyuk nodded his head while catching his breath.

‘Should I start to wrap this up?’

Ohjin, who was looking for the right timing, slowly started to head towards him.

“Should we end things here?”

He asked as he raised the starstone pouch that had become quite heavy before they knew it.

‘We should be able to fetch around five or six hundred dollars.’

After splitting it with Lee Shinhyuk, that would leave him with \$300—which was his goal for today.

“We should start to head back since we'll need to divide the starstones as well.

“Yes, I understand.”

Lee Shinhyuk stood up while nodding.

“Do you have time tomorrow?”

“Of course!”

“Haha. Then let's meet up tomorrow.”

“Yes! If it's with you, there is nothing to be afraid of!

Looking at Lee Shinhyuk exclaiming energetically, Ohjin couldn't help but laugh.

‘Wow, I've caught a real pushover this time.’

Thinking of taking advantage of Lee Shinhyuk, his bright smile wouldn't go down.

Rustle—

At that time, the sound of the bushes shaking tickled his ears.

* * *

Reaper Scans

Translator – Maccas

Proofreader – ilafy

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* * *

“Hmm?”

Ohjin turned his neck towards the sound.

“It seems that Ant-horns have appeared again.”

Lee Shinhyuk grasped his spear and lowered his stance.

Ohjin nodded his head and proceeded to take position behind Lee Shinhyuk.

Rustle, Rustle, Rustle—

The sound of bodies moving in the bushes.

Not just from one place, but spread simultaneously from various places.

“...It isn’t just one of them,” Lee Shinhyuk said with a bit of a nervous expression.

Ant-horns weren’t ones to act in herds but occasionally there would be cases where three to four of them would act together.

You would need to be cautious in these cases since there would always be an ‘Elder’ in the mix.

Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle!!—

“...Huh?”

Ohjin’s expression stiffened.

The sounds in the bushes started to become louder and louder.

Starting from his spine, an ominous feeling began to spread across his entire body.

‘Something...’

‘Something’s wrong—’

Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle, Rustle!!!—

The sound of rustling resonated in every direction.

It wasn't just three or four of them.

A minimum of 20, no, the sound was that of over 30 monsters moving.

“—Fuck,” a light swear flowed out of Ohjin's lips.

Something wrong had happened.

Very wrong, at that.

“J-Jinoh, t-this is...”

Lee Shinhyuk looked towards him with his trembling body.

Tuk!!!—

Ohjin roughly smacked the head of the trembling and pale-faced Lee Shinhyuk.

“What are you spacing out for, dumbass!!”

Naturally, a violent voice came out of the emerging situation.

“Run!!!!”

Lee Shinhyuk, who had been smacked in the head, looked at him with an expression that screamed surprise.

An expression surprised by the sudden words.

“I said run, you fucking dumbass!!”

He pulled on Lee Shinhyuk's shoulder, shouting out swear words.

Looking at the appearance of Lee Shinhyuk, who couldn't discern the situation at hand, anger started to rise within him.

“Ah, I understand!”

Lee Shinhyuk, who looked around the surroundings in a rush, nodded his head.

It seemed that he had finally understood the situation.

“This way, Jinoh!”

Deserving of one with the stigma of Pyxis, he accurately shouted out the direction of where the Ant-horn herd couldn't entirely surround them.

“Hah, hah!”

Ohjin desperately chased Lee Shinhyuk's back.

He wasn't sure if it was because of the thorough stamina training, but he was able to narrowly keep up with Lee Shinhyuk.

However.

'Fuck!'

Spouting out a swear in his mind, he turned his head.

"GRrrrrr!!"

"GRaa! GRaaagh!"

He could see dozens of Ant-horns chasing them, barging past the thick bushes.

Among them, as many as five 'Elders' were in the mix.

'What kind of bullshit is this!'

After several years of spending time in low-grade dungeons, it was his first time seeing dozens of Ant-horns moving together in a group this large.

"Jinoh, faster!"

"I'm running!!!"

He could taste the salt in his mouth.

The feeling as if his heart would explode out of his mouth.

"GRRrrrrr!"

Before they knew it, the Ant-horns started to surround them.

"Fuck!"

He twisted his body to reach for the pistol on his hips.

Colt 1911.

A weapon he carried around to provide himself with the minimal amount of self-defense.

Bang! Bang! Bang!—

"Grr."

"Fuuucck!!!"

The bullets bounced off of the thick leather of the approaching Ant-horns, as he had expected.

A weapon without the power of a 'stigma' imbued couldn't deal much damage to monsters in the first place.

It could only slightly slow their pace.

'Goddammit!'

After throwing the useless gun away, he started to run frantically once again.

‘Lee Shinhyuk, what’s that bastard doing without helping me?’

He stared at the back of Lee Shinhyuk, who had gone ahead.

“Ugh. A-At this rate...”

With a grimace, Lee Shinhyuk turned his body around.

His eyes, full of fear, headed towards Ohjin.

‘Could this bastard actually be...’

An ominous feeling passed through his head.

“...I-I’m sorry, Jinoh!”

Why were his ominous feelings always spot-on?

Lee Shinhyuk, who had turned his body around, pushed him towards the Ant-horns.

“Ahh!”

Ohjin, who had been separated from Lee Shinhyuk, rolled on the ground.

“I’m sorry! I’m sorry! I’m sorry!!”

Repeating his words like a broken record, Lee Shinhyuk started to gain distance.

‘This son of a bitch!’

Ohjin’s gentle face distorted coarsely.

“Don’t... Fuck with me!!!”

“J-Jinoh?!”

Gathering all of his strength, he dived towards Lee Shinhyuk and narrowly held onto his legs.

“You’re doing this to me after I saved you from spacing out? Are you fucking crazy?!”

“I-If this continues, we’ll both die!!!”

“Then let’s die together, you fucker!!!”

He couldn’t die a meaningless death here.

“Arrg!! Damn it, let go!!!”

Lee Shinhyuk kicked his feet with a pale expression.

‘Shit’

Ohjin, who was holding onto the ends of Shinhyuk’s legs, violently bounced off.

“Kuak!”

He tried to endure it with all he had, but there was simply no way for him to endure the strength of an Awakener.

“ F-Fuck.”

Rustle, Rustle, Rustle—

He could see the Ant-horns approaching.

Ohjin’s expression went pale.

‘At this rate...’

Death—

CRAAAACKLE!!!

Blue sparks fiercely sparked out.

Lee Shinhyuk, who was running away, suddenly flopped around as if having a seizure.

And then.

‘The situation became like this.’

Ohjin, who had finished getting burned, narrowly opened his eyes and looked at the lady in front of him.

‘No.’

He could instinctively realize.

That the expression of ‘lady’ wasn’t correct.

The ones who grant stigmas, the existences that create the supernatural beings known as Awakeners.

Celestial.

He was certain the identity of the lady who had suddenly appeared was a ‘god’ born from the constellations.

‘Why... is a celestial here...?’

Complicated thoughts entangled inside his head.

‘—Wait.’

At that moment, a sudden thought came to him.

Ohjin touched the stigma on his left chest with the tip of his fingers.

‘She definitely said ‘you have my stigma, which I haven’t given to anyone before’.’

He thought about the words that the silver-haired goddess had said.

The shape of a stigma that he had never seen before on his left chest.

‘This is...’

‘Lee Shinhyuk’s... stigma.’

He wasn’t sure of the reason, but using the power called ‘Black Heaven’, he had absorbed the stigma of the dead Lee Shinhyuk.

Not the stigma of Pyxis, but the stigma of Lyra.

‘Wait, wait, wait a second here.’

Starting from his spine, an electrifying feeling spread across his body.

The back of his neck started to heat up.

‘Then, could it be?’

Ohjin’s eyes widened.

‘Lee Shinhyuk... was a Regressor?’

‘No, that’s impossible.’

‘There is no way that dumb half-wit could be a Regres... ah.’

Just then.

The appearance of Lee Shinhyuk suddenly spazzing out while burning to death came to mind.

The blue lightning that shot out across his entire body...

A corpse which looked to be burned from the inside as if a ‘stigma’s power overloaded’...

‘Holy. Shit.’

If that was the moment the ‘Lee Shinhyuk from the future’ had been implanted...

If the sudden change was the cause of his death...

That would also explain why he carried not the stigma of Pyxis, but the stigma of Lyra.

‘It was overwritten.’

At that moment, that time, that starting point.

Lee Shinhyuk’s stigma was ‘reverted’.

And...

‘From the aftermath of the stigmas reverting... Lee Shinhyuk died.’

The disoriented puzzle pieces began to assemble in his mind.

Lightly shrugging his shoulders, Ohjin raised his head

[Hmm? Are you not a Regressor?]

The appearance of the goddesses' cold golden eyes, which seemed to be void of any emotion, shone looking down upon him.

[I definitely felt the presence of the 'Heaven-defying Star' in this pla—]

“That’s correct.”

He nodded while cutting off the goddesses' words.

There was no way to know what the situation at hand was.

There was no way of guessing what the cause and effect were.

What the Black Heaven, Heaven-defying Star, even the name of the goddess in front of his eyes was.

He didn't know anything.

There was simply no way of knowing.

‘However.’

He was certain of one thing.

“I’m... a Regressor.”

In order to make it out alive from this spot, he needed to become a Regressor.

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REAPER SCANS

I'm Not a Regressor

[Translator – Maccas]

[Proofreader – ilafy]

Chapter 4: Stigma of Pyxis (1)

[As expected, so you were the Heaven-defying Star.]

The silver-haired goddess slightly nodded her head, as if she had predicted it.

“Yes, that is correct,”

Ohjin replied with a composed voice.

But of course,

‘Holy shit.’

Opposite of his calm expression, his heart was pulsating vigorously.

‘She really believed it.’

They were gods born from constellations.

Albeit they weren’t ‘The one and only almighty God’ that Christians referred to, they were transcendent beings with power and authority way beyond the reach of mere humans.

Just now, he ended up deceiving a ‘god’.

[Although I would like to have a detailed conversation about the experiences you’ve had—]

The Goddess observed the surroundings.

Grrrrr—

Ferocious growls.

The Ant-horn’s were staring at her with eyes full of wariness.

[These insignificant beings are in the way.]

The Goddess let out a short sigh and glanced at Ohjin.

‘Is she telling me to eliminate them?’

Her look said, ‘I want to confirm the level of skills a Regressor has’.

‘Fuck, It’s too late to back out now.’

“I’ll eliminate them.”

[Hmm, I’m looking forward to just how powerful the strength of the Heaven-defying Star will be.]

“I’m currently—”

[Ah, I’m already aware. Even though you’ve returned from the future, your body should still be the one from this world. Don’t feel pressured; fight as you normally would.]

‘Damn it. Those are the words that make me feel pressured the most.’

“Huuu.”

While letting a large breath out, he raised his body.

Even without turning on the micro-LED hidden inside his clothes, a subtle light started to flow out of his left chest.

An overflowing power.

His body felt light—as if he had put down all the baggage he was carrying over his shoulder.

‘This is... the body of an Awakener.’

Although it was just 1-Star, the difference was clear.

A domain one could never reach with ordinary training.

A body of one that was beyond the scope of human beings, the body of a supernatural being.

‘However.’

Even with a body like that, Lee Shinhyuk had unseemingly run away from the monsters.

That thought didn’t serve to criticize him.

‘It just meant that the monsters were that powerful.’

Could he, who had Awakened just a few minutes ago, be the opponent of dozens of Ant-horns?

‘This isn’t the time to think about things like that.’

Even if he held on to the hem of her dress, begging her to save him, it would be impossible for her to personally eliminate the monsters.

‘The celestials called it something along the lines of commandments—it restricted them from directly intervening in this world.’

The reason why they granted stigmas to Awakeners and made them fight with monsters was the same.

‘If that’s the case...’

There were no methods other than fighting by himself.

Grip—

He grabbed and raised the spear that had fallen on the ground.

The spear Lee Shinhyuk had used.

The spear’s blade glowed with a blue hue and started to head towards the monsters.

“GGrrrrrr!!”

As he aimed his spear towards the Ant-horns, they fiercely howled out.

Two Ant Horns approached him at a fast speed.

“Hmpt!”

Lowering his stance, he jabbed his spear out like a spring.

Crack!—

The shell of the Ant-horn that had remained unfazed by the bullet was easily destroyed, splattering out green blood.

“Krr!”

The Ant-horn from the opposite side tried to aim for the gap that was created.

Ohjin moved his body back naturally, as if he were water, and used the spear’s shaft to uppercut its chin.

Spin—

Easily rotating the spear that reached two meters, he pierced through the Ant-horn’s belly.

[Oho, not bad.]

The goddess spoke out shortly after seeing him move with no unnecessary movements.

‘...Huh?’

Rather, the one who was surprised was Ohjin himself.

‘There’s no way it’s this easy.’

His body moved naturally, as though he had been handling the spear for years.

No matter how easy the spear was to use, to feel ‘familiarity’ from a weapon he had used for the first time in his life was definitely weird.

-Ring!

[The Black Heaven is reading through the ‘Records’ contained in the stigma of Pyxis.]

[The Black Heaven’s awakening stage is too low. The amount of records that can be read are restricted.]

[Part of Awakener Lee Shinhyuk was successfully inherited.]

[Skill #Spearmanship of Pyxis Lv4# has been acquired.]

As if in answer to his questions, the message window appeared.

And then,

“Agh!”

Hot.

The pain of scorching hot iron skewers pierced his skull.

Alongside this dizzy and intense pain, the scenery changed.

-Pant, Pant!

Inside his head spread an unfamiliar scene.

In an empty space with no one around, the appearance of Lee Shinyuk endlessly jabbing out his spear could be seen.

-Argh!

Even though he was shaking like he would collapse at any moment, he didn't stop jabbing his spear.

-If I stop here... I'll never be able to catch up to Woohyuk.

Roughly chewing his dry lips, Lee Shinhyuk continued to jab his spear.

Over and over again.

He pushed himself to the limit.

'...This is?'

His vision gradually returned to normal.

'Lee Shinhyuk's... memories?'

Even if they were memories, they weren't memories of the past.

'There're scars I haven't seen before.'

On the face of the frantically training Lee Shinhyuk, a distinct scar that ran across from cheek to jaw could be seen.

A scar that couldn't be seen on the Lee Shinhyuk who he had met a few hours ago.

'If that's the case...'

Memories from the future.

To be more accurate, not from the Lee Shinhyuk who had died in vain, but the memories of the Lee Shinhyuk from the '1st Round' started to flow into him.

No.

What flowed into him were not simply memories.

"Ggrrrrrrr!!"

"Aahhhhhh!!"

In unison, all the Ant-horns surrounding the area rushed towards him.

“Hmpf!”

Similarly, he ran towards the Ant-horns that were closing the distance.

Crack!!—

The spear he had explosively jabbed out obliterated an Ant-horn’s head.

“Graaaaaa!”

Another Ant-horn rushed in from the right side.

It was an ‘Elder’ that was one step larger compared to the other Ant-horns.

In the past, even his eyes wouldn’t have been able to follow its movements, but—

“Too slow, you bastard!”

—it was different now.

Boom!—

He launched his body by slamming his spear against the ground.

Like a pole vaulter, his body explosively soared through the air.

Spin—

He rotated his body in midair as he grabbed onto the spear.

While the Elder Ant-horn that had lost its target was in a panic, he accurately pierced through its head.

Craaaaack!!—

“That’s right!”

An electrifying thrill ran from his spine through his body.

‘I can do it!’

The power all over his body was boiling up.

* * *

Reaper Scans

Translator – Maccas

Proofreader – ilafy

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Every single detail of the Ant-horns rushing towards him was engraved onto his retina.

