Prince Revolution! Presents

The Legend of Sun Knight



Volume 1: An Introduction to Knight Theory

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SYNOPSIS

I am a knight. To be precise, I am the Church of the God of Light's Sun Knight.

The Church of the God of Light worships and serves the God of Light, and theirs is one of the three largest religions on this continent.

As the whole continent knows, the Church of the God of Light has twelve holy knights and each one has his own unique personality and features.

To be the Sun Knight is to have shining golden hair, sky blue eyes, a compassionate nature, and a brilliant smile.

"The benevolent God of Light will forgive your sins."

I must have said that line at least a million times in my time as the Sun Knight.

However, the greatest wish in my life is to be able to stand before the entire continent and roar, "Damn your 'the whole continent knows'! This Sun Knight just doesn't feel like smiling! I just don't want to forgive these human trashes! I just want to pepper my sentences with 'f***'!"

Unfortunately, even to this day, I continue to wear a smile as I say, "The benevolent God of Light will forgive your sins."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Yu Wo:

Who am I? Sometimes I am like a warrior, wielding a sword on the battlefield, with limitless passion and energy. At other times, I resemble a mage, with a mind devoted to research, completely absorbed in the things I like. Or I might be like a thief, leading a free and easy life, letting fate lead me to distant and unfamiliar lands. Occasionally, however, I am similar to a priest, with that gentle heart, filled with compassion towards the livings things of this world. Ultimately, I am a kindly, fantastical world.

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About Prince Rev!

Prince Revolution! (or PR! for short) was started in late April 2009 by Erialis for the purpose of translating and sharing the ½ Prince and The Legend of Sun Knight novels with other fans (who unfortunately couldn't read Chinese). PR!'s crew has since expanded to include thirteen translators, eight proof-readers, and three Chinese/English editors, as well as two sister sites who are translating our work into Spanish and German.

Links

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Contents

Prologue: About Religion 08

Rule #1: "Maintain Your Smile at All Times" 10

Rule #2: "Gracefully, Leisurely, and Most Importantly, Fair-Skinned" 20

Rule #3: "Even in the Face of Death, One Must Die Gracefully" 38

Rule #4: "One's Ability to Recover has to be Better than Good" 54

Rule #5: "Save up for Retirement to Avoid Impoverishment in One's Old Age" 66

Rule #6: "Build your Social Network! Maintain Good Relationships with Others, Even if It's a Corpse" 82

Rule #7: "Don't Underestimate Anything; Even a Shirt Will Bite you if it's Angry" 98

Rule #8: "Don't Act Suspicious While Wearing a Cloak" 114

Rule #9: "If you Want to Know a Secret, Ask a Woman" 126

Rule #10: "Carrying out Justice is the Reason for the Sun Knight's Existence" 156

Shared Rule: "No Matter What Happens, the Sun Knight is Perfect" 160

Epilogue: Character Introductions 164

Compilation of Footnotes





Character Introductions

Good, Warm-hearted Faction



THE SUN KNIGHT:

"The benevolent God of Light will forgive your sins."

Real name: Grisia Sun

Age: 20+

Hair color: Gold; Eye color: Sky blue

Widely regarded as: The benevolent spokesperson of the God of Light, the man closest to perfection alive.



THE STORM KNIGHT:

"More reports to write again…"

Real name: ???

Age: 20+

Hair color: Blue (dyed); Eye color: Green

Widely regarded as: A carefree, footloose charmer, the knight-representative of "freedom".



THE BLAZE KNIGHT:

"Sun!"

Real name: ???

Age: 20+

Hair color: Red; Eye colour: Amber

Widely regarded as: A person with fiery red hair with a temper to match, and worship The Sun Knight.



THE LEAF KNIGHT:

"Sun, are you really all right? Does it hurt? Do you need help? Are you sure?"

Real name: ???

Age: 20+

Hair color: Green; Eye color: Gray-green

Widely regarded as: A truly nice guy



THE EARTH KNIGHT:

"I'm not too used to sp-speaking with girls…"

Real name: ???

Age: 20+

Hair color: Brown; **Eye color:** Hazel

Widely regarded as: The yearly winner of "The Man Women Want Most as Their Husband" poll.

Character Introductions

Cruel, Cold-hearted Faction



THE JUDGMENT KNIGHT:

"The harsh God of Light will punish you for your sins."

Real name: Lesus Judge

Age: 20+

Hair color: Black; **Eye color:** Black

Widely regarded as: The most terrifying and cruelest of the Holy Knights, responsible for judging criminals.



THE ICE KNIGHT:

"..."

Real name: ???

Age: 20+

Hair color: Light blue; **Eye color:** Blue-gray

Widely regarded as: A cold person who doesn't like to talk much.



PINK:

Real name: ???

Age: ???

Hair color: Pink; **Eye color:** Pink

Widely regarded as: A necromancer.

DEATH KNIGHT:

Real name: Roland

Age: 20+

Hair color: Pale gray; **Eye color:** Pale gray

Widely regarded as: A dead knight.



· Prologue ·

About Religions

This is a continent filled with religions.

On this continent, “god” is not a flimsy, dubious entity or a name that one uses only when yelling for help. Gods are real, and a number of them exist.

Some gods are extremely weak. Of course, when we say “weak”, we mean by the standards of the gods. Other gods are exceedingly strong. As the strength of a god is largely derived from the piety of the god’s believers, the number of believers is often the crucial factor determining how strong or how weak a god is.

As such, the gods often resemble gangsters fighting over territory as they desperately attempt to extend the influence of their own religions.

However, if in order to extend their religions’ influence, the gods were to carelessly use their powers on the continent and end up conflicting with other gods, it wouldn’t be too long before the entire continent disappeared from existence entirely.

In order to avoid such a situation, the mightiest gods among them all established “the Contract of the Gods”. All of the gods were thus forbidden from directly using their divine powers on the continent itself. Their only option was to invest their powers in some of their followers, who would then wield that power in their stead.

In this way, the multitude of religions began to flourish.

One of the best-known faiths of all is that of the God of Light’s, under the jurisdiction of the Church of the God of Light. Although the Church of the God of Light is no longer as renowned and influential as it

used to be due to the growing influence of the God of War and the Shadow God, it is still as they say: a dead camel is still bigger than a horse. As such, even though it is no longer as widespread as before, and though the number of believers diminishes with each passing year, ten out of ten people will still name the religion of Light when asked for the most ancient and traditional faith of all.

Everyone knows that the best-known aspect of the religion of Light is the twelve Holy Knights, with the positions passed down through the generations.

The most famous of them all, which everyone knows – whether you are a follower of the God of Light or a three-year-old child – is the one they call the man closest to perfection itself, the Sun Knight.

The Sun Knight is the leader of the twelve Holy Knights, the spokesperson for the God of Light, and he always wears a gentle smile as incandescent as the sun. He has a compassionate heart, believes that all humans are inherently kind, and he will never give up on any human soul.

More than any other Sun Knight, the thirty-eighth generation Sun Knight is widely held to have been the very epitome of perfection. It has even been said that he was the incarnation of the God of Light himself and his exploits require five long epics to be fully narrated.

He dispatched the darkness' Death Knight back into the abyss and defeated the malevolent Undying Witch. Not to forget that he also slew a dragon, rescued a princess, and destroyed the Great Demon King…

That's right! This book is about the thirty-eighth generation Sun Knight.

From here on, let us witness his noble exploits together. It all began from the first conversation between the young thirty-eighth generation Sun Knight and his great teacher, the thirty-seventh generation Sun Knight…

***

"Child, from this day forth you are the successor to the position of Sun Knight. So long as you stand firm in the face of tribulation, grow in courage with each trial you encounter, and defend your knight's honor no matter what difficulty or temptation you face, you will receive from my hands the title of Sun Knight the day you come of age."

"Teacher, may I recant my decision?"

"No!"

"Why?"

"Because I forgot to choose a back-up Sun Knight."

"…"

· First Rule of Sun Knights ·

"Maintain Your Smile at All Times"

I am a knight. To be precise, I am the Sun Knight of the Church of the God of Light.

The Church of the God of Light worships and serves the God of Light, and it is one of the three largest religions on this continent. But although it may only be ranked third in terms of size, if we're talking in terms of history, then there is no other religious organization that can compare with the Church of the God of Light.

As everyone knows, the Church of the God of Light consists of the Holy Temple and the Sanctuary of Light, which are organized along militaristic and clerical lines respectively.

Naturally, I am a knight of the Holy Temple, of which the twelve captains of the holy knights are a part, and whose positions are passed down through the generations. Since ancient times, each captain of the holy knights has led a company of knights. For example, I am the Sun Knight, so I should be leading the Sun Knight Company.

However, the chances of war breaking out are extremely low during these peaceful times. Without wars, the knight companies cannot mobilize; if the knight companies cannot mobilize, then they cannot plunder, pillage, or ransack under the cover of the chaos of war...! In any case, at the current moment the Holy Temple is unable to afford the upkeep for twelve full companies

of knights. Thus, they decided to simply put together all the knights instead and form a Holy Temple Company, which can be further divided into twelve platoons. As for which platoon reports to me, it's obviously the Sun Knight Platoon.

The original Sun Knight Company may have shrunk into the Sun Knight Platoon, but of all captains of the holy knights, this change has the least impact on me. That's because as the leader of the Twelve Holy Knights, I am naturally the commander of the entire Holy Temple Company. As long as I am a company commander, who cares if it's the Sun Knight Company or the Holy Temple Company, right?

So, who are the twelve captains of the holy knights?

Whoa, I'd better introduce them to you slowly. If I just rattle off a list of names, ten out of ten people wouldn't be able to remember who the captains are.

Let's start by taking a look at this fellow walking next to me. That's right; I'm talking about the guy with the long, blue hair who is busy winking flirtatiously at all the nearby ladies. That's him, the Storm Knight.[1]

Each Holy Knight has his own expected personality – that's right, you heard correctly, "expected" personality.

For instance, the Sun Knight is born to be the benevolent spokesperson of the God of Light.

That's right; I am the benevolent spokesperson of the God of Light.

As such, no matter what the circumstances are, I must smile a smile as incandescent as the sun. Even if the person I'm about to meet is the one they call the most obnoxious monarch of all five kingdoms on the entire continent, that fat pig of a king who rules over the Kingdom of Forgotten Sound[2], I must still smile as though I'm about to meet a hot babe.

To force myself to treat a fat pig of a guy as a hot babe – oh brother! Surely you understand the difficulty level of this?

"The benevolent God of Light will forgive your sins."

This sentence is one which I have to say over a hundred times a day, plus I must wear my most perfect smile as I say it. This is the life of a Sun Knight, to forever wear a smile and forgive others.

---

[1] **The Storm Knight:** Two things to note. Firstly, "Storm Knight" is a name and also a position, so on occasion we translate it as "the Storm Knight" and other times as "Storm Knight". Secondly, in Chinese, Storm's name in Chinese is actually "暴风" (bào fēng), which can mean anything between a fierce storm and a typhoon. The second character is the character for "wind", which may explain Storm's "personality" a bit.

[2] **Kingdom of Forgotten Sound:** In Chinese, this name can also be interpreted as "Kingdom of Forgotten Fame", because the character here which we translated as "sound" is actually closer to "ringing", and it also sometimes loosely associated with the notion of fame or renown.

This is because, as the entire continent knows, the Sun Knight is the benevolent spokesperson of the God of the Light and he will never give up on the redemption of any individual!

Thus, even if I actually really want to kill that fat pig of a king with a single stab of my sword and make that old bugger who refuses to die hurry up and pass the throne on to his far more pleasant son, I cannot. I can only continue to wear a brilliant smile, walk over, and do my best to persuade that fat pig of a king to stop collecting more taxes.

Ah, but we're going off-topic.

Back to what I was saying, just as the Sun Knight is the benevolent spokesperson of the God of Light, the Storm Knight is the knight-representative of "freedom". As such, he is "carefree" and "a footloose charmer[3]".

As long as it's a meeting he can skip, he will skip it!

As long as it's a woman who looks better than a dragon, he will have to give her a flirtatious wink.

As long as it's something that has even the slightest connection to "freedom", he will have to get involved. For instance, if there's a revolution somewhere, he must at least head down there and give a rousing speech. He would even be unable to leave after the speech at times and end up being forced to lead some rebel group or another.

However, what's still more mysterious is that even if he skipped all of the meetings called by the Holy Temple, he would still know exactly what had been discussed during the meetings and even manage to complete all the work that had been assigned to him. (Sometimes he will have an especially huge amount of work. It can't be helped; who asked him not to attend the meeting? Of course we would take advantage of his absence to push all the work to him!) He would even know if the next meeting absolutely cannot be skipped, in which case he would show up on time for work.

This is to say, you may be called the carefree Storm Knight, and on the surface you are allowed to skip meetings, but you still have to complete the reports assigned to you!

As for the part about him being "a footloose charmer"… On our way here, no matter if they were princesses, ladies, female servants, or matronly housewives armed with toilet plungers, he would wink flirtatiously at the women we met and there would always be a playful smile on his lips.

However, I have suspected all this time that this fellow is actually still an innocent virgin. After all, in spite of his reputation as "a footloose charmer", in all the years I've known him, I've never once seen a pregnant woman come up to him demanding that he take responsibility.

[3] **A footloose charmer:** The description for the Storm Knight here means a man, such as a wandering hero, who is both extremely attractive to women and not tied down to particular responsibilities.

That mischievous smile of his is probably fake, just like that head of blue hair.

That's right; that fellow's hair is dyed!

Why?

As the whole continent knows, the Storm Knight has blue hair!

I don't know if the first Storm Knight really had blue hair or whether he just wanted to look cool and so dyed his hair blue. In any case, he caused a hell of a lot of trouble for subsequent generations of Storm Knights. After all, are there really that many children with blue hair to be found?

There obviously aren't any!

Thus, all the subsequent Storm Knights have had to dye their hair blue for the rest of their lives. The cause of death for eight out of every ten of them is kidney failure from dyeing their hair too much… Sigh! I'll just observe a moment of silence for you now, Storm.

"Did you say something to me, Sun?" Next to me, Storm Knight raised his eyebrows. The expression on his face seemed to be telling me not to interrupt him while he was busy giving women flirtatious winks.

"I did not, in fact, communicate any words to you, Brother Storm. Perhaps what you heard was the gentle murmuring of the benevolent God of Light," I replied with a placid smile.

A pained look darted across Storm's face. I guess that he really can't stand my way of talking, because I myself really can't stand my way of talking either. However, I have no choice but to talk in this manner, just like how Storm has no choice but to give every woman a flirtatious wink, even if she is no less hideous than a dragon.

As for me, I have no choice but to somehow link every sentence to the God of Light, even if the conversation has to do with how the toilet bowl is clogged – in which case, without a doubt, the toilet bowl must have clogged according to the God of Light's will.

Consequently, I do not like to talk. After all, nobody made it a rule that the Sun Knight must be fond of chatting.

(Praise be to the God of Light; luckily the first Sun Knight did not leave behind an impression as a talkative fellow.)

Back to the topic of hair, just like how the Storm Knight must have a head of blue hair, I, the Sun Knight, must have golden hair and blue eyes.

It was precisely because of this head of shining gold hair that during the selection competition for the twelve Holy Knights I managed to defeat another boy whose hair color was closer to brown but had three times my skill with a sword.

At that time, my teacher — that is, the previous Sun Knight — almost seemed to have a heartbroken look in his eyes as he announced that I had won the selection.

His gaze remained on that brown-haired boy the whole time.

Fortunately, although my swordsmanship was nowhere near that genius kid's level, I could still be considered to have outstanding talents in other areas, which comforted my teacher somewhat.

However, every once in a while, I would hear my teacher talking with a private investigator, saying, "Have you found the brown-haired one yet? I've already bought the hair dye from the mage…"

***

After walking for over ten minutes along a ridiculously long corridor which was a complete waste of taxpayers' money, we finally reached the audience hall. As I've said, our purpose for coming to see the king this time is to convince him to reduce the taxes…although I feel that it would already be an accomplishment in itself if I could just persuade him not to increase the taxes any further.

"Greetings, I am the Sun Knight from the Church of the God of Light. By the benevolence of the God of Light, I have come to seek an audience with His Majesty, the king, to spread the message of the God of Light's love," I said serenely to the guard, smiling.

The guard had an eager look on his face, and he gazed at me worshipfully for a few moments before turning to relay the message of our arrival. Within a moment, the doors to the audience hall were slowly swinging open.

I flashed the guard a flawless smile of thanks, and it seemed that the latter was so moved that he was on the verge of tears. Seeing the little stars glittering in his eyes, I thought, *Ha! Looks like the number of names on the members list of my fan club has just increased by one.*

The guard's expression was one of astonishment at an unexpected piece of kindness, as though he could hardly believe that I would show such courtesy even to a lowly guard. Truth be told, though, it was just him thinking too much about it. Whether it's an audience with a king or just the beggar on the street corner, there will always be a flawless smile befitting of a Sun Knight on my face, because I am a knight.

Yes, a knight – the Sun Knight with an eternally radiant smile.

***

We entered the grandiose audience hall and, sure enough, that damn tub of lard was still sitting on the throne and he was even fatter than he was the last time I saw him! He was practically as broad as three hulking warriors. *Dear God,* I thought, *how is it that he has yet to die from a heart attack or some other condition brought on by obesity?*

Wearing a perfect smile, I knelt on one knee, resisting the urge to hurl at the sight of excessively huge rolls of fat. Smoothly I picked up the king's flabby hand and quickly kissed the back of his hand before raising my head. Still smiling, I said, "Your Majesty, the Church of the God of Light's Sun Knight imparts the benevolence of the God of Light to you."

"Enough, enough! You always say 'impart benevolence', but in the end you always turn out to have come to cause trouble!" That fat pig of a king waved his hand in a brusquely dismissive manner.

If you weren't the one who creates trouble first, you think I would want to come and see just how much flabbier you've become again?

With my most innocent and sincere-looking smile, I proceeded to explain, saying, "You Majesty, the God of Light's benevolence spreads across the continent for the sake of helping the masses understand the teachings of justice and compassion; its purpose is never to create trouble for you, sire. I am truly grieved if there has been such a misunderstanding and I hope you will grant me the opportunity to resolve the confusion."

"ENOUGH!" Weariness had appeared on the king's face as he listened to my speech, and he said perfunctorily, "Hurry up and spit it out; what exactly are you here for this time?"

"I am most grateful for this opportunity to rectify this misunderstanding and touched by your Majesty's graciousness and compassion," I said, and I got to my feet in a flawlessly courtly manner. Inwardly, I took a deep breath before launching into my speech, which even I myself found to be unbearably long-winded.

"Since ancient times the God of Light's benevolence and universal love has blanketed the continent, and each and every inhabitant of the continent is His beloved child. Is there any parent beneath the heavens who does not care for his or her child's well-being? Since there are no such parents, then the God of Light too must surely desire for the citizens of this continent to live out their lives not in want, but in bountifulness. However, though the God of Light is an omnipotent god, He may not break the covenant which forbids the gods from approaching the mortal realm. Thus, He has entrusted the Church of the God of Light with the task of fostering and sharing His philosophy of merciful love and entrusted His most beloved children to the divinely-appointed rulers of this continent…"

The king gave a massive yawn, not sparing a thought for my feelings at all.

You stupid old fart, you only have to listen. Do you know what a pain it is for me, having to talk?!

"…However, for consecutive years, the poor harvest yields have caused His beloved people to slip into a life of uncertainty and poverty. I am but a lowly Sun Knight and so cannot fathom the thoughts of the God of Light, but even I may understand this: how could the God of Light possibly permit His children to endure such suffering? When His people's lives are harsh – dear heavens! What sorrow the God of Light must feel. His sorrow, in turn, leads me, the Sun Knight, to feel such guilt, to think that I have thus failed the God of Light in the task entrusted to me, to have allowed His children's lives to become thus perilous…"

The king had begun to nod off. Next to him, his two key advisors had brought out documents and were consulting the crown prince seated nearby.. The latter, who was the one who did the actual governing, began looking through and making amendments to the documents which the advisors had handed to him.

Next to me, Storm Knight had already given all the women in the audience hall a flirtatious wink, and was about to start from the top again.

"…Despite living under such tragic and painful circumstances, the citizens continue to harbor a deep respect for the king with patriotic hearts, offering up their tax payments in full. Their gesture is thus noble, thus self-sacrificing! Such noble self-sacrifice should be rewarded accordingly, Your Majesty. For while raising the taxes is a necessary course of action, you should, in consideration of the citizens' noble self-sacrifice, reciprocate their goodwill; only then will the God of Light's principle of compassion be upheld."

I'm so touched! I've finally reached the main point – that's right, cutting taxes! Stupid fat pig, the harvest yield is already this little and you still added another retarded tax. Are you trying to force the citizens to revolt against you?!

"What?" The king was suddenly wide awake and he slammed the table with one pudgy hand as he bellowed, "If we don't increase the taxes, where will the money for the palace's expansion come from?!"

Nooo… Don't force me to have to talk again! I thought, agonized.

"Your Majesty." In a casual manner, Storm Knight remarked, "Twenty percent of the harvest is the agreed upon amount in all the kingdoms of this continent. If you insist on having your way and increasing the taxes, the Church of the God of Light will not provide any form of assistance whatsoever should any problematic situation arise."

A simple, straight to the point threat, executed just like a highwayman! Storm, well said! I am sooo grateful to you! I thought. However, on the surface, I still rebuked him sternly, "Storm, how can you speak thus to his Majesty, the king? This goes against the God of Light's principle of not speaking frivolously."

Storm shrugged. Theoretically, he must heed orders issued by me, the leader of the Twelve Holy Knights, and so he spoke no more, but what shouldn't have been said was already said, so keeping silent wouldn't make much of a difference.

Except, of course, it wasn't really a big deal since as the whole continent knew, the Storm Knight's disregard for rules and formality was a part of his laid-back personality, so nobody would really hold it against him.

"This, this is a threat!" the king exclaimed, trembling with fury.

"Oh! Your Majesty," I hurried to explain, "Please do not misunderstand; the God of Light would never employ such a lowly method as threatening someone…"

…But the Church of the God of Light will.

"We but carry within us such feelings of sorrow and compassion, and simply cannot bear to see the people in such dire straits…"

You damn tub of lard! It wouldn't benefit me in the least if the people chose to revolt against you! There's especially little gain for the Church, which doesn't get much by way of income from the taxes but still must send out troops to help you suppress the revolts! Face the facts and take back the decree to increase to the taxes, or else we will watch as you're chopped and turned into mincemeat for dumpling filling, and then help the crown prince ascend to the throne!

"Crown prince, heh, the Pope told me the last time that he really admires you. I wonder when I will be able to call you 'Your Majesty'?" Storm Knight asked cheekily, addressing the crown prince.

"We receive the Pope's well-wishes with utmost gratitude," replied the crown prince with great courtesy.

Hahaha! Storm, you're the best! Yet another simple but effective threat to that fat pig of a king!

To the king, I thought, *If you don't rescind the decree to increase taxation, then we'll just force you to step down as king! After all, you don't dare to move against your capable eldest son.*

The king's face was indeed grey as ash, and after hesitating for a long while, he finally gave a weak wave of his hand and said, "Since the harvest is poor, we shall slow down on the palace's expansion and not increase the taxes."

Very good! I can finally report back to the Holy Temple. There aren't nearly as many people in the Temple who will think of forcing me to speak! I can finally go back to being a silent Sun Knight!

"However, Sun Knight, since you rarely come to the palace, we shall hold a banquet tonight to cleanse you of the dust of your travels. You must make sure to have a few rounds of drink with me, or else it'll be a slight to me!" As he spoke, the king smiled so broadly that his piggy little eyes were practically squinted shut.

Upon hearing that, Storm shot me a worried look.

As the whole continent knows, the Sun Knight does not even touch a drop of drink. One cup and his face will turn red, two cups and his head will start to ache, and upon finishing the third cup, he will topple over, unconscious.

I gave a weak smile and appeared rather troubled, but naturally it was just a façade for the king to see. After being threatened twice in a row, if the king wasn't allowed even the tiniest sense of accomplishment, he'd probably create trouble for the Church in the future and that would be…bad.

"Sun…will do his best," I answered formally, and made a show of acquiescing to the king's will as I knelt on one knee with a feigned look of helplessness.

"Hahaha! Men! Hurry and go prepare a banquet, and bring out the best and strongest wine there is!"

As the king ordered his servants obnoxiously to make the preparations, the crown prince gave me an apologetic look. After all, it was him who secretly contacted the Church and asked us to intervene when he realized he could not prevent the king from raising the taxes.

Although Storm was still winking at the ladies present, now he would throw me worried looks from time to time as well.

What's there to worry about? Let me get one thing straight: I'm an undefeatable drinker!

That's right, I, the Sun Knight who supposedly can't take more than three cups of wine, am actually history's biggest drink fiend![4]

I thought back to the past, when my teacher brought me to a secret, mysterious cellar…

***

"Child, your lesson for today is to drink wine."

"What? But teacher, doesn't the Sun Knight have a low tolerance for drink?"

"The Sun Knight always forgives others, but have you ever really forgiven someone?"

"Nope."

"The Sun Knight always wears a smile, but how many times have you really smiled from the bottom of your heart?"

"Only a few times…"

"The Sun Knight is a benevolent spokesperson, but are you really benevolent?"

"…"

"Child, if you have a low tolerance for drink, then how are you going to make sure that after drinking, you'll still be able to maintain the image of the Sun Knight as someone who turns red on the first cup, has a headache with the second cup, and topples over unconscious after the third?

[4] **Drink fiend:** What Sun calls himself here is closer to being "someone who will not fall unconscious even after a thousand drinks". It implies that he has a very, very high tolerance for liquor.

"So you see, the idea that the Sun Knight has low tolerance for drink is actually founded on the premise that the Sun Knight cannot be defeated by drink."

This argument might sound really reasonable, but when I think about it carefully, it seems to be full of contradictions as well!

"Drink up, child. You have to drink wine every night for the next month, until you can drink wine like it's just water."

"…"

The year I turned twelve, I became someone who could drink wine as easily as water, an undefeatable drinker, all for the sake of the Sun Knight's image as a lightweight drinker.

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Back in the present, ten minutes into that evening's banquet, with the king forcing drink on me, I "lost consciousness" after my third glass of wine.

Very good! I can finally return to the room and sleep.

Storm's really pitiful, though. For the sake of his image as the Storm Knight, he's still back there attending the ball and winking at all the ladies. From the number of noblewomen present…he won't be coming back to sleep until way past midnight, when his facial muscles have cramped up from all that winking.

· Second Rule of Sun Knights ·

"Gracefully, Leisurely, and, Most Importantly, Fair-Skinned"

As we had successfully accomplished our mission to persuade the king to stop raising taxes, Storm and I were both given a few days off work.

It might be, though, that the Pope just couldn't bear to see Storm with his eyes swollen to the size of chicken eggs, obscuring his vision to the point that he was crashing into pillars as he walked… (Or perhaps he just didn't want to see another pillar damaged – for the record, the pillars in the church are all ornately carved works of art and are *terribly* expensive.) …which was why he gave us a few days off.

The moment we were given leave, Storm immediate turned and left the Sanctuary of Light, making a beeline for the knights' area – the Holy Temple.

The reason? There are women serving as clerics in the Sanctuary of Light, and none among the knights of the Holy Temple.

To someone with eyes swollen to the size of chicken eggs, even if the female clerics of the Sanctuary of Light were all as beautiful as goddesses, winking at them would still be an excruciatingly painful business.

Storm left like a hurricane, and though I too was impatient to begin my vacation, I had no choice but to leave gracefully, walking at a turtle's pace.

As the whole continent knows, of all the knights, the Sun Knight is the most graceful and no matter what he might be doing, he will never lose his graceful demeanor.

I can still remember how much I used to admire my teacher; no matter whether he was standing, sitting, squatting, mounting, dismounting, running, or fleeing, he was always graceful.

In fact, one day, I was about to use the toilet, but forgot to knock on the door. I opened it abruptly, only to witness my teacher still squatting within and a certain dangling black thing stuck in a difficult spot…

My teacher revealed the brilliant smile which was the Sun Knight's trademark, and then elegantly finished what needed to be finished before gracefully wiping his bum clean. With great elegance he donned his pants, gracefully picked me up by the scruff of my neck, and then proceeded to give me a thrashing – gracefully.

My teacher often said, "Child, you must know, even if the Sun Knight were to fall down, he must still fall down in an extremely graceful fashion!"

I don't know if it was revenge for having forced him to use the toilet so gracefully, but for a whole month I fell down on a regular basis until I could – whenever, wherever, no matter how sudden or unexpected – fall down with incomparable grace.

Later on, just by falling I even caused the queen of some country to donate ten thousand gold ducats to the Church of the God of Light for my "healer's fee".

Although, ever since then, I have no longer dared to stand next to the church's finance manager, for whenever I stand next to him there is always a hand lurking behind me, intent on pushing me down a flight of stairs…

But aside from falling down and the slightly troublesome task of having to make sure that the door is locked whenever I use the toilet, walking gracefully can be quite advantageous.

For example, being graceful gives me a good reason to move slowly…and moving slowly is extremely useful when I'm walking through the Sanctuary of Light, because it enables me to record the beautiful female clerics from the corners of my eyes.

Yes, you heard right. It's not "look" or "peek", but "record"!