‘Slow down. Let’s not get too excited.’

Collecting his breath, he kicked off the ground—widening the distance between him and the Ant-horns.

‘Even if I inherited Lee Shinhyuk’s skills, it doesn’t change the fact I’m just a 1-Star awakener; I could die the moment I let my guard down.’

Crack! Crunch!—

He calmly swung his spear around and continued to reduce the number of Ant-horns.

‘Were 1-Star Awakeners originally this strong?’

Even while simultaneously facing off against dozens of Ant Horns, he didn’t feel tired at all.

It was hard to take in, considering the fact that Lee Shinhyuk was exhausted after taking on 3-4 Ant-horns.

‘The dumbasses I saw weren’t like this.’

‘Your average 1-Star Awakener ran around like a baboon that had his house lit on fire when even two Ant-horns charged them.’

‘...But why.’

Just how...

did it feel this ‘easy’?.

[Hmm...]

The silver-haired goddess narrowed her eyes and looked towards Ohjin, who was fiercely fighting in the midst of the Ant-horns.

[Are you putting on a show for this lady’s entertainment?]

‘Show?’

‘This is a show?’

‘What kind of bullshit is she spouting this time?’

[If that’s not the case, why aren’t you using your ‘stigma’?]

‘What?’

“.....”

Ohjin’s eyes naturally headed towards the left side of his chest.

Not towards the fake stigma he had engraved with his knife but towards the stigma of Lyra that was giving off a subtle glow.

That’s right.

Until then, it had only given off a subtle light.

Real stigmas would give off a much more brilliant light when used.

‘Huh, then until now...’

He had been facing off against dozens of Ant-horns without even using his stigma.

[Ah, I see. Even if you’re a Regressor, you wouldn’t be able to use the newly established stigma freely.]

After thinking and coming up with her own conclusion, the goddess nodded her head like she had understood.

[For you, it must be the same as entering the body of a baby that’s taking its first steps.]

Although it was nothing but the goddess’s own misunderstanding, the reason seemed to make some sense.

He couldn’t miss this chance, especially when the opposing side presented the opportunity.

He immediately nodded his head and answered.

“Yes, that’s right. For me, this body is... exactly the same as a baby’s body.”

‘Waah’

‘Me baby Ohjin.’

[I see, then my role will be to help that baby finish its baby steps.]

‘...Mama?’

[I’ll help you so that you can use this lady’s stigma easily.]

-Ring!

[Vega bestows upon you the Star’s Blessing.]

[The stigma of Lyra’s proficiency temporarily increases!]

Vega.

‘Was that her name?’

‘Huh?’

‘Isn’t that a name I’ve heard befo—?’

Bzzzzzt!!—

“Argh!”

Without room to continue doubting, blue lightning crackled across his entire body.

A blinding blue light explosively scattered out of the stigma on his left chest.

“Ahhhhhhhhh!”

“Grak, Graaaa!!”

The Ant-horns that were momentarily hesitant started to rush in again.

This time, they were in a formation with three Elders positioned in the middle.

“Huu...”

Inhaling, he lowered his stance.

Bzz, Bzzzzt!!—

The blue lightning that coiled around his body gathered around the spear’s tip.

Swiftly straightening his crouched hips, he threw out his spear with blazing blue lightning.

‘Now, let’s see.’

How incredible the strength of the stigma of Lyra is.

#Blue Lightning Lv1# is activated.

C R A C K L E ! ! ! ! !

“.....!!”

The lightning storm spread from the spear’s tip, swept the surroundings away, and turned the surrounding Ant-horns into ashes.

‘W-What was that?’

One Strike. (##)

With just one attack, the Ant-horns that numbered in the dozens were turned into ashes.

“G-Grr!”

“Kra!”

Within the lightning storm, the only survivors were the elder Ant-horns.

One of the elders that took the lightning head-on had died immediately.

“Grrrrrr! Graa!!”

“Kraaa!!”

Step step step step!—

The Ant-horns that had intuitively realized they were no match simultaneously turned their bodies and started to run away.

“...Hah.”

With an overwhelmed expression, Ohjin absentmindedly watched the backs of the fleeing Ant-horns.

‘Holy shit, what was that?’

That was not something a mere 1-Star Awakener could do.

2-Star, no, at minimum, you would need to be at least a 3-Star Awakener to even attempt to mimic it.

‘Just... what is the stigma of Lyra?’

It was a constellation he had never heard of before.

[Hmm. Indeed, you’re quick to learn—as expected of a Regressor.]

Vega looked down upon the earth that was scorched by lightning with a satisfied smile.

Ohjin’s eyes headed towards her.

Silver hair that came down to her waist, a goddess with blinding beauty.

‘Vega.’

The goddess’s name he had confirmed through the system window popped up in his head once again.

‘Hmm... Wait, Vega?’

At that moment, the faded memory of her name suddenly came to mind.

‘Ve...ga?’

‘Vega?’

‘It’s Vega?’

‘No way.’

Ohjin’s mouth opened wide.

“Star of the Weaver Girl...?”

[Hmm? Did you call this lady?]

Golden eyes that shined like gems headed towards him.

Shiver—

An electrifying sensation spread across his body.

“No fucking way...”

The celestials that numbered hundreds...

Even amongst those transcendental beings were ‘leagues’ of weaker and stronger authority.

Furthermore, after the ‘league’ of the celestial, the Awakeners that followed could be divided accordingly.

The celestials of the 12 Zodiacs were a staple.

Just being granted the stigma of one of the 12 Zodiacs would make one in a different league compared to other Awakeners.

-But even amongst them...

Existences that even the celestials of the 12 Zodiacs wouldn’t dare to challenge.

The three stars known as the ‘North Stars’.

Polaris, Deneb, Vega.

One of the top-rank celestials with a different ‘league’ other celestials wouldn’t dare raise their heads to... was the identity of the goddess in front of his eyes.

‘Huh? What, then am I currently...’

He could now understand why he, a mere 1-Star Awakener, was able to easily wipe out the Ant-horns that numbered dozens.

‘Scamming a top-rank celestial?’

He came to the realization that he was in the middle of an outrageous act.

‘Fuck.’

He was screwed.

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REAPER SCANS

I’m Not a Regressor

[Translator – Maccas]

[Proofreader – ilafy]

Chapter 5: Stigma of Pyxis (2)

[What's wrong?]

Looking at Ohjin's face that had suddenly stiffened, Vega tilted her head.

The mysterious voice echoed throughout his head.

He did his best to recover from his mental turmoil.

'Shit.'

Gulp—

Desperately suppressing the shaking at the tips of his fingers, he nervously swallowed his saliva.

'Think.'

Just how, with what method would he be able to solve this mind-boggling situation.

'Should I tell her that I lied because I thought I would die?'

He thought for a moment about letting everything go and telling her the truth.

He didn't have to contemplate for a long time.

Nibbling on his lips, Ohjin clenched his fist.

'No.'

It was already too late.

Whatever the reason was, the fact that he had lied against a celestial wouldn't change.

A mere human... had dared to make a fool of a god.

'...I need to deceive her.'

He couldn't go back on what he had already done since it wasn't like he was a Regressor like Lee Shinhyuk.

'I'll need to see what I started through to the end.'

Ohjin's eyes lit up.

That was often how lies worked.

Though you could decide to not lie at all, you couldn't lie just once.

Once you decided to deceive someone, you would have to go through with it perfectly.

Just like he had done with the Awakeners that had never even realized he had deceived them.

'If that's the case...'

He organized his thoughts.

Devise a method, make a plan.

It wasn't hard.

It was something he had done as if breathing, for the past eight— no, for his entire life.

[Hmm?]

Ohjin looked up towards the goddess that had been watching him with questioning eyes.

“I’ve missed you, Vega,”

he said with a trembling voice.

Drip—

Transparent tears flowed down his cheeks.

[—What?]

He could see the goddess's eyes widen.

One step at a time.

He headed towards her.

“I thought... I would never be able to see you again.”

Whoosh!—

He pulled down on Vega's wrist.

Naturally, her wrist didn't actually get pulled down, since there was no way a newborn Awakener would be able to pull down transcendent beings such as celestials.

‘It doesn't matter.’

His goal wasn't to pull her down anyway.

“Hick...uuuuhhk!!”

Kneeling down in front of her, he cried like an animal.

“It's a relief. I-It really is... a relief... hick!!”

[...W-What are you doing?]

The cold goddess that had seemed to be devoid of any emotions took a step back, flustered.

He could clearly see the unrest in her golden eyes that shined like starlights.

‘Good.’

He somehow succeeded in making her flustered.

‘This is just the beginning.’

Making the opponent flushed was incredibly important when deceiving.

Although people weren’t easy to deceive, when placed in a situation of sudden confusion, they would collapse easily beyond one’s imagination.

It was the same reason why phone scammers started off with phrases such as ‘I’ve kidnapped your children.’

‘I’m not sure if celestials are like people, but...’

There wasn’t any time to make confirmations.

“Vega! I-It’s me! Ohjin... ah,” he spat out in a short breath, dropping his head with hollow eyes.

“That’s right... you forgot everything about me...”

With a bitter expression, he slurred the end of his sentence.

[...Just what kind of relationship did you have with this lady in the future?]

Vega asked with embarrassment left in her voice.

“.....”

Ohjin’s lips tightly closed as he slowly nodded his head.

“No, I apologize. It’s... yes. I-It’s nothing. Please forget about what just happened.”

He backed off with an expression that screamed out that it wasn’t fucking nothing.

[It doesn’t seem to be nothing. Hurry up and tell me. Just what kind of relation—]

“Later.”

Cutting off the goddess’s words, he bitterly smiled.

“I will tell you... later”

He shook his head with a grieved smile.

The important thing here was making an expression that seemed to have a story behind it.

Scrupulous glances with a bit of trembling in the eyebrows.

Even gently biting his lower lips, with his fingernails digging into his palms.

‘There’s no way one wouldn’t get tricked by this.’

He wasn’t so sure about other things, but he had the confidence to create a mood and make detailed expressions.

[...I understand. It seems that you have a story. Moreover, to say that you thought you wouldn't see me again, huh... I see. This lady must have eventually ended up perishing.]

Vega nodded with quite a composed expression.

'Eventually?'

Her reaction that was so composed that it felt candid made Ohjin raise his eyes.

In order to make her completely believe that he was a 'Regressor' for the time being, he had roughly thrown out plausible words that seemed to make sense, but, looking at her reaction, it seemed that there was something she knew.

'Does an existence that can make a top-rank celestial perish even exist?'

Even when he thought of the powerful monsters that were notorious amongst Awakeners, he couldn't imagine it.

You could say it was obvious.

In the first place, the reason why celestials couldn't kill the monsters that took over one-third of the earth was not because they were weak but because of the commandments that restricted them.

'Well, whatever.'

It was only good for him if the opponent was willing to play along.

"...were you already aware?"

With a surprised expression, Ohjin widened his eyes.

The goddess nodded with a dark expression.

[Yes, I'm already aware. The fact that this lady... no, that all of the celestials will eventually get devoured by the darkness of the Black Heaven.]

"That's right. By the Black Heaven..."

'Huh?'

'Black Heaven?'

'Isn't the Black Heaven the thing from earlier?'

In that moment of desperation.

The power he had awakened.

The dark cloud that absorbed Lee Shinhyuk's stigma.

'Why do I have that?'

A chill ran up his spine.

An ominous feeling passed by his head.

'A few moments ago, she mentioned something about the end.'

When Vega first appeared, she had titled him ‘The one and only savior of a world that was destined to meet its end’.

End.

That’s right; the Earth was a ‘world destined to end’.

Though there was no way to tell if it was a prophecy or a prediction.

Vega already knew the fact that the Earth would be in peril from the beginning...

‘And Lee Shinhyuk regressed in order to stop that.’

Up to that point, it didn’t really matter.

The problem was...

‘—The existence that brings about the end of the world is me?’

Hah.

It was such a ridiculous story that he couldn’t even joke about it.

‘What kind of bullshit is that.’

Aside from having the ability to end the world, there wasn’t a reason to do so in the first place.

‘Fuck.’

His mind went blank white.

In his heart, he just wanted to shove his fist up his mouth and cry.

[You’re spacing out again.]

Vega spoke out as if she was worried.

Like a splash of cold water, his confused mind was woken up.

‘Not good.’

If he continued to show weird appearances, she would start to have some doubts.

‘I need to stop doing that.’

“It’s just that I was thinking about... the memories from back then,” Ohjin said with a sinking voice.

[The memories from back then?]

“I’m talking about the memories from when this Earth had met its end.”

[.....]

* * *

Reaper Scans

Translator – Maccas

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* * *

Vega closed her lips in silence.

“The sky... was colored by a thick darkness. A lot of people—an uncountable amount of people—died.”

[...Is that so?]

‘I don’t know, I’m just spitting bullshit as it comes.’

“However, I returned.”

One step forward.

“I gained the opportunity to change the world.”

He approached Vega and carefully held her hands.

Her hands in his grasp were soft to the point that it was hard to believe she was a god-like existence.

[L-Let go.]

“I won’t let go.”

Firmly nodding his head, he increased the strength of his grip.

“I won’t lose you again.”

[.....]

“I’ll protect you this time.”

[Regressor...]

“It’s Ohjin. Gwon Ohjin.”

[...This lady has no memories of you.]

“I know.”

‘Because the truth is, I don’t either.’

“We’ll just have to make new memories; we can recover the things we’ve lost.”

Gently releasing the strength in his hands, he smiled faintly.

“So that we can do that—”

Once he decided to trick her, he couldn’t be satisfied by simply deceiving her.

No, he couldn't be satisfied.

'I need power.'

In order to become a Regressor, to at least prove that he was the 'one and only savior', it was necessary to have power.

And in order to achieve that,

“—could you lend me some strength?”

He would use anything at his disposal.

Even if it was an existence that could make celestials bow down with their presence.

[.....]

Vega slowly closed her eyes and shortly after started to slowly nod her head.

[Regressor... No, Awakener Gwon Ohjin.]

She continued with a solemn expression.

[The existence who goes against destiny, the heaven-defying star.]

The goddess slowly reached out her hands.

[For you with a dark and perilous road ahead, may this lady's starlight illuminate up the path.]

The tips of her paper-white fingers touched his forehead.

-Ring!

[Star of the Weaver Girl, Vega, wishes to appoint you as an apostle.]

[Will you accept?]

Feeling the cold sensations on the tip of his forehead, he slowly nodded his head.

Owooong!!!—

Radiant starlight bloomed.

He could feel the silver light that shot out from her hands pushing into his body like a tsunami.

And then,

[The 'Black Heaven' is absorbing the stigma's mana.]

[You have achieved part of the conditions required for the 'Black Heaven's second awakening!]

A blue message appeared in front of his eyes.

A power one step higher than when he first awakened spread throughout his body.

“Thank you, Vega.”

Putting aside the message box, he once again gently grabbed the fingers touching his forehead.

“I will vow on this spot.”

He continued in a low voice.

“In order for you to not get devoured by the darkness of the Black Heaven, I will protect you.”

A vow that contained a firm resolution.

His two eyes that burned with willingness stared into the gaze of the goddess.

[What a truly dependable vow.]

Nodding her head, Vega silently giggled.

[By the way... who is that person?]

The place her eyes headed to was the corpse of Lee Shinhyuk, whose entire body had been burnt to a crisp.

“In the past... no, it’s in the present now. He’s a scammer that tricked me into this gate.”

Ohjin answered immediately—like he had been waiting for this question all along.