Because as the whole continent knows, the Sun Knight has vowed to dedicate his entire life to the God of Light; he is the most loyal knight of all!

As such, the Sun Knight has absolutely no interest in women!

Even if there is a woman standing next to him who has a face as lovely as a goddess's, a super curvy figure, and is completely naked, the Sun Knight will not even turn his gaze in the least to glance at her. He will only look ahead steadily, completely unaffected by her presence!

Brother, if you are a real man, do you think something like that is actually possible?

Yes, it is! Not turning one's eyeballs and looking straight ahead – that is definitely the right answer.

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"Child, you are already fourteen years old, and it is time to teach you how to look at women."

"But teacher, didn't you dedicate yourself to the God of Light and so have no interest in women?"

"Child, I may have dedicated myself to the God of Light as a knight for him to use, but the God of Light has not dedicated himself to me as a woman for me to use, so I'll still have to look for ordinary women if I want to 'use'."

"…"

"Child, let me tell you, as a Sun Knight, even if the person next to you is a naked, incomparable beauty, you must still look straight in front of you. In order to reach that level, you must learn to how to focus your gaze in front of you and then, using your peripheral vision, record the beauty's appearance in your mind. You may then retrieve the information from your brain after *you return to your room and view it at your leisure!"*

***

Whoa… The one who just went by on the left is not bad, recording!

Whoooa, is the one on the right a newcomer? Don't think I've seen her before, recording!

"Sun!"

I halted and turned gracefully to look at the person who had called me. Inwardly, however, I was actually very tempted to swear. *God damn it, what the hell are you calling me for?! I'm not done with recording the newcomer yet!*

"Brother Ice, may the benevolent God of Light melt your frosty expression."

He is the Ice Knight, one of the holy knights who is not on my side.

Why do I say that, you ask?

As the whole continent knows, the Twelve Holy Knights can be further divided into two groups. One is the "good, warm" faction led by the Sun Knight, and the other is the "cruel, cold-hearted" faction led by the Judgment Knight. It should be obvious that good, warm people and cruel, cold-hearted people cannot possibly get along well, and that they have to fight whenever they have nothing better to do.

"Sun, you should learn to adopt the God of Light's severity rather than go easy on that incompetent king."

Ice's face was pretty much devoid of expression, but it wasn't because he had anything against me. As the whole continent knows, the Ice Knight's expression is perpetually cold; even if the sun hanging in the sky were to hang right above his face, it would still be unable to melt that chilly look of his.

"The benevolence of the God of Light has allowed me to realize that even sinners may someday repent and turn over a new leaf, and I cannot give up any opportunity to redeem their souls."

A sorrowful yet compassionate expression appeared on my face. Inwardly, I yawned – loudly. Ice Knight wasn't a talkative person, so according to our "past encounters", he would only have to add another retort and we would be able to close shop for the day.

"Sinners should be punished. They do not deserve to be given the opportunity to redeem themselves!" As soon as he finished speaking, Ice turned and left, not giving me the opportunity to reply at all.

That's what I like about him!

Ice Knight is even less fond of arguing than I am, but since it's what the whole continent expects of us, he would reluctantly come up with a couple of sentences for appearance's sake.

Moreover, as the whole continent knows, the Ice Knight's personality is cold as ice, so not only is his face devoid of expression, he also hates to talk. Therefore, actions such as leaving abruptly are also perfectly in line with his character.

But although we always have to argue a little every time we meet, our relationship's actually not too bad. He, who specializes in ice magic, would make a bowl of ice for me to eat whenever the weather's hot.

Of course, in order to appear as though we are "opposed" to one another, he would always deliver the opening line of an argument first. Then, when I am mentally prepared, he would hurl a bowl at me for me to catch, and quarrel with me for another couple of lines before lobbing a jar of his handmade blueberry sauce at me. Finally, he would "attack" by casting an ice-type spell at me, sending a huge pile of shaved ice hurtling my way, landing squarely on my head, face, body, and the bowl in my hands… *Ah! So nice and cool!*

After that, I will have a bowl of blueberry-flavored shaved ice to tuck into, and the image of us being "opposed" to one another will remain unaltered.

That is why I really like that fellow, Ice. However, I am from the "good, warm" faction and he is from the "cruel, cold-hearted" faction, and as the whole continent knows, we cannot possibly be friends, so we can only be "friends who are not friends".

Speaking of friends, I think I probably should go and visit my "good friend", Earth Knight, before going on my vacation.

As the whole continent knows, the Earth Knight has a loyal and sincere disposition. He is tall and physically impressive, yet very shy when speaking, and would even stammer sometimes…

"I'm so-sorry; I'm not too used to speak- speaking with girls…" said Earth Knight, lowering his head bashfully as his cheeks grew flushed.

I pushed open Earth's room door just in time to hear him saying that sentence for the thirty-first or thirty-second time to the thirty-first or thirty-second girl whom I'd seen him with.

It was then that Earth shot me a discreet glare for the thirty-first or thirty-second time. The look in his eyes was extremely menacing, but there was still a foolish smile on his face as he greeted me, saying, "Sun, y-you're back."

"Yes, under the blessing and with the support of the God of Light, Sun has been so fortunate as to not fail in his mission and has successfully fulfilled the God of Light's wish, which was conveyed to Sun by the Pope."

"I see! Hohoho, congratulations! Is there something you need me for?" Earth Knight asked.

Despite his foolish laughter, there was impatience in his gaze, which I did not fail to notice.

"Under the well-intentioned prompting of the God of Light, I have come to greet you, my friend, Earth. The Pope has sensed that assignments no longer enable me to experience more of the God of Light's benevolence, thus I will be experiencing the God of Light's teachings beneath the wide earth and open skies."

That is to say, I, the Sun Knight, will be going on vacation!

I definitely read "F***! If you're going on vacation then hurry up and scram" in Earth's eyes. As for the woman next to him, she stared at me, unmoving – I can guarantee that she hadn't understood a word of what I had just said. It is impossible for a person to understand the meaning of my words unless he or she has known me for over three years.

It is also the main reason why I can't find a girlfriend, since whenever I try to chat up a girl whom I admire, she would think that I'm preaching to her, and would hurriedly leave me with some money for incense before running away.

"That's great, you can take a holiday."

Earth was still looking at me with that silly grin on his face, that face with its simple-minded expression which has tricked heaven knows how many girls.

Compared to Storm, who casts flirtatious winks at women every day until he gets a muscle cramp but is very likely to still be a virgin, Earth is the *real* lascivious villain who manages not to

have a reputation as a dissolute fellow. For as the whole continent knows, the Earth Knight is loyal, honest, and sincere, so how can such a person possibly be dissolute in his ways?

It's inconceivable! It's just as inconceivable as the idea of the Sun Knight being a drink fiend!

Although I have already seen thirty-one or thirty-two different women in his room by now, this fellow is still firmly entrenched in first place on the yearly poll for "The Man Women Want Most as Their Husband" year after year.

Although I am better-looking than Earth, have a higher position that him, and have a higher salary than him, my name has never once appeared on the "The Man Women Want Most as Their Husband" poll, because as all the women of the continent know, the Sun Knight only loves God, not women.

F***!

That is why I hate him.

Coincidentally—or most likely because I always open the door just as he's luring a woman to his bed—Earth hates me as well.

However, as the whole continent knows, the Sun Knight and the Earth Knight are the best of friends… So the two of us have no choice but to be "good friends who loathe each other!"

I revealed the brilliant smile that I've practiced for ten years. Instantly, that woman's face turned bright red, and though she wanted to duck her head and pretend to be bashful, she couldn't bring herself to tear her gaze from my face.

Although I can never seem to make it onto the "The Man Women Want Most as Their Husband" poll, I am still the long-term conqueror of the number one position on the "Sunshine Beautiful Men" poll. It is absolutely not a problem for me to make a woman quickly forget the man she wants most as her husband!

"Sun, aren't you going on vacation?" Earth glared at me ferociously, but his tone was still loyal and honest as he spoke – his ability to pretend can give my smiling face a run for its money! "Hurry and think about what you want to do; the holiday will be over very quickly."

I heaved a sigh feelingly. "This must be the God of Light speaking through you, Earth, to remind Sun to hurry to the wide world and experience the will of the God of Light. Sun shall bear with the pain of parting and bid farewell to you, Earth."

Scram!

Although I could see that word blazing in Earth's eyes, the look on his face suggested perfectly that he would be looking forward to my return. In a sincere voice, he said, "I look forward to seeing you again, my friend."

Hahaha! Wearing a smile on my face, I nodded and then shut the door in high spirits. Seeing how that girl was so mesmerized by me that her eyes had turned to hearts, Earth's attempt to deceive a girl is destined to fail this time, hahaha!

To be able to interfere and prevent someone else from romancing a woman always leaves me in especially high spirits. Very good, it looks like my vacation is on to a beautiful start.

Oh, no! Wait; I can't go on vacation yet.

Although I mentioned earlier that my relationship with Ice Knight is pretty good, out of the Twelve Holy Knights, he's still not the one whom I have the best relationship with. Before I go on my vacation, I think I've got to pay a visit to my actual best friend, otherwise I'm afraid he'll charge me with "forgetting friendship at the sight of beauty"[1]… That is, seeing that someone else has a beautiful woman, hurrying to get in the way of that person's happiness, and consequently forgetting one's own friend.

According to what I've heard lately, it seems that the number of crimes requiring judging has been particularly high, so I guess I'll be able to meet him if I wait in the toilet of the Judge's complex.

As expected, I had only just carried two stools and a basin of water into the toilet and settled down gracefully on a stool next to the squat toilet for no longer than three minutes when a knight with black hair, black eyes, and wearing a black knight's uniform rammed the door open in great haste. Upon entering, he hurried forward, knelt down, and proceeded to throw up noisily.

While I'm sitting here elegantly on a stool and waiting for him to finish puking, I might as well introduce him to everyone. This triple-black fellow (with black hair, black eyes, and black clothes) is "my best friend who is not my friend", who also happens to be the leader of the "cruel, cold-hearted" faction: Judgment Knight.[2]

As the whole continent knows, the most terrifying, the cruelest knight among the Twelve Holy Knights, the one whose name you could use to scare three-year-old kids, make them cry, and not even dare to sleep at night, is none other than the Judgment Knight, who is responsible for judging criminals.

As I am the leader of the warm, good people and he is the boss of the cruel, cold-hearted people, the two of us are sworn enemies.

I always say, "The benevolent God of Light will forgive your sins."

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[1] **Forgetting friendship at the sight of beauty:** A proverb which means to be so infatuated with beauty, usually in the form of a person who may or may not be one's lover, that one neglects one's friends and in the worst case, betray them.

[2] **Judgment Knight:** In Chinese, his name is "审判" (shěn pàn), which can mean quite a lot of things, such as "to judge", "to interrogate", even "to hold a trial". There may even be an element of torture in said proceedings as well.

He always says, "The harsh God of Light will punish you for your sins."

From this you can see that the God of Light must have a split personali— I mean, split divinity!

A crooked stick will have a crooked shadow, so the knights under Him are all a bit peculiar.

The first time he interrogated a criminal, he, who should have been the terrifying, cruel Judgment Knight, dashed to the toilet to puke right after he finished his interrogation.

Although that shouldn't have been anything strange either, since he was only thirteen years old when he had his first practice interrogation. It's very normal for a thirteen year old child to be unable to stomach a flogging with all that blood and gore.

I can still remember the day he had his first practice interrogation; my teacher had brought me along to have my first practice quarrel with the future Judgment Knight.

When I saw the serial rapist hanging from a crucifix, beaten beyond recognition, there was a feeling of satisfaction in my heart.

You bastard!

Do you know that the Sun Knight can only love God and not women in this lifetime? Do you know that the Sun Knight's way of talking may render it impossible for me to get a woman into my bed in this lifetime?

You, you criminal, actually daring to use such a dastardly method to get women! This simply makes me so (envious)…so pissed off! A scumbag like you deserves to have your corpse flogged even after you die!

Just as I was wondering about stuff like how one should go about flogging a corpse and so on, my teacher gave me a surreptitious nudge, reminding me what I had come to do. Oh, right; I'm here to have a practical on how to quarrel with the future Judgment Knight.

I immediately put on a Sun Knight-styled compassionate yet sorrowful expression, exclaiming, "This is simply too piteously cruel! How could you possibly use such methods to treat a child of the God of Light? Even if he is a criminal, he may still repent! The benevolent God of Light will certainly not condone such brutality!"

I'm done! I've started the argument; it's your turn now.

I turned and looked at my teacher. Seeing the approving smile on his face, I could tell that I'd done a good job of starting the quarrel.

That black-haired, black-eyed, and black-garbed little Judgment Knight did not say anything for a long time, however, and I could swear that I saw self-reproach and a profound regret in his eyes, as well as sparkling tears when I castigated him.

And then, with tears welling up in his eyes, he wrested himself free from his teacher's hold and knocked me aside as he ran away with his hands over his mouth.

"Child, are you not going to hurry up and follow him, to teach him the benevolence of the God of Light?" my teacher said, patting me on the back.

What? I still have to quarrel with him? I don't think that's nice, he's already crying…

"Remember to bring with you a handkerchief, clean water, and two stools." After giving me such strange instructions, my teacher turned and began to argue with *his* sworn enemy, the big Judgment Knight, verbally hurling "benevolence" and "harshness" at one another.

Although I was full of doubts, I did not dare to go against my teacher's orders, so I hurriedly looked for a basin of clean water. I already had the handkerchief, so with two stools tucked under my arms, I ran off to look for my future sworn enemy.

In the end, I found him in the toilet next to the Judge's complex. He was in the middle of puking his guts out, and was still puking even though there was nothing left in his stomach for him to throw up anymore.

I stood like a block of wood to one side, waiting. When my feet grew tired, I remembered the stools I was carrying. I walked over to pass a stool to my sworn enemy and then placed the other one beneath my own butt.

I continued to wait woodenly for some time, and at long last, he finally stopped puking.

Seeing his messy appearance, I automatically handed the water and handkerchief to him. He too received them woodenly and began to clean himself up.

The handkerchief, stools, and water have all come into play… I was struck by a sudden realization. *Could it be that my teacher had also once sat in this toilet, watching his sworn enemy throw up?*

When the future Judgment Knight was finally done throwing up, he wordlessly washed the handkerchief clean and handed it back to me. He didn't say a word of thanks because he *couldn't* say it; the Sun Knight and the Judgment Knight are eternally sworn enemies as we each represent a completely difference image of the God of Light. As such, each of us definitely cannot get along well with the other!

The two of us merely sat there, looking at each other wordlessly. I did not wish to reproach him with the benevolence of the God of Light, and he did not wish to use the harshness of the God of Light to rebuke me.

From that time on, the two of us would frequently have our "exchanges" on the God of Light's benevolence and harshness in the toilet. I would often bring a basin of water, stools, and a handkerchief to the toilet and wait for him there. In turn, he would always prepare tea and

pastries before his interrogations, and then bring them with him as he rushes to the toilet after interrogating.

You should know that a person would usually be kind of hungry after throwing up.

However, the pastries that he brings with him are always the type that's so sweet that you could almost mistake them for a heap of sugar – the type that he doesn't like, but I love.

Just then, it seemed that Judgment Knight was finally done throwing up. As before, I handed him the basin of water and the handkerchief, and he carefully freshened up, even as he said, "You have not concerned yourself with the judging of criminals for a while now, Sun. I thought that you had finally understood that only the harshness of the God of Light can bring an end to their criminal ways."

I understood what he meant by those words. My good friend was complaining that I had not come to chat with him for such a long time.

"The God of Light's benevolence does not exist within the Church alone. The palace, too, requires the illumination of benevolence, and His Majesty the king thirsts for the teachings of the God of Light more than anyone else."

Meaning I was dispatched to "educate" that pig of a king.

"His Majesty the king surely treats you with scorn. Only the God of Light's harshness can make him aware of the perils he faces."

It must been really tough, dealing with that pig of a king. Judgment gave me a sympathetic look.

"Through the efforts of Storm Knight, His Majesty the king was able to experience and comprehend the God of Light's benevolence."

If it weren't for Storm that fat pig would still be unwilling to back down and lower taxes.

"Storm Knight must deeply regret not having educated the entire palace with the harshness of the God of Light; can his eyes not see the wickedness in the palace?"

He went to the palace, which is full of women… Are his eyes okay?

"He used his eyes to witness the wickedness in the palace, and though it was excruciatingly painful, he continued to forgive them with the benevolence of the God of Light."

He only just stopped short of going blind.

"May the God of Light have mercy on him for witnessing wickedness and yet administering no punishment."

Poor thing… I hope his eyes recover soon.

"The Pope has already communicated to us the support of the God of Light. The warm sunlight of the outside world will shine on his forgiving eyes for three days, and Sun has been most fortunate as to be able to experience together with him the God of Light's benevolence."

He's on leave for three days, as am I.

"May the noon sunshine allow you two to experience the God of Light's fiery harshness. No matter where you may go, the God of Light's harshness will bear witness."

Hope you guys have fun! Where are you going?

"The God of Light's benevolence shines upon every corner of the continent, even if it is the lowly Sun Knight's room."

I'm going to hole up in my room like a turtle.

Judgment finally caved in and allowed a grin to appear on his stern and cold face. He shook his head, still grinning, and then took out a pastry and handed it to me. "May you come to accept the God of Light's harshness one day."

"May you learn to accept the God of Light's benevolence soon as well."

I took the pastry from him and took a bite. Yum, blueberry flavored, it's really tasty.

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As I told Judgment Knight when our conversation turned to my three day long holiday, I planned to stay in my room to sleep… Hey, what sort of look is that you're giving me? You don't believe I really am going to stay indoors to sleep?

What? Go pick up chicks?

Don't be a fool; I have no intention of helping the Church earn money! As such, I have absolutely no desire to hit on those girls whom I'm interested in only to have them mistake my pick-up lines for preaching and throw incense money at me before running away!

Eh? Am I not a drink fiend? Go for a drink at the tavern?

You must be out of your mind!

Have you forgotten who I am?

I am the Sun Knight, okay?! How can the Sun Knight, who collapses after just three drinks, go to the tavern?

Do you think that I'm not a Sun Knight just because I'm on leave?

My teacher often said, “Once a Sun Knight, one must smile and smile until the day one dies.”

Even if I’m on vacation, I am still a Sun Knight; the only change is that I have become a Sun Knight on vacation.

Even if I’m on vacation, the smile on my face must still be as brilliant as the sun.

Even if I’m on vacation, I must still mention the God of Light’s benevolence once every three sentences during a conversation.

Even if I am on vacation, when I see a beautiful woman I can only use my peripheral vision to record her.

As such, I would rather hole up in my room and sleep. There, my expression can be as sour as I want it to be and if I have nothing better to do, I am free to yell, “Go to hell, you fat pig of a king!” After that I can pour my efforts into retrieving the recordings of various women from my brain and use them for all sorts of OO and XX fantasies…

I can then, while fantasizing about a gorgeous woman, open the trapdoor beneath my bed and then head into the cellar to drink a couple of bottles of wine made by the previous Sun Knight – or the one before him, or the one before that one. Also, in order to show my gratitude to the previous Sun Knight, as well as to benefit the next Sun Knight, I will have to go to the kitchen and bring some apples back.

My teacher often said, “Child, it’s fine if your swordsmanship is poor, because the worst thing that can come of it is an early death.

“It’s fine if you have a hard time learning holy magic, since the worst thing that can come of it is that you won’t be able to heal your patients’ wounds, in which case you can just give the patient a couple of blessings and wish him an early reunion with the God of Light.

“But you must learn well the art of wine-making! Otherwise, even after you’ve returned to the company of the God of Light, future Sun Knights will, for lack of good wine, curse your name for generations to come!”

My teacher was most proficient at making grape wine, so I have an entire cellar full of grape wine to drink. As for me, I am best at making apple wine, so my student will have an entire cellar full of apple wine to drink.

However, as a result of taking too many apples, the cafeteria lady always serves apples as my after-meal fruit…

So my feelings toward apples are about the same as my feelings towards Earth Knight; I am the apple-loving Sun Knight who hates apples!

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MAY THE DAY COME WHEN YOU ACCEPT THE STRICTNESS OF THE LIGHT GOD.
AND MAY YOU RECEIVE THE KINDNESS OF THE LIGHT GOD.

Because I don't want to smile!

Because I don't want to say "the benevolence of the God of Light!"

Because I don't want to see an apple!

So I think I'll just hole up in my room like a turtle, sleep, and do some skin care while I'm at it.

What? Why the heck would a guy need skin care, you say?

Brother, you really are clueless… As the whole continent knows, the Sun Knight is a beautiful man with golden hair, blue eyes, and skin so fair that he practically glows!

For the sake of becoming a beautiful man with skin so fair that he practically glows, every single Sun Knight has inevitably become an expert in making skin whitening body masks. However, I believe I must be one of the foremost experts amongst them.

Although I am called the Sun Knight, in truth, I hate being in the sun because I tan very easily. Each time I spend some time in the sun, I will have to apply a body mask for the entire night after in order to salvage my fair skin.

At the same time, I am also experimenting with all sorts of body masks in order to allow my easily tanned self to remain as fair-skinned as ever, even if I had just spent the previous day fighting under the sun.

At the moment, the most effective body mask resulting from my experiments involves mixing soured milk with ten drops of lemon juice, the extract of thirty roses, the extract of ten stalks of lavender, and a small amount of flour. After the mixture is ready, I would lather it all over my body, set a pot of water on the fire, and use the steam produced to give my entire body a good steaming for an hour.

(Please note that I, the Sun Knight, have done this many times before; don't try this if you're not a knight!)

This mixture guarantees that after an entire day of sunbathing, one will still have skin as fair as soured milk, with a tinge of egg yellow.

Truth be told, however, I've always suspected that the first Sun Knight was simply an albino!

How else could he have been able to stay in the sun all day, training, fighting, listening to the king's lecture, et cetera, and somehow still leave behind that damnable image as a beautiful man with a fair complexion for the whole continent to know?

Regardless of whether the first Sun Knight was actually an albino, however, I have no other choice but to strip myself naked and give my entire body a good steaming every week.

There is one thing, however, that is even more evil than apples and Earth Knight: Every time, after I've stripped myself naked, lathered the skin whitening body mask all over my body, and am about to begin steaming myself, some jackass or another would usually appear, knocking on my door…

Knock-knock-knock!

You see? Damn it, it has *got* to be a curse!

I'm almost used to it already.

"May I ask which brother is it beyond the door, who has been, with a gentle murmur, reminded by the God of Light to come forth and seek out Sun, in order to discuss the God of Light's benevolence?"

He had better damn well be looking for me for some important matter, otherwise I will scrap off the body mask from my body and then shove all of it into his mouth!

"It's me, Leaf. Thank goodness you're in, Sun. Come quickly; an undead creature has appeared in the city!"

Leaf Knight? Of all the knights in the "good, warm" faction, he's one of the rare few whom I actually like.

The reason is that he is truly a nice guy.

"Please hold on for a moment, brother Leaf. Under the prompting of the benevolent God of Light, Sun has sensed that he will need to face this world with a clean appearance."

No matter how urgent the matter is, you still have to let me scrape off the body mask from my body and put on my clothes first!

Otherwise, when I appear, it's hard to tell if everyone will attack me instead of the undead creature… Right now, my appearance on the whole resembles that of an undead creature that's still decomposing!

"Sure, take your time, Sun. I'll go and help keep the undead creature busy. Don't worry; I'll leave it for you to finish off!"

Sure enough, after he finished speaking, I heard the sound of the Leaf Knight's urgent footsteps as he left in a hurry.

You see, he's such a kind person! If I were a woman, I would definitely say to him in my gentlest voice, "You truly are a nice guy!"

As the whole continent knows, the thing which the Sun Knight hates the most is none other than undead creatures. Such creatures of darkness completely defy the edict of the God of Light, and

as the element of darkness within them and the Sun Knight, who faces the light, are diametrically opposed to one another, thus the Sun Knight will always go berserk upon catching sight of an undead creature!

Of course he will go berserk, because the only thing that the Sun Knight doesn't need to forgive is an undead creature!

Meaning, I can go ballistic and roar, enraged as I chop that fellow up into a ton of mincemeat. As for my resentment at having to smile every day, having to mention the God of Light's benevolence in every sentence, being unable to look at pretty girls openly, at having to lather on a body mask every week, I can vent it all on that fellow!

My teacher often said, "Child, you absolutely must seek out undead creatures on a frequent basis."

"Is it because the Sun Knight has vowed to destroy all undead creatures?"

"No, you must seek them out frequently so as to vent your emotions."

"What?"

"Think about it. You must smile every day, forgive every piece of human trash, and praise the God of Light – whom you will probably never meet in your entire life – in every sentence. If you don't have a channel by which you can vent your feelings, then if you end up with depression, you might no longer be able to carry out your duties as a Sun Knight properly. If you fail to carry out your duties properly, you will lose your job, and after losing your job you will become even more depressed. In the end, you will be so depressed that you'll be reunited with the God of Light. Now, you surely wouldn't want to meet with such a tragic end, do you?"

"…I don't."

"And so, child, you must look for an undead creature to vent your frustrations on at least once a month, understand?"

"What if I can't find one?"

"Do not worry, child. Here, this is the name card of the necromancer whom the Church has specially contracted; not only can you specify the type of undead creature that you want, you can even report this as work expenses and get the Church to pay for it."

"…"

In order not to become depressed, in order not to become unemployed, and in order not to be reunited with the God of Light *too* soon, I hurriedly scraped off the skin whitening body mask. I was in a rush to vent my resentment on the undead creature.

It's a good thing I hadn't begun to steam myself yet.

I say that because body mask that's still wet and dripping is definitely ten times easier to scrape off than body mask that has already dried. If you don't believe me, next time when you're free, take a pot of glue and coat your body with it. Let the left half of your body stay wet and bake the right side dry, and then compare the difference when you try to scrape it off.

(I should still remind you, though, that I, the Sun Knight, have done this many times before; if you're not a knight, I won't be responsible for the consequences if you try it.)

I can still remember how, when my teacher first taught me the how to make the most basic of skin whitening body masks, he forgot to give me a very important piece of instruction. By the time he remembered and hurried back to remind me, the body mask had already dried and I was busily scraping it off…

"Child, you absolutely must not coat the body mask onto your 'important area', otherwise—"

"*AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!*"

My important area has not grown a single hair from that day on.

My teacher has always felt that he had failed me, and so after that incident, he would be especially serious and put in extra effort when teaching me and he no longer dared to forget to mention even the smallest piece of instruction.

We're going off-topic. In any case, the wet and dripping skin whitening body mask only needs to be rinsed off, and I would be completely clean. With that rinsing, however, goes the two hours' worth of effort that I'd put into mixing the body mask… Oh, the heartache! The Church won't reimburse me for the money spent on buying roses and lavender!

I watched with unshed tears in my eyes as part of my salary was washed away… Damn it! I'm so going to vent all of my resentment onto that damnable undead creature! I am so pissed off!

I donned my knight's uniform and picked up a sword. Charge!

I kicked open the door to my room. After charging out, I wasn't sure which direction I was supposed to head towards. Luckily, that fellow Leaf isn't *just* a nice guy, but is nice *and* very meticulous. Not only had he gone ahead to help me reserve that undead creature, he'd also left behind a knight-apprentice to point me in the right direction!

Leaf! I swear that when I'm done with venting my emotions, I will definitely send a recommendation to the Church to issue you a certificate for being such a nice guy.

· Third Rule of Sun Knights ·

"Even in the Face of Death, One Must Die Gracefully"

I rushed onto the streets like a comet streaking across the skies. By this point, I no longer needed the knight-apprentice as a guide, for that towering aura of death was simply impossible to miss. I had never encountered such an intense aura of death in the city before…

(Don't tell me that my request for a tougher undead creature has really been answered? That can't be! I heard from my teacher that because the Church pays very little, the necromancer would, at the very most, only summon a zombie that's missing various limbs for me to play with.)

There's a house with a flat roof ahead… I stepped on the wall and used it to propel myself into the air as I jumped onto the roof. Spotting where the holy knights had gathered on the ground, I leapt toward them, crying out in mid-air, "Undead creature which defieth the laws of nature, tainted and malevolent being of the darkness, by the authority of the God of Light, I, the Sun Knight, in the name of the Sun which doth hang in the skies, shalt utterly annihilate thy existence from the face of the earth, for the glory of the beauty of the light!"

"Sun, you're here at last!" Beneath me, Leaf Knight turned his head to look at me, a relieved expression on his face.

With him were the Storm, Earth, and Ice Knights, each of them leading a few knights from their respective squads. I quickly saw that there were a total of twenty-something holy knights present; as far as my memory serves me, this seems to be the first time that we've mobilized on such a large scale. But then again, I can probably guess at the reason for such a large operation; after all, a death knight isn't the kind of undead creature you would see often… Hold on a second! A death knight?

Why would such a creature of the darkness – with a success rate of summoning so low that a necromancer would rather take care of an enemy with his or her own hands in order to save time and effort – show up here?

Don't tell me it lost its way?

Shit!

As the shock was too great, the muscles in my left foot suddenly lost their strength. This led to it bending at the wrong angle and kicking into the muscle at the back of my lower right leg, which in turn caused the angle of my right knee to be incorrect and rendered it unable to direct my thigh to move in such a way as for me to take a step forward… Although it all sounds terribly complicated, simply put, this situation can be summarized as—

I tripped.