‘It’d be weird to not ask this question when there’s a corpse burnt to death right next to me.’

Since it was something he had predicted beforehand, there was no need to hesitate.

[A scammer?]

“Yes, haha... I went through some tough times because of this bastard; I got robbed of all my money and equipment.”

[Is that why you took revenge right after regressing?]

“It’s not just because of that.”

He shook his head with a serious expression.

“In a couple of years, that person will become a member of a crime organization made up of Awakeners and become a malicious being that plunders from the innocent.

[Aha.]

Vega nodded her head.

[Eliminating the evil of the future, huh... it truly is the actions of a Regressor.]

With no intentions of inquiring any longer, her gaze left the corpse of Lee Shinhyuk.

Bzz—

[Uht.]

At that moment, a blue spark jumped out of the goddess's body that was observing the surroundings.

[Although I wish to share a longer conversation... it seems that the commandment's restriction has started.]

“Commandment's restriction...?”

[Didn't I grant you a blessing a few moments ago? Even though it wasn't direct, it was still an action that clearly violated the commandments.]

“Ah. I see.”

Celestials were fundamentally restricted by the commandments which prevented them from directly intervening with the world.

‘Still, I can't let my guard down.’

Just like she had done when granting him a blessing, celestials could endure the ‘restriction’ and slightly intervene in the world.

In fact, the appearance of monsters no different from calamities that no Awakener could possibly face had caused the celestials to personally step in a couple of times.

Which meant—

‘If they put their mind to it, they can easily kill a mere scammer that dared to make a fool out of a god.’

—the commandments couldn't protect him.

The moment that he was caught not being a Regressor, the commandment's restriction wouldn't mean shit, and he would end up crushed within the hands of the furious celestial.

‘It'll be better if I die alone.’

‘But possibly...’

‘By any chance...’

‘If the aftermath reaches my ‘surroundings’...’

‘No. I need to prevent that from happening, no matter what.’

[As a matter of fact, because materializing this form is already an act that violates the commandments... this lady will now return to her sanctum.]

Sanctum.

A dimension that celestials would usually stay in, they were able to use them like gates to enter and exit through select areas around the Earth.

Although, as only Awakeners were able to enter, he had never been to one before.

[In one week's time, come find this lady at her sanctuary. Let's talk about future plans when that time comes.]

"Yes, I understand."

He respectfully bowed down his body.

Owooooh!—

Soon after the sound of low-pitched echos, the goddess's body became silver stardust and dispersed into the air.

"...haaa"

Ohjin, who was left alone, took a deep sigh and sat down on the spot.

'God dammit, just how did this happen?'

"...First, should I start by returning home?"

He had a splitting headache with so many thoughts swimming through his head all at once.

'Still.'

He pulled his shirt and looked down at the left side of his chest.

On that place, not the fake stigma that he had inscribed with a knife, but a 'real' stigma could be seen.

Smirk.

Looking at the stigma, the sides of his mouth went up on their own.

"I guess not only bad things happened."

Actually, this was a rather good opportunity.

If he could take advantage of this opportunity, he could possess strength other Awakeners couldn't dare to imagine.

'Although there are still many mountains left to cross.'

Thinking about the regression and Black Heaven once more, he started to have a splitting headache again.

'Let's think about it at home.'

It wasn't a problem that could be solved by sitting around and contemplating.

"Well then..."

Before exiting through the gate, there was one final thing left to do.

"Should we take a look at how much mister Regressor had been carrying around?"

He started to rummage through the coal-black corpse of Lee Shinhyuk.

Even though the leather armor was ruined by burns, fortunately, the wallet was unharmed.

“Holy shit, why does this bastard carry \$2000 in cash around?”

Once Ohjin saw the wallet stacked with cash, he started to lick his lips while cackling out loud.

After the gates turned the Earth into chaos, even though cases of people carrying around cash had increased, it was still abnormal to carry thousands of dollars around.

“I’ll also use your weapon well, bugger.”

While smirking, Ohjin stood up after looting all the things that looked to be worth money off of Lee Shinhyuk’s corpse.

“Huh?”

At that moment, something strange stood out in his eyes.

He took a closer look at the face of the burnt Lee Shinhyuk.

“The fuck? Is this guy smiling?”

‘Maybe he’s having a good dream?’

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REAPER SCANS

I’m Not a Regressor

[Translator – Maccas]

[Proofreader – ilafy]

Chapter 6: Stigma of Pyxis (3)

“Two Whopper sets~ The total comes out to \$15.80! Do you want it to go?”

“Yes. I’ll have it to go.”

He ordered dinner from a nearby burger store on his way back home.

‘Fucking hell, why are burgers this expensive.’

The hands that took out the dollar bills from his wallet started to shake like an alcoholic patient.

Buying something that cost three times the price of \$2 frozen burgers made him want to throw up his intestines.

“Here are the two Whopper sets you ordered~!”

Leaving behind the clerk, who had a bright smile, he started to move his feet.

He moved towards a narrow alley filled with old and crumbling homes.

The sharp smell of mold and damp humidity entered his nose.

“...haa”

Looking up to the dark sky, he threw up a short sigh.

‘Ultimately, is it back to lying?’

Suddenly, old memories started to surface in his head.

Memories from when he was young, over 15 years ago.

Fragments of memories that now felt unfamiliar started to float around his head.

-Lies? Did you say you were lying?

Was it when he was around eight or nine years old?

There was a time when he pranked the director by lying about the kitchen being on fire.

He could see the bald director’s beet-red face.

Throwing up the middle finger towards the director, Ohjin let out cackling laughter.

-You goddamn little bastard!!

The director’s steaming face distorted as he headed towards Ohjin with clenched fists.

He was an average male in his forties, possessing the ultimate trinity force known as high blood pressure, diabetes, and balding.

He had a surprising talent of holding back just enough to not leave any scars; even professionals would have been shocked to see it.

Fists rained down on top of Ohjin’s crouched body.

-Don’t hit our Ohjin, you bald bitch!!

With red hair that waved like fire, a young girl took off.

In contrast to her sweet, doll-like face, the girl's movements were nimble and ferocious like that of a savage beast.

However, even if that was the case, a mere 10-year-old girl couldn't stop the force of an adult.

-You two!!!

The bald director violently swung his fists around.

Ohjin and the girl embraced each other, enduring the assault of the director.

"Nothing's changed from when we were young."

Laughing bitterly, he walked through a path so desolate that it looked as if it had been assaulted by monsters and arrived at his home.

Creeaaak—

After opening the worn-out door, he could see the insides of his cramped house—it didn't even total 355 square feet.

"Arghh."

Did they awaken from the sound of the door opening?

Together with the sound of light groan, the shabby bed wailed out creaking noises.

"I'm home."

He roughly placed the burgers on the ground and took off his shoes.

"....."

Folding back the blankets, a woman sat up.

Red hair, reminiscent of fire.

Akin to a ruby in mud, inside of the run-down house that reeked of mold, was a woman that shone out beautifully.

She, who had just woken from sleep, slowly focused her eyes on Ohjin.

No.

The expression 'focused her eyes' wasn't appropriate.

Because—

"...you're here?"

—on the surface of her faded white pupils, no reflection could be seen.

Fold—

She clumsily folded the blankets back.

Inside of the folded blankets, her pure white legs were exposed.

Where there should have been two, only her left leg remained.

“Yes, I’m here.

He smirked while nodding his head.

The red-haired woman gazed upward towards Ohjin.

“If you’re here— hurry up and give me a cig.”

She stuck out two fingers with a grin.

The appearance of her nonchalantly sticking out her hand like he was a servant made Ohjin chuckle.

“Back with the bullshit as soon as I’m here?”

“Oh~ Bullshit? Is that something you would say to this sister that’s akin to the sky?”

“Fuck off with the sister.”

“I heard that was a trend nowadays.”

‘Is it?’

“Sister Ha-eun...”

“Urrghh. Stop. My insides are curling.”

“But you’re the one who told me to.”

“Kyahaha!! It sounds weird after hearing it.”

Looking at her acting like normal, Ohjin’s lips secretly curled into a smile.

‘It looks like nothing bad happened.’

Song Ha-eun.

A woman two years older than him. She had become Ohjin’s one and only crutch throughout the hell-like orphanage.

The tenacious relation from the orphanage days continued even after they came out of the orphanage.

Although, it was shaky and sloppy.

Clearly.

“Here.”

He rolled up the receipt he received after buying the burgers and placed them in between her fingers.



Click!—

He lit up his lighter.

“Sssptt... Kek! Cough! W-What is this?!”

“Cigarette.”

“No it isn’t, you bastard!” Ha-eun shouted out while violently throwing the burning receipt onto the ground.

He picked up the receipt and extinguished the fire with his fingers.

“Smoke in moderation. What if you get sick on top of your situation.”

“Heh. Even if I look like this, I’m still way healthier than you.”

Shrugging her shoulders, Ha-eun smirked.

She wasn’t bluffing.

In reality, she possessed a body several times healthier than him.

Because she was an ‘Awakener’.

‘Though she’s only a half-Awakener that can’t use her stigma’s mana.’

But it didn't change the fact that she possessed body specs miles superior to him.

No, to be more accurate...

She *had* possessed.

'It's different now.

'Since I have also become an Awakener.'

"I've bought some food for us to eat."

"Oh, thanks. What's on the menu?"

"Burgers."

"Hehe! Nice! You have some good tastes!" Ha-eun snickered in satisfaction.

She liked burgers.

Not because she thought the taste was special, but because they were easy to hold and eat.

For her who couldn't see, using cutlery was no easy task.

Rustle—

He removed the wrapping and handed the burger over to her.

Nom.

She chewed on the hamburger with her small mouth.

"...Huh?"

Her eyes opened wide.

She ripped more bites off of the burger like she couldn't believe it.

"W-What is this? Why is it so tasty?"

"It's because it isn't frozen; I bought it from the restaurant."

"...What?"

Ha-eun's mouth opened wide.

"A-Are you sick somewhere? Did you get hit on the head by a monster?"

Her voice faintly trembled; she couldn't possibly believe what she was hearing.

Ohjin

He wondered for a moment about why she was making such a big deal out of a burger set that wasn't even \$10, but looking back at his past actions, he could understand her reaction.

"I got some money."

“...It’s not like you weren’t buying them because you didn’t have the money to.”

As she said, even if it was a little extreme, the reason why he saved living expenses wasn’t because he didn’t have money.

Though it was true that he wasn’t earning a lot considering that it was a job risking his life, he had still earned over ten thousand in a month before.

He could have bought a burger set that wasn’t even a mere \$10 any time they wanted.

‘Though we’ve never eaten it until now.’

Even so.

The reason why he was so persistent in saving money was to save up a little faster.

‘Since there’s something I need to buy at all costs.’

* * *

Reaper Scans

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* * *

Ohjin staringly gazed at Ha-eun, who had been stuffing down the burger.

“There’s sauce on your lips.”

“Ah, really?”

Ha-eun turned her head and stuck out her chin.

“Here, I’ll give you the honor of being able to touch my lips.”

“You’re driving me nuts.”

He wiped off her lips with tissues.

“Hehe! Hey, what’s this called?”

“Whopper set.”

“Kya! As expected of the king of burgers!”

Ha-eun smirked in satisfaction.

“Then I’ll buy this instead of frozen burgers from now on.”

Ohjin took a bite of his burger as well.

‘How disgustingly delicious.’

It was in a different realm from the frozen burgers he usually ate.

The taste was so good it made him want to shove his fist up his mouth and cry out.

“.....”

There was an awkward silence.

Ha-eun’s blank white sight headed towards Ohjin.

“You... something happened today, didn’t it?”

“Yeah.”

Ohjin calmly nodded his head.

“I became an Awakener.”

“.....!”

—*Splash*

Ha-eun spilled the cola she was holding all over the floor.

* * *

Late at night.

A delicate moonlight seeped through the window frame.

“Phew. I finally have some time.”

After explaining this and that to the freaked out Ha-eun, it became night before he knew it.

‘Well, it was only natural to be that surprised.’

Since he had suddenly become an Awakener and an apostle of one of the ‘North Stars’ at that, it would be rather strange to not be astonished by that fact.

Naturally, he couldn’t immediately tell her all of the complicated story.

‘...How do I explain that I scammed a celestial into thinking I’m a Regressor.’

After the situation was a bit organized, his splitting headache started once again.

Ohjin, who had gone to the nearby playground, closed his eyes while sitting on the squeaking swing.

‘First of all, this Black Heaven.’

An unknown power that ate up the stigma of Lyra that was engraved on the left chest of Lee Shinhyuk.

‘...this is something that I’ve always had with me.’

He couldn't understand why on earth that unknown power was with him, but he was certain of one thing; whatever this Black Heaven was, it was something that he had originally possessed and was unrelated to 'Lee Shinhyuk's regression.

There was no way Vega would have mistaken him as a Regressor if it wasn't for the Black Heaven absorbing the stigma of Lyra in the first place.

'And Vega believes that the existence that carries the Black Heaven will destroy the world in the future.'

If that was true, it would mean that he was the one that would destroy the world in the future.

Every time he thought about it, it just didn't make any sense to him.

'Just what happened to me during the first round.'

He always thought it was a fucked up world, but he had never thought that it would be nice to destroy the entire world.

'This is... something I can't figure out, so let's move on.'

The problem was the fact that he was carrying the Black Heaven.

'I need to hide this at all costs.'

Whatever happened, he couldn't let it be discovered.

The moment the Black Heaven's existence was discovered, the truth that he was not a Regressor but a third party that had absorbed the stigma of a Regressor would be exposed.

'Wait, but what is this Black Heaven thing anyway?'

The power to absorb stigmas and make them his own.

Although he had participated in a lot of parties with diverse Awakeners until now, he had never heard of a power like this before.

Ohjin confirmed the system window that only Awakeners could see and clicked where the 'Black Heaven' was displayed.

-Ring!

The blue message box appeared in front of his eyes.

[Innate Ability List]

[Black Heaven]

1. State: First awakening

2. Trait

Stigma Absorption : Absorbs the mana of stigmas and stores them within the Black Heaven.

Black Curtain : Completely shrouds the Black Heaven's presence.

This trait can also be used on possessed stigmas.

Transmission : Reads the records contained in stigmas.

This trait is influenced according to the awakening stage.

3. Possessed Stigma

Stigma of Lyra : Currently designated as the main stigma.

“...uh”

Ohjin, who had confirmed the message box, let out a low-pitched mumble.

‘There’s nothing I can figure out with this.’

It was just a summary of what features the ‘Black Heaven’ had. It didn’t explain what it was and why it was with him.

“Then, let’s also move over this.”

Eventually, he temporarily put aside thinking ‘why is this happening to me’.

Since it wasn’t like he would find new information by sitting there contemplating.

‘If that’s the case.’

‘What I need to start thinking about is ‘what should I do from now on.’

“A Regressor...”

‘The most important thing right now is how to look a little more ‘regressful’ in the meeting with Vega in a week’s time.’

‘There’s a limit with just words.’

No matter how much he used his words, if he didn’t get recognition for his ability and skills, Vega would start to have some doubts.

‘To receive Vega’s recognition...’

There was a need to raise the stigma of Lyra’s ‘star’ as fast as possible.

‘At the minimum, I need to reach 2-Star by next week.’

Awakeners needed to achieve two requirements in order to promote.

‘The amount of mana stored in the stigma and the proficiency of the stigma.’

There was no need to think about the former.

‘I have overwhelming amounts of mana.’

He was in a situation where he had been granted stigmas by both the Vega of the ‘First Round’ and the ‘Second Round’.

Rather, he was in a situation where he had so much mana that it could become a problem.

“If that’s the case...”

It meant that if he could increase his proficiency in handling his stigma, he could ‘promote’ much faster compared to other Awakeners.

“Looks like I’ll have to visit the dungeon tomorrow.”

Was it two or three years ago?

One Awakener that he had partied with said that there was nothing better at raising a stigma’s proficiency in a short time than fighting in real combat.

In reality, all high-ranked Awakeners that had explosive growth went looking for dungeons.

‘Should I go to sleep?’

Creak—

He got up from the swing and started to exit the gloomy playground.

“Hmm?”

Taking a look at his smartphone on the way home, a news article caught his attention.

[Inside a 1-Star dungeon located in Incheon, Sinheung-dong, a phenomenon where Ant-horns traveled in herds of over 20 occurred... victims ‘one after another’.]

It was the dungeon he went to earlier that day.

[As the association believes that this phenomenon could mean the appearance of a ‘mutant’, they request that you refrain from entering for the time being.]

“...A mutant.”

Ohjin narrowed his eyes.

‘I didn’t see a mutant back then, but...’

It could be that he missed it since he wasn’t in a situation where he could care about if there was a mutant or not.

‘...can I take it on?’

A monster’s mutation emerged extremely rarely.

According to the situation, there were times when mutants were weaker than normal, but they normally possessed more power compared to the original species.

It was a monster that no newborn 1-Star Awakeners could possibly overcome.

However.

He wasn't your average 1-Star Awakener.

Just being a 1-Star apostle of the 12 Zodiacs would give you several times more prestige than other apostles, but he was an apostle of one of the 'North Stars' that even the 12 Zodiacs wouldn't dare compare to.

Truthfully, he had also slaughtered herds of Ant-horns that numbered dozens earlier that day.

Of course, he did receive the help of Vega in the middle, but—

'It was manageable even before receiving the blessing.'

—he actually thought it was rather too easy.

And that was when he only possessed Lee Shinhyuk's stigma of Lyra from the 'First Round'.

He didn't even have to think of how much easier it would be with the added stigma of Lyra from the 'Second Round'.

"Alright."

Ohjin finished his thoughts and calmly nodded his head.

His destination for the next day was set.

* * *

The next day.

Ohjin headed to the location he had first met Lee Shinhyuk.

"I'm a 2-Star Awakener of Fornax! Does anyone want to party?!"

"2-Star Awakener of the Greater Dog here! Looking to hunt for the mutant!"

Arriving In front of the gate, the rowdy shouts entered his ears.

'There's quite a lot of people.'

Even though the association had requested them to refrain from entering, there were more Awakeners gathered in front of the gate.

'I think I heard that the starstones of mutants were much more expensive?'

It appeared that they gathered for the same reason of hunting the mutant that he had.

"Hmm..."

Ohjin stopped his feet and was temporarily lost in thought.

'Should I join a party?'

He no longer had the need to perform a shit show now that he had become a real Awakener.

‘...No’

Ohjin, who had been temporarily in thought, slowly shook his head.

He had the confidence to face the mutant alone anyway.

In addition to having to divide the profits, it would also make it harder for him to experience proper ‘real combat’.

“Well then, should I go?”

He headed inside the dungeon, towards the location of where he had met the Ant-horn herd.

The sticky humidity made the dark forest road even more unpleasant.

Rustle—

The sound of bushes shaking.

‘They’re coming.’

He grasped the spear slung on his back and lowered his posture.

T/n: Constellation ‘the Greater Dog’ is the ‘Canis Major’ which is Latin for ‘greater dog’, which is also the constellation that contains Sirius, the brightest star in the night sky known as the ‘dog star’.

Incheon # City in South Korea

Sinheung-dong # Administrative neighborhood in South Korea #

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REAPER SCANS

I’m Not a Regressor

[Translator – Maccas]

[Proofreader – ilafy]

Chapter 7: Hyenas (1)

“Graaaaa!!”

Six Ant-horns simultaneously jumped out of the bush.

Judging by the two that were much larger than the others, it seemed that there were ‘Elders’ amongst them.

“Hmpf.”

He took a quick breath in and added strength to the spear within his grasp, focusing his mind towards his left chest.

—*Owooong!*

The blue light of the stigma blazed up.

A powerful strength spread across his body.

“Grrrr!”

One elder Ant-horn sharply raced across from the left.

His body moved naturally according to the spearmanship inherited by Lee Shinhyuk.

Crack!—

“Grreeeeegh!!”

After he shoved the spear’s shaft inside the Ant-horn’s face, the Ant-horn tried to use its sharp chin to break the shaft.

“You dare!”

Crunch!—

He bent the shaft while simultaneously using the heel of his foot to stomp down on the Ant-horn’s head.

The Ant-horn’s shell that had been unscathed after taking a hit by a bullet was completely crushed with a simple kick.

‘Good.’

His body felt as light as a feather.

The muscles all over his body wriggled like they were breathing.

“Graaak!”

He easily dodged the Ant-horn that tried to strike from behind by lowering his body and then grabbed onto the Ant-horn’s back legs that were flying past his head.

“Grk?!”

The Ant-horn struggled as if he was shocked.

“Hmpf!”

He threw the Ant-horn he was holding towards the herd.

Grrrakkkk!—

The Ant-horn that flew away like a cannon hit the other Ant-horns and tumbled across the floor.

‘As expected, my body specs alone put me in a different realm compared to normal 1-Star Awakeners.

An Ant-horn’s average weight was approximately 80kg.

It wasn’t an easy task to one-handedly throw something that was the weight of two rice sacks like a cannon without being an Awakener of Taurus—especially if you were nothing but a 1-Star Awakener.

‘My body specs aren’t the only monstrous thing.’

The real strength of the stigma of Lyra revealed itself when he activated it with his mana.

Bzz, Bzzzzt!—

Powerful rays of light scattered out of his left chest while blue lightning arced across his body.

“...Is it too early for me to replicate what I did back then?”

When Vega had granted him her blessing...

Different from back then when it looked like a blue lightning storm that would sweep the surroundings away, the current lightning around his body was but a tiny spark, like a three-day starved pikachu using thunderbolt.

“Tch.”

You couldn’t expect much from the first attempt.

He didn’t come to this place to see if he could amplify his lightning like he had when he received the blessing in the first place.

“Grrrrr!”

“Graaaaah!”

The tangled Ant-horns let out an eerie shriek full of fury while charging towards him.

‘Let’s leave the miscellaneous thoughts for later.’

Now was the time to focus on combat.

He fiercely jabbed out his spear, following Lee Shinhyuk’s movements that were engraved onto his brain.

* * *

Inside the forest filled with sticky humidity.

On the vacant lot created by burnt woodlands where Ant-horn corpses had been burnt to a crisp.

A reeking stench pricked his nose.

“Kya, just how much is all of this?”

Ohjin rummaged through the corpses and put the starstones he harvested into his sack.

The palm-sized sack was hefty.

It was the kind of hefty that made the side of his lips go up.

‘Will this rack me around \$800?’

Around three hours of hunting for \$800.

Without a party, there wasn’t even a need to split up the money.

It made him feel hollow about how he had been risking his life while performing a shit show to earn \$200-300 a day.

“This is why everyone’s going crazy about becoming an Awakener.”

He had heard on the news that in order to be selected by a celestial, people would gather up and head to the gate that leads to the sanctum to say their prayers every day.

He could now slightly understand their feelings.

‘Although if you look at the fatality rate of Awakeners, it isn’t purely good.’

‘Well, whatever.’

There was a saying that money was more important than the price of life.

“Anyways... the saying that real combat is the best in raising proficiency was definitely true.”

Bzz, Bzzzzt!—

Ohjin’s eyes shined as he made lightning easily at the tip of his fingers.

In just three hours, controlling lightning with his stigma became quite natural to him.

‘I’m not sure if I’m fast or if everyone else is capable of doing this much.’

Since there were no other Awakeners that possessed the stigma of Lyra, he couldn’t make any accurate comparisons.

He changed the form of the lightning on the tip of his fingers into a ball and rolled it around his body.

‘Well, I’ll figure it out sooner or later.’

Ohjin himself was not aware of this, but if he had joined another party, their eyes would probably have popped out in astonishment.

Usually, the higher the ‘league’ of a stigma, the more difficult it would be to raise the proficiency in compensation for their mighty power.

Even an apostle of the 12 Zodiac would take years to develop their stigmas, but for him, who was an apostle of one of the North Stars, to use his stigma naturally in mere hours completely defied common sense.

—However.

He defied that common sense.

Without even realizing that he was a **unique existence**.

“Well then.”

Narrowing his eyes, Ohjin took a look at his surroundings.

He refrained from placing the spear back in its sheathe and decided to keep his grasp on it.

“The Ant-horns’ movements are definitely strange.”

Unlike the usual herds with one Elder in charge, the herds of Ant-horns he had bumped into today had two or more Elders moving together.

In other words, it meant that there was an ‘upper species’ that presided over the Elder Ant-horns.

“The problem is that I don’t know where that guy is...”

He tried to find it directly, but it seemed like another method was necessary.

“It’s a relief I brought this just in case.”

Ohjin opened the zipper on his sling bag and took out a square blood pack.

It was one of his ‘business tools’, a very useful item that he used to act injured.

‘Although it isn’t human blood, but pig blood.’

‘It probably won’t be a problem since Ant-horns aren’t picky between humans and animals.’

Splash!—

After tearing open the blood pack and spraying it over the floor, he hid his presence above a nearby tree.

Rustle, Rustle, Rustle!—

‘Nice.’

A short moment after spraying the blood, together with the sound of bushes shaking, he could see the herd of Ant-horns flock in.

They numbered around 20.

And in the middle—

‘Found him.’

—there was a black-shelled Ant-horn with the build of a tiger.

You could tell with one glance that it was distinctively different from the other red-shelled Ant-horns.

As the association had predicted, a mutant appeared.

‘Let’s finish this quickly.’

No matter how powerful the stigma of Lyra was, facing over 20 monsters in a prolonged battle was difficult.

Blitzkrieg.

He needed to eliminate the mutant in at least three minutes.

“Fuu.”

Standing up above the tree, he took in a sharp breath.

Thump.

An electrifying thrill spread from his spine as his heart pulsated.

The stigma engraved on his left chest started to spew out light.

Bzzt!—

Blazing blue lightning.

And then—

‘...huh?’

—as if dark clouds had covered up the sky, his sight was suddenly drowned in darkness.

The only thing he could see through the deep dark was the figure of the mutant Ant-horn.

‘Was this place always this dark?’

He didn’t know.

His body moved before he could continue his thoughts.

Crunch!—

Kicking off the tree, he soared upwards.

With the weight of his entire body, he pointed the spear’s blade towards the ground.

Crackle!!!—

The lightning intertwined with the spear’s blade.

Unlike before, the blue lightning that fluttered like flames had a **jet-black darkness** mixed within it.

* * *

Reaper Scans

Translator – Maccas

Proofreader – ilafy

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* * *

[# Thunder Fall Lv 1 # is activated.]

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The thunder spear fell down like a comet.

Piercing through the back of the mutant Ant-horn, the spear dug into the ground.

The stench of flesh burning wafted.

“Huh? What?”

‘One blow?’

‘It really died in one blow?’

Even if it was a sudden ambush, Ohjin, who hadn’t imagined that the ‘Mutant’ Ant-horn would die immediately, was very shocked.

“Grreen!!”

“Grhaag!”

After the mutant had died, the surrounding Ant-horns fell into confusion and spun round and round on the spot until they turned their bodies to flee.

“Oh, hey! Wait!!”

Ohjin, who hadn’t thought that the Ant-horn herd would dissolve this easily, shouted out in a rush without having the time to chase after the fleeing Ant-horns.

“If you’re going to run, spit out your starstones first, you fucks!!!”

One starstone out of an Ant-horn was approximately \$20.

It was precious money that could be used to buy as many as 3 Whopper sets.

“Fuck!”

Grab!—

He tried to pluck the spear out of the ground to give chase, but it wasn't easy to pull out, as the spear was stuck so deep into the ground.

Eventually.

“Hah...”

Ohjin let out a deep sigh and gave up on the chase.

‘It’s unfortunate, but whatever, I’ve got the mutant anyway.’

As mutants weren't a common appearance, the starstone of a mutant was worth a minimum of \$1000.

“Hehehe.”

Just thinking about it made his laughter come out.

As he turned his body to harvest the starstone,

Zap!!—

“Argh!”

An electrifying feeling could be felt from his left chest.

After hurriedly lowering his head, he could see the stigma of Lyra scattering out powerful lights.

‘Huh? Is this possibly...’

Gleaaam!—

Next to the stigma that was scattering out lights, one flick was drawn.

-Ring!

[‘Stigma of Lyra’ has been promoted to 2-Star!]

A blue message box appeared in front of his eyes together with the sound of clear bells.

“Hah.”

A short chuckle of absurdity flowed out of Ohjin’s mouth.

To think that he would reach 2-Star in not a week, but a single day.

‘Does this make sense?’

He predicted that he would promote quickly, as his stigma was overwhelming with mana, but he didn't imagine that he would be able to reach 2-Star in a single day.

“There’s no way I’ll reach 3-Star by the end of the week, right?”

If that were the case, there would be no need to deceive or rack up his brain anymore.

Because reaching 3-Star within a week was something that was seriously impossible without being an actual Regressor.

In reality, reaching 2-Star in and of itself was an unbelievable speed.

‘Since achieving 2-Star is something that usually takes six months.’

Even though the majority of the reasons it took so long was because they had insufficient mana, it was still an astonishing speed, even taking that into account.

“2-Star, huh.”

He lightly swung his spear.

Fwoosh! Fwish!!—

Although he was only slightly swinging his spear around, the sound of air tearing apart echoed.

He could feel that his body was unquestionably one step more powerful and agile compared to when he was a 1-Star.

‘Good.’

‘The results are more than enough for today.’

“I should hurry up my harvest and return back.”

He headed towards the corpse of the mutant while humming, thinking if he should order a Guinness Whopper instead of a regular Whopper later that day.

Rustle—

The bushes nearby shook.

‘Huh? There’s no way those bastards that fled are insane enough to come back with their own feet.’

Grasping his spear, he narrowed his eyes.

“Oh, woah. Isn’t that shell black?”

Two intimidating-looking men walked out of the bushes.

He could see the swollen muscles gaping through the gaps of their worn-out armor.

“Wow, even if it’s an Ant-horn, to be able to hunt a mutant by yourself. You’re not the average Awakener, are you?”

“We’re 3-Star apostles of the Hunting Dogs, nice to meet you~”

The two of them approached Ohjin with friendly laughter, opposite of what their appearances portrayed.

Ohjin’s eyes narrowed.

‘These fuckers.’

It was clear that they weren't approaching him with good intentions.

Honestly, you could call it prejudice, but if you weren't a robber and possessed a face that looked like it had been ground on asphalt like them, that was a crime in its own way.

'There's no way 3-Star Awakeners would come to this low-ranked dungeon... unless they came here looking for the mutant.'

If that was the case, there was no way they would sit still and let Ohjin, who was harvesting the mutant's corpse, go.

Awakeners turning into robbers with a simple flip of a hand was quite common.

"Hmm..."

One of the men that had approached bent his torso down to take a sniff.

His appearance looked like that of a hunting dog chasing down its prey.

"Phew, he must have used enormous amounts of mana to hunt this mutant."

"Hehe. Shouldn't he be quite exhausted?"

"Right? It's not like a 4 or 5-Star Awakener would come here."

The two of them murmured to each other in a low voice.