And I tripped in *midair*.

Fortunately, my teacher had put me through both "reasonable training" and "unreasonable drilling". It's not that I want to brag, but thanks to those two types of special training for falling down, I can guarantee that even the God of Light can't fall more gracefully than I do… Although now that I think about it, it's impossible for the God of Light to ever fall down, so there's no way we can test *that* out.

I bent forward reflexively. My arms swept forward in graceful arcs like a ballerina's to form a circle and I executed two complete forward somersaults, followed by a sideway twist… *And I land!* Lastly, I raised both arms over my head slowly and lowered them – like a butterfly's wings – to rest at my side. I gradually regained my breath and then reverted to the Sun Knight's straight and graceful stance.

Clap clap clap! A round of applause rose from the audience, and one knight was even banging on his shield with his sword, shouting, "Encore! Encore! Fall down once more!"

Screw your "fall down once more"! Why hasn't the death knight sent this idiot to the God of Light to be re-educated?

"Ten points!" Leaf, being the nice guy that he is, immediately awarded me full marks.

"Hmph! Five points; his footing wasn't steady enough when he landed." That damnable Earth! He must still be nursing a grudge against me for interfering in his "business" earlier.

"Eight points; the fall in front of the queen was more graceful." Storm… Fine, at least you're honest.

I admit, in order not to disgrace myself in front of the queen that time, I used the "superhuman endurance which I'd gained by surviving for ten years under the guidance of my teacher without developing a warped personality" (whether my personality has become warped or not, I will never admit to it, so we'll just take it that it hasn't changed) in order to fall gracefully…and fell down the full three hundred and twenty three steps of the staircase.

Since that time, the temple staircase's level of detestability has been higher than that of Earth Knight in my mind.

F***ing hell! Are they trying to kill people by building such a long staircase?!

If not for the fact that there were several hundred clerics at the foot of the temple casting thousands of spells on me simultaneously and healing me up instantly, I would have become the first Sun Knight to die from a fall.

Remember what I told you guys before about my teacher saying that "even if the Sun Knight were to fall down, he must still fall down in an extremely graceful fashion"?

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When I was old enough to be sent on practice missions by the Church, my teacher – in a grave and well-meaning manner – gave me further instructions, saying, "Child, you are finally going out to carry out missions. As your teacher, I am extremely relieved, but there are some instructions that I must give you before I can truly be at ease."

"I will definitely be careful, teacher." I felt extremely moved; my teacher is truly very concerned about me!

"Yes, child, you must be careful! Remember, a Sun Knight must always maintain his graceful demeanor, regardless of time and place."

I nodded my head obediently. "Teacher, I will complete my mission very gracefully."

(Back then, I had gone through a lifestyle involving lots of falling down for several months already. On average, I would have to look for a cleric once every three days to cast a high level healing spell on me to cure the wounds I receive from a particularly nasty fall.)

My teacher shook his head and said, "Child, completing the mission gracefully is but the basics."

"Then what's more advanced than that?"

"Child, you must remember, when you have failed your mission and are near death, at that time, you must…"

"Pray to the God of Light?"

"No, you must contemplate what sort of pose you will die in, and if that pose will be accompanied by a serene expression or a heroic one. Still more important is the question of whether you will die from a single thrust to the heart from your enemy or if you will slit your own throat, and so on and so forth. Only after all of the important circumstances surrounding your death have been planned out and arranged perfectly can you pass away in as graceful a position as possible!

"Even in the face of death, a Sun Knight must die very gracefully!"

"…"

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As such, if I were to die with the cause of death being something as inelegant as "a fall", it is entirely possible that my teacher would be infuriated to the point of using necromancy to resurrect me as a death knight and then use the holy spells of the God of Light to let me die once more – and in a graceful manner this time round.

"Sun, this death knight is pretty strong. Be careful," said Leaf Knight. He then retreated several steps, together with Storm Knight and Earth Knight, clearing an area in the center for me and the death knight.

"Isn't it too risky to leave that undead creature to Knight Captain Sun to handle alone?" some of the knights at the back exclaimed worriedly.

"Relax, my best friend definitely wouldn't lose to an undead creature," Earth Knight said in a "loyal" and "honest" tone.

"Yeah, whenever Sun encounters undead creatures – which he hates the most – he will become several times stronger. You guys had better not interfere and steal his prey, or else he'll get angry," Leaf Knight – being the good guy that he is – explained to the knights, and even gave me a smile that said, "Don't worry, I won't let anyone interrupt your fight."

But hold on a second! That's because the undead creatures that I dealt with in the past were all paid for by the Church and summoned by a necromancer for the purpose of helping me de-stress and to prevent me from getting depression!

Just then, the sword in the death knight's hand suddenly burst into black flames that reached for several meters around the blade. The death knight opened its half-rotten mouth and gave an inhuman roar…

Very good! Perhaps I can begin to contemplate what pose I should die in and what expression I should have to go along with it, as well as choose my favorite way to die, and then gracefully return to the company of the God of Light…

I was just about to begin my contemplations by deciding what pose to die in when the death knight actually swung its sword – which was spitting black flames all over the place – at me… Quit kidding around with me! How can I possibly die before I've properly considered what pose and expression to die with *and* made sure that I would die as gracefully as possible!

My teacher often said, "It's okay if you don't have the talent for it; the most important thing is to practice, practice, and practice. Child, if you continue to fall down for yet another month, you will definitely master the art of doing so gracefully!"

Hence, if I do not die gracefully, my teacher will definitely resurrect me again and again and again, until I've died over and over again for an entire month and finally mastered the art of dying gracefully; only then will he allow me to die for good…

As such, I definitely *cannot* die before I've come up with a way to die as gracefully as possible or before I've instructed my good friend Judgment Knight to dismember my body thoroughly after I die, so as to make it impossible for my teacher to resurrect me!

"Yargh!" I roared as I unsheathed my sword, and it met the death knight's flaming weapon with a loud, steely clang.

"As expected of the Sun Knight; such a powerful, forceful blow, it's definitely something for the undead creature to reckon with," breathed the holy knights who were watching admiringly from one side.

"Sun! Why didn't you bring your Divine Sun Sword with you?" Leaf Knight exclaimed in alarm.

Are you nuts?! The Divine Sun Sword is an antique that's worth enough money to hold a city ransom! Even though right now its blade is still incomparably sharp, who knows when it might break?

It doesn't matter when it breaks, so long as it doesn't break in *my* hands! Otherwise I will never be able to compensate the Church for it, even if I were to hand them all of my retirement savings from hence forth!

Besides, I'd thought that I was just coming to chop up a zombie that's missing hands and feet, for the purpose of warding off depression. Is there anybody out there would kill a chicken with an enormous cleaver, the kind meant for butchering cows? In the same way, is there anybody out there who would, in order to avoid getting depression, bring along an antique that he or she is constantly worried about, fearing that it would be stolen or, worse still, simply break on its own?

What? I'm worrying over nothing, you say?

Fine! Let's set aside the question of whether the sword will break or not.

A sword – doesn't matter if it is the Divine Sun Sword, the XX Holy Sword, the OO Demon Sword, or whatever, so long as it's a weapon – will become blunt after hacking stuff for a while. When that happens, you'll have to bring it to the smith to sharpen it.

It costs at most one silver ducat to sharpen a regular sword, and that's already considered very pricey. However, ordinary smiths do not have the courage to handle something like the Divine Sun Sword that's worth a city's ransom. Consequently, to find a smith who dares to touch this antique, I will have to look for the most famous smith in the entire city, which means that the price of sharpening the sword is one gold ducat at the very minimum!

One gold ducat is enough for me to buy an ordinary sword already!

Besides, blades grow thinner as you sharpen them! So if I spend a gold ducat to sharpen the Divine Sun Sword, it will cause the blade to grow thinner, thus increasing the odds of it breaking… I would rather use my *teeth* to bite enemy monsters to death!

For the sake of the Sun Knight's graceful image, however, I forked over a gold ducat with quite a bit of heartache and purchased a sword to replace the Divine Sun Sword. After all, it is simply too difficult to bite a monster to death gracefully using my teeth!

Though it sounds like I've been muttering to myself in my head for some time now, in reality, the death knight and I have already exchanged over ten blows. There seemed no end to the metallic ringing of our swords as they clashed together time and time again. Each fresh sound of metal on metal would leave my heart aching as though it was about to break. The clashing of swords is a terrifying business; unless one's weapon is greatly superior to the opponent's in terms of quality, the sword will be nicked with each exchange. As a sword develops more and more nicks, it must be taken to the smith to be repaired, and repairs cost money as well…

I was sorely tempted to simply use my body to take the blows, and I would have done so were it not for the fact that the death knight's sword was blazing with black fire and looked positively menacing. After all, the Sanctuary of Light is practically packed to the rafters with clerics who can easily dispense lots of free healing!

I couldn't help but feel that something was a little odd, however. Is it just me, or is the legendary death knight that's super-duper difficult to summon nowhere as powerful as I'd imagined it to be?

Or it could be that I'd somehow gotten stronger lately without realizing it… Scrap that! I really shouldn't delude myself.

Just a few days ago, I was defeated in three moves by Judgment Knight during a practice fight, so even the death knight with its decomposed brain wouldn't believe me if I say that I've gotten stronger!

Or could it be that what I'm seeing is not a death knight, but just a "dead knight" that had been, coincidentally enough, resurrected by the necromancer and turned into a zombie?

I took a good look at this death knight…whoa! Its body has decayed so badly that it's practically in tatters, and its swordsmanship is absolutely rotten to boot. I've really got to say, for me to be able to be *this* unfocused, with my thoughts wandering off all over the place, and still be able to gain the upper hand, the level of swordsmanship can only be described with the word "rotten"…ahem! I mean, it can be described as "not that great".

(Don't be ridiculous; if I say that its swordsmanship is rotten, that would obviously mean that my swordsmanship is rotten as well! I'll admit that my skill with a sword is not that great, but I would absolutely *never* admit that my swordsmanship is rotten!)

As such, this undead creature which has not-that-great swordsmanship probably isn't a death knight, but a dead knight.

Forget it! It doesn't matter if it's a "death" knight or a "dead" knight, I only know that if I don't hurry up and render this fellow utterly and irrevocably dead and unable to swing a sword around soon, I will definitely end up having to spend money yet again on buying a new weapon, which in turn will lead to excessive heartache, and finally, an ungraceful death.

While my swordsmanship isn't that great, I am very skilled in the holy magic which holy knights specialize in! I can guarantee that one spell from me will send the undead creature straight to its eternal rest. As for why I'd just spent this much time in a protracted battle with it, it is entirely because…

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My teacher often said, "Child, even if you encounter the most powerful undead creature ever, you must still remember to have a protracted battle with it *before* you send it to its eternal rest using your holy magic."

"Then why not use it from the beginning?" the young me asked uncomprehendingly.

"Think for a moment, child. When the common folk encounter a monster, it would take around ten minutes, during which people would get killed, in order to demonstrate how powerful the monster is. Afterward, they will spend another ten minutes screaming in panic, followed by yet another ten minutes spent running everywhere, fleeing for their lives, and finally, the knights will arrive to save them. As such, if you only spend three seconds sending the monster to its eternal rest and then turn to leave, do you think that would be fair to the audience who spent thirty minutes waiting for your arrival?"

"…Then teacher, how much time must I spend to fight a monster, so as to be fair to the common folk?"

"Child." My teacher gazed into the distance with a profound look in his eyes as he said, "Fighting is just like a poem, and you are like a bard. Not only does the battle need to have an introduction, development, a turning point, and a conclusion, you must also create tension in the atmosphere from time to time in order to entertain the audience. It would best if you could let the villain thrash you to the point where you're gracefully lying on the ground. If the

opponent is a villain of some standard, he will, at this point, mock, taunt, and throw insults at you in order to show off his own power. After that, you will ignite and set ablaze your inner universe…"

"…Inner universe?"

"…Errr, ignite your potential and set ablaze your holy magic, and then gracefully thrash your opponent until *he's* lying on the floor, and then send him to his eternal rest. Now *that* would be a flawlessly executed battle."

…*That just sounds like a very tiring battle.*

***

From that time onward, I harbored an incomparable hatred for missions that required fighting, since the amount of effort they required was comparable to the effort required to gracefully fall down a flight of stairs with over three hundred steps. Consequently, unless it's an undead creature that I had specially ordered from the necromancer in order to prevent me from getting depression, I would routinely toss the missions into Judgment Knight's lap. After all, that guy usually needs just one blow to cleanly finish off the enemy.

That is also the reason why Judgment Knight's fights don't usually have much of an audience – because his fights are simply too boring.

Suddenly, all the people present bellowed, "Sun, be careful!"

"Eh?"

I was so surprised by their bellowing that I froze; a second later, pain blazed across my back. Before I could even see which bastard attacked me from behind, Leaf had already rushed over and dispatched the "dead knight" to his eternal rest with a single burst of holy magic. Leaf then turned to examine my back anxiously, and I even heard the hiss of his breath faintly as he gasped.

It's not that serious a wound, I hope? Nervous, I turned my head to take a look, but I still couldn't see my own back even though my neck felt like it was about the snap from all that twisting.

What I did see, however, was Earth setting up his ultimate skill – the Shield of Earth – at my back. Although I still really detest that fellow, I must admit that my favorite spot is behind his shield, especially when the enemy is so powerful.

Ice Knight stood across from someone else, his Divine Ice Sword – which really looks just like an icicle – in hand and a furrow between his eyebrows. Judging from the fact that there was actually an expression on Ice Knight's face, this enemy must be extremely powerful, powerful enough to make a furrow appear between Ice's eyebrows.

"Sun, does it hurt?" Leaf asked me apprehensively.

I shook my head. This little bit of pain is nothing to me! I am the Sun Knight who has survived my teacher's special training that involves falling down for several months straight, the Sun Knight who can continue to smile brilliantly even when falling down a staircase with three-hundred something steps!

"It really doesn't hurt?" Leaf sounded extremely alarmed.

I resisted the urge to roll my eyes. Damn Leaf! Why did you have to force me to speak?! I replied, "The sunshine which the God of Light gently showers upon us has made the small amount of pain vanish without a trace."

"Sun really is amazing," Leaf muttered to himself. "To be *this* wounded and still call it just a 'small amount of pain'…"

I paid no more attention to Leaf, my interest piqued by the fellow who had sudden appeared. His appearance was really very weird. At first glance he looked like an ordinary person, but a second, more careful look convinced me that this fellow was definitely not a human!

After all, there isn't a type of human that's "discolored", is there?

This fellow's hair was a discolored sort of brown; his skin, a discolored sort of beige. Even the knight's armor that he was wearing was a discolored sort of silver. Basically, he was grayish-white in color from head to toe, looking for all the world like a person who hadn't moved for several centuries and had, as a result, accumulated a thick layer of dust on his body.

From my words, it may sound as though this guy could just be a lazy person who hasn't bathed for several years and hence accumulated too much dust on his body. I am still absolutely certain, however, that this fellow is *not* a human!

The reason is because there were no eyeballs in his sockets. Instead, in their place blazed two grayish-white fires!

What the heck! Production standards must be really sloppy these days if even fires can be discolored.

The sword in that fellow's hands was probably the only thing that wasn't discolored. Its design was austere to the point where it was completely unadorned. Light glinted coldly off its extremely sharp edge, suggesting that it wasn't a blade to be trifled with.

Fortunately, the Divine Ice Sword in our Ice Knight's hands was the real deal as well. Although it might look just like a popsicle that's been filed to a point, a popsicle is nowhere near as sharp as it!

Besides, Ice Knight is famous for his excellent swordsmanship. I suspect that his combat ability would still be higher than mine, even if he were to really fight using a popsicle…


Faded brown hair.
Worn silver armor.
Sallow skin.
Grey flames burning in the place of eyes....

Ahem!

Ice's fighting style is passive in nature; that is to say, he can stand still for a whole day with his sword in hand. This will continue until the opponent can no longer stand it and comes lunging at Ice with his weapon raised. At this point Ice will – with a single, fatal thrust – finish off his opponent.

As such, Ice's fights are the type which nobody wants to watch, since there's nothing interesting about them.

It was no exception this time either. The discolored fellow clearly did not have the patience to remain locked in a face-off for an entire day. Barely a few minutes passed before he raised his weapon and came charging at Ice. He was also alarmingly fast – hardly a second went by from the moment he first moved, but that fellow had almost reached Ice already. It didn't look at all like he'd moved, but had simply disappeared from where he stood, and then rematerialized right in front of Ice!

With such speed, it's no surprise that he could actually land an attack on me before the very eyes of Earth Knight, who, of all the Twelve Holy Knights, specializes in maintaining a protective shield… I'd nearly thought that it was Earth deliberately letting me get chopped as revenge for what happened earlier.

Fortunately, Ice Knight's concentration is genuinely first-rate. Although the discolored fellow was really fast, Ice still managed to raise his popsicle…I mean, raise his Divine Ice Sword to block the attack in time.

However, it was clearly impossible for even Ice Knight to finish off the enemy quickly this time. Instead, he began to exchange a flurry of blows and parries with the opponent, and both parties were frighteningly fast. I took a more careful look and saw that Ice was actually slowly being forced back.

I watched eagerly and gleefully from the sidelines…ahem! I mean, I anxiously watched the fight between my companion and the enemy, and was struck by a sudden realization. A powerful knight with a discolored appearance, emitting a towering aura of death… a death knight?!

Whoaaa! Looks like we've finally met the main antagonist.

"Sun, do you want to heal up first?" Leaf asked from behind me in a rather worried voice.

"Sun is fine."[1] I'm having fun watching the fight! It's a rare chance to see Ice exchanging this many blows with the enemy; we can leave the healing till later.

[1] **Sun is fine:** In Chinese, speaking of yourself in the third person is not always a cutesy affectation. There are two ways to talk of yourself in the third person: the first is to say "rén jiā", which means "others". This is the cutesy way. The second way, which Sun uses here, is to say your own name. This is used in ancient China as a formal, even courtly way of speaking

Happy as I might have been with just watching the fight, it was evident that Ice was having a slightly difficult time. I think I really should give him a hand; after all, he did help me to fend off the enemy. Otherwise, if Ice were to be defeated, since Earth specializes in defense and Leaf is a long-range attacker, wouldn't that mean that I would have to fight?

If that happens, there's an eighty percent chance that the floor would be covered in my blood by the first exchange, and that my head would be on the floor by the third.

"Ice, let me assist you!" I shouted loudly. I wasn't worried that Ice might be distracted since Ice's concentration was the strongest out of all the twelve Holy Knights to begin with.

Since I am the Sun Knight who deeply abhors undead creatures, a majority of the spells that I had learned since I was young were specifically meant for dealing with such things. Let's take for instance the spell "Holy Blessing"; with it, I can bless any object, infusing it with holy power for a short while, thus making it several times more deadly to undead creatures.

I had originally intended to cast Holy Blessing on Ice's popsicle, but after a while, I realized that there was a huge problem, as that popsicle was simply moving too fast for me to lock on to!

Oh, forget it, I'll just exert a bit more energy and infuse Ice himself with holy power!

"The almighty God of Light showers the world with dazzling sunlight, cleansing it of shadows and evil…" (The rest has been omitted for brevity's sake.) After reciting a long string of words praising the God of Light, just as the death knight managed to inflict several wounds on Ice's body, I finally pronounced the most important phrase.

"Holy Blessing!"

Within a moment, Ice's body was enveloped by a golden light, making him look just like a candle flame. Not only does this light have the effect of increasing the damage done to undead creatures, it also has another very useful effect: it can make it difficult for the opponent to see where they should attack, even if the opponent isn't an undead creature!

"Bless me as well, Sun."

Even the nice guy, Leaf, was angry at last. He was probably provoked by the sight of Ice getting wounded. He stood next to me with a stern look on his face, and he held in his hands… Haha! You must be thinking that it's the Divine Leaf Sword. Let me tell you, you're wrong!

It's the Divine Leaf Bow!

As I was too lazy to recite all those words praising the God of Light yet another time, I simply raised my hand and grabbed the arrowhead of the arrow which Leaf had nocked. The edge pierced my palm, and I let go of it, leaving an arrowhead that was fully coated with my blood.

As the spokesperson for the God of Light, my blood has perpetually been blessed with holy power, rendering it simply poisonous to undead creatures!

Leaf looked moved as he said, “Sun, I will not waste the blood which you have contributed.”

As for Ice, now that I had enveloped him in holy light, the death knight was clearly extremely wary of the holy light that was hindering his attacks. Ice, who was originally losing, was now fighting on an equal footing with the death knight.

However, there was still another person on our side – Leaf – who was watching the fight intently, waiting for the moment to strike. He raised his bow with a sharp glint in his eyes, as though he could bore holes in the enemy just by looking.

I forgot to mention to everyone that when Leaf Knight raises his bow, he immediately changes from “a really nice guy” to “a really terrifying guy”. He can fire five arrows within ten seconds, and all of them would hit the bull’s eye.

That’s not nearly as impressive, however, as the fact that he can run, jump, sing a song, turn his head to look at a hot babe, and at the same time, turn the enemy into a hedgehog with his arrows.

Basically, I would choose taking up my sword and fighting the death knight any day over having to fight Leaf when he’s armed with a bow and a quiver of arrows. With the former, even if I can’t win, I can still flee from the fight. With the latter…how does a person outrun an arrow?!

Next to me, the arrow left Leaf’s bowstring with a “*fwish*”. His timing was perfect – the death knight was dodging Ice’s attack at that very moment, leaving him with no way to evade this arrow that came out of nowhere and no alternative but to take the arrow in his chest. Now, a normal arrow can deal only little or no damage at all to a death knight, since the latter is already dead. However, it is a completely different matter when the arrow has my blood on it.

A sizzling sound just like the sound of a fish frying on a pan could be heard from the death knight’s chest, and then a large chunk of his chest vanished, leaving behind a deep hole. There was no blood, however, only a sticky, grayish-black liquid that slowly oozed out.

Ice made use of the opportunity and hacked at the death knight’s left arm, and the latter let out an inhuman bellow. Ice’s attack had almost completely cut off the death knight’s limb, and it was now hanging by a strip of flesh from his body.

The death knight retreated within the blink of an eye. Such a quick movement was not something that Ice could catch up with. However, there’s still Leaf on our side!

Not even a death knight can outrun an arrow!

With a “*fwish fwish fwish*”, Leaf fired three arrows in rapid succession, but this time the death knight evaded them pretty quickly and actually managed to dodge two of the arrows. The only arrow which found its mark did not have my blood on it, however, so the damage it dealt was so minimal that the death knight couldn’t even be bothered with pulling it out.

I gave a faint smile and once again wrapped my hand about the arrowhead just before Leaf fired. After a moment of thought, however, it struck me that this wasn't a foolproof method since the arrow might not hit the target, and so I simply raised my bloody hand over Leaf's quiver and let my blood to drip onto all the arrows at once.

Leaf didn't fail me, and began to fire arrows nonstop. Although the death knight managed to dodge a number of them, quite a few arrows still managed to find their mark, and each one elicited a howl of pain from the death knight.

"Crap! He's running away," Leaf exclaimed in alarm, and stepped up the speed at which he was firing arrows. He was so fast that I could only see a fan-shaped blur, followed by the sound of his bowstring being released as he fired a steady stream of arrows. Leaf sure lives up to his reputation as the archery specialist among the Twelve Holy Knights!

Forget about counter-attacking; by this point, the death knight had his hands full trying to dodge the rain of arrows, and was running further and further away…

"I will come back and find you one day, Sun Knight!"

Just like every other villain who has fled, the grayish-white death knight threw out a sentence threatening the protagonist just before he disappeared as a speck in the distance…wait, the one he threatened was the Sun Knight…me?

Wait, wait a moment, what are you looking at me for? The one whom you were fighting with wasn't me!

As the saying goes, "vengeance must have a source, a debt must have a debtor"; all I did was to cast a bit of shiny holy light on Ice and coat a bit of poisonous blood on Leaf's arrows while I was at it! Ultimately, the ones who you fought against were the two of them, not me!

I really want to cry… This time, not only did I get hacked at, I'd even managed to earn the enmity of a real death knight; what on earth did I do to deserve this?!

Just then, Ice Knight sheathed his sword, and Earth Knight put away his shield as well. The two of them turned around with extremely grim looks on their face, but for some reason both of them froze as soon as they caught sight of me.

"Sun, you...do you need help?" Earth asked, with a look on his face which seemed to suggest that he'd just seen a ghost.

I shook my head emphatically. Why does everyone seem to think that I need help?

Ice didn't say a word, but his gaze traveled down from my face to the floor and back up, and surprisingly enough, his expression kind of looked like he was spacing out. Curious, I followed his gaze and looked down at the floor.

WHOA! Since when did the whole floor become covered in blood? This sea of red does look pretty awe-inspiring…

Wait a second! Why have my white knight's pants turned red?

"Sun… Are you really alright?" Leaf's voice was so urgent that he seemed like he was about to cry.

The blood on the floor…is mine?

"Leaf…" I said, only to discover that my voice was so weak that it was about as loud as a mosquito's buzzing.

"Huh?" Leaf drew closer hurriedly, probably because my voice was simply too soft for him to hear.

"Give me a hand…"

"Sun!"

And then…

…in a very graceful fashion, I…

…fainted.

· Fourth Rule of Sun Knights ·

"One's Ability to Recover has to be Better than Good"

As a result of losing an entire street's worth of blood, my three day long vacation was successfully extended to a week. I heard that Leaf was even going to help me get it extended to one month initially. Unfortunately, His Holiness the Pope seemed to have a mission for me to carry out, so the attempt failed. *Sigh!* Leaf, you really are a nice guy!

I poured soured milk into a basin filled with flour goop with one hand as my other hand stirred the goop using the sheath of the Divine Sun Sword. I really must say that the Divine Sun Sword's sheath is full of amazing uses. As the sheath is almost completely made of gold, it's guaranteed not to rust, regardless of whether it is used to stir this body mask mixture or to stir my apple wine.

Not only would the sheath not become dirty after stirring, it would shine brighter than ever if you wiped it with a cloth!

Hmm, looks like the body mask is almost ready. I should be able to start lathering myself with it. After fighting for that long yesterday, plus the fact that I fainted from heavy blood loss, I didn't manage to apply the body mask in time last night. When I woke up this morning and took a look in the mirror, I nearly fainted dead away; my skin had changed from the color of soured milk to the color of honey!

My god! It looks like I won't be able to salvage my fair skin if I don't apply the body mask for an entire week.

"S-Sun! What are you doing?" Leaf Knight had pushed open the door to my room all of a sudden and was gaping at me, wide-eyed.

I'm done with mixing the body mask and about to lather myself with it… I thought woodenly with a gob of body mask in one hand.

Crap! I forgot to lock my door. Of all times for this fellow Leaf to forget to knock on the door!

It's okay, it's okay! I was only *going to* lather myself with the body mask; I haven't actually applied it yet. Otherwise, if Leaf caught sight of me just when I was looking like a decomposing undead creature, it's entirely possible that he would haul me before my good friend Judgment Knight, who would then interrogate me to see if I'd been possessed by an evil spirit.

"What are you getting up for? After losing that much blood yesterday, you should stay in bed and get some rest!"

Leaf quickly crossed the intervening space and swiftly forced me down onto the bed with one hand, and then covered me with a blanket.

I rolled my eyes. Hey, hey! There's still a gob of body mask in my hand, you know!

"Sun, what are you holding onto that flour goop for?" Having covered me with the blanket, Leaf was now looking uncomprehendingly at my right hand, which I had extended away from the blanket.

Leaf stared thoughtfully at the body mask for a while (although it looked more like he was spacing out), and then turned to look at me with a smile. "I got it. You're hungry, aren't you?"

…How on earth did you reach *that* conclusion? Does that gob of raw flour look remotely edible to you?

"You'll fall sick if you eat this kind of stuff."

Leaf gave me a somewhat reproachful look as he scooped the body mask up from my right hand, dumped it back the basin in which I had mixed it, and then picked up the basin. As he headed for the door, he looked over his shoulder with a smile and said, "I'll go and get you something to eat from the kitchen."

Hey, hey! I have nothing against you helping me to get something to eat, but where are you taking my body mask mixture?

That basin of body mask used up five days worth of my salary. I plan to make it last an entire week!

Leaf marched to the door and yanked it open, only to promptly receive a shock from the person standing outside. The basin slipped from his hands and began to fall…

My body mask that cost me five days worth of my salary! I jumped out of bed, but I could not possibly make it time to rescue my salary…

Thump!

The person standing outside the door calmly caught my salary in an outstretched hand. His entire being resembled an ominous dark cloud, for not only were his hair, his eyes, and his clothes black, but even the atmosphere surrounding him seemed to be dark and bleak. This person is none other than the one who leaves fear in the hearts of those who behold him, someone from whom even ghosts flee upon catching sight of: the Judgment Knight.

“Knight-Captain Judgment, may I ask if you have any business here?” Leaf Knight asked warily.

I nearly forgot to mention, Judgment Knight is my “best friend who’s not my friend”, something that only the two of us know. On the surface, our relationship is still like that of water and fire.

Moreover, it seems that between the members of the “good, warm” faction and the “cruel, cold-hearted” faction, ours is the exceptionally good relationship; all the other knights truly view the opposing faction with dislike. Clearly, the church’s indoctrination during our childhood was a huge success.

Judgment’s cold face was expressionless, his aura imposing without him even doing anything. In his uniquely deep voice – which had scared heaven knows how many criminals to death – he said, “I am here to deliver the Pope’s instructions for a mission.”

There’s no way a nice guy like Leaf could possibly win against Judgment Knight’s aura, so he turned to look at me with an uneasy smile. “Sun…”

Suddenly leaping from my bed had caused me to feel a bit giddy, so I slowly, gracefully sat down on my bed and said, “Sir Leaf, since it is a mission from his His Holiness the Pope, Sun must of course listen attentively.”

“But you’re heavily injured; you should rest,” Leaf said worriedly.

“Please do not be troubled, Sir Leaf. Sun has the protection of the God of Light.”

If you freaking force me to open my mouth to talk one more time, I will faint for you to see!

“Then…okay.” Leaf left my room helplessly, shutting the door behind him.

Judgment locked the door considerately, so as to prevent yet another fellow from barging into my room without knocking.

Judgment sat down and put down the basin of body mask. Without wasting time on banalities, he went straight to the main point. “The Pope takes the recent incident very seriously. He wants you to find out the origins of the Death Knight within a week – and do so secretly.”

I *knew* that damned old skinflint couldn’t possibly be so kind as to give me a week’s leave!

“Sun does not understand; what mission could it be that it cannot be placed before the radiance of the God of Light?” I felt extremely unenthusiastic; missions like this that requires sneaky searching are usually a hornet’s nest.

“I don’t know,” Judgment responded shortly.

“Even if it’s a Death Knight, it shouldn’t require as much attention as His Holiness the Pope places in it, so why does he have to especially send Sun to investigate?”

I was really troubled. Although the damn old man knew how to exploit knights well, and my recovery ability was more than just ordinarily good, this time I did after all bleed an entire street’s worth of blood. If he doesn’t let me recuperate for three days, I think it would be impossible for me to recover to my original state. If matters are really so urgent, why doesn’t he get the other holy knights to investigate?

“The Pope does not wish to see the results of the investigation. After you have found out the truth, telling me will be enough.” As Judgment Knight spoke, his eyes were stern, though that sternness wasn't aimed at me, but rather at the criminal.

Oh… He wants the Sun Knight to go and investigate the matter sneakily, and then have the Judgment Knight dispose of the criminal surreptitiously? Looks like this matter is not just your ordinary, everyday affair.

If I just say it like this, I believe that everyone probably still won't quite understand what secret words were being exchanged between Judgment and me, so I'd better explain again in detail.

***

First, we start with the explanation from the birth of a Death Knight. To give rise to a Death Knight, well, it's not that I want to complain about it, but it's an extremely difficult process indeed. One must first prepare two “necessities” to give birth to it, as well as a type of “food” to let the Death Knight infant to become more powerful as it grows.

The first necessity is: A necromancer of a high level.

Although this is not considered to be too hard to find, it’s still not easy. After all, necromancers themselves are not a popular occupation choice. In addition, this occupation faces grave

occupational prejudice, thus necromancers can only live in desolate[1] mountains and cemeteries and the like.

The second necessity is: A fresh corpse with an aura of grudge that reaches as high as the sky, and has yet to fulfill its wish.

The difficulty of finding such a corpse is even higher than finding a necromancer.

Perhaps you would say, what's so difficult about finding a corpse with a grievance?

I have to tell you though, that it can't be any small complaint or feud, or a small resentment like not having his fill of food before dying. To be able to create a Death Knight, it has to be an injustice as great as the sky as well as an obsession that can revive the dead!

And the only food that will help the Death Knight "infant" become strong is: "Obsession that cannot be accomplished"!

The harder it is for the Death Knight to accomplish, the more hatred he feels. Hatred acts like food, and will let the Death Knight infant grow until it's smart and strong. When his hatred and obsession reach the heavens, he evolves into a "Death Lord", and then matters will be very serious indeed.

No matter how powerful a Death Knight is, there is still only one of him. However, a Death Lord has the powers of a highly skilled necromancer. Not only can he summon an undead army, he can even use many different kinds of magic to assist the undead army.

In other words, never should a Death Lord be born, otherwise it would be a frightening catastrophe.

After talking about the birth of a Death Knight, it's time to talk about how to annihilate a Death Knight. The simplest way is to use force and trash it, and then use fire to burn it away completely, and all problems solved!

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[1] **Desolate:** The actual words the author uses to describe it are 千山鸟飞绝、万径人踪灭 (qiān shān niǎo fēi jué , àn jìng rén zōng miè), which are lines from a famous Chinese poem. It basically mean desolate/very lonely place where no one ever goes.

Original poem*:*
柳宗元
"江雪" (Snow on the river)
千山鸟飞绝, (There are no flying birds in the thousand hill nearby)
万径人踪灭, (No sign of people in the ten thousand pathway nearby)
孤舟蓑笠翁,(A man wearing a coat on a lonely boat)
独钓寒江雪 (Fishing alone on the cold river with the snow)

The second way is to investigate what was the obsession of the Death Knight and the injustice it has received, and help it to get its revenge. After settling its obsession, it will ascend to heaven by itself.

Although the second method sound more befitting of justice and morality, everyone still has the tendency to directly trash it, for it is much easier.

“Why is His Holiness the Pope so concerned over this Death Knight?”

I was extremely curious, for though that damn old man still has a conscience, after being in a high position of the Pope for so long, I believe that little remains of that conscience. This time, he actually wants me to specially investigate a Death Knight’s injustice, the fact which would even cause the God of Light to shout 'Unbelievable'!

Judge glanced at me with a bit of a strange look, and slowly said, “I hear that the only words that the Death Knight spoke were that he would come back to find you...?”

I nodded my head. *Yeah, that’s right! He said that he would come back to find me… Damn, I realize now!*

Usually the only person that a Death Knight would pester would be the person who is related to his hatred or obsession…

“I have been suspected?” I was stunned, and even forgot to add decorative phrases and to praise the God of Light.

Judgment Knight nodded his head, his face solemn.

With a whole head of cold sweat, I clarified, “I didn’t kill him, I don’t even know him!”

Judge nodded again and left behind a few words. “Then find out the truth, and prove your innocence. You have to move fast though, for everyone is starting to get suspicious.”

***

I feel that if I were to die now, there is a 99% chance that I would become a Death Knight. My grievance is as deep as the sea!

First, the Death Knight slashed me for unknown reasons, and my blood spilled through an entire street. Then I thought I gained a week’s worth of holidays, only to realize that this week was for me to go investigate the matter. Moreover, the biggest suspect in this case actually happens to be myself!

I originally wanted to apply my body mask, lie in bed for three full days, then get up for holidays. However, now that I know that I am being treated as a suspect, how could I still dare to stay in bed?

As soon as Judge left, I stood up shakily. There was only a week's worth of time, and to investigate the truth was a very hard matter itself. Not to mention that it was the case regarding the Death Knight, and who knows how long that Death Knight had been dead for already!

Therefore, although I felt like I would pass out at any moment, I still crawled up with all my might to investigate the case. *If I die because of this, I will definitely become a Death Knight, and then look for that Death Knight for revenge!* I threw on my cloak, and took the authentic Divine Sun Sword. *Who knows when that Death Knight will come back to find me. Better bring along the Divine Sun Sword to be safe.*

Originally, I wanted to go and take a horse to ride on. However, upon thinking again, I remembered that I currently have a serious deficiency of blood in my body. I was already dizzy, and if I were to climb onto a horse and sway around, I might directly fall off from the horse's back and die.

I guess I can only walk then. Let's hope that I won't collapse mid-way.

In order to avoid trouble, I pulled the hood of the cloak lower, not wanting to be recognized by the masses. Then I moved slowly, and sometimes there were people circling around me from the sides to cross by, and rolling their eyes as if to say, "Are you a tortoise crawling?"

The current me who had severe low blood pressure was too lazy to mind anyone, and continued my tortoise style of walking. As I walked, the street became more and more deserted. The surrounding scenery went from a big pile of wealthy and busy shops, to run-down residential houses. The number of passer-bys congesting the street also gradually decreased, and at last there were only a few left in twos and threes. Their expressions were vacant, as though they were people who had no idea where to go.

"Yoooo! What a pretty cloak! Young Master, are you unable to find where your wet nurse is?" Some of the drunkards lying at the side of the road laughed jestingly.

I continued walking past these drunkards. Even my footsteps maintained at the same slow speed. Finally, I walked to a shady corner that even the citizens of this run-down street would not go to, and stopped in front of a broken-down house that looked like no living being stayed there. Then, I slowly raised my head to look at this house.

Thump!

I kicked the main door down with one foot and rushed into the house, shouting in rage, "Corpse! Show yourself! I'm in trouble because of you!"

Inside the house, there were only a few toppled over rotting tables and chairs. There were even really thick cobwebs covering the furniture. If someone were to rush into the house daringly, then they would definitely be tangled in the cobwebs straight away to become a giant silkworm cocoon.

Because of this, not even a stray dog would live in this kind of place.

However, I know that this was just an appearance that necromancers use to avoid people with serious occupational prejudice.

“Corpse! You aren’t coming out, huh?” I slowly extended a hand from underneath the cloak, and then the white and elegant— Damn! It’s a honey-colored hand!

Sob! I have become a honey-colored Sun Knight!

Never mind that, let's find Corpse first before worrying about it. Even without reciting any incantations, my hands started to glow with the light of holy magic. The light turned from weak to strong, and at last the white and gentle light filled the whole run-down house.

Not that I want to boast about this, but to be able to gather so much holy light without reciting incantations is something that few can do. Even amongst the higher leveled clerics, including the Pope’s cardinals, there are only a handful who can do it.

When my teacher taught me magic, he often said in surprise, “Child, you really are a naturally gifted cleric.”

“Really?” The young me was extremely happy, for at that time I was upset over my tragic swordsmanship.

“Yeah, if you had first entered the Sanctuary of Light, then in the future you would have definitely become one of the very best Popes in the history of the Sanctuary of Light!”

With glittery eyes, I imagined the best Pope’s honor and glory…

“But since you initially entered the Holy Temple, then you can only be a very weak Sun Knight in the future.”

As expected, females are scared of marrying the wrong man, and men are afraid of entering the wrong profession. One moment of choosing the wrong career actually made me go from the strongest to the weakest. I really regret that decision bitterly. Children are foolish, and always think that the knights wielding a sword and wearing armor are cool.

Now I know that being a cleric is truly the better career choice!

As they don’t have to wield a sword, they don’t have to spend money to repair one. They do require money to buy a staff, but judging from my ability to gather holy light, I’d be fine even with a tree branch!

Also, clerics don’t have to wear armor, so they don’t have to buy armor, and also don’t have to spend money on repairing it when the enemy has chopped their armor to pieces. Even though clerics still need to buy clerical robes, nonetheless I repeat, judging from my ability to gather holy light, I’ll be fine even with a white curtain on my body!

The heavens gave me such a good clerical potential, yet I went to become a knight, plus it was even a job that you cannot regret, cannot change professions, and can only continue to be one until you retire or die: the Sun Knight… Even I want to scold myself for being an idiot!

Ah, regret…

"Sun, Sun!" The shrill screams interrupted my remorse.

I turned my head abruptly, and saw that a small, blurry shadow was fleeing in all directions, and screaming my name like its life depended on it. Seeing the situation, I gathered back all of the holy light with a 'whoosh' sound.

"*Sob!* How painful!" The small shadow squatted in the corner and cried continuously.

The whole house had already changed, for my holy light had erased the necromancer's illusion magic. The scene of the cobweb-filled house disappeared, and was replaced with a tidy small house, but then…

Pink, pink, it was pink everywhere!

How crazy! This place totally doesn't need to use illusion magic to cover the fact that a necromancer lives here.

Who would believe that this house that has pink walls, pink tables and chairs, a pink bed, and even pink dolls filling the whole house, is actually a necromancer's residence?

Even the cobweb-filled, run-down house from before looked more like a place where a necromancer would live!

"Sun…" The small shadow shyly tugged on my cloak.

I lowered my head to see — that's right! I lowered my head, for this fellow's height reaches only to my waist! — the necromancer. I glared at her with a fierce and serious expression.

The small shadow squatted down and started sobbing softly due to my glare. "Why are you crying? You are a necromancer!" I stared at the small shadow unbelievably, and growled, "Besides, the person who should cry is me. I have not only been slashed at and bled a street's worth of blood, but also been suspected by everyone that I have done something that is intolerable by heaven, and thus a Death Knight would come to pester me."

"It might turn out that you actually really did it…" The small shadow said softly.

"WHATT DIIID YOOOOU SAAAY?"

I fumed with rage between gritted teeth, glaring at the small shadow, and slowly picked it up…

***

In a house where the walls are pink, the floor is pink, and the bed on the side is also pink, a handsome man of honey-colored skin sat on the pink deck chair. Sitting on his knees was a pretty little girl who looked delicate and refined, with bright and beautiful big eyes full with spirit and curly golden hair. She looked almost as cute as a doll.

However, on closer inspection, this girl's skin is actually pink too, which lets people suddenly realize that there is something strange about her, and goose bumps silently crawl up their back…

"So you are saying, Corpse, that you also don't know where that dead body came from?" I furrowed my brow.

"You're so mean! Don't call me Corpse, I'm called Pink!" The pink girl held a lollipop in her hand, and was even pouting as she complained. After a glare from me, she explained with much grievance, "Pink only did the same as in the past, and went to the execution grounds to buy a corpse. And Sun, last time you said that you wanted a better undead creature, so Pink specially spent a lot of money to buy an intact corpse… Pink also didn't know that that corpse's aura of grudge and obsession was so strong that it would actually become a Death Knight." Pink tilted her head to look at me, and with a cute expression, said, "Moreover, the object of his obsession just happens to be you, Sun!"

"But I don't know that fellow!" I was practically about to be driven crazy, for I obviously hadn't seen him before. Why would the object of his obsession be me?

It is unknown whether Pink believed me or not, for she only lowered her head to lick her lollipop.

I furrowed my brows, asking, "You said that you bought the corpse at the execution grounds? Is he a criminal?"

"Shouldn't be." Pink lifted her head, and though her face was just as adorable, her eyes showed a hint of maturity… Who knows how old is this hag of a necromancer that likes to act cute.

"Huh?" I touched my nose, and asked skeptically, "I thought only criminals would be sent to the execution grounds?"

Pink laughed at me with disdain. "On the surface, that's true! However, Pink will tell you that Pink is a person with many years of experience when it comes to buying corpses. A lot of corpses that cannot be openly dealt with, yet are feared to be discovered by other people, can be piled onto the heap of criminals' dead bodies at the execution grounds by paying just a little bit of money."

"Is this true? How would you confirm that he's not a criminal?" I frowned, *Should I tell Judgment Knight about this news, and let him investigate?*

"Idiot!" Pink rejoiced in the dead's misfortunes as she said, "The dead at the execution grounds are all hung to death, but I have bought many corpses that are not. Their necks all have

strangling marks, but Pink is after all very familiar with corpses, and with one look Pink can tell that those marks are casually made after their death with a rope. Their necks are absolutely not broken at all, so they were not hung. “

“How did that Death Knight die?”

I decided to throw the incident of the execution grounds’ fraud aside first, for right now, it was more important to prove my own innocence.

Pink tilted her head slightly with a cute expression, and carefully considered for a while, before choosing the most accurate answer. “He was tortured to death. His body has too many injuries, so he was tortured for quite a while, and in the end he died of course.”

Tortured to death… My scalp is starting to become numb.

“However, Sun…” Pink suddenly looked at me with much anticipation. “I didn’t know that you had this kind of hobby. Next time we can exchange torturing methods with each other, for you know, I haven’t been able to torture out a Death Knight yet.”

Hearing that, I blew my top and grabbed Pink’s shoulder, shaking her violently. “Exchange?! I told you before, I don’t know him!”

As Pink was shaken around, her two bright, beautiful and spirited eyeballs swayed up and down like crazy. There seemed to be a tendency for them to fall out, so I hurriedly used my two hands to smack her eyeballs back into her eye sockets with a *bang*. After all, I had no wish to see a scene with her eyeballs falling out.

“Pink got it, Pink also doesn't know those who were tortured by Pink!” Pink looked at me with a smart-alecky smile.

I cursed silently. *This dead fellow… Wait! She really is originally a “dead” fellow anyway. This evil-natured necromancer actually refuses to believe that I didn’t torture that Death Knight.*

“Which execution grounds did you buy the corpse from?”

“The one outside the city, in the northwest direction.”

“The one that is the furthest, huh…” *Looks like my troubles are still in the midst of becoming bigger.*

Resigned to my fate, I stood up from the deck chair, and although what I wanted to do next most was to fall onto the pink bed beside and hug the pink cake bolster to sleep for three days and three nights…

However, reality is always contrary to one’s wishes. What I had to do next was to go to an execution ground that was full of the stench of corpses and interrogate the corrupt execution ground manager to find out where the rotten corpse was from.

Just thinking about it made me feel that my future was bleak…

I pushed away the pink doll-like Corpse on my lap, and then slowly climbed up, and even more sluggishly walked to the door…

“Sun.”

Hearing that call, I turned my head back. Pink was leaning against the door, licking her pink lollipop, and her beautiful eyes winked at me.

“You know, what Pink has said before in the past still counts. If you want to, I’ll accept you as my disciple anytime, and even the Holy Temple and that teacher of yours with the nickname of “The Strongest Sun Knight” can’t make me hand over my disciple.”

I was stunned for a moment, and was a little incomprehensive. *Could she mean that she wants to protect me?!*

Corpse may be a necromancer whose peculiarity exceeds the limit, but to tell the truth, she sure is loyal.

I pulled a rather weak, faint smile, and waved goodbye to her. The magician girl didn’t say anything, and happily waved her lollipop ferociously to bid farewell to me.

· Fifth Rule of Sun Knights ·

"Save up for Retirement to Avoid Impoverishment in One's Old Age"

The northwest execution ground outside the city really is not just a normal distance away. In order to prevent myself from immediately lying down and joining the row of corpses after walking all the way there, I reluctantly decided to bear the pain of spending money to call a carriage to bring me there.

I could have returned to the Holy Temple and taken their public carriage instead, but then I would have to maintain the Sun Knight's brilliant smile and perfect demeanor in front of the driver…

In my current feeble situation where I can't even fully smile, I better bear with the grief and rent a carriage, using the retirement funds that I had been saving with great effort. After all, if I were to die now, then the retirement funds that I have been saving so painstakingly would be useless, right?

At the carriage rental area, I chose a carriage that looked like it could still arrive at the execution ground without falling apart, and an old coachman who wouldn't seem to mind even if the passenger were a man-eating demon. I jumped into the small carriage and, although it smelled like a basket of rotten eggs, I was too tired to care. I nested in the corner and made myself comfortable. Gradually, my consciousness became fuzzy and all I knew was that the swaying of the carriage was just as comfortable as a baby's cradle…

Boom!

I woke up with a blank expression on my face, along with a large, swollen bump on my forehead. This was because the carriage had braked suddenly, causing my head to bump against the wooden board of the carriage in front of me so hard that even the board had broken.

I started thinking, *Perhaps I could also pay a sum of money to bribe the person handling the corpses at the execution ground, and then let this coachman join the pile of corpses "who didn't die by hanging" there?*

“Pardon me, a few knights suddenly stopped up front, so I had no choice but to use the emergency brakes,” The coachman shouted to the compartment, though his monotonous voice didn't sound apologetic in the least.

Knights? I rubbed my forehead a bit painfully.

Holy knights and knights are actually pretty much the same thing, for both wield weapons, ride horses, wear a suit of armor, have to be a meat shield in combat, and are the first of the troops to die… *Cough!* It should be, both use their own bodies to block off attacks on other group members, nobly sacrificing themselves to protect others with every breath in their body until death.

The only difference is that the former serve God, while the latter pledge their allegiance to the people. However, because Holy Knights serve God, they have various kinds of special abilities. For example, we holy knights have a “Self-Recovery” ability, so our bodies’ recovery rate is super fast!

For example, I had just spilled a whole street’s worth of blood yesterday, yet am able to run about today. This is something that definitely cannot be achieved by a knight; it's more probable that they would just fall down and die right after they finish spilling all their blood.

As for the people-serving knights, of course they wouldn’t be able to get any help from God, but the salaries paid by their masters is also higher than ours, and not just two or three times higher. *Damn them!*

A high level knight, as long as he can survive until retirement, can definitely save up enough money from his salary to spend his old age luxuriously. However, for a Holy Knight… If one does not accept private jobs, even the Twelve Holy Knights that have worked to the top would still have to live their life thriftily. Otherwise, when they retire, they’ll realize that they don’t have a single cent to their name for food. The consequences will either be going to see the God of Light directly, or having to fight over missions with younger people to earn money even when they’re already fifty, sixty years old.

(Whisper) For example, that master of mine who is considered to be the strongest Sun Knight in history is now an adventurer, competing for missions with younger people everywhere, and fighting evil with evil against monsters and robbers… *Cough!* It should be guiding the younger generation and upholding justice.

Anyway, before my master left the Holy Temple, he once told me in a grave tone, “Child, if you don’t want to be forced to become a cleric after you retire… and with your swordsmanship, it’s too dangerous to be a knight… Then you must save well for your retirement funds, in order to avoid impoverishment in your old age.”

When I thought about this, I started to feel regretful over my decision to spend money to hire a carriage. *I should have walked there, for I believe with my Sun Knight’s recovering ability, I probably wouldn’t have died halfway.*

Just as I was feeling regretful, there was suddenly an uproar coming from outside with horses trotting, armors clanking, and people shouting.

“What happened?” I asked impatiently, sticking my head out of the carriage.

Just as I stuck my head out, I happened to see the coachman jump out of the driver’s seat. *Oh, great!* He ran off as though he had grown wings, in the blink of an eye becoming little more than a speck of dust in the distance.

Damn coachman, don’t let me find you in the future! Otherwise, I will definitely take you to see the Judgment Knight, and charge you with the offense of purposely abandoning the Sun Knight!

After I “blessed” that coachman to see the God of Light soon in my heart, I turned my head around, and finally understood why the coachman had fled. In front of the carriage were three burly knights who didn’t look too friendly.

“Go back!”

The three knights were originally watching the escaping coachman, stunned, but the leader was obviously experienced and returned to his senses quickly. Seeing me peeping at them, he roared at me.

I scowled. Being the leader of the twelve Holy Knights, no one had dared to roar at me in my whole life, with the exception of my teacher, the Pope, and that fat pig of a king who was oblivious to the situation. *I can’t believe that today “The holy knight who is having difficulties at the execution grounds is being bullied by knights”*[1] *is actually happening. Three measly knights actually dare to roar at me? You guys better watch your backs!*

Do you believe that I’ll, I’ll—…go back and tell Judgment Knight to beat you all into a pulp!

Hey! You’re not allowed to say that I’m weak! You try losing a whole street worth of blood, and then let's see if you can do anything the next day other than being lovey-dovey with your bed!

[1] **“The Holy Knight who is having difficulties at the execution grounds is being bullied by knights”:** This is a play of the original idiom, 虎落平阳被犬欺 (hǔ luò píng yáng bèi quǎn qī), which literally means the tiger fell to the plains (in China, tigers are considered the kings of the mountains) and is being bullied by dogs. (Meaning that strong people who are in a difficult situation can’t even fend off the weaklings.) So, in this case, Sun is saying that he’s in a difficult situation and is being bullied by people weaker than him.

I have always said that my swordsmanship is lousy… I mean, "not that great", but that is only in comparison to the standard of the twelve Holy Knights and my abnormal master. Compared to normal knights, my swordsmanship is considered to be…to be…average!

However, don't forget that I am a holy knight. My salary isn't sacrificed in vain, for after adding in a whole bunch of hodgepodge holy skills, my ability is about that of a high level knight! Moreover, taking into account the holy knights' extremely unusual self-recovery abilities, my real ability is definitely above that of a high level knight!

Nonetheless, let me repeat myself. After bleeding an entire street's worth of blood, forget about dueling with a high level knight, even the action of pulling out a sword would be the kind of vigorous activity that should be avoided. Thus, I rubbed my nose and lowered the hood of the cloak. Jumping from the back seat of the carriage into the driver's seat, I wielded the horsewhip with little skill and commanded the horses to hurry and turn back.

"Consider yourself sensible enough!" The three knights seemed as though they weren't particularly looking for trouble either, and after seeing me leaving obediently, they paid me no further attention and rode their horses in the opposite direction.

They are riding in the direction of the execution ground, I observed as I sneakily turned my head around.

Waiting till I had enough distance between us, I brandished the horsewhip again to let the carriage continue onwards, while I jumped off the carriage and hid amongst the trees on the side of the road. *As long as I don't walk on the main road, those knights probably won't notice me.*

I was extremely interested in why these knights were going to the execution grounds seemingly without any reason, faintly smelling a conspiracy. It would be great if this conspiracy had some connection to the Death Knight that I was investigating! Even if it had no connection, at most I'd just go back and hand the case over for Judgment to investigate. Anyway, I better continue the investigation first.

Afraid of missing the opportunity to crack a conspiracy, I did not use my tortoise-style of walking to advance further, but instead stepped up my pace and jumped agilely in the forest. Though I had a premonition that my injury would probably re-open tomorrow, it didn't matter, for if my self-recovery abilities were claimed to be second best amongst the Twelve Holy Knights, no one would dare claim to be number one.

No matter how serious the injury was, as long as I rested for a whole day, I'd definitely be able to get up from bed the next day. If I were to rest for three full days, even if my injuries were as heavy as my intestines taking a stroll outside, my heart going on strike, and my lungs running out of breath, I would still be able to get up for breakfast and apply my facial mask as usual.

However, there are also disadvantages to having injuries heal so quickly. Ever since it was discovered by that damn old man the Pope, my sick leave has always been shorter than everyone else's…

After cursing that old fellow for a while, I saw the short clay walls of the execution ground. It was a large, circular arena, and its only surroundings were those tiny, low clay walls. In the center was a square with the execution device, which was rather crude as well, for it was consisted of only three wooden stands with a rope hanging down from the middle. The lowest point of the rope was a simple noose, simple yet deadly.

This execution ground was the oldest in history, as well as the most run-down one. Criminals with serious crimes or those with even a bit of status would not be transported here for executions. Generally, only the lowliest of bandits, whose lives no one cared about would be sent here.

However, this Leaf Bud City is after all the capital of the Kingdom of Forgotten Sound. Moreover, it is also the headquarters of the God of Light's devotees. Thus, on one street there might be a few knights from the Royal Knight Militia Squadron having a friendly duel, and then walking onto the next street one would see a few Holy Knights contesting whose holy magic is stronger. Then going onto the next street, one might see a few clerics preaching.

The most horrifying part would be the Knight-Captain Judgment's habit of patrolling the city at different times every day. In the ten years that have passed, the total number of criminals caught for various crimes is 1056.

Tell me, who would dare to steal or rob?

Because of the lack of criminals in the city, this execution ground was also pretty much abandoned.

But then it's due to this kind of abandoned look that leads to various kinds of sneaky matters happening, for there were actually corpses that are not criminals being dumped here. If there are corpses, that means that there are crimes still happening. Looks like the capital is still not as peaceful and safe as the Sanctuary of Light and the Holy Temple might think.

I laughed grimly. *Wait until I tell this to Judgment! That cool face of his will definitely become even colder, until it can clean up the whole capital.*

The execution ground was desolate except for three horses tied at the side. *Looks like the three knights have already arrived.*

Although there was nobody here, the run-down house on the edge of the execution grounds had bright lights in the window that revealed a few faint human shadows.

I cast two support spells on myself, specifically the Light Shield[2] that increases physical defense and the Wings of God[3] spell that increases agility. Then, I avoided the angles from which the people inside might be able to see from the window, and slowly moved closer to the house.

[2] **Light Shield:** Basically, it works like a layer of light around the caster that helps to increase physical defense. For those who play Ragnarok Online (RO), it works like *Kyrie Eleison*.
[3] **Wings of God:** A spell that increases agility. Basically works like Haste.

"…Where is that corpse?" a rather fierce voice said from the small house.

"Sir… There are many here… Here… Which one is it?" This voice was quite feeble with age, and even though I tried my best to eavesdrop, I still missed out on much of the conversation.

At this moment, I stopped in my tracks and hid behind a few big trees at the side of the house, not daring to advance any further. The three knights were obviously inside, and sadly my current condition was not looking good, for even the strength from the two buffs on my body was wavering. If I were to go any nearer, it would be hard to guarantee that they wouldn't discover me.

"…The one with blue eyes." The knight's voice suggested that its owner was desperately trying to restrain his anger.

That feeble, aged voice cried out, "Sir, I will not go and flip dead people's eyelids!"

"Blond, no, the hair color is closer to brown. About twenty-three years old, with a rather handsome looking face."

I furrowed my brows. The description made me feel faintly uneasy... I wonder why?

Blue eyes, brown hair, twenty-three years old……He's the same age as me, and to have actually died so young. I believe that this might be a part of the Death Knight's grudge too.

"Already buried…"

"How dare you lie to me!"

This was followed by a series of shrieks and blows. After a while, that old, feeble voice said even more feebly, "…Sold it to someone two days ago."

"Who?"

"A man with a little girl."