'I know what you're talking about, even without hearing it, you dumbasses.'

'Tch.'

"Now that I think about it, it's a bit strange. You know we swept through an Ant-horn herd from all the way ov~er there? Are you sure you didn't pick off the one that ran away?"

"Aha, is that what happened? This... this can't be left alone, can it?"

The both of them smirked while taking out their swords.

'As expected.'

They were robbing fucks.

'...This can't be helped.'

Ohjin let out a sigh and quickly got on his knees.

"I-I apologize! I didn't even know that happened!!"

"Huh?"

"What?"

Looking at the appearance of Ohjin, who had knelt down without a second of hesitation, left the two men surprised.

Whatever the case, Ohjin rubbed both of his hands together while prostrating on the ground.

“I-I’ll hand it over!!!”

“Kyahahaha!! Well, aren’t you a youth that’s quick to understand!”

One of the men exploded out in laughter and started moving his feet.

Just when he started to approach the collapsed corpse of the mutant behind Ohjin—

“Ah, I’m not saying that I’ll hand that over.”

He grasped his spear and violently stabbed the back of the man.

Destroying his armor, the sharp spear pierced his body.

“Khyuk! Kyuk!!”

“I’m saying that I’ll hand you over next to your dead mother’s side.”

“Fuck!”

The other man charged while hastily swinging his sword.

He spun the spear that had pierced the man and blocked the sword.

The man who had become a human kebab shield let out a scream.

“Uh, Uuhhh?”

Slice!—

Was it because he couldn’t stop the inertia from the swing? He ended up slicing the head of his partner into two.

“W-What are you doing!!!”

Ohjin, who watched the unbelievable scene with his wide-open eyes, let out a scream!

“You killed your partner!!”

“H-Holy shit!!”

“What would your dead mother think if she saw your appearance right now!!!!”

“Shut the fuck up!! My mom’s living completely fine; stop talking bullshit!!”

“Don’t lie!!!”

He roared out fiercely!

“I saw your mother pass away with my very own eyes; why do you keep insisting on lying!!!”

“No, what the fuck are you talking about!! She’s alive!!!”

“Take in the reality!!”

“Take what in, you crazy son of a bitch!!!”

“Your mother has passed away!! She’s no longer in this world!!!”

T/n : Constellation ‘the Hunting Dogs’ is ‘Canes Venatici’ which is Latin for ‘hunting dogs’!

Burger King X Guinness (Alcohol Brand) Whoppers are a thing in South Korea. Black Whoppers that taste good.

Rubbing both hands together has a similar meaning to begging for forgiveness in South Korea.

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Note: Translator’s notes and/or references can be included either right before or right after the final Discord link section

REAPER SCANS

I’m Not a Regressor

[Translator – Maccas]

[Proofreader – ilafy]

Chapter 8: Hyenas (2)

“Son of a bitch!!”

Violent profanity emerged from the red-faced man that was steaming from rage.

Even though he was a shameless robber that aimed for the game of others, it appeared that he was still affectionate for his parents.

It was to the point that it was quite unfortunate that his mother had passed away without being able to see his current appearance.

“Die!!!”

Oooowng!—

The light of the stigma shone through the gaps in the man’s armor.

The stigma of the Hunting Dogs’ power spread throughout his body, amplifying his senses.

Swish!—

Although the sword swung with great speed, its direction was too predictable.

‘He’s out of his mind.’

Ohjin easily dodged the attack by moving his body back.

Accidentally splitting his partner’s head in two on top of Ohjin’s constant ridicule caused the robber’s agitation to build up to the extreme.

The robber who had lost his rationality drew a simple line with his sword that hit nothing but thin air.

‘This’ll be easy.’

No matter how strong 3-Star Awakeners were, they would be easy to face in a state like that.

No. Even if he was in a normal state, it was most likely that Ohjin would still dominate since the 1-Star gap over the stigma of one of the North Stars by a minor stigma like that of the Hunting Dogs was negligent.

Whoosh!—

Ohjin easily dodged the sword that aimed for his head and jabbed out his spear towards the man’s right side.

The sharp counterattack flashed through a blind spot.

Chiiing!!—

“Argh!”

Proving he had the skills of a 3-Star, the man narrowly blocked the spear strike that aimed for his right with his sword.

However, the attack didn’t end there.

“Wasn’t the stigma of the Hunting Dogs supposed to amplify the body’s senses?”

The side of his lips went up into a smirk.

If the senses of one’s body were amplified, it would also mean that one’s sense of pain would be magnified as well.

If that was the case...

Bzzzzzz!!!—

“Aaaahhhh!!:

Blue lightning flowed through to the spear’s tip.

The man who was holding onto his sword let out a scream in pain.

“Hmpf!”

Ohjin couldn’t miss this prime opportunity.

The spear's blade rode along the man's arm and pierced through his neck.

"Kugh! Kuh."

Dark red blood poured out of the man, whose eyes had rolled to the back of his head.

That was the end.

Taking down two 3-Star Awakeners didn't even take 5 minutes.

'It would've been much harder if we fought properly.'

There wasn't really a need to think of that.

It wasn't like it was a sport; was there really a reason to fight fair and square?

"Well then."

'Is it time for some human farming?'

Rummage Rummage—

While humming to himself, he took off the armor of the two men and started to rummage through their pockets.

"Haah? They're damn broke. What the hell were these guys doing after reaching 3-Star?"

Ohjin, who had confirmed the wallet's insides, scrunched his eyebrows.

Combined, they totaled up to \$275.

If you put them being 3-Star Awakeners into consideration, they were poorer than poor.

"Tch."

Of course, he could earn more money if he used their cards, but recklessly using cards that were easy to track down was ill-advised.

Although they leaned towards implicitly ignoring the things that happened between Awakeners in dungeons, an investigator from the Association would be sent if it were outright obvious.

"The armor... It will be hard to sell in this destroyed state."

'Should I only take their weapons?'

Rummage—

He tied their swords together and proceeded to hang them on his belt.

Taking the cards of these bastards would be dangerous, but nobody cared if you took simple stolen goods to sell.

It was a world where people died as easily as bugs on the street.

"...And."

Ohjin narrowed his eyes.

He looked down towards the left side of the unarmored man's chest.

Although the shirt was covering it up, the stigma of the Hunting Dogs was seated on that spot.

No matter how low the league was, as long as it was the same 'stigma'...

'The Black Heaven should be able to absorb it.'

In reality, it was quite a dangerous act.

He would be fucked if Vega took notice of the fact that he absorbed the stigma of the Hunting Dogs.

However.

'There was something called 'Black Curtain' amongst the Black Heaven's traits.'

The trait that completely shrouded the Black Heaven's presence.

'The reason why Vega couldn't sense the Black Heaven should be because of that trait.'

In addition, a line on the description explained that the trait applied the same way to 'possessed stigmas'.

'If that's the case...'

'It means that Vega won't be able to sense the stigma of the Hunting Dogs, even if I absorb it.'

As it was already confirmed that she was unable to sense the Black Heaven, there was no need to doubt its capabilities.

"Alright."

He put his hands on top of the collapsed man's chest.

Rum, Rumble—

The black clouds that flowed out of the tip of his fingers moved quickly towards the stigma like it had been starving

Ring—

[The Black Heaven is absorbing the stigma of the Hunting Dogs.]

[The Black Heaven's conditions for the second awakening have all been accomplished!]

[The Black Heaven's second awakening is starting!]

Rum, Rumbleee!!—

The black cloud shook.

“Arrgh!”

Darkness shot up around his body.

The black cloud started to wrap him.

Sizzle—

His head was assaulted with pain as if burning iron skewers were piercing it.

Along with that—

[The Black Heaven is reading through the ‘Records’ contained in the stigma of Pyxis.]

[The Black Heaven’s awakening stage is too low. The amount of records that can be read are restricted.]

Once more, the memories of Lee Shinhyuk surged into his head.

-...Are you awake?

The first thing he saw was the appearance of a tall and attractive youth through a cloudy haze.

The youth looked down at Lee Shinhyuk with a cold gaze.

The disoriented Lee Shinhyuk slowly moved his head to observe the surroundings.

His cloudy sight started to become clear.

‘Hospital room?’

In his memories, Lee Shinhyuk was lying down in a spacious private hospital room.

He could see the date through the digital clock hung on the room’s wall.

‘2020.11.21’

Since it was currently the 7th of November, they were the memories of exactly two weeks in the future.

-Where am...

-This is the hospital.

-The hospital?

-You passed out for two weeks.

-F-For two weeks?

Lee Shinhyuk asked once again in shock.

-That's right.

The youth that looked to be Lee Shinhyuk's younger brother bluntly nodded his head.

A cold fury lurked behind the youth's chilly gaze.

-Why did you enter the dungeon on your own?

-T-That is...

-Didn't I tell you to take one of our guild members with you?

-It's... because everyone looked busy.

-So you entered that place on your own?

-...I'm sorry, Woohyuk. I thought it'd be okay since it was only a 1-Star.

-Hah...

The youth called Woohyuk let out a deep sigh.

Lee Shinhyuk lowered his head with a daunted expression.

At that moment,

—*Knock Knock.*

Lee Woohyuk stood up from the spot and opened the door.

The appearance of a woman with glasses could be seen through the gap of the door.

-Guild leader, do you have time to spare?

-What's the matter?

-You are aware of the new dungeon that appeared in Mok-dong on the 15th, correct? Changhyun said that he discovered a star relic inside the dungeon.

-Changhyun did?

-Yes. But hearing the story, there were some strange...

Bzz—

Along with the static noise, his sight started to go blank.

The voice of the two started to fade.

And then.

“Huuaa!!”

The pain piercing his head disappeared.

* * *

Reaper Scans

Translator – Maccas

Proofreader – ilafy

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* * *

-Ring!

[Part of Awakener Lee Shinhyuk was successfully inherited.]

[#Spearmanship of Pyxis Lv4# has increased to #Spearmanship of Pyxis Lv5#]

[You have acquired #Lame Excuse Lv2#.]

A blue message box appeared in front of his eyes as his pain resided.

“...Will I gain more of Lee Shinhyuk’s memories as the Black Heaven’s awakening stage increases?”

Ohjin slowly ruminated through the memories that had just passed through his head.

‘Lee Woohyuk. New dungeon on the 15th in Mok-dong. Also...’

‘Star relic.’

An artifact agglomerated with a star’s power.

The ability of star relics varied widely but amongst them existed ones that had the power to increase power by 1~2 stars.

‘In summary, it’s saying that a star relic will appear in a dungeon that appears in eight days in Mok-dong?’

It was an unexpected piece of high-class information.

“I think...”

Ohjin’s eyes shined sharply.

It was the golden opportunity to get his hands on a star relic.

No, even more than that—

“I’ll be able to use this.”

—it was a great buffer to continue his ‘scam’.

‘By the way, can I read the records on these two as well?’

Looking down on the corpses of the two men, Ohjin tilted his head.

Although he had absorbed the stigma of the Hunting Dogs, he did not receive memories as he had with Lee Shinhyuk.

[The stigma of the Hunting Dogs you have absorbed is too faint.]

[Reading the stigma’s record has ended in failure.]

‘Ah, is it because of that?’

“Indeed, there’s no way these obviously dim-witted bastards could possibly have a thick stigma.”

‘No matter how low the league the celestial of the Hunting Dogs is, they probably aren’t stupid to the point of granting bastards like these a thick stigma.’

‘Well, anyways.’

It was an incredible harvest.

He was not only able to promote to 2-Star, but he had also awakened the Black Heaven once more.

‘Though I’m not entirely sure if the Black Heaven awakening is a good thing.’

He couldn’t be certain if continuing to develop the Black Heaven was the right thing or not since the mysterious Black Heaven was an unknown power.

However—

‘I have no choice in the matter.’

—if the fact that he could earn Lee Shinhyuk’s memories as the Black Heaven awakened was true, he couldn’t stop there.

For him who had worn the mask of a Regressor, nothing was more important to him than the memories of a ‘real’ Regressor.

‘Well then—’

Ohjin gently closed his eyes and concentrated his mind.

A blue light scattered out of the stigma on his chest.

‘—let’s take a look at what the stigma of the Hunting Dogs is like.’

As soon as he activated the stigma, the senses of his body multiplied.

His sense of smell was especially sensitive.

“Urrg!”

Numerous smells that entered through his nose made him bend down and gag.

It felt like the smell of every single surrounding leaf was digging into his nose.

‘This’ll be useful once I get used to it.’

He shook his head and activated the stigma of Lyra once more like a switch.

It seemed that he couldn’t use two stigmas simultaneously, as once the stigma of Lyra was activated, his body’s sense returned back to normal.

Bzz!! Bzzzzzzzt!—

The blue lightning blazed around his body.

“Hmm?”

Ohjin’s eyes widened as he took a look at the fiercely blazing blue lightning.

‘The lightning became thicker?’

He didn’t understand the reason why, but the blazing blue lightning was one step thicker.

Bzzzzt! Bang!—

A loud explosion burned the ground after he shot lightning out as an experiment.

‘The stigma’s power has increased for sure.’

The feeling was different from when he was promoted from 1-Star to 2-Star.

Back then, he could feel that the ‘amount’ of the stigma he could use at once had increased, but currently, it felt as if the stigma’s ‘quality’ itself had thickened.

Ohjin narrowed his eyes and was momentarily lost in thought.

“Ah.”

Finding the answer didn’t take long.

‘It said that the stigma’s strength would be adjusted according to the awakening stage of the Black Heaven.’

With all the chaos that was going on back then, he had completely forgotten about it.

“...Wait, then does that mean the stigma’s power I’ve been using until now was reduced?”

He chuckled out of absurdity.

‘Then just how strong does that make Vega, the owner of the stigma?’

A dizzy sensation spread from his spine.

He once again resolved to never be caught by Vega at all costs.

“I should start preparing to head back.”

He left the sprawled-out corpses behind and headed towards the mutant Ant-horn's corpse.

Rummaging through the corpse, he found a starstone the size of a 50¢ coin.

'It's black?'

Starstones were normally tinged in blue.

"Hmm... how much will this sell for?"

His eyes shone while putting the black starstone inside his pocket.

With the two swords on his belt and a hefty pocket, his lips automatically turned into a smile.

'I'll receive around \$500 for the swords.'

The normal starstones added up to around \$800, including the mutant's starstone would mean he earned a minimum of \$3000 in a single day.

"Holy shit."

Hurray Awakeners!

* * *

Creak—

The familiar smell of mold tickled his nose as soon as he opened the rusty door.

"You're home?"

Ha-eun, who was hanging around the entrance with her crutches on, quickly approached him.

"That's unusual. Why aren't you lying down on the bed?"

Ohjin asked with his round eyes.

"Shut up. Why do you assume that I'll be lying down every day?"

While she was saying that, she slowly stretched out her hands.

Her pure white hands touched his cheek.

Fumble Fumble—

Her hands searched over his cheeks, hair, neck, and shoulders.

It was quite ticklish.

"...What are you doing?"

"....."

Without answering the question, she continued to fumble all around his body for a while until she let out a short sigh.

"At least you came home without getting hurt like a dumbass."

‘Ah. So it was like that.’

Smirk—

A smile spread across his face.

“Why? Were you worried that I might have been hurt?

“It’ll be a big problem for me if my errand boy breaks down.”

“What errand boy are you talking about.”

“Hehehe! Weren’t you my errand boy starting from the orphanage?” Ha-eun chuckled while tapping on his head.

“Now now~ What did my errand boy buy for dinner today~?”

“Ah, I forgot.”

“Ang?”

“Just kidding. I brought burgers.”

“Whopper set?”

“Guinness Whopper set.”

“Do you wanna get married?”

‘What is this woman saying.’

“Alright. Then should we set up a date, honey?”

“Huh? R-Really?”

“No.”

‘Just kidding.’

“Y-You rascal!”

“Let’s stop talking nonsense and head inside.”

Ohjin carried her into his arms and moved her to the bed.

He handed over the burger set that was in the paper bag to her.

“.....”

Ha-eun, unusually, didn’t even lay her hands on the burger.

“What’s wrong? You’re not eating?”

“.....”

A sudden silence came down.

Ha-eun hesitantly opened her mouth.

“You... you really became a North Star’s apostle?”

“Yup.”

“.....”

She continued clenching her fist.

“Just because you’re a North Star’s apostle doesn’t mean you can just enter high-ranked dungeons and stuff, alright? Join parties, even if you think it’s a waste.”

“Don’t worry, I extensively take care of my own safety.”

“...hm!. You don’t mean that.”

Ha-eun stretched out her hand and slightly pinched his cheek.

“Your celestial... did you say it was Vega?”

“Yeah.”

“...How is she?”

“What do you mean?”

As he tilted his neck and looked at her, Ha-eun’s cheeks slightly blushed.

“I mean. Well. It’s just that... she’s the famous Star of the Weaver Girl.”

“.....?”

“God dammit!! I’m asking if Vega or whatever looks pretty!”

“Ah.”

‘So she was talking about that.’

“She’s pretty.”

With a little added exaggeration, she was a beauty that could make one’s eyes spin around.

Streeetch—

“Owowowow.”

An electrifying pain rushed in as his cheek pulled out.

“Why...?”

“Just because I’m a bit pissed.”

“I’m innocent.”

Whoosh—

Ha-eun rolled over as she covered herself tip to toe with the blanket.

“Ah, right. I’m planning to go there tomorrow.”

“...Where?”

Peek—

Ha-eun slightly lowered the blanket and peeked out.

Ohjin continued while slightly opening up the burger’s wrapping and placing it close to her mouth.

“The Awakeners Association.”

Nom—

She took a bite out of the burger with her small mouth.

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REAPER SCANS

I’m Not a Regressor

[Translator – Maccas]

[Proofreader – ilafy]

Chapter 9: Registration Test (1)

Special Disaster & Security Management Association.

While it was a plausible name, in reality, nobody called it by that name.

It was the organization commonly known as the Awakeners Association.

Only the ones that had been granted stigmas by celestials, Awakeners, could apply to the Association to receive a license.

Naturally,

this 'license' didn't signify much in itself.

After the gates opened across the world, due to the government's authority weakening, the practicality of the license was pretty much nonexistent.

"Damn it, it's so crowded."

Just so, in front of the headquarters located in Yeouido were numerous Awakeners waiting to take the license issuance test.

The reason why Awakeners across the country had gathered for a license that held little significance was quite simple.

Getting a license would increase the chance of getting scouted by guilds.

A simple analogy would be registering a product at an auction.

1~2-Star Awakeners with good results would be scouted with exceptional conditions from major guilds.

There was nothing much to mention about the opposite cases.

'I don't have any thoughts on entering a guild, but...'

He had a separate plan for coming all the way there.

"There's still some time left in the waiting queue... I should sell the starstones in advance."

Ohjin started to head towards the starstone purchasing office stuck next to the headquarters building.

He handed over the two pouches of starstones to the employee that had a business smile.

One was from when he had partied with Lee Shinhyuk, and the other was from the dungeon the previous day.

"According to the market price of 2020.11.8, the total comes out to \$1444. Would you like that in cash?"

"Please send it to my account."

Although taking it in cash would feel better, he didn't want to risk the chance of losing it.

'No shot.'

He would never risk the chance of losing an enormous amount of money that passed \$1000.

"Accounting for taxes, your final total is \$1152."

"Fuck."

"Huh?"

"No, it's nothing.'

'What kind of tax takes 20%, you fucking robbers.'

“Sigh.”

Although his head heated up from his bottomless anger, he settled it down with his superhuman endurance.

He had wanted to sell them using the illegal route that didn't take off taxes, but the risks that came with that method were too high.

‘Since they supervise starstones even more meticulously than they do drugs.’

No matter how much their authority had dropped, the Association was still the nation's largest institution.

If he got caught, it wouldn't end with simple tax problems.

“Tch.”

Ohjin clicked his tongue while taking the receipt.

‘The only thing left now is the starstone harvested from the mutant.’

‘I'll need to gather more information before I sell it.’

Whereas normal starstones had an international market price set, a mutant's starstone was different.

It would garner more profit if you gathered information beforehand.

“Let's see... it's about time.”

Checking the time, he could see that it was almost time to take the registration test.

Ohjin moved his feet towards the headquarters building.

“Wait number 57.”

“Here.”

Thud Thud—

Ohjin, who had been momentarily waiting in the waiting room, got up after hearing his number being called.

“Which constellation are you associated with?” the employee asked with a business-like vibe while filing in documents as if he was a machine.

“It's Lyra.”

“Lyra...?”

Tilting his head, the employee looked through the chart at his side.

“W-Wait. Could you repeat that for me? Which constellation?” he asked with a pressing tone.

Crash!—

The employee shot to his feet.

“It’s Lyra. L. Y. R. A.,” Ohjin replied with a nonchalant expression, like he had predicted that reaction from the start.

“By L-L-Lyra are you p-perhaps...”

“Yes.”

Ohjin smirked while nodding his head.

“Star of the Weaver Girl. I’m the apostle of Vega.”

“.....!!!”

The mouth of the employee fell open.

“P-Please wait for a moment!!” He turned his body in a hurry and ran out somewhere.

Murmur—

Everyone nearby shot a glance.

“Ha.”

Ohjin clicked his tongue with a short chuckle.

Although it was the expected reaction, he couldn’t help but chuckle when he saw it.

‘Is this the prestige that comes with a North Star?’

The truth was, he had contemplated a lot about whether he should reveal the fact that he was an Awakener of Lyra.

If he revealed that he was an apostle of a North Star in a world where everyone would go crazy over being affiliated with the 12 Zodiacs... he couldn’t predict what kind of chaos would come.

If you thought about the countless nuisances that would follow, you might be tempted to live like a loser while hiding strength—like the main characters in mass-produced isekai fantasies.

‘That’s just dumb.’

Prestige was authority.

The foundation he had possessed was too lacking to give up the enormous authority that came with being a North Star’s apostle.

Aside from the simple problem of money, he could gain connections, information, and a host of other small things.

Thinking about the things he had to do in the future, they weren’t just one or two things he needed.

‘And, to solve that...’

Authority.

He needed the title of being a North Star’s apostle that nobody could dare disregard.

“It... It’ll take a bit of time, so could you please wait over here?” The employee who had run off came back and asked respectfully.

The machine and business-like appearance that the man had displayed at the start could not be seen.

‘That’s right. This is the power of authority.’

Smirk—

Ohjin nodded his head while smirking.

“Please follow me.”

The employee led the way.

“Huh?”

“What’s going on?”

Although he felt the gazes from the murmuring onlookers, he lightly brushed them off.

Click—

“You can wait inside here.”

The place the employee had guided him to was a waiting room that had the words ‘VIP’ written on the door.

* * *

Reaper Scans

Translator – Maccas

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* * *

“Got it.” Ohjin slightly nodded his head and headed inside.

“...Hmm?”

Sitting down inside was a blond youth with short hair that gave the impression of a good-for-nothing.

“Who’s he?” the blond youth asked towards the employee like he was a servant.

“Ah, I see Awakener Park Jungwoo has already arrived. The thing is... I’ve brought him here due to some circumstances.”

“What circumstances?”

“That is...”

The employee studied Ohjin's expression.

Ring Ring!—

At that moment, the sound of bells spread across the room.

“E-Excuse me, I have something urgent to attend to!”

“My explanation...”

Bang!—

Running away, the employee closed the door behind him.

“.....”

“.....”

An awkward silence came down with only the two of them remaining.

‘Who’s that bastard?’

Ohjin looked at the blond youth called Park Jungwoo with narrow eyes.

Sitting comfortably on the sofa, the youth was staring in his direction.

He momentarily thought about starting up a conversation, but he decided to ignore him.

‘Well, he’s probably some rookie affiliated with a major guild.’

He had heard that Awakeners who had already joined a guild would occasionally take the registration evaluation to make their names known.

Looking at the fact that he was situated in the VIP room, it was probably within that category.

‘Moreover...’

Ohjin’s eyes headed towards the table in the corner of the waiting room.

Spread out on top of the table was a buffet-like array of desserts such as biscuits, cakes, and simple snacks.

Not only that... Inside the mini-fridge located next to the table, in addition to drinks of every kind, was a wide selection of alcohol.

‘This is... all free, right?’

They were probably left there for people to eat while waiting.

‘Buffet...’

‘Holy shit. A buffet.’

He had only ever seen buffets in pictures before; it was the first time in his life he had seen one in person.

Tremble—

Starting from his spine, a thrilling sensation spread across his body.

‘Just how much is all this?’

A glance was enough to tell that the snacks and cakes displayed on the fancy plates were really fucking expensive.

‘This...’

He couldn’t restrain himself.

No...

It was something that shouldn’t be restrained.

An opportunity to fill up for free couldn’t be passed up.

Grab, Grab—

He filled up his plate with snacks and cakes.

Munch, Munch—

Since he didn’t know when the employee would return, he gobbled up the snacks and cakes in a rush.

“Huhuhu. This is so nice.”

Although he didn’t like sweet things, that matter became obsolete with the fact that everything was free.

“...hah.”

Park Jungwoo, who was looking at him emptying plates like a beggar, let out a sigh.

Ohjin ignored him.

‘Does this place have a plastic bag?’

Ohjin, who had emptied three plates in an instant, looked around for a plastic bag.

‘Let’s pack up the rest and take it home.’

Weren’t they left there to be eaten in the first place?

There probably wouldn’t be a problem if he took them.

‘Kyhuhu, Ha-eun will jump in joy again.’

She would be overjoyed even more since she had utterly no opportunities to eat desserts.

While he was imagining Ha-eun’s smile in his head—

“What are you, a fucking beggar?”

Bang!!—

—Park Jungwoo, who had been observing with a frown, violently dropped his foot on top of the table.

“.....”

Ohjin momentarily put down the cake and raised his head.

Looking at Park Jungwoo staring at him with sharp eyes, he smiled.

“Hmm.”

Comfortably leaning on the sofa, Ohjin crossed his legs.

“What a quite daring young man.”

Changing his manner of speech, he continued with a solemn voice.

“It’s nice to see the energetic youth these days.”

It wasn’t only his voice.

As if a switch had turned on, Ohjin’s expression, gesture, and even the atmosphere he gave off changed in an instant.

The display of him emptying the plates like a beggar vanished like it had been a mirage, and a mysterious vigor similar to that of an old master seeped out.

“What nonsense are...”

“—Do you know who I am?”

Flinch—

Park Jungwoo’s shoulders shook.

“...So who are you?”

“Hoho. I guess matters like these occur since I haven’t been active all that often these days.”

Kekeke—

He relaxedly crossed his arms while laughing like an old man.

“Though I feel like people on the level of getting guided to the VIP room should be able to recognize me...”

“.....”

Park Jungwoo clenched his fist while shutting his mouth tightly with an uneasy expression.

‘Who is he?’

Judging from his confidence, he seemed to be someone famous that had his face known to the world, but no one came to mind in the moment.

‘He sounds like some kind of old man...’

Come to think of it, he had heard of it before.

That there were instances of high-ranked Awakeners of at least 9-Star recovering their body and youth.

‘S-Shit.’

Gulp—

Park Jungwoo, who had felt something amiss, started to sweat with a nervous expression.

Come to think of it, Ohjin was someone like himself who had been guided to the ‘VIP room’.

It meant that he wasn’t your average Awakener.

“Which guild are you in?”

“Pand—”

“Manners.”

“...Huh?”

“Your manners are quite lacking.”

Keke—

Ohjin let spill a good laugh while narrowing his eyes.

“.....!”

Goosebumps spread across from Jungwoo’s spine.

The frightening gaze in between the narrowly opened eyes made Park Jungwoo’s body unconsciously swoop down.

‘W-What the hell.’

He felt lost, like he had been staring into a neverending black sky.

He couldn’t understand just how a person could change this drastically with one glance.

It was impossible to tell if he was the same person that was eating cakes like a beggar a few moments ago.

“I-I’m... affiliated with the Pandinus Guild.”

“Pandinus...”

A guild made up of Scorpio’s Awakeners.

It was a guild famous enough to be picked as one of Korea’s top ten guilds.

‘Was the guild leader’s name Kang Chanhuk?’

Thousand Poison Stab (###), Kang Chanhuk.

To call him one of the representative Awakeners of Korea was a bit of a long shot, but he was still quite famous.

If you wanted to specify rankings, he was narrowly within the top 30.

Taking into account that there were tens of thousands of Awakeners in Korea, there was no doubt he was incredibly skilled.

“Aha, so you’re in Chanhyuk’s guild.”

Ohjin nodded his head while staring into the void with a reminiscing expression.

“...A-Are you perhaps familiar with our guild leader?”

‘Nope.’

‘I don’t know a thing.’

“We used to eat together a lo~ng time ago and go to the sauna and whatnot!”

“S-Sauna...?”

“Keke, that young boy became a full-fledged guild leader before I knew it.”

The more Ohjin talked, the paler Park Jungwoo’s expression became.

“I should have a drink with him soon. Ah, that’s right, could you send my regards to Chanhyuk? Just say it was from ‘Gwon Ohjin’ and he’ll recognize who it’s from.

“T-That is. The... I...”

Jungwoo’s body shook with a deathly pale expression.

“I-I apologize for being discourteous and unrecognizing of such a paramount individual!!!”

“Keke. Don’t worry about it. A young man can make some mistakes.”

With an expression of a kind man, Ohjin lightly tapped on the shoulders of Park Jungwoo.

“Not at all!!! I-I made too big of a mistake...”

“Hmm. If that’s the case, could you do me one favor?”

“Give the word and I’ll do anything!!!”

Park Jungwoo courteously bowed down his neck and loudly shouted out.

“Then—”

Ohjin slid out his hand and pointed towards the table that still had tons of snacks and cakes remaining.

“—could you bring a plastic bag and pack those for me?”

“.....”

* * *

—

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REAPER SCANS

I'm Not a Regressor

[Translator – Maccas]

[Proofreader – ilafy]

Chapter 10: Registration Test (2)

“I’ve packed them all here!”

Boxes were stacked on top of the table.

Instead of plastic bags that would make the cakes crumple, Park Jungwoo put them in several boxes and sincerely packaged them one by one like a professional Pâtissier.

“Thank you for the hard work.”

Looking straight down the long line of boxes, Ohjin put up a satisfied expression.

“By the way, have you come here for the registration exam?”

“Y-Yes, that’s correct! I have come to get good results to make Pandinus’s name known!” Park Jungwoo replied in an instant, like a private first class that had just finished bootcamp.

“Hmm. I see.” Ohjin smirked while nodding his head.

Since it was about time the association employees returned, it was time to wrap things up.

“I’ll need to confirm the skills possessed by a rising star of the Pandinus guild myself.”

“...Yes?”

Park Jungwoo’s eyes enlarged from the words like a bolt from the blue.

Although he didn’t know who, an Awakener that appeared to be in a higher position than his guild leader wanted to observe his evaluation test.

Those words were no different from a commander that had visited the unit wanting to confirm the results of training.