A flash of light shone in my eyes. *What a blessing from the God of Light! I can't believe that I actually guessed right, that these three knights really do have some connection with the Death Knight.*

Hmm, a man and a little girl? It's probably a small corpse bringing a big corpse! It was definitely Pink and her "Cleaning Corpse", which is an undead creature that she specially summoned to clean her house.

"What did the man look like?" The knight sounded like he was in a towering rage.

Heh! You asked the wrong question. You should have asked what the little girl looked like, I mocked spitefully.

“The cloak hood was pulled really low… I couldn't see his face…”

“You birdbrain!”

“Let’s kill him, in case he tries to reveal our identities.”

“Spare me!” that feeble, old voice suddenly shrieked.

My face became grim. As the Sun Knight, shouldn’t I do something to help in this kind of situation, where criminals are trying to eliminate their witnesses?

However, in my current state, if I were to dash in, I might end up getting killed along the way as well.

Should I save him or not…

“Stop! No more!” The pleading voice could be heard from inside, but the other party seemed to totally ignore them and the sounds of punches and kicks continued.

Bastards! I had been daydreaming for such a long time and yet you guys still hadn’t killed him off yet. One slice of the blade would be enough, so what’s the point of attacking with mere limbs?! Don’t you realize that when villains take their time, there will inevitably be a defender of justice showing up to meddle in your business?

Especially when this defender of justice who has to show up is me!

After looking down to check that the Light Shield and Wings of God spells were still activated, I sneaked a peek inside from the window. Two knights were in the midst of landing blows, and one lone knight was standing at the side with a grim-looking face. According to my theory that “the boss usually only talks and does not take action”[4], then this fellow ought to be the leader.

In a low voice, I recited a magic incantation. Although I’m a holy knight, I clearly have the potential to be an exceptionally gifted cleric, as well as the qualifications of a talented magician. In other words, I would excel in every profession except as a knight. *Soooob!*

My teacher often lamented to the sky, “How is it that you can copy a magician using a Spell of Paralysis after just a glance, yet you still can’t grasp the concept of a basic sword technique after I guide you with demonstrations over twenty times?”

[4] **“The boss usually only talks and does not take action”:** Another play on words. The original is 君子动口不动手, which means, “A gentleman should reason with his mouth instead of brawling with his hands.”

In order to avoid unnecessary problems, such as people saying that I'm not true to my image and such, I usually don't use magic in front of others. However, this is a special situation, and I have no intention of revealing my identity.

"Spell of Paralysis!"

I cast a Spell of Paralysis on the leader of the knights, while simultaneously breaking through the window with a flying kick. Then, I kicked the back of the knight's neck, and he fell down without even uttering a single cry. Not that I want to boast about it, but my qualifications for being an assassin are also unusually good… *Ahem!* Let's stop chatting, as the two other knights are already charging over here with their swords.

In the moment I kicked the leader of the knights, I had conveniently pulled out his saber. After all, I wanted to hide my identity, so I couldn't take my shining Divine Sun Sword into battle, for then only the blind wouldn't realize that I am the Sun Knight.

As I dodged the two knights' attacks, I chanted another incantation in a low voice. With a swing of my left hand, I threw a Spell of Grease that would cause the ground to become slippery. Straight away one of the knights fell, and I quickly stomped on his leg and broke his shin.

A knight with a broken leg is even less dangerous than a cleric, for after all they are just a bunch of armor-wearing tin cans running around. To support the hefty weight of armor requires a steady foundation, thus when a knight breaks a leg, even standing up is quite difficult.

"A swordmage!" the other knight shouted as his face paled drastically.

Swordmage? I rolled my eyes. *Oh please, I'm just a holy knight who accidentally learned some elementary magic, not the kind of deviant who learns both magic and sword fighting.*

However, I was brimming with confidence after defeating the knights this easily. *Looks like the three in front of my eyes are not quite high level knights; that makes this much easier to deal with.* The knight in front of me who mistook me for a swordmage was obviously very frightened, and didn't have the guts to go anywhere near me.

I could probably understand his feelings. After all, a swordmage is a weird occupation, in that one might be extremely strong or extremely weak. However, when I first entered the battlefield I defeated the strongest one among them, and in another instant I defeated a second one. In his mind, I was probably a swordmage who belongs in the strong category.

All of a sudden, I felt a strong aura at my back. I abruptly turned around and, as expected, I saw the fellow that I had first kicked down stand up slowly. His face was thunderous, and what was even worse was that his body radiated a small energy flow. That is battle aura, and only knights of high level and above possess it.

"Shameless backstabber!" the knight roared. He wanted to pull his saber out, but realized that I have already taken it away, which made him so furious that his face flushed crimson.

So that guy was actually a high level knight. No wonder he was only wearing light armor instead of the heavy armor that the other two were wearing.

“Battle aura” is like an air bubble wrapped around the body, and the effect is much better than armor, for it can not only block attacks but also at the same time, it had a buffering ability that armors don’t have. What’s more, it doesn’t have the weight of armor and thus will not lower one’s speed. So it can both help attack and save one’s life!

However, this kind of good thing wasn’t something that everyone can have, which can be seen from the fact that once knights can bring out a battle aura, they can immediately apply to be promoted to a high level knight.

I remember when my teacher spent all possible efforts to help me bring out a battle aura, and used all the possible methods he could think of. Every day, he would activate his battle aura over and over so that I could experience the battle aura’s activation method… In the end, I still didn’t manage to learn how to use it. On the other hand, when I was using my eyes to record the beautiful clerics, I accidentally learned the support spell that was meant specifically for high level clerics—Light Shield—which nearly made my teacher die of frustration.

It was not until I took over my teacher’s position as Sun Knight that I experienced the activation of battle aura during a mission that had nearly killed me.

However, I still prefer to use Light Shield instead of battle aura. That’s because I can cast Light Shield easily, but my battle aura fails an average of once every three activations, and it is weak to the point of being pathetic. On average it can take three blows before dissipating, so I don’t really dare to entrust my life to my disappointing battle aura.

I peeked at the high level knight’s battle aura. Smooth energy flow with suitable thickness, it looked like his battle aura was not as bad as mine, so it probably would not be an easy feat to break through it.

“Spell of Grease!” I casually threw a spell again.

However, as that high level knight was wearing light armor, the weight on his body and the little bit of oil on the ground was obviously not enough for him to fall on his back with four limbs facing the sky. Instead, this magic only aggravated him. He roared, “Despicable!” and then lifted the nearby table off the ground, throwing it in my direction in one breath.

He probably thought that I would face him head-on and handsomely slice through the table with the sword, and then have an earth-shaking knight vs. swordmage battle!

But…I dodged! Also, I added a “Spell of Smokescreen” to create smoke that would obscure my enemy's sight.

After that, I scooped up the old fellow who had been beaten to a pulp from the floor and jumped through the window. In a surge of adrenaline, I dashed to the side of the three horses, and cut loose the ropes holding them with one slice. Then, I jabbed two of the horse’s

backsides, causing them to run away, neighing loudly. Carrying the old man, I jumped on the third horse and pulled on the reins with great force.

At this moment, a sword covered in strong energy came flying through the broken window, slicing through the air straight at me.

If I were to dodge this sword, I would definitely fall off the horse. If I fall off the horse, then the knights behind will definitely catch up, and matters will be disastrous.

That is because in my current condition, even my Light Shield was like a protective barrier made of paper, and I totally had no strength to engage in combat with others, let alone with a high level knight.

I guess I have no choice but to take the damage!

Light Shield plus my holy magic should be able to take it…

*Tsssshhh…*That blade broke through my protective barrier as though it was passing through two layers of paper. My face paled, but I managed to tilt my body slightly so that blade didn't pierce through my heart, but only scraped across my right shoulder, which immediately spilled a stream of blood. Luckily, the sword didn't hurt the horse, so it still pressed forward with all its might, increasing the distance between us and the knights.

As I used healing magic to seal the wound, I thought, *This knight is very strong… Even if my condition were at its best, I'm afraid I still wouldn't be at an advantage. The only reason I managed to successfully knock him down in the first blow was thanks to the luck of catching him unaware and through the coordination of magic.*

A knight this strong, plus the fact that he yelled 'unscrupulous' and 'despicable'... I'm afraid he's no ordinary knight. Who knows, he might have some noble family background and that is why he would value the virtues of honor and fair play.

However, thinking about it, a knight who values honor going to an execution ground for a corpse… Seems like there's something wrong going on, no matter how you look at it!

Unless it was the order of the master that he is serving under, then it would be another matter entirely… Urgh!

A sudden dizzy spell struck me, and I shook my head violently. Lowering my head, I saw that the shoulder that I just healed had started bleeding again. That made sense; on this kind of bumpy horse ride, even if the wound were to clot up, it would be jarred open again.

I better hurry back to the Church so as to be able to use my full strength on healing my wounds. I quickly tore off a strip of the cloak, casually wrapped it around my shoulder twice, and then focused all my strength on riding the horse back to the city.

When I was just about to reach the city gates, I threw the old man off the horse, and then tossed a healing spell at him. In a low voice I told him, “If you value your life, leave this place quickly. Go as far as you can, you hear?”

The old man was obviously much better after my healing, and he nodded his head in fright before limping away.

Once he was gone, I also jumped off the horse. It belonged to that group of knights, so I wouldn’t dare to ride it back into the Church. If it were found out after the incident, there would be a lot of trouble. Moreover, my shoulder was dyed red with blood right now. If I were to ride in on a horse, it would be too eye-catching. I was worried that I might garner too much notice from the Militia Squadron or even from our own holy knights.

I used my hand to cover up the wound and slowly walked into the city. The city guards at the gate looked at me with a scowl for a few moments, but they didn’t stop me from entering. They had probably already seen a lot of adventurers with injuries covering their body. Moreover, since there are Militia Squadron and holy knights present within the city, there shouldn’t be a lot of guys who would dare to cause a ruckus in the capital.

I really had lost too much blood, and was so weak that I had no choice but to go back to my tortoise style of walking.

Although I didn’t create trouble, there was still a squad of Militia Squadron who were staring at me. The blood covering half my body on the cloak was a startling sight and they were probably also afraid of me suddenly causing trouble or worse still, directly toppling over to the side and dying.

Seeing that some of the knights in the Militia Squadron were pressing closer, I walked towards the side of the street, where three holy knights from the Holy Temple were chatting.

I moved closer to the three people and then reached out a hand to the holy knight with his back facing me. This action had obviously made the Militia Squadron and the other two holy knights who had noticed my movements nervous, and the other holy knights pulled the holy knight to one side…

I had originally wanted to tap that holy knight’s shoulder, but evidently I’m unable to now.

“May the God of Light bless you, my fellow brothers,” I said in a loud voice. However, after speaking, I realized that my voice was not as strong as I had imagined. Instead, I sounded abnormally weak.

“Who are you?” The holy knights stared at me in confusion, and seeing the fresh blood on my body, they couldn’t help but furrow their brows.

I pulled away my cloak a little to let them see my face, and said with a smile, “Can you recognize me?”

The three holy knights widened their eyes as soon as they saw my face, and the youngest among them started stuttering, “You, you are Su—!”

“Shh!” I pressed my pointer finger to my lips and even winked playfully with a casual smile on my face… I really wanted to just damn faint, but I still had to work hard to maintain the image of the Sun Knight!

The three holy knights’ facial expressions ran through several emotions. First they had discovered that I was the Sun Knight, so they wanted to salute. However, they remembered that I seemed to want to avoid revealing my identity, so they didn’t dare to salute. Next, their eyes drifted over my body, and seeing it covered in blood, their expressions changed drastically. After that, I could no longer tell what they were thinking, but they looked extremely pale.

How interesting…

“I need an escort. Are you are willing to spend some time to accompany me back to the Holy Temple?”

My speech was a lot simpler than usual. Words like being under the watchful eye of the God of Light, or fellowship amongst holy knight brothers and the like—that kind of nonsense was all omitted. Right then I only wanted to go back to the Holy Temple and sleep like a log.

“Also, the Militia Squadron seems to have some misunderstandings about me, so may I trouble you to help explain for me, but please don’t reveal my identity.”

The three holy knights nodded their heads fearfully, and one of the holy knights walked over to explain to the Militia Squadron. I don’t know what words he used, but the knights just nodded their heads before leaving.

The youngest holy knight in front of me seemed to be a little nervous as he asked, “Sir-Sir, do you want your wounds healed first? I know a little bit of healing… Ah!” As he spoke, he seemed to remember something, and stopped again.

Smiling, I said, “Then, may I trouble you?”

When those words of mine were spoken, the three holy knights looked at me with extreme disbelief. I can probably understand their shock; after all, I am the Sun Knight who gained fame through my powerful holy magic, and yet I actually needed someone to help me by using healing magic. It was simply just too unbelievable…

The three holy knights also knew not to talk too much. Only the holy knight who had spoken just now used his less-than-proficient healing skills to tend my wounds, and then the three escorted me back to the Holy Temple.

With the escort from the three holy knights, I reached the Holy Temple quickly. After saying a few words of thanks to the three knights, I stepped onto the staircase of the Holy Temple alone.

"Su— …Are you alright?" the youngest holy knight called out worriedly.

My body swayed twice, though it was not visible. I turned around to them, showing my most brilliant smile while saying, "I'm alright, please do not worry."

However, for some unknown reason the three Holy Knights first became shocked, and then showed even more worried expressions.

Reaching the Holy Temple's gate, I pulled off the hood of my cloak. The holy knights guarding the door immediately saluted me, and I entered the Holy Temple without any problems. I made a beeline to my room. *I'll be there soon! Oh, my dear bed…*

"Sun!"

Hearing the voice calling me, I had to stop in my tracks. Without even enough time to turn around, I was dragged away by someone. Since I didn't even have the strength to talk now, I could do nothing but allow myself be hauled off.

"What have you been doing? There's so much blood on you! It's the enemy's, right? I bet you beat them until they were trying to find their teeth all over the floor, ha!"

The person had a head of fiery-red hair, a loud voice, and a tall build. His manner of speaking was also extremely straightforward, and his strength was shocking. My whole body was dragged about by him with just one hand of his.

This person is Blaze Knight of the Twelve Holy Knights, and his personality is like an inferno, direct and explosive. He, Storm, Leaf, and I are all the same, for we all belong to the "warm, good" faction of the Twelve Holy Knight-Captains.

Please let me go, Blaze! I feel like crying; I'm about to faint already!

"Right, forgot to tell you why I was looking for you."

Blaze didn't even look back at me, but only continued to drag me forward. I saw that when the holy knights passing beside us saw me, all of them dropped the documents, cups, and even precious swords in their hands in shock. I think that my current facial color must have been very scary—as in so weak that it's scary.

If this continues, my image as a Sun Knight would definitely be completely tarnished. I mustered every last ounce of strength in my body and pulled up the hood of my cloak.

"Ice is lying down. That Death Knight's sword was a bit strange. They say that it was the Death-something Sword, and when struck with it, it directs the aura of death into their body. Even that old man the Pope can only forcefully repress its deathly energy. They said that only you have the power to cancel out that what's-it-called energy."

Aura of death? Everything makes more sense now! No wonder I was still this weak even with my extremely strong recovery abilities. I'm afraid that the sword has some extraordinary origin and, unfortunately, it is being held in the hands of a Death Knight. What was even more ill-fated was that I was being suspected as the chief culprit for creating that Death Knight, so I had no choice but to find out the truth.

Blaze dragged me to the row of rooms where the "cruel, cold-hearted" faction were living, and kicked open Ice's room with his leg. Then he shouted, "I found Sun! Now what do we have do to save this icy fellow?"

The situation in the room was not as grave as I thought. Although Ice Knight was lying in bed, he was conscious and was even holding a book and reading. A few high level clerics stood at the side, discussing how to heal the wound.

Judgment was also sitting at the side of Ice's bed, amending documents. Even though he came here to take care of Ice, he still would not forget about official work.

The high level clerics showed a joyous expression at my entrance. "As long as we drip that holy blood of Sun Knight, which has long been receiving blessings from the God of Light, onto Knight-Captain Ice's wound and combine it with our purification magic, we can definitely chase out the aura of death," one of them said. "After that, just let the Knight-Captain Ice rest quietly for a few days and he'll be fine.

Can you let me rest quietly for a few days first? No matter how you look at it, I feel that my condition is worse than Ice's by a fair amount…

Urgh! With a twinge of pain, my arm suddenly sprayed out blood like a fountain.

"That's simple. In any case, Sun is like an invincible cockroach. Bleeding one or two buckets of blood is nothing for him." Blaze grabbed my shoulder with one hand and with the other hand, lifted my hand and waved it all about on Ice's head. My blood sprayed all over his whole body, and the expression on his face grew even colder.

Seeing the situation, a few high level clerics rushed up to perform the purification spell. However, all of the purification spells were given to Ice on the bed… *Hey, hey! Did everyone forget that I was also struck yesterday? Moreover, the wound I received is even deeper than Ice's, so share some purification magic with me!*

I watched all those purification spells, wanting to cry and yet unable to do so. Although I wanted to shout, only a hoarse sound came out from my mouth.

"Knight-Captain Sun, you…" Judgment seemed to have observed that there was something wrong with me. He raised his head up suddenly, yet he hesitated and didn't continue.

I can understand Judgment's hesitation. After all, the two of us are the Sun Knight and Judgment Knight who definitely cannot get along with each other. It doesn't matter what is the true situation in private, in front of those clerics and Blaze, it was not appropriate for him to initiate

concern for me. Moreover, with the recovery abilities that I had shown in the past that resemble that of a cockroach, probably no one would believe that I would really die…

During the time that the clerics were doing purification on Ice, my consciousness gradually became hazy. *Please! Anyone is fine, just discover that I'm about to go see the God of Light…*

In the final moment before I fainted, I watched from the corner of my eye as Judgment pulled off Blaze's hand from my arm and removed the hood of my cloak. When he saw my face, he took in a deep breath, and then turned around, roaring at the clerics. However, I couldn't hear any more so I don't know what he was roaring about.

Hoho, Ice also jumped up from his bed. This icy fellow's face can actually have a flustered expression? It's simply too amazing. Instead it was Blaze, who always had exaggerated expressions, who had become dumbstruck.

I don't care anymore!

At any rate, what happens after, be it life or death, is none of my concern. Right now, I only want to sleep…Closing my eyes, I thought, *Ah! How comfortable. Good night, everyone.*

· Sixth Rule of Sun Knights ·

"Build your Social Network! Maintain Good Relationships with Others, Even if it's a Corpse"

"Sun should be safe and sound, right? His recovering ability is so strong…"

"You didn't see his face when he fainted; he looked like a dead man."

How rude, who did you say looked dead?! Originally, I wanted to roll over to face the other side of the bed, but my body felt too heavy. Never mind then, I will just continue sleeping.

"Your Holiness the Pope, Sun's condition wouldn't happen to be serious? That can't be, right?"

"He hasn't moved for two days…"

So I haven't been moved for two days already? No wonder my butt is aching slightly; can't someone come and help me change my body position? What if I get bedsores?

The Sun Knight getting bedsores… What if this leaks out to the public!?

I squirmed in my bed with all my might as I fearfully imagined my hideous appearance, covered in bedsores. This action consumed all the energy that I had painstakingly regained, and as a result, I fell into such a deep sleep that I couldn't even hear the people cheering beside my bed.

"What should we do? Sun has already been unconscious for five days now. At this rate, he will continue to weaken and die…"

"Get out!"

"What?"

"I said, everyone get out!"

After that, there was a loud quarrel, roars of anger, and sounds of people arguing. All in all, it was noisy as hell!

Don't you realize that there is a heavily injured person here? Can't all of you be quieter?!

I turned my body resentfully, blocking all the noise behind me with my butt, and then continued to sleep in peace…

"Sun, wake up!"

I slinked my head back under my blanket, and resumed sleeping.

"Grisia Sun, you get yourself up from that bed right now!"

I froze abruptly …*Grisia?*

Ah! It had been so long since I last heard it that I had almost forgotten that my name is Grisia.

From the day I took up the position of Sun Knight, everyone has been calling me Sun. But in actuality, only my last name was changed to Sun when I became the Sun Knight. The Twelve Holy Knights still retain their original names; it's just that no one will normally call us by our given names.

Therefore, I would always forget the names of the other Twelve Holy Knight-Captains. For example, I can never remember whether Knight-Captain Leaf's name was Elmairy or Strawberry…

To call me by my full name, it seemed like Lesus Judgment was very angry indeed. Looks like if I still refuse to wake up, I might never be able to wake up again…

I opened one of my eyes very reluctantly, and spoke my first sentence in five days in a hoarse voice, "Would it kill you to let me sleep for a moment longer?"

"…Ha."

The cold expression on Judgment's face finally broke. The corner of his mouth turned up into a smile, and he shook his head and laughed, with a "what-am-I-going-to-do-with-you" kind of

expression. He brought over a bowl of fish porridge, its sweet aroma permeating in all directions. It even had my favorite spice, a huge heap of coriander leaves, sprinkled on top of it.

Growl…

I leaped up from my bed like a spring in response, and with a ravenous expression minus the drooling mouth, I held out my hands to take the bowl full of savory porridge…

However, Judgment moved the bowl out of my reach in a flash, just as I was about to grab it.

“Lesus Judgment!” I called Knight-Captain Judgment by his full name in a grieving tone.

Lesus passed the bowl to me while speaking slowly and deliberately, “Remember to eat slowly. You only had sugar water to drink over the last five days, so a stomachache would be the least of your worries if you eat too quickly.”

I took the bowl and started to eat the porridge in small mouthfuls with a suffering expression.

“Truthfully, you should be eating something even blander than this. I shouldn’t have added the coriander leaves.” Judgment looked at my bowl with furrowed brows and let out a barely audible sigh. “But if I didn’t add them, you would definitely refuse to eat the tasteless porridge.”

Judgment knows me best—what kind of person would want to eat plain porridge!

Judgment sat down at the side of my bed. While I was eating my porridge, he took out some documents and started to make revisions. He certainly is a person who doesn't waste any time.

My hunger and thirst from the past five days was finally satiated after I set down my bowl in contentment and had voraciously drunk a whole bottle of water.

When Judgment saw that I had eaten and drunk to my heart’s content, he finally put away the documents in his hands and raised his head to look at me.

Although Judgment didn’t say a word, I understood that he wanted me to explain the entire situation. So, I immediately began describing what happened, starting from the time I went to look for Pink.

The fact that I was in league with a necromancer—Psh! It wasn’t “in league with”, it should be “in contact with”—was theoretically top secret, but Judgment was my best friend after all. I had never kept a secret from him before. Therefore, it was natural for him to know about the existence of Pink, the necromancer who was specially commissioned by the Church.

After Judgment heard everything, he fell deep into thought even as I tried hard to prop myself up on the edge of the bed with one hand while my other hand fished around beneath my bed. *…I remember that I had sneaked in a big piece of dried meat under here, now where did it go? Aha! Here it is.*


Bounce up!
Grumble~
LESUS JUDGE-MENT!

I was trying my best to bite off the piece of dried meat that was larger than my head while watching Judgment's expression. Normally, he would always look cold while I would always smile. However, beneath the surface and behind closed doors where no one could see us, both of us could show any random, goofy expression. For instance, I was sticking my butt high in the air just now while looking for the dried meat under my bed.

Judgment looked up with a doubtful expression. When he saw that I was eating the dried meat, his expression changed and he snatched it away. He growled softly, "You really don't care for your health at all."

I revealed a victimized expression. "But I'm still hungry…"

"I will bring over another bowl of porridge in a bit," Judgment insisted with determination. He even went as far as tucking my dried meat under his robes to stop me from eating any more.

"I inspected the sword that you had brought back." Judgment was Judgment indeed, going straight to the point without banalities.

I tilted my head until I recalled that the sword that he was referring to was the one used by the knight that I kicked down in the little house by the execution ground.

"Oh? So did you find the owner of the sword?"

"The hilt of the sword was adorned with the Orchid Crest of the Gerland family. To inflict such a wound on your shoulder and make you choose to flee, the knight should at least be a master knight. The Gerland family only has three master knights: the third son of Baron Gerland, plus two other knights who have sworn fealty to the Gerland family."

"Which one of them is the culprit?" I asked without the slightest hesitation. I believe that with Judgment's ability, he would be able to discover 70% or 80% of the facts just from the sword that I had brought back.

Judgment was silent for a moment, and then he finally opened his mouth and replied, "Regarding the third son of Baron Gerland, the master whom he had sworn fealty to is the crown prince."

I was silenced too. Then I asked with a little hope, "Are you sure it's the third son of the baron?"

Even though I phrased my question like that, the actual question that I wanted to ask was, was it really done by the crown prince?

For a knight who honors his name more than anything else, doing something as heinous as abandoning a corpse is only possible as an order from their master. If the third son of the baron really did declare his allegiance to the crown prince, then the one who had tortured the corpse couldn't be anyone else.

Judgment nodded. “Baron Gerland has two master knights who have sworn fealty to him. One of them was out of town, and the other knight had been patrolling the city the entire day. There were even a few knights patrolling with him who could testify.”

“The crown prince…tortured someone to death?” I had a somewhat aghast expression on my face. *This doesn’t seem like something the responsible and gentle crown prince would do.*

After I uttered this sentence, the whole room became quiet and the atmosphere was stifling. I thought it was because this matter related to the crown prince. If this were true, things would get problematic. Even if we did prove that it was the crown prince’s doing from the result of the investigation, could we send the only heir of the country to the gallows?

“Outside…” Judgment suddenly opened his mouth and spoke that one word before becoming silent again.

Looking at Judgment, I felt that this fellow had been acting slightly oddly today. Normally when it’s just the two of us, he relaxes his expression and wears a smile on his face. His smile, which was a bit stiff from not smiling for such a long time, compounded with his cool demeanor, would give an overall impression that was quite ridiculous looking.

But today, his face seemed taut, and when he first smiled, it looked fake. I could tell it was fake because it was the exact same smile I wear every day.

I stared at him, and he stared back at me. A weird and heavy atmosphere that had never appeared before started to form between us. Judgment’s perpetually resolute black pupils seemed to be somewhat flickering now, and I could even see his indecision from the way he knitted his brows.

“What’s the matter…?” I pulled at my shiny golden hair, then pushed Judgment roughly and said, “If you have something to say, just say it. Don’t hide things from me, or I will have a falling out with you.”

Judgment hesitated at first, but under my firm gaze, all he could do was sigh as he replied, “Outside, the whole city was abuzz with the rumor that it was you who had tortured the Death Knight to death.”

When I heard this, I was so shocked that my whole body became still, while Judgment continued to speak.

“The Pope has already given an order that we don’t need to investigate the facts anymore. Now we are supposed to condemn the Death Knight with all our power, and say he is an unpardonable criminal who has committed many unforgivable crimes. When you finally caught him, he repeatedly refused to listen to your advice, so finally he was taken away by Judgment’s men and sentenced to death. He has a grudge against you because you were the one who caught him.” When Judgment spoke this sentence, his tone was calm, as though as he was speaking the truth.

But this clearly wasn't the truth!

The fires of wrath burned in my chest. I don't know whether I was angry because that Death Knight was being falsely accused, or if it was because I dragged my weak body around to investigate the matter, nearly dying on the way, only to receive in the end a "no need to investigate further" decree!

Anyway, the flames of rage in my chest sprung up suddenly like a ravaging prairie fire, spreading wildly and violently burning in my chest. But the odd thing was, my limbs were feeling especially cold, and I was even breaking into a cold sweat.

"Calm down." Judgment noticed there was something amiss with me, and patted my shoulder with concern.

I brushed aside his hand, and this action left us both stunned for a moment.

He withdrew his hand, still silent. I couldn't control my mouth, so I pressed on with my interrogation, "You don't believe me when I say that I didn't kill that knight?"

Judgment was stunned, and then he raised his head to look at me. After a moment, he said, "I believe the evidence."

When I heard this, my heart sunk.

Judgment analyzed the case carefully, "Based on the current situation, it is possible that the crown prince had killed the Death Knight, and then ordered his knights to abandon the corpse at the execution ground…"

"But, it was also possible that I did it, right?" I interrupted Judgment in a loud voice. Judgment was obviously startled, but he didn't refute my words. I became angrier, and I couldn't stop myself from continuing.

"In any case, the person whom the Death Knight has a grudge against is me, and I was the one who told the whole story of what had happened at the execution ground. I also brought the sword back. Who knows, maybe I made everything up. I probably thought that if I can blame the whole matter on the crown prince, no one would dare investigate whether or not the crown prince is the criminal. Is that right, Knight-Captain Judgment?"

I said the whole sentence in one breath, and I even felt out of breath when I finished. My chest heaved furiously; I don't know whether it was because I was really tired from all the speaking or that the fire in my chest was threatening to escape.

Judgment was silent for a long, long while, and finally he only spoke a single sentence, "It is possible."

"F*** off, you son of a b****!" I was so angry that I let out a low roar.

With a dark expression, I jumped up from the bed and opened the closet nearby. I took out my extra cloak, and looking at the Divine Sun Sword beside the closet, I debated with myself whether to bring it along with me. But in the end, I decided not to take it, since I had not yet decided exactly what I'm going to do. I just wanted to vent out my anger!

"Sun, where are you going? Your body…" Judgment stood up suddenly, his face brimming with disapproval.

"I'm going to ask Pink something!" I interrupted Judgment's sentence, and couldn't stop myself adding in a sarcastic way, "If you are interested, you can add 'being in contact with a necromancer' to my list of offenses as well."