“T-That’s a bit…”

“Keke! Since you kids are the ones that Changhyuk picked, of course you’ll be incredible! A new star! That’s right! You’ll be the new star that’s responsible for the future of Korea!”

Shudder—

The legs of the pale-faced Park Jungwoo quivered.

‘I’m fucked.’

He nervously nibbled on his lips.

The truth was that he had already pre-planned this evaluation test to be taken by a bribed association employee.

A situation where he would get high marks even if he half-assed the test.

However—

“W-What do I do?”

—using that kind of trickery was impossible if another person observed the test.

“Hm? Why do you have such a lifeless expression?”

“The thing is… N-no… I-It’s nothing.”

Clench—

Park Jungwoo clenched his shaking hands.

His mind burned white.

Just when he thought he could live a strong and steady life by entering a large guild, he felt that he had suddenly come to an enormous cliff.

“Is your body perhaps not feeling well?”

“Ah… Uhh.”

Ohjin continued speaking with a concerned expression.

“Then shouldn’t you avoid taking the evaluation test today? You may end up unnecessarily disgracing the guild’s name by taking the test in your current state,” he said in a subtle voice.

There was no way any guild member would want to take a test while an Awakener who seemed to be in a much higher position than their own guild leader was observing personally.

‘Maybe if it was someone with skill.’

The truth was that with the good-for-nothing attitude and the atmosphere he gave off, he looked quite lacking in saying he was an Awakener of Scorpio belonging to the 12 Zodiacs.

In the first place, it was doubtful if he had even planned on taking the test properly.

‘Since they say that there are cases of bribes in order to get high marks.’

Although he wasn’t sure if Park Jungwoo was planning on using those kinds of trickery, whichever side it was, it didn’t matter.

Looking at the expression he wore like that of a constipated lil puppy the moment he heard that Ohjin was going to observe the evaluation test, it was clear that he didn’t welcome anyone observing the test.

“.....!”

As if he had discovered an oasis in a dry desert, Park Jungwoo’s eyes glistened.

“Y-Yes, I understand! The truth is, I was feeling under the weather today.”

“I see. So that was indeed the case.”

‘Look at this fucker’s expression brightening up. Does it feel that good?’

“Come here for a second.”

“Huh? Why all of a sudden...”

Park Jungwoo, who was startled, stumbled over the ends of his words.

“Didn’t you say that your body is feeling unwell? I’ll take a look at it.”

“N-No! T-There’s no need for you to...!”

“It’s not like having an unwell body is a crime; there’s no need to act this way.”

He pulled on Park Jungwoo’s wrist.

“U-Uhh.”

Jungwoo shut his eyes tightly with a stiffened expression, like a high-schooler that had been caught smoking.

‘Cute bastard.’

Cackling on the inside, Ohjin started to look here and there around Park Jungwoo’s body and then continued to feel the pulse on his wrist.

“Hmm... Mana is definitely unstable. Respiration is also in disorder.”

He nodded his head while spitting out pretentious words.

“It seems that your body is simply fatigued. It isn’t an illness, so rest assured.”

“T-Thank you!”

“However, fatigue is the source of all illnesses; postpone the evaluation test for another day and rest for today.”

“Haha. Yes. I understand. I shouldn’t unnecessarily overdo myself and disgrace the guild’s name.

“Yes, yes, that’s right. Shouldn’t health be above all?”

Park Jungwoo, who had instantly got up from his spot, bowed deeply.

“Thank you for your kind words! I once again apologize for the disrespect I gave before!”

“Keke. Don’t worry about it. You should head back now.”

“Yes!!”

“Don’t forget to send my regards to Changhyuk.”

“Understood!”

Park Jungwoo, who had been continuously bowing, opened the waiting room’s door and ran out as if fleeing.

Ohjin relaxingly sat on the sofa while waving.

Now the annoying menace that had gotten on his nerves disappeared.

Naturally, there was the danger of annoying matters occurring in the future, but—

‘There’s a higher chance of him not reporting.’

—there weren’t many cases of mere guild members being able to meet the guild leader of large guilds in the first place.

It wasn’t like it was a matter that was of importance; there was no way he would have a private meeting with the guild leader just to send his regards.

‘Well, even if he did...’

‘It would probably end with him scolded for all the nonsense.’

Even if he came searching for him after that, it wouldn’t matter.

‘I’ll just need to crush him when that time comes.’

Rising star of a large guild or not, he was a North Star’s apostle.

Thinking about back when he easily pulled down on Jungwoo’s wrist, he didn’t think he would lose in a fight.

“Neat.”

He got rid of the menace and got beautifully packaged cakes to bring to Ha-eun.

And, above all...

“Now, should we take a look at how much there is inside?”

Exploding out in laughter, he took out a luxurious wallet.

Moments ago.

When he said he would take a look at Park Jungwoo’s condition, he had secretly swindled his pockets.

“Oh, wow. This bastard carries a lot of cash around.”

He took the bills stuffed inside the wallet with a smirk.

The rumors of salaries of large guilds being no joke seemed to be true.

“Hm? What’s this?”

While he was rummaging through the wallet, a black gem the size of a 50¢ coin caught his attention.

‘This is... a mutant’s starstone?’

The size was similar to that of the Ant-horn’s starstone he had harvested.

‘Why does that bastard have this?’

As the appearance of mutants was extremely rare, it wasn’t easy to get ahold of a mutant’s starstone.

But why did it come out of Park Jungwoo’s wallet all of a sudden?

“...I’ll need to find out more about this.”

To simply take it as good news, something felt fishy.

Swoosh—

* * *

Reaper Scans

Translator – Maccas

Proofreader – ilafy

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* * *

He started to hear footsteps from the hall ten minutes after roughly tossing the wallet into the waste bin.

Thump, Thump—

Heavy footsteps could be felt from the hallway.

Click—

Opening the door, a man came in.

“I apologize for making you wait so long.”

He seemed to be in his late thirties.

It was a tanned man with a tall height reaching around 190cm with muscles that seemed to want to burst out.

“.....”

From the overwhelming feeling like that of facing a tank, Ohjin momentarily lost his words.

“You are Awakener Ohjin... correct? The one who possesses the stigma of Lyra.”

“Ah, yes. That is correct.”

“My introduction was late. I’m Team Leader Han Joonman from the disaster countermeasures headquarters of the Special Disaster & Security Management Association.

The humongous man lent out his hand.

Shaking the hand full of calluses, Ohjin could feel the electrifying strength climbing up from his grip.

‘Woah.’

He was a powerful being incomparable with the likes of Park Jungwoo.

“Your constellation by any chance...”

“I’m a 6-Star Awakener of Taurus.’

Taurus was a constellation that belonged to the 12 Zodiacs, just like Scorpio.

Because he had reached 6-Star on top of that, Ohjin couldn’t help but feel the suffocating pressure.

“I heard that there was nothing to be seen amongst the association’s Awakeners, but I guess they were all nonsense.”

“Haha. Well... it isn’t entirely nonsense.”

Team Leader Han Joonman laughed bitterly while nodding his head.

“Anyways, is the fact that you possess the stigma of Lyra really true?” he asked with an expression full of disbelief.

Well.

Awakeners that were granted a stigma from the celestials known as the ‘North Stars’. Even if you took into account the entire world, there were but twelve of them.

In addition, all twelve of them were Awakeners that were granted the stigmas by Deneb.

They called the Awakeners that were granted stigmas by Deneb ‘North Star’s apostles’. As every single one of them was incredibly skilled, they had their names known across the entire world.

Although attention to the other apostles of the North Stars was gathered from the extraordinary powers they had shown, only the existence of Vega and Polaris was known, and they had never made an Awakener to date.

In other words, Ohjin was the first Awakener in the world who had been granted a stigma by Vega.

“I’ll show you.”

Actions were faster than words.

He unbuttoned his shirt and showed him the stigma engraved on his left chest.

“Hmm...”

Team Leader Han Joonman observed the stigma with a serious expression.

He had an expression that spoke out that he wasn't sure yet.

“Did you say you came here in order to take the evaluation test?”

“Yes.”

“...If it's okay with Awakener Gwon Ohjin, would it be okay if I conducted the test personally?”

‘Personally?’

What kind of 6-Star Awakener does an evaluation test?

‘This will slightly mess up my plans...’

Just when he was about to open his mouth to refuse.

‘Hm... Now that I think about it, it's not all that bad.’

He thought of the possibility that this method would be better than his original plan.

“Yes, I understand.”

“Thank you. Then let's move to the testing grounds right away.”

Nodding his head, he followed the back of Team Leader Han.

“—Alright then.”

After walking through the complicated hallways for five minutes, he could see the spacious testing grounds located inside the association.

Surrounding the testing grounds was tempered glass made specially with starstones for Awakeners.

‘They got rid of the spectators.’

Because it wasn't like spectating was against the rules, he had heard that a couple of people passing by would usually come to spectate, but it seemed like the team leader had directly restricted entry.

‘He unexpectedly has good senses.’

‘Even though he looks like he could chew on iron ingots for breakfast.’

“Since you said you're a warrior-type, the examination method will be a simple spar.”

Team Leader Han Joonman, who had put on protective gloves, took his stance.

“Can I really use this instead of a sparring weapon?”

Ohjin tapped on Lee Shinhyuk's spear that he had left at the depository when he first entered the association building.

“Haha. Of course.”

“...If that’s the case.”

It didn’t matter since the opposing side said it was okay.

‘A 6-Star Awakener.’

No matter how overpowered the stigma of Lyra was, could it really close the gap of four stars?

And an Awakener affiliated with the 12 Zodiacs at that?

‘I’ll have to try and find out.’

Is that the reason he decided to conduct this test?

‘Fuu.’

He breathed in while lowering his stance.

Breathing in low and slow.

His body moved according to the ‘Spearmanship of Pyxis’ engraved in his brain.

And—

Uooong!!—

—the stigma engraved on his left chest blazed out with blue lights.

Crack, Crackle!!!—

The blue lightning sparked out fiercely.

“Ch-hat!!”

Boom!—

Violently kicking his feet, he sprinted.

He jabbed out the blue lightning-infused spear with all his strength.

Kaang!!—

The spear blade that hit Team Leader Han’s forearms strongly bounced off.

It didn’t feel like a human’s arm, but instead like some kind of hard cast iron.

“...Huh?”

The expression of Han Joonman, who had easily blocked the spear, stiffened.

“What the hell...”

Han Joonman’s mouth fell open.

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REAPER SCANS

I'm Not a Regressor

[Translator – Maccas]

[Proofreader – ilafy]

Chapter 11: Registration Test (3)

Twitch—

The blue lightning moved to his right arm.

His forearm that had deflected the spear's blade couldn't move properly.

'No way.'

The eyes of Team Leader Han Joonman trembled slightly.

He had certainly confirmed moments ago that the stigma had two stars.

The blocked attack of an Awakener that was only a mere 2-Star was able to make his arms difficult to move.

"Just what..."

Before he had the time to grasp the situation accurately, a sharp spear strike stabbed out at him.

"Hmpt!"

Bang!—

Taking a raging step forward, he compressed his shoulders.

As the spear's blade bounced off, he saw a clear opening to strike at Ohjin's chest.

He roughly swang his gloved fists.

Bam!—

“Kugh!!”

Ohjin, who had taken the blow right on his chest, flew back like a baseball that had been hit by a bat.

Ragdolling on the ground, he crashed into the testing ground’s wall.

“Cough, cough!”

He couldn’t breathe properly.

Rather than a human fist, it felt more like he had been hit by a car racing at full speed.

‘Holy shit.’

‘What kind of monstrous power is that?’

A sharp pain passed through his spine.

“A-Are you okay?”

“...Yes.”

Putting Team Leader Han Joonman’s panicked expression behind him, he stood up.

Although the arm that was grasping the spear was slightly shivering in addition to his shaking legs...

‘Still.’

He could still fight.

He could still move.

Owooong!!—

The stigma on his left chest started to pour out light.

The heavy pressure that had been pushing down on his chest reduced slightly.

‘Stabbing is not enough.’

He couldn’t pierce through those solid arms with a direct attack.

‘If that’s the case...’

Hwoong!!—

Lowering his body, he swung his spear in a clean motion.

The ankles were his target.

The blue lightning-infused spear blade flashed across the floor.

“Hyat!!”

Team Leader Han Joonman kicked towards the spear blade that was heading towards his ankle.

A movement like that of kicking a soccer ball.

‘That’s right.’

Ohjin’s mouth perked up.

Ohjin knew that he wouldn’t try to avoid it.

Pang!!—

Just before the low-swung spear was about to be hit by the foot, he let go of his grasp on the spear’s shaft.

The spear bounced on the ground and rotated in the air..

Snatching the spear—

“Hyaaaaaa!!”

—he struck down towards Joonman’s shoulder!

Ppaaaaak!!—

“Kugh!!”

Recoiling his body, Team Leader Han Joonman took a step back.

Chasing after him, Ohjin gripped his spear.

“Haa, haa!”

An intense exaltation.

The insides of his head were burning up.

Smirking, a thrilling sensation spread throughout his body.

‘A little more.’

He wanted to enjoy the sensation of his body burning up.

He wanted to feel the thrill of scratching the surface.

Owooong!!—

The stigma let out a blazing light.

Craaaackle!!!!—

Just like when he had received the blessing from Vega, the blue lightning fiercely blazed up.

#Thunder & Lightning Lv1# has increased to #Thunder & Lightning Lv2#.

A blue message box appeared in front of his eyes.

He ignored it.

“Fuu.”

He took in a large breath.

—The smell of piercing thick sweat.

The smell of air, dust, and steel.

As if he was using the stigma of the **Hunting Dogs**, the senses in his body sharpened to its edge.

‘Just a little... more.’

Swing the spear.

Stab the spear.

More tenaciously. More brutally. More viciously!

Kang! Kakang! Kagaaang!!!—

“Kuuuugh!!”

Team Leader Hanjoon circulated both his arms to protect his face from the spear strikes that rained down.

‘What’s this?’

His doubt grew wider.

Up to the point of him no longer being able to remember the surprise he had first felt, the stunning astonishment left him shaken.

‘Just what’s going on?’

Kaang! Kang!—

What he was surprised by was not the fiercely blazing blue lightning nor the wildly swinging spear.

Above that...

Above something trivial like that...

‘Just why... is he becoming stronger?’

Out of hand, out of control.

Like a fallen drop of black ink spreading out in transparent water.

A sticky and ominous feeling wrapped around him.

Owoong!!—

The stigma engraved on Team Leader Han Joonman started to burn brightly.

Although a 6-Star Awakener using his stigma against a 2-Star Awakener was a ridiculous thing to do—

“Hyaaaaap!!”

—this wasn’t the time to argue about that.

Baaaang!!!—

“Kuhuuuk!!!”

As the glove exploded, the thick fist ferociously swung out.

The wave of strength caused by the stigma of Taurus compressed the air, making it explode in a frightening fashion.

Bang! Ba-Bang!—

Ohjin, who was caught in the explosion, bounced on the floor like a skipping stone.

“O-Ohjin!”

The panicked Team Leader Kang Joonman urgently rushed towards him.

“Medics!! Quick, come and bring the medics!!!”

As Team Leader Kang Joonman urgently shouted out, an Awakener that was on standby outside the entrance hurriedly came in.

“Ah, uh...”

“I’ll start by stopping the bleeding!”

The stigma engraved on the left chest of the Awakener started to pour out light.

The blue light pouring out of his two arms started to flow into Ohjin’s body.

“Haa, haa.”

Ohjin’s course breathing started to return to normal.

“Fortunately, it’s not a big injury.”

“Phew...”

As Team Leader Han Joonman felt at ease, he exhaled a breath out of relief.

“Bring a potion if there’s one available. The best one.”

“Yes, Team Leader.

The Awakener who had rushed outside soon came back holding a potion.

* * *

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Translator – Maccas

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* * *

It was a potion made from finely grounded starstones created with the power of an Awakener of Aquarius.

“Please, take it.”

“Gulp, gulp.”

Ohjin calmly drank the potion Team Leader Han Joonman passed over.

His body that felt stinging pain soon returned to a completely normal state.

‘Damn, how much is this?’

Looking at the empty potion bottle, the first thought that came to mind was that it was regretful.

A potion made from an Awakener of Aquarius.

One bottle would easily exceed \$1000.

“I apologize!!!!”

Team Leader Han Joonman bowed down from his hips in a 90°angle.

“No, don’t worry about it.”

He shook his head while smiling.

Although he wasn’t able to win, he was thoroughly satisfied with the fact that he had driven a 6-Star Awakener to the point of using a stigma.

“Anyways, is the confirmation finished with this?”

“...Of course.”

Team Leader Han Joonman nodded his head with a heavy expression.

Star of the Weaver Girl, the apostle of Vega was a ludicrous existence far exceeding his imagination.

“This isn’t something I should be saying after committing such a big mistake, but...”

Repeatedly slightly lifting and closing his mouth with a hesitant expression, he soon opened his mouth carefully.

“Could you please spare me some time?”

“Time?”

“Yes. There’s a private proposal I would like to offer.”

A proposal.

‘Should I hear him out first?’

Ohjin nodded his head while lifting himself up.

* * *

“Coffee or tea, which one would you like?”

“Tap water.”

It slipped out of his mouth since it was the only thing he drank.

“Huh?”

“Ah. Coffee, please.”

As he waited for a moment on the chair, Team Leader Han Joonman brought two steaming coffees.

“What did you want to talk about?”

“First of all... do you have a separate guild you want to join in mind?”

“No, there is none.”

He shook his head firmly.

Even though he took the evaluation test, his goal wasn't to join a guild.

“Then...?”

“I'm thinking of acting as a mercenary.”

“Ah.”

A short exclamation flowed out of Team Leader Han Joonman's mouth.

Mercenary.

In other words, Awakeners that took requests for matters that were hard to solve with a guild's current members.

It was a job with high risk, as you wouldn't be affiliated to any one place, but if you had the capabilities, you could bring in high earnings that would find the earnings of most major guilds' executives amusing.

‘The simple difference between a freelancer and an office worker.’

It wasn't hard to raise his prices after receiving a good evaluation from the evaluation test together with the title ‘North Star's apostle’.

“...By any chance, do you have any thoughts on joining the Association?”

As expected, a recruitment proposition.

“I think it'll be tough for me to be affiliated with any one place.”

The moment you were affiliated with a group, it was inevitable to have your actions be restricted.

And currently, Ohjin was in a situation where his actions mustn't ever be restricted.

'Since I don't know what deeds I'll have to commit in order to become a Regressor.'

Putting the cup of coffee he had finished drinking on top of the table, he stood up.

"Then I'll take my—"

"Your affiliation itself will be within the Association, but there will be no need to commute to work as an official employee. Ah, of course, you'll receive a monthly salary even if you don't go to work. Though it is very lacking compared to major guilds."

What?

Getting paid a monthly salary without going to work?

"What do you mean by that?"

"It's exactly as I said. Only keep the Association's name as your affiliation; it'll be fine if you work freely as a mercenary. If it's okay with you, we could arrange moderate requests and forward them to you."

It was a tempting proposal.

If he could receive requests through the Association, there would be no cases of his remuneration getting chipped off.

'The conditions are great, but...'

'A bait shouldn't be taken right away.'

"Hmm..."

Frowning deeply, he pretended to be momentarily lost in contemplation.

"Is there perhaps a condition you want?"

"Two months... no, could you prevent my information from spreading for about one month?"

He didn't have any thoughts on living while hiding his strength.

However, he couldn't use the title 'North Star's apostle' right away in a situation where he hadn't had any preparations set.

Although the title 'North Star's apostle' was most definitely a powerful authority, with authority would follow responsibility.

'I need time.'

He needed the performance and skill to carry the weight that came with the name North Star.

"I understand. We'll try to prevent information from spreading on the media and internet with the best of our capabilities."

'Nice.'

He could prevent the information from spreading explosively just with that.

‘To sum it up, if I just leave my affiliation with the Association, I can prevent my information from spreading, and they’ll forward me good requests on their own?’

And on top of that, he would receive a monthly salary without commuting to work.

‘Holy shit.’

The conditions made his balls shiver.

It was extremely one-sided if you only looked at the conditions, but you could somewhat understand the stance of the Association.

‘It’s an opportunity to have the Star of the Weaver Girl’s apostle as a part of their Association.’

There was no opportunity like this for the Association that had been getting its authority pushed back by the major guilds.

“...How is it?”

Gulp—

Team Leader Han Joonman asked while swallowing nervously.

His expression was full of unease.

Ohjin comfortably sat on the sofa and crossed his legs.

Even though he had already decided to take up the Association’s offer in his mind—

‘I want to come off really fucking charismatic.’

—It’d be all for nothing if he came running to their doorstep like an excited puppy.

He would eventually degenerate into the Association’s dog.

‘I can’t become a dog.’

He had lived like a dog for the past eight years.

No.

He had lived like a dog his entire life.

‘Not anymore.’

He wouldn’t live like a dog anymore.

He wouldn’t yield; he wouldn’t obey anymore.

‘From today onwards, I’m—’

‘—**The ‘Owner’.**’

“Hmm, I think I’ll need more time to thin—”

“In addition, we’ll grant you a full tax exemption.”

“I’ll become the Association’s dog starting from today.”

“Huh?”

“Grrrr!! Woof!! Woof!!”

“...”

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REAPER SCANS

I’m Not a Regressor

[Translator – Maccas]

[Proofreader – ilafy]

Chapter 12: Sanctum (1)

One week after officially joining the association.

Even though he had constantly been going in and out of dungeons in order to promote to 3-Star, he was unable to in the end.

‘Well, trying to reach 3-Star in a week in itself is having no conscience.’

Since it was something he had already predicted, it didn’t feel all that unfortunate.

“Fuu.”

A breath full of nervousness flowed out of his mouth.

He confirmed the date on his phone.

November 13.

It was the date he had promised to meet with Vega.

‘Sanctum.’

Star’s sanctuary.

The world the celestials resided in.

He had heard a lot, but it was the first time he had personally visited it.

“Ugh, I’m getting butterflies.”

Although he was sure he had prepared quite thoroughly, thinking about directly meeting and talking with Vega made his stomach start to fill with butterflies.

‘Let’s get ready and—’

Taking a deep breath in, he calmed his mind.

The moment he made a mistake here, his plans would all go to waste.

‘—take off.’

Slap!—

Lightly slapping both sides of his cheek, he moved his feet.

Murmur Murmur—

Seoul, Hongdae.

The street that used to be filled with youths’ passion was now crawling with another type of passion.

“Oh god, please accept my wishes!!!”

“Ahh, oh great celestial!!!”

“Bless this humble bug with the power of the constellation!”

The moment he took a step out of the station that had taken him an hour to arrive at, he was met with the ringing sound of prayers akin to madness.

‘Is this what I saw on the news before?’

In front of the gate that led to the sanctum were crowds of people that had gathered to try and win over the hearts of the celestials so that they could become Awakeners.

‘...Though if the celestials saw the state they’re in, they’d probably lose any desire to select them.’

Worn-out clothes and dark grime covered their bodies; a dreadful stench pricked his nose. They hadn’t bathed for days on end.

It was a world where the value of life became an amusing joke.

Life was nothing but an endless misery for those without power, wealth, and authority.

‘It is unfortunate, but...’

That’s all.

He had neither the obligation nor willingness to care about others' lives.

Owoooong!—

Passing by the people gathered in front of the gates, he headed towards the gate that led to the sanctum.

A humongous gate that seemed to reach over 30 meters.

Just by looking at the blazing blue fissures, he could feel the overwhelming pressure pouring out.

‘Did they say that there are hundreds of worlds like these?’

‘Well then.’

He moved his feet towards the gate without hesitation.

There wasn't anyone guarding or confirming identities at the entrance.

There was no reason to.

It would be no different from a rabbit protecting the entrance of a tiger's den.

What kind of insane Awakener would make a fuss at the sanctuary where hundreds of celestials were gathered?

‘Furthermore, they say that the commandment's restrictions are much weaker inside the sanctum.’

If you carelessly caused a commotion, it would end in catastrophe.

Owoooong!—

He passed through the fissure that blazed with blue light.

Along with the feeling of floating—

“...ho.”

—the scene of the cosmos unfolded.

Uncountable stars sparkled in the black darkness.

The Milky Way seemed to cut the cosmos in half.

In a place where the rivers flowed with starlight...

‘This is the sanctum.’

Ohjin unconsciously looked around with his mouth open wide in awe of the overwhelming beauty.

He slowly moved his feet along the road made of silver light.

Following the humongous silver road, he was met with a crossroad that split into several other routes.

Sanctuaries with various shapes and forms could be seen at the end of each road.

‘It looks like a tree made of the galaxy.’

He himself felt like he was a fruit dangling at the end of a massive tree stem.

“...But how do I find Vega here.”

How could he find Vega amongst the hundreds when he could see dozens of sanctuaries with just his eyes.

As he stood still with narrowed eyes, a passing Awakener struck up a conversation with him.

“Is this your first time in the sanctum?”

It was a youth with a friendly impression that seemed to be in his mid-late twenties.

“Ah, yes. That’s right. I came here to find my celestial, but I don’t know where to go.”

“Haha. I wandered around a lot at first too. Come this way. I’ll show you where the map is.”

* * *

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* * *

As expected, there was a map.

Well.

It was a place that was impossible to navigate without one.

“Over here.”

‘Were there this many celestials?’

There were also many constellations he had never seen in his life.

‘Let’s see. Vega is...’

He searched for Lyra on the map.

Even though there were hundreds of constellations, it wasn’t hard to find Lyra.

‘The highest place in the sanctum.’

Since if you considered it a tree, it would be located at the peak.

‘I guess Vega really is an incredible celestial.’

There was nothing reaching her height except the other North Stars, Polaris and Deneb.

“Have you found it?”

“Yes. I’ll need to go way up.”

“Way up...”

The youths’ eyes expanded.

“A-Are you perhaps an Awakener of the 12 Zodiacs?!”

He looked towards Ohjin with eyes full of envy.

Slightly lowering his head, he could confirm that the constellation of the 12 Zodiacs were located right under Lyra.

Smirk—

He nodded his head with a light smile.

“I was lucky.”

“Wow... you were really an apostle of the 12 Zodiacs.”

His voice was filled with envy.

“12 Zodiacs?”

“Where?”

Was it because the surroundings heard the youth?

He could hear the nearby Awakeners starting to murmur while looking towards their direction.

“Ugh... I’m so jealous.

“If only I had one of the 12 Zodiacs...”

Steaming gazes mixed with clear jealousy were focused onto Ohjin.

The gazes from the novice Awakeners that had entered the sanctum for the first time were especially focused on him.

Observing the gazes focused on him, Ohjin turned his body.

“Well then, I’ll take my leave. Thank you for showing me the way.”

“Ah, here is my business card! Please contact me if there’s anything you want to ask about!”

As he was about to take his leave, the youth with the kind impression lent out his business card.

The intention of wanting to make a connection with an apostle of the 12 Zodiacs could be felt.

Ohjin took the business card and nodded.

‘The prestige that comes with the constellation’s name really is important.’

Without needing to say anything, the opposing side would bow down and do everything for him themselves.

“Haha. Then I’ll contact you later.”

“Yes, sir!”

The youth replied with a salute like a private that had just entered the army.

At this point, it was hard to tell which person was the one who either received or gave help.

“Well, then.”

‘Should we go to meet our goddess?’

Ohjin slowly climbed the road made of rays of silver light.

“Ugh.”

“When will I be able to climb that road?”

“Wake up. How would we ever be able to go up the road towards the 12 Zodiacs.”

Ohjin could slightly hear the murmuring sound of the Awakeners.

‘Constellation of the 12 Zodiacs, huh?’

Smirk—

Ohjin moved his feet.

Past the 12 Zodiacs,

towards the Star of the Weaver Girl’s sanctuary.

* * *

[You’ve come.]

After entering the silver light sanctuary at the peak of the sanctum, the beautiful voice echoed out in his head.

Religious symbols and glamorous murals were nowhere to be seen in the empty sanctuary.

Inside, a brilliantly shining silver-haired goddess was floating.

“I wanted to see you, Vega!”

Smiling brightly, he headed towards her.

“Ah.”

Suddenly shaking his shoulders, he stopped his steps.

“...I apologize.”

He dropped his head with a painful expression.

Softly biting his lips, he clenched his fists.

[...It seems that your mind is still in disorder.]

With a bitter expression, Vega slowly floated through the air towards him.

The future memories that didn't exist for her.

Looking at the appearance of the Awakener suffering from the gap between that memory and reality, her heart became one step heavier.

[This lady isn't the same woman you remember.]

“...No.”

Ohjin shook his head with a gentle smile.

“The Vega within my memories... was beautiful, no different from the present.”

[Mmh. You're saying such embarrassing words again.]

Khmm—

Vega cleared her throat and looked away.

[Even if you flatter me, there's nothing this lady can do for you.]

He could see the golden eyes that shone like gems slightly waver.

‘Nice start.’

It seemed to be working out, even though he felt sick enough to his stomach to throw up the calorie bar he had eaten that morning.

[That's that.]

She urgently changed the subject and put her hands on top of Ohjin's stigma.

[To be promoted to 2-Star in only the week I didn't see you... Indeed, you are the Heaven-Defying Star.]

“Since it's something I've done once before,” Ohjin replied nonchalantly, shrugging his shoulders.

[Fufu. That makes sense.]

Vega nodded her head with a satisfied smile.

[First of all, I want to hear a detailed explanation about the future you know. Won't this lady need to know what happens in order to be of help?]

“.....”

Fuck.

At last, the time had come.

Gulp—

Swallowing nervously, he slowly started the story he had prepared.

“In the near future... an existence known as the Heavenly Demon will appear.”

[Heavenly Demon?]

“Yes.”

This was the title he had roughly come up with from Vega’s words, ‘The one possessing the Black Heaven will end the world’.

The demon who carries the Black Heaven, the Heavenly Demon.

Although it couldn’t be more simple, it was said that the simplest and easiest to understand lies would work the best.

‘Not like there’s any way I was actually called the Heavenly Demon.’

‘Heavenly Demon?’

‘It’s not like this is a B-grade Wuxia story; why would anyone use a title like that.’

[Then are you saying that the Heavenly Demon is the one who possesses the Black Heaven?]

“That’s correct. However...”

Fuu—

Taking in one deep breath.

“As the Heavenly Demon had thoroughly hidden his identity, we were unable to identify his face, name, and not even if he was a human being or not.”

[Are you saying that, even as the Regressor, you don’t know?]

“Yes. Even though I’ve tried to find out up to the point of my regression, I failed in the end.”

[Hmm?]

As if she couldn’t understand, Vega tilted her head.

[If you used the ‘Pledge of Stars’ to regress to the past, it would mean that you killed the Black Heaven’s owner... Are you saying that you were unable to confirm his face even after his death?]

“Huh?”

‘What the fuck is the ‘Pledge of Stars’?’

—