"You…" Judgment's face become deathly tight, and he seemed to be quite angry indeed.

Oh no! I suddenly felt a little guilty from the bottom of my heart. *I shouldn't have said that last sentence, and now I accidentally made Judgment angry… Ah! I don't care anymore. He is angry, but I'm even angrier!*

I will go and discuss matters over with Pink first. With this idea in my mind, I decided to take action right away, and I was nearly out the door with the cloak on my arm when I remembered something important at the last moment. I turned my head toward Judgment and said, "Oh right, don't spread around that nonsense from the Pope. I will find out the truth."

When I finished my sentence, Judgment went silent again. This made me feel slightly anxious, as this friend of mine would usually agree to any requests of mine no questions asked, even if they are stupid requests like helping me clear a combat mission, helping me investigate a case, or helping me punish others in the name of justice, but now he was actually being silent…*This is bad! I really shouldn't have angered him just now.*

Luckily, Judgment's tolerance was obviously much higher than I had thought. He only considered it for a moment before answering me, "I can only cover up for you for three days at most."

"Okay, three days is enough!" I readily agreed as I put on my extra cloak and turned to leave my room.

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"Shopkeeper, give me the biggest, sweetest, and pinkest strawberry lollipop in your shop!"

In a single breath, I threw out a silver ducat in exchange for a lollipop that was even bigger than my head. I instantly regretted it. *Why did I try to act cool?! I lost another silver ducat from my retirement funds again!*

With a remorseful heart, I once again approached Pink's house. This time, I couldn't tell whether she had known in advance that I was coming, or if she was just coincidentally enjoying the sun by her door. In any case, when I reached her house, she was already leaning on the doorframe,

looking rigidly at the giant strawberry lollipop in my hand, her saliva dripping down almost three feet.

As she dashed towards me, I quickly held up the lollipop high over my head, so that the short little necromancer girl couldn't reach it despite all her efforts to leap for it. Finally, she pouted and, holding her cheeks in both her hands, she crouched down on the floor and stared at me with a piteous expression.

"Did the Death Knight come back?" I asked while waving the lollipop.

Pink swallowed a mouthful of saliva, "Yes."

When I heard this, I thought, *Aha! Now we're getting somewhere.*

"Is he still taking orders from you, the necromancer?" I asked.

"He had never been very obedient right from the start. All Death Knights aren't very obedient. I told him to sweep the floor and wipe the table, but he ignored me completely." Pink answered with a pout.

To order a Death Knight to sweep the floor and wipe the table… Alright, since even the esteemed "Sun Knight" was helping her run errands and buying her lollipops, it wasn't too weird for her to have a Death Knight doing her cleaning.

"That reminds me, Sun, don't go provoking him. He is very strong now; you can't beat him in a fight." Pink cautioned.

I gave Pink a peculiar glance. *This anarchistic corpse is actually telling me to avoid the Death Knight?*

Pink muttered, "If you were hacked into mincemeat by the Death Knight, then even I can't sew you back and revive you. Then I wouldn't have an apprentice anymore!"

When she finished speaking, she tugged at my cloak and asked anxiously, "When are you going to be my apprentice?"

"Wait until I die."

This was not a rejection!

A number of years ago, when I was still young and naive, I came asking Pink for help just because I couldn't complete a mission. Of course she wouldn't help me for free, so I had already promised to give her in return a lollipop, a pretty pink frock, and a pair of corpses—a beautiful female and a handsome male—that hadn't decayed yet…which forced me to dig in the graveyard for a total of ten days in order to find corpses that fulfilled the requirements in order to repay the debt I owed her.

In the end, I had nothing left to sell to her. I gritted my teeth, *Fine! I have no choice but to sell my "afterlife."*

After that, I didn't dare go to Pink for solutions to my problems again, afraid that I would even sell the "living me" one day.

"What is that Death Knight's obsession?" I held the lollipop high in the air, hoping this lollipop that had cost me a silver ducat from my retirement fund would be enough to satisfy Pink.

Pink held both of her cheeks in her hands, and her eyes were looking at the lollipop, not quite willing to surrender. She said in an annoyed tone, "I don't know! He refused to tell me."

"Then who killed him?"

Pink looked at me oddly, and said in a matter of fact tone, "Aren't you the one who killed him?"

"I didn't kill him!" I was so angry now that I nearly went berserk.

"Oh, so it wasn't you…" Pink said in a long drawn out tone and her eyes had a faraway look. It was obvious that she didn't believe me at all.

This little girl… I gritted my teeth in frustration, but I didn't have the courage to actually bite Pink. If I did that, I would probably die of food poisoning from tasting her rotten flesh.

Not to mention, I still have to rely on her to clear my name. Therefore, I mustered the full extent of my smiling skill and wore the purest, most innocent, and the most victimized smile on my face. I guarantee that out of the ten women who saw this smile, all ten would suddenly feel the glow of motherly love in their chest and come running over to kiss me on the cheek. *…Ahem!* I meant that they would feel unbounded sympathy towards me.

As expected, Pink's eyes shone with a brilliant light and then she dashed towards me with the burning enthusiasm of a little fireball. Her arms were stretched wide as though she wanted a hug, and she…snatched away the lollipop in my hand.

I looked at my empty hand. *So this little girl dashed towards me was because I had forgotten to hold the lollipop up high, so she took the chance to snatch it away from my hand!*

Now that I don't even have a lollipop anymore, how can I get help from Pink? I can't really sell the "living me"! I couldn't help but sit down on the ground dejectedly.

Pink was crouching beside me licking the lollipop. Luckily, she still has some conscience left, as she patted my shoulder to console me, saying, "Don't be dejected, Sun. If you really didn't kill the Death Knight, just find the real culprit and everything will be fine, right?"

"Easy for you to say," I replied, rolling my eyes. "This matter involves the crown prince. I can't just waltz in front of the third son of the baron and ask, 'Hey! Is this whole fiasco the crown prince's doing?'"

Pink tilted her head in thought and then said, “In that case, you can capture him and bring him here to me, and I will help you ask him free of charge.”

“…Do you think the crime of torturing someone to death is worse than the crime of colluding with a necromancer?”

Unexpectedly, Pink showed a “you are hopeless” expression on her face. She shook her head and sighed, “Stupid! Can’t you capture him while covering your face?”

Hearing her reply, I started to feel a little tempted. No matter who falls into Pink’s hands, their only option is to speak the truth. I can save myself a lot of trouble this way…

Wait a minute! The third son of Baron Gerland is a master knight whose skill is nothing to scoff at! Although I may be able to win against him in a fight with help from my holy magic and the Divine Sun Sword, winning and capturing him alive are entirely different matters!

Moreover, unless everyone in the baron’s residence is dead, they would be sure to help the baron's third son. When that happens, I wouldn’t even know how I died!

“He is too strong and has many guards around him. I can’t capture him.” I was feeling even more dejected now.

“Nonsense! You are my chosen apprentice!” Pink pouted, and then she pulled my hand and dragged me into her house. This corpse may have looked like a little girl, but her strength was comparable to a bull. I couldn’t free myself from her grip at all, and could only let myself be dragged away.

Sob! The feeling of being dragged along by a little girl is terrible! Two-thirds of my body was scraping the ground…

Wham!

After she had dragged me into the house, she slammed the door shut with one hand. Then she released my hand and started digging around in a big trunk off to the side, throwing out a pile of random items in the process. The silent “cleaning corpse” at the side dutifully started picking up the items his master had thrown around.

I watched as Pink dug around, dumbfounded, until a pair of little girl’s laced panties flew on top of my head. I finally could not hold it in anymore and opened my mouth to ask, “What exactly are you looking for?”

“Found it!” Pink shouted loudly at the exact same moment and then took out from the bottom of the trunk a badge around the size of her palm.

Once again, I stood dumbfounded as I watched Pink walking towards me with the badge in her hand. She attached the badge to my chest with a small click. I looked down to examine the badge on my chest. The base of the badge was black, and silver lines formed a simple dragon

motif on it. The whole design was simple and elegant; it was quite beautiful as far as accessories went.

However, everything inside Pink's house apart from strawberry lollipops are all dangerous to a degree, ranging from dangerous, very dangerous, extremely dangerous, to apocalypse-inducing dangerous. There definitely wasn't an accessory here that wasn't dangerous.

"What is this?" I asked in slight panic. After all, this badge with an unknown-level of danger was attached to my chest!

"Ouch!"

Pink used her fingernail to cut open my finger, and then she raised my hand over the badge. The blood dripped on the badge until the badge started to glow with a faint silvery light. I understood that this light meant that the badge was confirming me as its owner.

In this world, there are many items that require dripping blood on them, and some that require even more troublesome rituals, for example adding a magic spell in order to confirm one's ownership before its true ability is revealed.

For instance, my Divine Sun Sword required an extremely complicated magic spell and a huge amount of my blood to transfer its ownership from my teacher to me. After that, only I can use the full power of the Divine Sun Sword, while others can only use it as a regular steel sword.

Plus, all these items that require ownership confirmation share the same characteristics: they are all incomparably precious, valuable, and expensive!

One might not be able to buy such an item even with a treasury full of gold ducats, and yet Pink just gave it to me like it was nothing. To say that I wasn't touched at all would definitely be a lie.

Besides, I saw that Pink's expression wasn't exactly comfortable. After all, my blood, which is known to be the most holy thing in the world, is the so-called natural enemy of all creatures of the dark.

"It's done!" Pink breathed out a sigh of relief and retracted her hand. The badge in her hand fell naturally to my lap. I picked up the badge and asked curiously, "What is this?"

Pink eyes glittered with an amused light, and then she urgently prompted me, "You yell, 'Dragon's Sacred Brigandine, in the name of the descendants of Dragons[1], I command thee, activate!'"

I was somewhat doubtful. *Who was the deity that created this old-fashioned spell?*

[1] **Descendants of Dragons:** Chinese people sometimes refer to themselves as such; (龍的傳人) lóng de chuán rén.

I thought about it and decided that Pink wouldn't hurt me, or more precisely, if she wanted to hurt me, she didn't need to do something as troublesome as this, so I repeated her words and said, "Dragon's Sacred Brigandine, in the name of the descendants of Dragons, I command thee, activate!"

As soon as I finished reciting, the badge in my hand started vibrating violently and then actually freed itself from my palm and floated in midair, while the gentle silvery glow intensified into a blinding light. I couldn't help but close my eyes in the presence of such radiance, and I could only feel the badge attaching itself firmly to my chest. Originally, it felt only the size of a palm, but it gradually expanded more and more, until finally it covered my whole chest, and then spread over my back and limbs…

To be honest, I was really apprehensive; who knew whether or not this badge was dangerous at the apocalypse-inducing level, but the current situation was like an arrow that had already been notched to a bow. Nearly my whole body had already been covered—what else could I do at this point?

Since there was nothing that I could do, I might as well close my eyes and endure it for a moment until it passes!

"Woooow! Sun's physique is as awesome as I had expected!" The surprised exclamation from Pink traveled to my ears.

What? I have an awesome physique? Don't tell me I'm naked!

I quickly opened my eyes and looked down. Luckily, I didn't see any fleshy colors. Instead, my clothing had changed into a skin-tight black leotard… No wonder Pink said my physique was very good.

This skin-tight leotard was aglow with silver light. There was silvery armor on vital spots like my chest and the lower part of my body, and even the footwear on my feet became a pair of light silver greaves as well. When I examined the light armor closely, I saw that it was in fact made of scales the size of fingernails, so that my mobility and actions were not impeded at all.

"This is high quality stuff indeed…" I couldn't stop myself from sighing in praise, but while sighing, I realized that my voice had changed as well. Not exactly changed, per se—it was more like I was speaking in a muffled voice.

I thought that it was strange, so I touched my face, and then I realized the lower part of my face was covered with the light, scaly armor as well.

Full of curiosity, I walked in front of the only mirror in the house. I looked and saw that the man staring back at me was wearing a tight leotard, with silvery scales covering just the lower part of the face, vital points, and feet, which all glimmered with an unassuming glow. The overall appearance was extremely cool and handsome, especially when combined with the black hair streaked with silver. It could be said that this handsome look could make every woman from eight to eighty faint…Wait, Wait a minute! Black hair with silver streaks?!



I was stunned out of my mind.

"AHHHHHHH! My hair color changed! My golden blond hair! AHHHHHHHHHH! I'm going to lose my job! I can no longer be a Sun Knight! I don't want to be reunited with the God of Light because I'm depressed from unemployment!"

The man in the mirror who could make every woman from eight to eighty faint was now cupping his cheeks and screaming at the top of his lungs.

"This noise is killing me," Pink commented while licking her lollipop beside me.

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"If you provide the badge with 300cc[2] of blood you can transform once. The duration of the transformation is 3 hours, and every hour after that requires 200cc more. I suggest you keep the transformation length below 5 hours each time, or else it'd be easy for you to die from losing too much blood," Pink explained.

Why does it sound like in order for it to work, I have to pay it a salary in blood?

"However, after a transformation, you'll have to wait 24 hours before you can transform again," Pink continued.

So this thing even needs a resting period. Isn't working for only 5 hours a day a bit outrageous?

"When transformed, your defense is doubled, your strength is multiplied by a factor of 1.6, your jumping ability is multiplied by a factor of 1.5, and your speed is multiplied by a factor of 1.2."

It was really a pile of troublesome numbers—why can't it just be straightforward and double everything?

"After the power up, Sun, your strength is probably… 85% of Judgment Knight Captain's!"

Damn it! You didn't need to remind me how weak my combat strength is, alright?

"But taking into account your abnormal recovering ability which is even stronger than that of an undead creature, if you can engage in a battle of attrition against Judgment Knight Captain lasting 3 days and 3 nights, you would win for sure!"

"…Did you forget that this armor sucks blood? Forget 3 days and 3 nights; I would become a dried up corpse after just 1 day and 2 nights!"

[2] **"...provide the badge with 300cc":** The original unit is "grams" but blood is measured in volume, not weight. 1g = 1cc roughly. (Blood density ~1.02 g/ml)

"Oh, that's right. I had forgotten the armor requires blood…Never mind then! I will demonstrate a few necromancy spells for you… Watch closely!"

Don't! I'm a holy Sun Knight, if other people were to find out that I can cast necromancy spells, I would be tied to a wooden stake and burned to death!

…I learned it? Oh my god! I only saw it once and I learned it already. Ahhh! Don't tell me that I'm not only a natural cleric and a genius mage, but also an incredibly gifted necromancer as well?

"Sun…when you became a holy knight, did you decide it by throwing dice? The God of Dice must have a vendetta against you…"

Don't ask anymore…*Sob!*

I spent more than an hour in Pink's cottage, listening to her explanation of the functions of Dragon's Sacred Brigandine, plus accidentally learning a few necromancy spells… Oh god! I must be very careful never to use them in my daily life, or else I would be in deep trouble.

Pink was really becoming more and more enthusiastic about teaching me necromancy spells. When she even wanted to start teaching me advanced necromancy spells, I had to escape quickly from the cottage to avoid becoming a master necromancer before even realizing it.

Let me do some calculations: If I can find the third son of the baron within half an hour, spend another half hour taking him to a desolate location, and then spend half an hour more to extort a confession from him using the necromancy spells that Pink had taught me, it would be possible for me to keep my transformation time within the 3 hours timeframe. Which means I wouldn't have to pay extra blood to this vampiric armor!

For a person who routinely loses blood continuously, this really is news worth celebrating!

Thus, without further delays, I set out to look for the third son of the baron, so that I could force him to speak the truth using physical force and black magic.

· Seventh Rule of Sun Knights ·

"Don't Underestimate Anything; Even a Shirt will Bite you if it's Angry"

After coming out from Pink's house, I pushed forth on my journey with all I had in order to conserve what little blood that remained in my body.

Moreover, although the shirt on my body is cool and suave, it's also troublesome for this very reason. Wearing this shirt on the main streets is just like declaring that I'm a suspicious character! I bet I don't even need to walk half a block before being noticed by the Royal Knight Militia Squad plus our own Holy Knights, and then together they would invite me to drink tea with the Judgment Knight.

Thus, I could only become a beam-walker gentleman, a specialist in walking on rafters…or in other words, the rooftops.

Luckily, it was currently nightfall, and with a dusky sky, the line of sight was limited. Otherwise, even if I walked on the rooftops I would still have to pray for the knights' and holy knights' eyes to be muddled by clam meat[1], so that I would not be discovered.

[1] **Eyes muddled by clam meat:** A Taiwanese proverb "眼睛被蛤蜊肉糊到", which is considered to be vulgar. It means that a man is infatuated with a woman's female charms and so he ignores the existence of everything around him.

I leapt and flew around on the rooftops swiftly, my body so lithesome it was as though I could fly. A casual jump of mine was higher than the heights of two people, and even more impressive was that my landings were as silent as a cat's.

It made me so joyous that I wanted to let out a maniacal laugh.

Pink was indeed an undead creature that had lived for an unknown number of years. What she so casually gifted to others were in fact all incredible treasures, although the name of this shirt is just too strange. *Why does it have to be called such a weird name like Dragon's Saint Brigandine? These days, aren't all treasures called The Sword of Atlantis or XX Goddess's Blessings and so forth?*

That being said, rather than the name "Dragon's Saint Brigandine", the fact that this shirt has to suck blood in order to work is even more abnormal. *Where do the huge amounts of blood it sucks go?*

Although I suspect that this shirt may be an undead creature of some sort, my blood is probably the most holy thing in the world. Don't talk about sucking 300cc of my blood; even 1cc would make it reveal its true form… But then again, maybe its true form is precisely a shirt?

Your servant is indeed a shirt.

I stopped in my tracks and looked left and right. Apart from me, the only thing above the roof was the star-filled sky. *So who said that sentence just now? Perhaps I have started having delusions, triggered by the excessive blood loss?*

Your servant has not sucked your blood yet. The due blood will be paid after my lord's transformation is terminated.

"Ohhhh… So it's like that!" I nodded my head, indicating that I understood. "It is rather considerate this way, since people wear the shirt for the sake of battle. If they are dizzy and thus not steady on their legs due to the lack of blood, they would definitely lose miserably."

My lord, you flatter me.

"No, no. What I said was the truth; this is really…quite…considerate…"

The more I said, the slower I spoke and the wider my eyes became. After a series of glances to the left and right, I can guarantee that the only thing around me that could speak was—!

Then what the hell is talking to me? Moreover, it's even very polite!

Your servant is Dragon's Saint Brigandine.

"You are the pitch-black shirt that is on my body?" I stiffly lowered my head, looking at the cool, suave, black shirt covered with silvery light armor, and asked with a hint of suspicion, "Prove it?"

How, may I ask, does my lord want me to prove it?

"What's with 'My lord' and 'Your servant'? This form of addressing others sure is strange." I shook my head, and said in an offhand manner, "Then just randomly move around a bit!"

As you wish.

I had just heard the word "wish" when my body instantly felt weird. *Why is there a … feeling of tightness?*

Flustered, I lowered my head and helplessly watched my waist becoming thinner and thinner…As I stared dumbfounded and wide-eyed at my almost-twenty-five inch waist, a sense of suffocation came from my chest. I hurriedly shouted, "Stop, stop, stop! I'm about to be strangled to death! I believe that you are the Dragon's Saint Brigandine, so hurry up and stop!"

As you wish.

I was a little touched to see my waist expand back to a normal male's waistline of thirty inches once more.

"How the times have changed!" I sighed with deep lament.

In the past it was only precious swords or gemstones that could talk. Now in this age, even clothes could open their mouths to speak!

Next time, before buying clothes, I need to test first for whether it can talk. If I didn't and they started a "Clothes Meeting" in my room, I definitely couldn't help it but burn all my talking clothes. Then, only after burning them would I remember that they were bought with my money… In the end, I would die an ungraceful death—of heartache.

Your servant is very sorry. Your servant will not open its mouth to speak at will in the future.

Such an obedient and clever shirt! I couldn't help but ask, "Since you're so obedient, can you not suck my blood when my transformation is terminated?"

Your servant- your servant cannot obey this order…

As expected, it's still out of the question. I let out a sigh. *Forget it. After this time, I probably won't use it again anyway, so letting it suck 300cc of blood shouldn't be a problem.*

My lord, there's movement ahead of you to the left, about a hundred meters away.

What? I was extremely shocked, but what shocked me wasn't the movement ahead, but the fact that this Dragon's Saint Brigandine actually has an "auto radar" function! My 300cc of blood certainly was not wasted!

I went in the direction that the Dragon's Saint Brigandine said for a short distance and found out that the aforementioned movement was actually from our own people. This place was a small square on the avenue leading to the palace. However, it was still quite a distance from the palace and about twenty holy knights had gathered there. Judging from the flame design on their chests, they were from the Blaze Knight Platoon[2]. Furthermore, their leader, the Knight Captain Blaze, was also here.

Seeing the situation, I promptly laid down flat on the rooftop so as to avoid being spotted by the keen-eyed holy knights. It would be disastrous if I were mistaken for the enemy.

However, I felt doubtful. *It shouldn't be the Blaze Knight Platoon's turn to be on patrol this month… If I remember correctly, this month should be the Judgment Knight Platoon's turn.* Every time the Judgment Knight Platoon was on patrol, the public order within the city would be especially good for that month. Forget fighting on the streets, even quarreling couples would only dare to argue softly behind closed doors.

For the whole of this month, the only major event that occurred was the "Death Knight" wreaking havoc. The only reason that the "Death Knight" could actually create a mess for this long and still not be easily disposed of by the Judgment Knight Platoon was that everyone had a tacit understanding that undead creatures should be handed over to me, Sun, to handle.

My doubts didn't last for long, for there was something that was even more shocking. The opponent that the Blaze Knight Platoon was facing was actually—the Death Knight!

It can't be wrong, for it was this discolored fellow who cut me with his sword. Just before he left he even said that he would come back to find me, which nearly made me lose enough blood to go see the God of Light.

However, why did this fellow look like he had changed somewhat?

I furrowed my brows, looking at him up and down. *It seems like… He's a bit darker than last time? Could this dead guy resent that his skin was too pale, and so he specially went to sunbathe?*

"Ha! I finally found you."

Blaze's cold laughter pulled back my attention. I simply couldn't imagine that guy Blaze could actually laugh coldly. *Wasn't he always very brazen, and his movements as boorish as a gorilla? His way of laughing was supposed to be either loud or maniacal.*

Could it be that Blaze is also a guy whose outer appearance doesn't match his personality on the inside?

[2] **Platoon**: A military unit typically composed of two to four sections or squads and containing 16 to 50 soldiers. (For more information, see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Platoon)

I had even thought that amongst the twelve holy knight captains, he was the one whose reputation matched reality the most. After all, I became familiar with the future six knight captains of the "good, warm people" faction when I started learning the ways of the Sun Knight at the age of ten. In fact, we were all really clear on what each of us were like when we just started.

Storm was actually a very shy child when he was young. It was rumored that it took his teacher three years just to teach him how to throw flirtatious winks at women without blushing.

Leaf has always been a kind-hearted and well-behaved darling child. After going through the teaching on how to be a nice person, I estimate that in this world, there are few people who can be nicer than him.

That guy, Earth, is in fact very rebellious and doesn't like to follow the rules. I don't even know how much effort his teacher spent just to make him at the very least learn how to look honest and trustworthy on the surface.

For Blaze, he was like a wild monkey ever since he was young, and required practically no training on the type of personality that the Blaze Knight Captain should display.

As for the "cruel, cold-hearted people" faction of the twelve holy knights, we became acquainted with each other at around eleven or twelve years old. At that time, everyone had already undergone three years of damage… *_Cough_* I mean, learning.

Thus, I'm not too sure about the original personalities of the six knight captains from the "cruel, cold-hearted people" faction. I only heard more or less about them from Judgment Knight.

"You're the piece of trash who hurt Sun and even incriminated him! You nearly caused me to accidentally kill him!" Blaze pulled his hand back and drew out the two-handed broadsword that he was carrying on his back. Both of his eyes were red with anger, and it seemed as though even his hair was standing up on end.

Hearing that, I was stunned for a while. *So Blaze was angry because of what happened to me? That explains why his behavior was abnormal!* This couldn't be helped though, for Blaze had particularly idolized me ever since we were young. Even now, I still don't understand why he would idolize me that much. *Perhaps it was because his teacher had instilled too much of this kind of thinking into his mind.*

"I…am not…TRASH!"

The Death Knight growled in a husky voice. The dark aura surrounding him suddenly swelled up and the sword in his hand looked even more ferocious. Needless to say, the blade was sharp enough to make mincemeat out of people, and the whole hilt of the sword resembled the warped shape of a human in pain.

This situation doesn't look good…Blaze has most likely stepped onto the Death Knight's sore spot and made him go berserk.

I started to become vexed with myself. How could I have forgotten to ask Pink whether the Death Knight's sword was her item, and whether or not it had any special abilities or whatnot?

What was even worse was that Blaze's fighting ability was not as good as Ice's, so he definitely couldn't beat the Death Knight.

Luckily, Blaze wasn't dumb enough to fight one-on-one with the Death Knight. With only a wave of his hand, Blaze signaled the well-trained knight platoon to surround the Death Knight in groups. Two of them walked into the ring and, along with Blaze, formed a triangle surrounding the Death Knight right in the center.

Good job! I applauded secretly in my heart. Firstly, the ring prevented the Death Knight from running away when he was losing the battle like last time. At the same time, it served the purpose of protecting the spectators, although none of them were on the square. Most likely, the crowd had already been dispersed by Blaze. However, there were quite a number of civilian houses nearby. To the Death Knight, these civilian houses were no more than paper models. It would be terrible if he were to break the walls and seize the civilians inside as hostages.

Although I praised Blaze's way of handling things, the Death Knight seemed to be even more enraged by this action. The flames in his eyes shook chaotically as he growled. "Shameless, you're shameless! You are not fit to be a holy knight!"

Hearing that, I frowned. Inside my heart, I thought, *Does this Death Knight have a connection to us holy knights?*

For most people, if they saw behavior that did not conform to justice and morality they would say that it was behavior unbecoming of a "knight". They probably wouldn't specifically point out that this behavior was unbecoming of a "holy knight". This is because, except for the difference in where their loyalty lies, there is basically no difference in the guidelines of how a knight and a holy knight should behave. It can be said that a holy knight is only just one of the branches of a knight.

Blaze had a naturally explosive personality, and after being scolded by the Death Knight, was unwilling to be outdone. Immediately, he retorted with a roar. "You are the one who is not fit to be a corpse; corpses should keep their mouth shut for good! Charge!" The last line was an order to the two members of the Blaze Knight Platoon.

Once his command was given, Blaze himself charged in front to fight with the Death Knight. The two members of the knight platoon from the back seemed to be used to their captain's reckless actions, for they reduced the size of the encirclement straight away, and at the same time supported Blaze in battle.

Although it looked as though they were at a disadvantage even with three people besieging a Death Knight, I wasn't very worried. Even if Blaze and two members of the knight platoon couldn't defeat this guy, there were still twenty members of the holy knights platoon on the sidelines.

I refuse to believe that a trivial Death Knight can be victorious against all these people! After all, the holy knights who are chosen to follow alongside the twelve holy knight captains are all elites from the Holy Church.

In the short time while I was thinking, Blaze had already called up two other holy knights. With Blaze at the core, the five people battled with the Death Knight with perfect coordination among them.

Seeing the situation, I was even more at ease. Though Blaze was in a fit of anger, he obviously had not lost his cool. As usual, he had handled this with the best approach, which was not to charge in impatiently, but to engage the Death Knight in a meticulous battle of attrition and to subdue him slowly.

“Shameless, shameless, shameless!”

The Death Knight seemed to stutter suddenly, as he repeatedly chanted this phrase non-stop. At the same time, he seemed to become even darker…

No! It’s the dark aura surrounding him that’s becoming heavier.

Looking at Blaze, I noticed that he didn't seem to have realized that something was amiss about the Death Knight. Most likely, this subtle change in the dark aura was something that only I, the Sun Knight who has a one hundred percent holy attribute, can feel. *What bad luck! I have to find a way to warn Blaze.*

Thinking it over, I thought that it was better to just join the battle directly. At most, I could run away without taking any responsibility after that.

Just as I’m going to draw out my Divine Sun Sword… Where would I get my Divine Sun Sword! I looked all over my body, and my physique was really not bad…**Cough!** In short, I was wearing a leotard on my body, so I couldn’t see any place that could hide weapons.

Jump into the battle unarmed? Blaze might just think that I was in the way, and tell me to scram to the side and drink milk.

My lord, your servant can provide weapons.

“Really?” I extended my hand happily. “Then give me one, quick!”

My lord, your servant has an obligation to remind you that the weapon must be exchanged for 200cc of blood.

“Are you a black market merchant? You would need to suck my blood just to get me a weapon?” I asked in shock, “That’s right! You’re a shirt! Grr… How abominable! You ‘black shirt’!”

My lord, your servant is indeed a black shirt.

I was so angry that was grinding my teeth. However, upon lowering my head, I saw that although the Death Knight was being besieged and the wounds on his body had increased quite a bit, the dark aura around him was as thick as ink. Even Blaze had realized that something was wrong. His expression showed doubt and anxiety, but it seemed like he had no intention of retreating.

You big gorilla, where did all my usual warnings go? Didn't I say that it was better to retreat than to stubbornly force yourself?

Having no choice, I could only roar at the shirt, "Hurry and give me the weapon!"

As you wish.

Just as the Dragon's Saint Brigandine finished its reply, my waist suddenly felt a little itchy. My hand went to touch it, and sure enough, I felt a sword. I drew out the sword in one go...

"F***! What is this? A letter-opener?"

My lord, this is the Sword Breaker.

"Breaker? What the hell?"

I stared in disbelief at the sword in my hand…No! It was a dagger. This small item was only about as long as the length from my elbow to my fingertip, of which about one third was the hilt, like a child's toy. What was probably stranger was that this dagger had ample thickness and looked extremely solid. The back of the dagger was serrated.

The Sword Breaker, short and small, can be used to assassinate. In the event that the assassination has failed, the serrations on the back of the knife can be used to break the opponent's sword before escaping.

"Sounds like it is pretty good… But, it's not like I want to assassinate anyone!" I rolled my eyes.

Even if I wanted to assassinate him, the Death Knight is not going to die from one stab of a short sword, okay? Besides, the sword in the Death Knight's hand might not even break after hitting it with an iron hammer.

"Do you have an ordinary sword? Even a dao will do!"

My lord, your servant is an assassin's gear and has no weapons used by warriors.

"These days, even a shirt talks about specialization…" Sighing, I lowered my head to look at the dagger in my hands. *Use this to fight the Death Knight?* I simply wanted to cry as I asked, "Do you have any other weapons?"

Yes, darts require 100cc of blood; grappling claws requires 150cc of blood…

"…Pretend that I didn't ask."

Yes.

I sighed as I reconsidered my strategy. Rather than holding a dagger and joining the battle, perhaps it would be better if I reverted back to my form as the Sun Knight, and then go down and use my blood with its holy attribute and my adept holy magic to help Blaze.

In any case, I probably wouldn't be able to accomplish my original goal today. I couldn't possibly leave Blaze here to go capture the third son of Baron Gerland.

Just as I was about to jump down from the roof to find a dark spot to revert back to my original form, the situation changed for the worse. I felt that the dark aura surrounding the Death Knight was no longer ball-shaped, but like a vortex. The Death Knight was the center of the vortex, continuously absorbing into his body the dark aura from not only the surrounding area, but even the entire city.

I abruptly turned back and without thinking, I stabbed my left palm with the Sword Breaker, staining it with my blood. I jumped off the roof and dashed towards the Death Knight, while casting "Wings of God" and "Light Shield" on myself. There was only one thought in my mind.

I can't let him become a Death Lord!

***

At this moment, the dark aura on the small square was already thick enough to make those with weak willpower raise their sword and commit suicide. Even those with strong willpower, such as the twenty plus holy knights, were pale-faced and shaky. Only Blaze still managed to maintain his normal state, albeit with some difficulty.

"Shameless!" The Death Knight absorbed the dark aura as he walked towards Blaze. The flames in his eyes had already turned from a discolored red to a grayish-black. When he becomes a true Death Lord, they would be pure black.

"Knight, Knight Captain Blaze…" As the twenty plus holy knights saw that the Death Knight was walking towards their own captain, they strenuously moved their legs, trying to move forward to the rescue.

"Go! All of you staying here will do no good, hurry up and go inform the Holy Church." Blaze roared fiercely to the holy knights.

"No way! Knight Captain Blaze, you should go first!" The holy knights shouted in succession.

"Not a…single one of you…can leave! Shameless people!"

The dark aura surrounding the Death Knight abruptly turned from a vortex to a ball-shape again, and then the ball of dark aura rapidly expanded outwards. In the end, it was like a giant layer of eggshell, enclosing the small square tightly.

Even if it would delay him from becoming a Death Lord, he still intended to annihilate this platoon of holy knights.

His first target was the leader of the platoon, the Blaze Knight.

Blaze lifted his two-handed broadsword. Originally, the sword was ablaze with purifying flame, but now it was flickering like a candle's flame in the dark aura that was covering the sky and earth, with the danger of extinguishing anytime.

Dealing with undead creatures has never been Blaze's specialty; his purifying flame is a spirit's natural enemy. Though spirits and undead creatures sound quite similar, they are actually not the same thing. The biggest distinction would be that spirits have no physical bodies, but undead creatures at least have mortal flesh.

The effect of purifying flame on spirits was as strong as "when the fire comes, spirits are gone". However, once there is flesh separating them, the flame becomes a lot less effective. Thus, although undead creatures also loathe the flame, they do not fear it as much as spirits.

Dealing with undead creatures has always been the Sun Knight's area of expertise!

I held the dagger, and stealthily sneaked near the two people held in a stalemate…

"Who is it?" The Death Knight coldly threw a look in my direction.

Damn it! I had originally wanted to launch a sneak attack, but the holy aura on my body was out of place in this ball of dark aura. To the Death Knight, I probably was as noticeable as a torch in the dark night.

Without saying another word, I quickly started attacking the Death Knight. Conveniently, this action also clearly indicated to Blaze and the others that I was on their side.

The Death Knight didn't seem to take me seriously, but I forgive him for that. Even I myself would be unable to take a guy who held a dagger and chose to charge directly head-on against people instead of assassinating them with it seriously.

When I made my first attack on the Death Knight, he was still in a half-dazed state.

Bastard, you're still not taking me seriously! Did you think I wanted to confront you head-on with a dagger? It's just that as the Sun Knight with a completely holy attribute, I'm probably brighter than the sun in the sky to a Death Knight like you! It's completely impossible for me to assassinate you, so do I have any choice other than holding the dagger and 'assassinating in the open'?

When my first blow sliced across the Death Knight's chest, the front of his chest immediately let out a sizzling sound, like that of fish being fried. He also growled multiple times in pain, and then brandished his sword to block my second attack.

The Death Knight looked at me, saying, "As expected, it's you."

He recognized that I'm the Sun Knight already, damn it all! I don't want to be discovered by Blaze and the holy knights behind him that as a dignified Sun Knight, I actually run around wearing all black and dyed my hair a weird black color with silver streaks. What's even worse was that I stupidly discarded the Divine Sun Sword along with my common sense, and instead chose to confront him head-on with a dagger meant for assassination.

I can't possibly clarify myself by saying, "I plead innocence! I was originally going to conduct a kidnapping, so I only brought along a dagger and went on my way."

"Su…"

As the Death Knight started to call me, I immediately roared, interrupting him in the middle. "That's right, it's me! I am the hunter that specializes in hunting Death Knights, renowned in the northern part of the mainland, and is also famous in the southern part of the mainland! I'm Su… Supreme Dragon[3]!"

"Supreme Dragon?" Blaze remained speechless for a while, before turning around to ask the holy knights by his side, "Do you know Supreme Dragon?"

The twenty or so holy knights by his side simultaneously shook their heads in tacit agreement.

"Supreme Dragon…?" The Death Knight seemed to be stunned by my title, and sounding more than a little confused, he said, "Aren't you…Sun…"

I hurriedly burst into a wild roar, "Prepare to die! Death Knight, now that you've met me, the Death Knight killer, you're dead meat!"

"But then again, it can be said that the Death Knight has long since been dead, right?" Blaze muttered at one side. "Moreover, are there really that many Death Knights to hunt on the mainland?"

"Death Knight, let us have a quick battle to determine the winner," I told the Death Knight coldly. I was fearful of staying in this place too long, for my identity as a Sun Knight could be discovered easily, and I sure don't want the reputation that I leave to the future generation to be "The Sun Knight with a costume fetish".

[3] **Supreme Dragon**: Sun is pronounced Tai Yang in Chinese. In this scene, the Death Knight actually said "Tai" as the first word of Sun's name, and Sun named himself as Tai (Greatest/Extreme) Long (Dragon). We've changed the name into an English equivalent for consistency.

Nonetheless, my own reputation doesn't matter, but if my teacher with the title of "The Strongest Sun Knight" finds out that he actually raised "The Sun Knight with a costume fetish", then I reckon that there will be another piece of scandal that the Church of the God of Light would have to cover up.

"Shocking news! Ex-Sun Knight kills Sun Knight!" is not the headline news that the Church would want to see.

I don't know if it was my misperception, but after the Death Knight across from me heard that I wanted to have a swift, decisive battle, he seemed to be a bit hesitant. However, after he glanced at Blaze and the others, he coldly replied, "Just what I wanted myself."

I felt that his reaction was extremely strange. Generally speaking, once a Death Knight meets the object of his obsession, he should become so agitated that he'll lose all reason… At least, my "Basic Knowledge of Undead Creatures" textbook says so.

But the Death Knight was not sloppy at all. After he finished speaking, he immediately launched his assault. Without any trouble, I threw a Light Ball, which was the most elementary magic. Other than providing illumination, it doesn't do any actual damage. However, with the sudden illumination in the night, this move was enough to block the light-hating Death Knight once.

As expected, he was blinded by this Light Ball for a while and even had to use his arm to block the light. Under the "Wings of God" spell and the Dragon's Saint Brigandine's twofold speed enhancement, I took this opportunity and instantly dashed right in front of the Death Knight. This speed was really astonishing; I reckon that even strong people like Judgment Knight would be at a disadvantage against this maneuver.

Sure enough, this kind of speed caught the Death Knight off guard. Although he could still feel the holy aura on my body even without relying on his eyes, he could only get a rough idea of my position this way and was unable to accurately determine my movements. My left hand first feigned a strike to his chest, and then when his defense was diverted to his chest, I lowered my body and immediately stabbed at his knee with the Sword Breaker in my right hand.

My line of thought was that since the opponent was a Death Knight, even if I really jabbed at his chest, at most it would just carve a hole in his chest. To normal people, this could be a fatal wound. However, the Death Knight was already dead to the extent that it couldn't die again. As for having one more hole in his chest, perhaps he would just enjoy the improved ventilation!

On the other hand, if I attacked the knee, the damage at the knee joint could reliably affect the Death Knight's subsequent battle movements. Then, even if I couldn't defeat him and wanted to escape, I wouldn't have to worry about whether or not Blaze and the others would be finished off by the Death Knight.

After a painful roar from the Death Knight, his vision had also already recovered. However, I was fully prepared mentally. Shutting my eyes, I released another Light Ball and retreated. Finally, I used my Spell of Grease to fill the area between the Death Knight and myself with a layer of grease.

"*Argh*!"

The Death Knight probably didn't think that there was someone who would use the same move twice. Moreover, this time the Light Ball even exploded right in front of his eyes. One could tell just by looking at the way he is howling that his eyes really hurt!

This is extremely thrilling! My heart is still beating non-stop. It can be said that this plan was thought up on the spot when I was moving just now and had realized that my speed was so fast. If I had used this move in a situation where either my movement speed or my spell casting speed wasn't quick enough, I definitely would have been finished off immediately by the Death Knight while I was still closing my eyes!

"This guy wearing the black shirt sure is despicable," Blaze commented. Blaze was standing at one side and bad-mouthing me... I'd let it pass, but to actually say it loud enough for me to hear? You're done for!

One of the holy knights suddenly voiced out, "I understand now! So Supreme Dragon is…"

Uh oh! Could they have discovered that I am the Sun Knight?

The holy knights said in unison, "A Ma-gi-cal As-sas-sin!"

I nearly slipped and fell. *Last time I was a swordmage, and this time I've become a magical assassin?*

Bastards! I'm just a holy knight wearing an assassin's gear and using magic, alright?! I don't have that kind of strange occupation where I learn magic and become an assassin… Speaking of which, is there really an occupation such as magical assassin?

Shit! My attention was diverted by Blaze and the others, and as a result the Death Knight was actually already charging towards me. I tried to get away, but the surrounding dark aura that was used to prevent Blaze and the others from escaping suddenly engulfed me. The Death Knight's speed was so fast that I was completely unable to react in time, and the holy light that didn't require an incantation was also unable to break through the dark aura around me.

Watching helplessly, I was soon going to be divided into eight little pieces by the furious Death Knight. At this moment, the only move that could save my life flashed in my mind. The surrounding dark aura was so thick that if I used that spell, I probably wouldn't even need to recite the incantation…

"Bone Prison!"

A simple and crude wall constructed from bones appeared between the Death Knight and me.

I used it! AHHHHHH!! I used the necromancy that Pink taught me!

My god, I have become a necromancer! This won't do! As a Sun Knight, I absolutely can't use this kind of evil magic…

BAM! BAM!

The Death Knight swung his sword twice, and the prison was on the verge of collapse. In a moment, the third swing was going to chop the bone prison into a pile of broken pieces.

"Bone Prison! Bone Prison! Bone Prison!" I built up three walls in one breath.

"Wrong!" Blaze roared in alarm, "That Supreme Dragon is…"

Shit! Blaze has indeed proved himself to be from the same "good, warm people" faction as me! I'm afraid he has already recognized that I am Sun from my movements…

"Is a necromantic assassin!"

"…"

I suddenly had a feeling of abandoning myself to despair. As it happens, the Death Knight's continuous assault has pretty much destroyed most of the three bone prisons. I was at a loss as to how to escape, and simply seized the opportunity when the Death Knight was still hacking at the bone prison to recite an incantation. I then threw him an enhanced version of holy light. The dense holy light not only forced back the surrounding dark aura, but also forced the Death Knight to retreat more than ten steps.

This time, they really ought to know that I'm not some magical assassin or necromantic assassin!

"They're all wrong!" Blaze and all the rest of the holy knights spoke unanimously, "So Supreme Dragon is actually a Holy…"

Hohoho! At long last, I got discovered! Although they might not be able to guess that I'm the Sun Knight, but they would at least know that I'm a holy knight, right? I felt a bit relieved.

"Holy assassin!"

Pffft!

I stared expressionless at the scene in which even the Death Knight couldn't stop himself from laughing out. *What a miracle from the God of Light! Our holy knights actually managed to make the vengeful Death Knight laugh.*

I roared at the bunch of idiots, "Holy assassin my ass! Is it even possible that apart from knights, the God of Light would also raise up assassins? Bastards! I am your Sun Knight!"

Unfortunately, the sentence above is purely the cry of my heart. Unless I want my teacher to personally send me to the God of Light for re-education, I can only imagine it in my head.

"Alright, we have been watching for too long. Although I don't know who that guy in the black shirt is, but he doesn't seem to be an enemy. Let's go and defeat the Death Knight together." Blaze turned around to shout to the twenty or so holy knights.

"Okay!" The holy knights shouted excitedly in high spirits.

I nodded my head. With Blaze and me, as well as the addition of these holy knights, I believe we should be able to capture or kill this Death Knight.

At this moment, the Death Knight abruptly shifted the dark aura to separate us from Blaze and the others, successfully isolating the two of us.

This is bad! I was just about to call up another bone prison, and then recite an incantation to release large amounts of holy light to expel all of the dark aura when the Death Knight suddenly spoke.

"Grisia, you have become stronger, good."

Hearing my own name, I suddenly froze. Although my name isn't a secret, far too few people call me by this name. Perhaps this Death Knight is an acquaintance of mine?

"Grisia, if you aren't chosen as the Sun Knight, being a priest wouldn't be too bad either! Then you'd be able to help heal my injuries in the future."

The Death Knight said mildly something that didn't match the current situation at all.

However, I couldn't be more familiar with these words… And I was very astonished. Only now did I finally look at the Death Knight's face carefully. Though the Death Knight's facial color was mostly grayish-white, and his eyeballs flame-shaped, but that serious expression and that pursed up tight lip was ever so familiar. I finally confirmed who he was… Or I should say, who he had been when he was alive.

"Roland? You are Roland?!" I shouted, extremely agitated. *How could it be Roland?*

Roland, that brown-haired young knight whose swordsmanship was estimated to be three times better than mine, who had contested me for the position of Sun Knight…

But now he had become a Death Knight.

"You still remember me." Roland revealed a gratified smile.

That smile made me even more certain that he was Roland. I still wanted to ask him how he became a Death Knight when a loud noise came from the surroundings.

"Judge! Quick, over here…"

Roland had also noticed it. He turned around, wanting to flee. However, he turned his head to look at me in hesitation, obviously fearful of me.

I was suddenly at a loss for what to do. My heart cried with my all might, *Hinder him!* With my own ability, even if I couldn't win against him, hindering him should be an easy task.

Also, Knight Captain Judgment was very strong. With the addition of the whole platoon of holy knights that he was bound to bring, as well as Blaze and his Blaze Knight Platoon, even if I don't intervene, they would definitely still be able to kill the Death Knight. I am the Sun Knight, and regardless of who the Death Knight in front of my eyes might be, he is still my enemy.

At this time, the figures of Judgment Knight and the others were already visible.

Unable to stay any longer, Roland turned and fled.

I stood blankly for a few seconds, watching his figure recede as he ran. Then I too turned to escape, to prevent myself from being captured by Judge.

I am the Sun Knight, but I am also still Grisia. If I must uphold the principles of the Sun Knight and exterminate this Death Knight, then I can at least choose the method of extermination.

Roland, I swear I will find your murderer and avenge you.

· Eight Rule of Sun Knights ·

"Don't Act Suspicious while wearing a Cloak"

Grisia, if you aren't chosen as the Sun Knight, then being a priest wouldn't be too bad either! Then you'd be able to help heal my injuries in the future.

I sat up in bed abruptly. Just now I'd had a dream, one that brought back memories buried a long time ago. I even saw a serious-looking face that had not shown itself for quite a while.

Roland had always been a very serious guy, wearing a serious expression even while cheering others up. He had observed my abilities very carefully and then suggested an alternative career path for me. And I had really taken his words to heart, getting ready to go the Church and put myself in the running for a priest in case I didn't get picked as the Sun Knight.

Even if I couldn't become the Sun Knight, being a priest by his side wouldn't be too bad. If Roland were chosen as the Sun Knight, then all the better.

Roland and I met each other at the Holy Church during the examinations for selecting the next Sun Knight. When there were only ten candidates left, everyone hated one another like bitter enemies, but I was on very good terms with Roland.

Roland was very strong and was the most promising candidate, and I was well aware that my own swordsmanship was the worst amongst all of us. I probably could only wish for a miracle to happen in order for me to be chosen as the Sun Knight!

In such a competitive environment filled with hatred all around, only the most probable and the least probable candidates could ever hope to become good friends.

Though our bonds of friendship were severed on that last day when the Sun Knight who later became my teacher announced that he had picked me to be his successor….

"Why was I chosen?" The childhood me walked forward quite dazedly to face the then-current Sun Knight, as the possibility of my being chosen had never even crossed my mind.

"Well, perhaps it was because of your beautiful blond hair," laughed my teacher somewhat facetiously. Hearing this response, my heart practically froze, stilled by the feeling that I had somehow won through dishonest means. Even so, I just couldn't bring myself to say that I would relinquish the position and that I would like Roland to take my place instead.

I had also wanted to become the Sun Knight myself, and very very much so!

When I finally turned my head around to look, Roland had already turned to leave before I even had a chance to see his expression. He was walking away very quickly, leaving without a hint of reluctance and showing no intention to come back and congratulate me. Granted, given the situation at that time, I was already infinitely fortunate that he didn't come up here to cut me to bits. The other candidates all looked like they were trying to turn me into Swiss cheese with their penetrating stares.

"Do you hate me, Roland?" I buried my face between my hands, muttering. "Did you come back to haunt me because of your hatred? But how in the world did you die? I mean, you're Roland, the very same Roland that could defeat an adult in battle at the age of ten."

Then I thought about Baron Gerland's third son, and the possibility that the crown prince was behind it all, and finally got a gist of what's going on. No matter how strong he may be, there was no way Roland could singlehandedly go against the ruler of an entire country. Even the Sun Knight couldn't simply overthrow a country's ruler unless that country were to oppose the entire Church of the God of Light and start an all-out war between the country and the Church.

But didn't I just declare it my goal to avenge Roland…? Hmm! *I had better investigate things more thoroughly before starting any talk of seeking revenge,* I thought with a bit of the mentality of an ostrich burying its head in the sand.

As for investigating the royal family, consulting with Knight-Captain Storm is a must, since he spends all day throwing flirtatious glances at aristocratic women and waxing poetic romance with the sons of noblemen. He definitely knows many of their secrets.

Actions speak louder than words and thoughts! I spent the next minute combing my hair, washing my face and tidying up my appearance before rushing out my bedroom door and searching the entire Holy Church for Storm Knight. Finally, in the middle of some corridor, I intercepted Storm Knight who was carrying a large stack of documents.

I asked without hesitation, "Brother Storm, could you lend Sun a hand?"

"May I refuse?" Storm Knight asked with dark circles under his eyes. Looking at the height of the stack of papers in his hand, I deduced that most likely, for the sake of upholding his reputation as the carefree Storm Knight, he had no choice but to skip out on another meeting. Following previous examples, the backlog of work that had accumulated during my vacation must have all been passed down onto his shoulders.

"This is a command from the leader of the Twelve Holy Knights."

"…Go on and say it then."

"Please help Sun investigate who amongst the nobility has a penchant for torturing others – may the God of Light forgive these lambs that have lost their way."

"If it's only that, I can tell you without even needing to investigate. Around 80% of the nobility have this kind of hobby," Storm Knight said while giving me several disdainful looks.

"That many?" I was somewhat startled by this. Could it be that torturing others is a fundamental skill for nobles?

"Of course, they are aristocrats after all."

"Then… Are there any that have lost their way even more so, who not only have embraced the path of torture, but indulge even further in the kind of activities that the God of Light would not tolerate, such as torturing others to death?"

Upon hearing this question, Storm gave me a weird look, but he still responded earnestly, "Nobody would actually admit that they have a pastime of torturing others to death. But Sun, if you really want to know, there's actually a good number of unconfirmed rumors…"

"Then do tell!" I egged him on. I originally thought there would only be a few people. Instead, Storm rattled off ten or so names, and even though I consider myself to have a fairly decent memory, I could only memorize a small handful of those names.

"…Baron Gerland and the king also seem to have such rumors about them."

I hesitated a little, but asked anyway. "What about the crown prince?"

"No, I actually haven't heard anything about the crown prince having this kind of hobby. Amongst the nobility, the crown prince is even considered to be fairly honest and clean-living." Storm shrugged his shoulders and added, "Of course, it could also be that he's been doing a particularly good job of keeping it a secret. Although on the surface it looks like the crown prince is someone who can be easily taken advantage of, he could actually be one of those classical wolf in sheep's clothing type of characters. How else would it be possible for him to keep the king under control?"

I pressed on with my interrogation. “In that case, you wouldn’t be surprised if the crown prince really did torture someone to death?” Storm gave me an even more bizarre look, but nevertheless nodded in response.

I nodded a little in dismay. “That’s all I need to know. May the God of Light bless you with his presence, brother Storm.”

Storm nodded and as he left, I overheard him muttering to himself, “How unusual for Sun to be speaking so plainly today that he could be understood as soon as the words leave his mouth. I didn’t have to waste any brain power deciphering what he was trying to say. Inconceivable!”

While pacing about idly, I contemplated to myself. *There’s ten or so people on the list of suspects, but since the situation is related to Baron Gerland’s third son who swore fealty to the crown prince, the suspects can be narrowed down to Baron Gerland, the crown prince, and His Majesty the king. Although the one he had sworn fealty to was the crown prince, if the king were to give him an order, then it should still be enforceable.*

The reason I haven’t suspected Baron Gerland’s third son himself was that he brought along two other knights to help dispose of the corpse. All knights put great value on reputation, so if he really did do it himself, then he would just quietly dispose of the corpse alone, and would not let the other two knights know about his torturing somebody to death.

But then again, is it possible that these three did it together?

“No!” I immediately pushed aside this line of thought. “Roland is too strong. He couldn’t possibly be taken down by those three knights alone.”

“It looks like you’ve made some progress on your investigation.” I jumped in alarm. When I turned around, I saw that the voice belonged to Knight-Captain Judgment.

“So Roland is the name of the Death Knight?” Judgment stared at me intently, as if he could divine the answer from my facial expression.

I’m beginning to realize how he’s able to coerce criminals to speak the truth now. He’s really deserving of the title of Judgment, to be able to deduce that Roland is the Death Knight just from that one sentence.

“You’re acquainted with that Death Knight? But I’ve never heard you mention that name before. Is it someone you knew a long time ago?” *Err… I haven’t said anything yet, right? Why do I get the feeling that Judgment knows every single detail? How scary!*

“Yesterday, Blaze met the Death Knight and someone who was wearing clothes that were all black.” Upon saying this, Judgment glanced at me casually and said, “You don’t seem to be surprised. Did you know this already, then? But the meeting amongst the Twelve Holy Knights has just ended, and Blaze left after me, so you shouldn’t have heard it from him yet.”

"..." *I guess I don't even need to respond for Judgment to deduce all the answers on his own within a minute.*

He probably saw that I had no intention of responding, so Judgment stopped his questioning and just explained. "According to Blaze's account of the events, that Death Knight seems to be on the verge of becoming a Death Lord, so I'm planning to dispatch half of the Holy Church's forces to search for him within the city. The Pope also agreed to send half of the Church's priests to assist in the search. We absolutely cannot allow a Death Lord to be born."

Then Roland's only fate would be to end up being burnt at stake! I forcibly suppressed my anxiety and brought forth my dignity as the Sun Knight which I had not shown in ages. I said curtly, "Taking care of undead creatures falls under the responsibility of the Sun Knight. Knight-Captain Judgment, you seemed to have overstepped your jurisdiction."

"I'm extremely sorry, Knight-Captain Sun. I was under the impression that you're on vacation, and this situation with the Death Knight absolutely cannot be dragged on, so I had to act on your behalf. If you would like to take back the reigns, then please cancel your vacation. As a reminder, you still have two days left for your investigation," Judgment responded in a completely calm manner as well.

When he finished speaking, he turned to leave, but as he passed me, he said in a low voice, "Ever since our childhood, how many times have you forced me to overstep my jurisdiction for you? Help me in battle, help me investigate, help me beat up my bullies – who's the one that has been making all these requests?"

Err…that does sound like something that the "young and immature me" had said.

"Regardless of who Roland might be, preventing a Death Lord from being born by all means ought to be one of your guiding principles right, Sun Knight?"

"Yes, that is one of the Sun Knight's guiding principles," I admitted with a nod. It's just that Grisia has his own principles as well.

Hearing my reply, Judgment gave a final nod and left.

There's not much time left now. At their highest level of efficiency, the Church and the Holy Church would still need about half a day to assemble half their forces and group them into platoons to be sent to investigate each district. Within this half day window, I must find Roland's whereabouts and hide him at Pink's place. I have great confidence that Pink would be able to hide Roland away properly and securely.

Being highly attuned to dark auras, finding Roland within half a day should not be a difficult task as long as that guy isn't hiding anywhere too unusual.

I went back to my room to get my Divine Sun Sword and put on my stealthy cloak, and arrived not too long afterwards in the center of the city, which also happens to be the city's largest

plaza. Then, pretending to be a worn-out traveler, I sat down by the edge of the central fountain.

Under the shadow of the cloak, I held onto the Divine Sun Sword. The pure holy element of the Divine Sun Sword makes me even more sensitive to dark auras.

With both eyes closed, I sensed for any dark auras in Leaf Bud City. Just as how every city is sure to have places of darkness, every person is bound to have traces of darkness in their being. But that amount is very minimal for cities and normal citizens alike. Generally, they are brimming with all sorts of elements, perhaps some fire element here and some water element there. Only those who cultivate a particular skill would have a high concentration of that particular element. For example, magicians who study fire-type magic are bound to have an abnormally high amount of fire element in their bodies.

By examining their internal composition of elements, I can pretty much deduce someone's occupation the first time I meet them.

Fortunately, my ability to sense elements is not a common one, to the point that it could be considered a rare innate gift. Although those not born with it can still learn to do this, the results generally aren't that great.

The fact that I possess this ability is something only my teacher knows, and my teacher had warned me very harshly not to divulge this secret to anyone. I was also forbidden to use this skill unless absolutely necessary.

That is because this ability is just too frightening, since everyone's composition of elements is unique and cannot be changed significantly in the short term. As such, as soon as I recognize someone's makeup of elements I would be able to track their whereabouts. Also, as mentioned previously, I could tell which elements someone possesses the first time we meet, to the point that I could even know whether they were carrying any enchanted accessories, and the approximate power of those accessories as well.

If others were to find out that I am able to clearly see their abilities, it really wouldn't be to my advantage.

Moreover, ever since I became the Sun Knight, my ability to sense elements has dulled, since my own holy element has become so prevalent and always interferes with my ability to sense other elements. It is only toward one particular element that my sensing ability has actually gotten stronger, and that is precisely the element that is the opposite of holy: darkness!

I indeed felt a good amount of dark element around the city, though the amount wasn't especially high. Leaf Bud City is comparatively fresh and clean relative to other cities.

I kept expanding and expanding the area of my search, starting from the streets of the plaza and extending out in all directions. I searched through shady alley corners, rickety old shacks, and horse stables filled with rations and fodder, but still could find no traces of Roland.

Where did he hide himself? His dark element is exceedingly strong, so there's no reason I shouldn't be able to find him.

Could it be…I looked doubtfully behind my back. Not too far away stood the most important site in the entire country, the imperial palace.

The palace could be considered the darkest place ever. Although within its walls are many loyal knights, there are even more aristocrats with hearts darker than black. Just from Storm's words that over 80% of the nobility have a hobby of torturing others, one can tell that the imperial palace is definitely the most sordid place in all of Leaf Bud City.

I could sense that the entire palace was shrouded in a cloud of darkness. If Roland really were to hide in there, I definitely would not have noticed.

I really don't want to extend my senses inside that mass of darkness… I grieved in my heart. But, I could not find Roland anywhere else, and that was the only place left to look.

Once again I closed my eyes, and reluctantly extended my senses inside the imperial palace.

Soon after, I opened my eyes again. *How is it that he doesn't seem to be in there either?*

Could it be that he left the city? I thought idly. *This is good news. Judgment wouldn't be able to find him like this.*

"Don't tell me it's the Sun Knight's duty to be daydreaming in the middle of the plaza?"

"Of course not. Normally, I would be quite busy!" I countered automatically, but when I raised my head I became dumbfounded. Right in front of me stood the very guy whom I searched for all over but just couldn't find... Roland!

Roland stood by me, practically unchanged since childhood, only taller and sturdier than before. He had a slender build, a bright and handsome face, and an ever so serious expression. Just by standing there, he gave an impression of being a tough guy. Even his smiles gave off an indescribably oppressive feeling, but very few people would object to the oppressive feeling that Roland emitted. He was just one of those natural-born leaders who could make people do his bidding happily and willingly.

However, what surprised me most was that Roland looked like a…normal human being!

He looked completely different from that ghastly color-faded appearance of his from before. Had he appeared before my eyes looking like this the last time we met, I would have been able to tell from one glance that he was Roland.

I asked blankly, "You…were resurrected?" But I wanted to slap myself as soon as the words left my mouth. How could he be resurrected after dying and even having become a Death Knight!

"No, I obviously didn't get resurrected," Roland answered me, completely serious like always. Then, politely as ever, he asked, "May I sit down?"

"Uh, sure." Now, my mind was in complete disarray, frantically wondering why Roland looked so human despite not being resurrected. It couldn't be that this Roland was only some sort of strange figment of my imagination?

Roland sat down by my side and said to me with a smile, "Grisia, you're the same as ever. Whenever a difficult problem comes your way, you would sit down in a plaza or something, lost in thought."

That's because I was using my element sensing abilities, not because I was lost in thought!

"Why do you look like this?" I couldn't resist asking.

Roland raised his left hand, and I immediately noticed the ring on his middle finger. Roland never wore jewelry, especially not this kind of pink, heart-shaped ring that anyone could tell from one look was some kind of cheap counterfeit. I believe that this ring must have some kind of special apocalyptic-inducing ability in order for Roland to wear it willingly.

Roland gave a soft sigh. "This is the Ring of Life that Pink gave me, which allows me to assume the artificial appearance of a human. But using Holy Light is enough to easily sweep away this illusion."

"I can tell that the ring belongs to Pink… Did she give you that sword as well?" Who would have thought that this living appearance was all created by the effects of a ring that looks like it might have been used by little girls to play house?

Next time I go to Pink's house, I probably should pay attention to that teddy bear in the corner. Who knows, perhaps that teddy bear has the ability to summon forth a demon king or something?

"No, this sword is a family heirloom. I thought I would never use a wicked sword such as this." Roland smiled somewhat grudgingly. "I never imagined that I would be using this sword as a Death Knight, and actually be aligned with the forces of evil..."

"Hold on!" I waved my hand around to interrupt Roland, as I felt the presence of roughly five holy knights and two priests entering the plaza. Although they probably wouldn't predict that the Death Knight would appear in the largest, most populated plaza, Judgment would always do everything carefully without overlooking even a single hair. He obviously wouldn't just let such a big plaza go uninvestigated.

This was bad; the Death Knight was sitting right next to me!

Although Roland might look like a human, sitting next to him I could still faintly feel the dark aura that he is emitting. It would be hard to guarantee that he wouldn't be detected by the priests… Uh oh! This is bad—a priest kept darting his eyes in our direction, and even pointed us

out to the holy knight next to him. They seemed to be preparing to come over and take a closer look.

“Roland, leave now!” I urged with a low voice.

However, although Roland glanced at that group of holy knights, he still made no motions to leave, and even kept a calm and easygoing attitude.

What a disaster—not only did the holy knights come over, but all seven of them were together, each with grave expressions. It can’t be that we really were found out?

My heart was beating wildly, and I was still wondering how to finagle past my own group of holy knights when the seven of them were already at Roland’s side. ...And ignoring his existence, they walked past him and stood in front of me.

The leader of the knights then said to me vigilantly, “Sir, please take off the hood of your cloak.”

I took off the hood expressionlessly, while Roland stood by the side looking away. I could tell from the way his shoulders shook that he was stifling his laughter.

“Ahh, Sun Knight?!” The seven of them were obviously given quite a big shock. Even if they really found the Death Knight, I think they wouldn’t be more shocked than this.

As if filled with grief, I responded, “Could it be that Sun is no longer being blessed by the God of Light, so the holy aura permeating this body is lost to the extent that my fellow holy knights would mistake Sun to be a Death Knight brimming with dark aura?”

“No, no, that’s not how it is!” The seven of them simultaneously shook their heads, a truly dramatic sight to behold!

“Then is it because Sun’s behavior and movements are overly devious and shifty, to the extent that my fellow holy knights would mistake Sun to be a Death Knight lurking about?”

The seven of them again shook their heads simultaneously, gyrating back and forth at 180°.

“Then could it just be a beautiful misunderstanding permitted by the God of Light on occasion?”

The seven of them shook their heads again until they realized what I had just said. After making seven different terrified expressions, they all started to adjust their heads to move up and down.

“Since it's all just a beautiful misunderstanding permitted by the God of Light, then Sun will disturb his brothers no more. Please continue carrying out the will of the God of Light.”

After the seven of them hastily saluted me and I saluted back slowly and calmly, they scrambled to flee the scene without looking back, as though I, the Sun Knight, was even more frightening than the Death Knight.

It's probably my initial expressionless face that scared them. For the Sun Knight who has to uphold a principle of smiling even upon death to suddenly stop smiling, it would look pretty scary even without showing an angry expression. It seems like I will need to pay even more attention to my smiles in the future, or else unsavory rumors could easily spread around about the Sun Knight and his unstable temper.

I put back on the hood of my cloak and turned around to see a somewhat surprised look on Roland's face. He asked, "Grisia, since when did you start speaking in such an erudite manner?"

"...Don't even ask."

I told him, "Roland, just hurry and hide at Pink's place. That priest back there probably really did feel a dark aura, and it's just that you were sitting there out in the open looking so innocent that they would mistake me by your side for the Death Knight.

Roland fell silent for a while before saying quietly, "I was just saying goodbye to you, Grisia. The next time we meet, we'll be enemies."

"Enemies…then you really do hate me." I lowered my head dejectedly. Originally I still held onto a tiny bit of hope that Roland is not someone who would keep a grudge and perhaps he might even have already forgotten the fact that I had stolen his position as the Sun Knight.

But instead, Roland asked, "Why would I hate you?"

"You don't hate me?" I lifted my head suddenly and loudly asked, "Then why would you hack me down the minute you showed up?"

Roland revealed an apologetic expression. "That's because Pink asked me to bring some undead creatures for you to take care of. I only wanted to greet you with a wave, but I only recently became a Death Knight and had forgotten that my speed and strength were both increased, and the result was that I didn't have enough time to retract my hand and accidently cut through you. I'm really sorry!"

"…" I grudgingly asked, "Then why did you say that you would come back and look for me?"

"I originally was going to come back and look for you so I could say goodbye." Roland replied matter-of-factly.

Roland, you knucklehead! Don't you realize that you're already a Death Knight? I was almost killed by your "greetings" and "goodbyes".

"Roland, if humans had two lives, I would be sure to let you die a second time," I said angrily while gritting my teeth.

It's bad enough that he slashed at me, but how could he then say something that could be so easily misinterpreted like, "I will come back to find you, Sun Knight"? That caused people to

misunderstand me to the point that I was almost ready to become a martyr and slam myself to death against the church pillars.

“You can burn me to death,” Roland answered quite calmly. “After I kill my nemesis, then I’ll let you burn me to death.”

“I was just kidding.” I frowned. I almost forgot, Roland is such a serious guy that you can’t joke with him at all.

“I was being serious. If I didn’t need to kill that person, then I wouldn’t have allowed myself to exist in this world as an evil spirit.”

“Is the person who killed you the crown prince?” Upon hearing my words, Roland stared blankly before nodding his head.

So it really was the crown prince? My mood immediately became heavy.

“You won’t succeed. Judgment Knight, for one, is not as addle-brained…ahem! I mean, not as ‘kind-hearted’ as me. He would definitely set up a net around the crown prince that stretches from the ground up to the heavens, so it’d be impossible for you to succeed.” I said.

Roland turned around and I could see he was so agitated that his eyeballs were starting to deform, as though they were starting to turn back into the vengeful and fiery eyes of a Death Knight.

“It doesn’t matter what’s the chance of success, I will definitely kill him,” Roland answered firmly.

“Roland, vengeance is not an appropriate characteristic for a knight,” I pressed on.

“No Grisia, I’m not doing this out of revenge,” Roland coldly explained. “This isn’t the first time he has committed the crime. I was victimized because I couldn’t stand his transgressions any longer and wanted to expose him for what he is. Letting him live would only result in more innocent victims.”

I was completely dumbstruck and at a loss for words. *Is the crown prince really a two-faced person who puts a smiling face forward while hiding the personality of a sadistic killer in the back?*

Roland stood up, the dark aura on his body dispersing wildly all around. “I will definitely kill him so that he cannot endanger anyone ever again.”

“Your lingering obsession is to kill him?” If that’s how it is, then this is going to be difficult. There is no compromise for such a lingering obsession.

“Lingering obsession?” Roland stared at me blankly.

"Yes. Last time you almost became a Death Lord. For you to progress this far in such a short amount of time, you must have a lingering obsession that is nearly impossible to accomplish. And if it is about killing him, then it really is a nearly impossible lingering obsession." I shook my head. *Don't tell me that the only solution is to burn Roland after all?*

I looked up and just happened to see Roland giving me a weird look. "What?" I asked, somewhat baffled.

"No, I should leave. The dark aura that I had released a moment ago when I lost control probably has been noticed already. Grisia, next time we meet, I hope you'll appear before me as the Sun Knight." As soon as he finished, Roland turned and left without pause.

Dazed, I sat in the plaza, my heart filled with a swirl of emotions. *It is already impossible to stop Roland from trying to kill others, so what should I do?*

Expose Roland's plans? That way, no matter how strong he may be, under the careful watch of the imperial palace and the Church of the God of Light, he would have no chance of success and might not even escape. If that were to happen, as the Sun Knight I would have to personally take Roland away to be burnt at the stake and light the match to barbeque him.

On the other hand, I could keep Roland's plans to myself and wait for him to slice the ruler of the country into two. I hate to admit it, but with his strength and under the guise provided by the Ring of Life, Roland might actually succeed…

Damn you Roland! Why couldn't you just do the deed quietly on your own and just gossip to me about it later? Why did you have to tell me beforehand about your evil plans, giving me a massive headache as I debate whether or not to put you on a barbeque stand?

Then the sound of disorderly footsteps drew close. When I looked up, it was indeed the tardy group of holy knights. I shook my head. *To have come only now, they wouldn't even be able to find the shadow left behind by the Death Knight!*

"Over there!" *Ehh? Could it be that Roland came back again?* I looked all around but didn't see any signs of him…

"You! Take off the hood of your cloak!" An entire platoon of holy knights charged at me with all the fanfare of a herd of bulls and shouted at me fiercely.

"…" *Exactly how many times are you guys going to mistake me for the Death Knight before you're satisfied?!*

· Ninth Rule of Sun Knights ·

"If you want to know a Secret, Ask a woman"

The sound of a wooden door creaking open came from a small, rundown house that looked as though it would fall apart when the wind blew. Under the door handle a little girl's pink face appeared, her mouth sucking on a strawberry lollipop that was even bigger than her head.

"Pink, I agree to be your apprentice from now on, and I will learn necromancy," I said seriously.

Pink was stunned for a moment, then she beckoned me with her finger, signaling for me to squat down.

What? Is it possible that to become her apprentice, one still has to go through a ceremony? I squatted down with suspicion. Then Pink beckoned me with her finger again, telling me to come closer. I obliged, moving my face nearer.

After that, she placed her palm horizontally against my forehead, exclaiming, "Oh no! Sun, your forehead feels really hot! Burning up like this, it's no wonder you were speaking nonsense just now!"

"Your hands are icy because you're a corpse…"

Pink withdrew her hand and, after looking at it for a while, she said in realization, "That's true, I nearly forgot that I'm a dead person. But then…"

She glanced at me doubtfully. “Are you sure that you don’t have a fever?”

I rolled my eyes and said sullenly, “Under the protection of the God of Light, I haven’t had a fever since I was ten years old.”

“Oh!” Pink nodded. With much understanding, she said, “Then there is something that you want me to help you with? This time your determination is certainly strong, if you intend to sell even your ‘living self’.”

I hurried to explain the details of the contract. “I only said that I wanted to learn necromancy from you! I still want to continue being the Sun Knight!”

“A Sun Knight who is a part-time apprentice to a necromancer?” Pink shook her head, sighing. “You’re the only one who dares to do these sorts of things. You’re not scared that your God of Light will send thunder to strike you down?”

“I believe that the God of Light will understand my pains!” I said soberly. Then I added to my explanation, “Besides, no one has seen Him for several hundred years, and I believe that he would not descend to Earth simply for this small matter.”

Pink licked her lollipop and didn’t express her opinions on this, sending a shiver down my spine. In that instant, I seriously considered how high the probability was of the God of Light striking me with thunder…

I shouldn’t be so unlucky! I shook my head and asked Pink, “So? Do you accept it or not?”

“Tell me, what do you want me to do?”

“I would like you to—”

***

After telling Pink my request, I walked back to the Church. Of course, I had already pulled off the hood of my cloak. If another fellow came along and mistook me for the Death Knight again, I would definitely be so angry that I would turn that fellow into a “dead knight.”

Continuing on, I still had to request something of someone. Comparatively, this person was easier to deal with than Pink, so I wasn’t too troubled.

I smiled at one of the holy knights in the corridor. “My holy knight brother, the God of Light hangs high in the universe’s center, his smile overlooking everyone. What a day filled with brilliant radiance. I hope that you can also feel the God of Light’s warmth.”

The holy knight that was stopped by me was extremely excited, and with a tone of respect and admiration, he returned the greeting. “I also hope that you can feel the God of Light’s warmth. Knight-Captain Sun, the weather today really is very good. I hope that we can successfully catch the Death Knight today.”

I nodded my head. “My brother, I was wondering if you know where brother Knight-Captain Storm is currently bathing in the God of Light’s kindness?”

The holy knight started to get nervous, and asked with uncertainty, “Er… May I ask if you are asking where the Storm Knight is?”

I nodded.

The holy knight answered in relief, “Knight-Captain Storm has been in his room for the past three days, reviewing documents.”

“My holy knight brother, Sun is extremely grateful for your words filled with goodwill and kindheartedness. I hope that you’ll feel the God of Light’s warmth throughout your days,” I thanked him politely, and immediately turned to leave.

“Knight-Captain Sun, you’re really too polite!” The holy knight sent me off with a worshipping gaze.

I walked without halting to Storm’s door, and knocked.

After a while, the door opened as slowly as it possibly could. A grayish-white face about the same shade as a Death Knight's appeared. If I wasn’t certain that Death Knights don’t form black rings around their eyes, I really would’ve believed that Storm had become the second Death Knight inside Leaf Bud City.

I was about to open my mouth to speak, but was stopped by a wave of Storm’s hand. He said feebly, “Sun, please speak in the simplest terms that you can find. If not, I guarantee that I will fall asleep within three seconds.”

I pondered for a while, and said only two words: “Help me.”

“Can I reject?” Storm asked with trembling lips that were completely pale from successive all-nighters.

I thought it over again, and shortened my thoughts to one word. “Order.”

“…Definitely simple enough.”

Once I had briefed Storm on the matter, I left to do my next task, extremely assured even though Storm looked as though he would keel over and die any second.

However, there was no need to worry. For even if he really did keel over and die, he would become a Death Knight, then climb back up to finish the work. This fellow is just that earnest of a worker, which doesn’t match the carefree image of the Storm Knight in the least.

Just as I was about to find a place to sneakily change into “Supreme Dragon”, the sound of uniform footsteps came from the other end of the corridor, as well as some whispering. Such a disciplined platoon could only be Knight-Captain Judgment’s.

Sure enough, Knight-Captain Judgment walked over not long after, leading twenty or so holy knights. As usual, he said to me, “May you soon comprehend the harsh ways of the God of Light, Knight-Captain Sun.”

“Tonight, the Death Knight will go to the palace for revenge,” I whispered.

Hearing this, Knight-Captain Judgment stopped in his footsteps. It was such an abrupt halt, but the twenty or so holy knights behind him actually also stopped uniformly, without a hint of disorder or expressions of shock.

Judgment waved his hand once, and his platoon immediately departed, passing around us without any objections.

After waiting until everyone was gone, Judgment instantly asked me, “Are you certain?”

“Yes!” I nodded quickly, for that fellow Roland had never dragged things on. If he said that he was going to do it, it was guaranteed that he really would do it right away.

Judgment looked at me a bit skeptically and asked, “Are you determined to catch him?”

“I am the Sun Knight, Knight-Captain Judgment,” I calmly told him. “A Sun Knight absolutely will not permit those who are already dead to interfere with those who are living, even if the living has sinned beyond pardon.”

Judgment Knight coolly replied, “Tonight, I will send some knights to lay in ambush in the palace to protect *that* person and catch the Death Knight at the same time.”

I threw him a quick glance. “How remarkable. Have you already discovered who killed Roland?”

“Yes. I caught the execution groundskeeper and asked about the specific condition of the corpse.” Judgment briefly explained. “Once I knew that he was tortured to death, I let Storm go and investigate the aristocrats who have connections with the third son of Baron Gerland and an evil habit of torturing people to death. There are only three suspects: His Majesty the king, the crown prince, and Baron Gerland.”

Poor Storm. Not only did he get bombarded with work from me, but he also got bombarded with work from Judgment. No wonder he looks more dead than alive.

“Then how did you detemine who it is?” I asked, a little curious.

“Actually, based on recent happenings, I already had an idea of who it might be. Nevertheless, for the sake of certainty, I let Ice, who had seen the Death Knight, pick from the holy knights

someone who looked the most similar. After disguising the selected person's face to be a bit paler, we brought him to visit the three people, and even made him act suspiciously."

Judgment shook his head, sighing. "Although this method of deceiving people is not very proper, it is very effective. It was really easy to determine who the murderer was, for the murderer was so afraid that his whole body trembled."

"How formidable!" I praised with heartfelt admiration, for I only found out who the murderer was after talking to Roland face to face.

"Since you have already made up your mind, tonight we'll have the Sun Knight platoon and the Judgment Knight platoon lie in wait at the palace together," Judgment said, cautiously making his decision. "After all, though that person's sins cannot be pardoned, he still cannot be the least bit injured, otherwise it will incur a storm."

"I agree, but I would like to bring Blaze and Earth along."

Judgment seemed to be puzzled as he asked, "I can comprehend the reason for bringing Earth together, as his protective abilities can ensure that *that* person does not get injured. However, Blaze's specialty is against spirits, not undead creatures."

I shook my head. "Judgment, I'm afraid that I saw Roland face to face earlier and he was already on the verge of becoming a Death Lord. If he becomes a Death Lord on the spot due to his lingering obsession, and summons creatures of darkness such as spirits, there will be a lot of trouble for us."

"True; you're still more familiar with undead creatures than me. Doing it this way is more thorough." Judgment nodded his head as he added, "I am also very happy that you finally set your mind to eliminate a former friend, which must not have been easy."

"It was difficult," I answered tranquilly. "Extremely difficult, especially since it is Roland."

"After this matter is resolved, I will be more than happy to hear you talk about Roland's deeds when he was still alive." Judgment nodded again and then bid farewell to me. "May your friend rest in peace soon."

With that, he left.

After watching Judgment's departure, I turned my head to look outside the window. *Good, the sunlight outside is still bright!* It was still early enough for me to finish my business and come back again to convene with my Sun Knight platoon.

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After settling things with Storm and Judgment, I was left with only one more thing to do, which was to sneak into the palace to find the place where Roland was tortured.

Since Roland said that the person was a criminal accustomed to torturing people to death, there would definitely be a place used specifically for torturing them. If I were able to find this place and obtain proof, then I would be able to expose that person's crimes.

The palace was heavily guarded, but nevertheless, I had been there countless times.

That fat pig of a king keeps stirring up trouble from time to time, and every time I have to be dispatched there to preach to him until he get fed up with it, then it'll be the turn for one of the Twelve Holy Knights who had accompanied me to threaten him. Most of the time, the person accompanying me there was Storm Knight, but when matters are grave enough, it would be Judgment Knight.

Apart from advising the fat pig, I also frequently come here to facilitate good communication between the Church and the palace. The queen's birthday, the baron's daughter's coming of age ball, the prince's first hunt, and many more random happenings are all within the scope of my job.

In conclusion, the Sun Knight is the Church of Light's living, walking billboard.

Not to mention that the queen is my teacher's adoptive mother, and at that time my teacher called the crown prince his brother. Therefore, my teacher often brought me to the palace for leisure activities, under the pretext of helping to facilitate good communication between the Church of Light and the palace. In reality, he was drinking afternoon tea with the beautiful queen, the princess, and a bunch of ladies….

Ahem! Hence, having lived in this world for twenty-three years, the place most familiar to me, except for the Church of Light, is this palace.

Therefore, the palace's defenses are not a problem to me whatsoever, for I can openly and legitimately walk in from the main gate. The palace guards on both sides even salute me respectfully!

"Dragon's Saint Brigandine, in the name of the descendants of the Dragons, I command thee, activate!"

After finding a dark corner within the palace, and wearing the blood-sucking, silver and black shirt, I intended to sneak around the palace secretly and find the torture chamber...

My lord, your servant's name is Dragon's Saint Brigandine, not Blood-sucking Shirt.

"Ugh! You scared me to death." I patted my chest, over my heart. *Don't be afraid!* I thought to myself. I scolded it, "If there's nothing wrong, don't speak so suddenly. I nearly thought that I had been discovered."

Yes, my lord.

Although wearing a body of black clothes in the daytime is not a very wise move, at least it was better than wearing the Sun Knight's attire and being discovered conducting dishonorable behavior by others.

Moreover, even if it were daytime now, the palace corridors still had a whole bunch of bizarre, gigantic decorations that I could use to hide myself. Some examples are vases taller than people (Can you even put flowers inside?), extremely heavy armor that knights couldn't walk around in even if they wanted to (What were they made for in the first place?), and a huge collection of sculptures.

In the event that I still couldn't dodge the guards, that's alright too.

My teacher often said, "Child, don't think that the palace is really some impenetrable fortress. Perhaps when it was first constructed, it might have been. However, every king would want to open a secret passage in the palace that only he knows for escaping. Conveniently, he would also want to open another secret chamber that he could use to do private stuff…. After ten or so generations of kings, there are ten or so secret tunnels and ten or so secret chambers. Although both the secret passages and the secret chambers are "secret" in name, you shouldn't think that those are actually secret. Believe me, even the current king doesn't know as much as the people by his side, the queen and the princess."

"Then teacher, why would you know that?" I was totally baffled.

"The princess told me, of course."

"Why would the princess tell you, teacher?"

"If she didn't tell me, then how could I sneak into the palace and have a secret love affair with her? …Hush! Little kids don't need to know so much; just memorize the locations of the entrances of the secret passages and secret chambers clearly."

"Yes, teacher."

Now that I think about it, my teacher really wasn't a normal person. Why?

That is because at that time, there were only two princesses in the palace. One's age was close to fifty, and was the king's unmarried younger sister. The other was fifteen years old, and was the king's daughter. At that time, my teacher was about thirty years old. *I really wonder if he was a cradle-robber*[1] *or if he was the one being cradle-robbed... Ahem!* But I digress. Anyway, I guess the location of the torture chamber should be a secret chamber that isn't too far from the perpetrator's bedroom.

[1] **Cradle-robber:** Original saying is 老牛吃嫩草, lit. "Old cow eating young grass." It means an old person who has a young spouse.

First I intended to try my luck and look in the existing secret chambers, for that person would probably make use of the existing secret chambers, instead of opening another one.

After all, according to the number of secret tunnels and secret chambers that my teacher told me about, the foundation under this entire palace is already almost completely hollow. Perhaps even the palace architect wouldn't dare to dig a hole thoughtlessly, to avoid accidently making the whole palace collapse.

I went about sneakily through the corridor, and darted into the entrance of a secret passage when the coast was clear. Then I darted out and into another secret passageway. On the way, I even nearly ran into a couple that were hugging and kissing. *Luckily they were too engrossed with kissing, and didn't notice that there was an extra person around, namely me.* I hurriedly turned away into another fork in the tunnel….

Wait a second! I frowned as I thought. *The couple just now who were having a secret affair… was one of them Her Highness the princess?*

This was that princess who was fifteen back then, and may or may not have had an affair with my teacher. This year she was already over twenty-five years old, yet still brazenly refused to marry princes from other countries. *So it's because she already has someone that she loves… More than likely, the other party's status isn't high and thus it's utterly impossible for the king to allow the princess to marry him, so they can only have an affair in a secret passage.*

Looks like these secret passageways and secret chambers really are, as my teacher said, not a big secret at all. They're practically a scenic spot for affairs.

As I advanced further, I considered the positions of the many secret chambers that my teacher told me about. *The perpetrator's room has many secret chambers surrounding it, but only three have passages to the bedroom. Of the three, two of them can be accessed from the secret passages outside. The other one is sealed off, and only has one passage to the bedroom.*

I plan to check out the two secret chambers that can be entered from other secret passages first.

Inside the secret passages, I prowled around for quite a while. Thankfully, my memory was extraordinary, and I could even find my way out of such a confusing passageway. Not long later, I stepped into an empty, deserted chamber. According to my memory, this should be one of the places I wanted to go.

Then again, seeing that the spider webs here were even more solid than the material of my cape, I had a feeling that this wasn't the place.

My next plan was to enter the bedroom from here, and then get into the two other chambers from there. Still, looking at all these layers of spider webs before my eyes and thinking that I would have to worm through them, I really just wanted to set them on fire and burn them all to ashes.

However, the palace has mages. If a mage sensed the magic I cast, I would have problems. Thus, I could only reluctantly use my hand to tear apart the spider webs. I went through much effort and pain, with my whole body covered with spider webs, before I finally managed to get to the other side of the chamber. I squatted down to check the hidden door….

"It's sealed shut."

I felt like crying when I discovered this. *Sigh! I should have known. How can a dignified royal leave alone a secret passage leading to his own room and not care?*

"I hope that the other secret passageway isn't sealed up."

Carrying this hope, I backed out of there. Once again, I twisted and turned this way and that, before finally arriving at another secret passage. What I didn't expect was that this secret passage was a lot smaller than the one before and approximately about half my height. I could only kneel down and crawl through it. Once I had crawled to the end, the secret chamber was basically an empty hole, and neither its height nor width was even two meters. *Never mind murdering someone, even squeezing two people inside would be forcing it!*

I lifted my head to check the hidden door. The hidden door here was on the ceiling and luckily it wasn't sealed shut. *This secret tunnel is probably better concealed, since even the bedroom's owner doesn't know of it.* I lightly pushed the hidden door upwards, and opened it a crack. *This hidden door sure is heavy!* Looking left and right, I thought, *Good! There's not even a single trace of a human being in the bedroom.*

Originally, I wanted to lift the whole hidden door upwards lightly. However, I soon realized that the door wouldn't move at all. Using all the strength I could muster, I lifted the hidden door up about ten centimeters and, with great effort, moved it sideways. At long last, I managed to shift the hidden door aside. I had also just about soaked my clothes through with sweat.

Phewww! I suspect that without the increased strength from wearing the Dragon's Saint Brigandine, I probably would've been unable to open the hidden door.

When I had finished panting for breath and climbed up into the bedroom, I found that there was actually a marble cabinet on top of the hidden door! It was taller than me by a dozen or more centimeters. *No wonder it was so heavy!*

Still, now was not the time to complain. *Since I don't know when the owner of this bedroom will be returning, I better hurry and get back to business.*

Without spending much effort, I found the sealed secret chamber behind the full-length mirror hanging on the wall. Then, I took a step into this last place, hoping that my trip here hadn't been wasted….

The smell of blood attacked my nose at once. It was dense, strong, and brought with it a rotten smell.

In front of my eyes, a thick, heavy piece of fabric obstructed my view, but it was unable to block out that smell of blood. I knew that I had found the right place.

I walked in front, and lifted the cloth….

I was stunned. Having already found the evidence, leaving as soon as possible was the safest course of action. However, I could only foolishly stare at this place. There was no sign of a corpse, nor was there any gory scene of flesh and blood. Conversely, this place was scrubbed very clean, and the chains and all kinds of torture instruments on the wall were even oiled and polished.

The wooden bed in the center was also gleaming.

It was probably the bloodstains that couldn't be scrubbed off no matter how hard people tried. The bloodstains were coated layer upon layer, and in the end, the solidified blood on top of the wooden bed became so black that it gleamed.

The surrounding walls and floor seemed to have no marks at first glance. However, the cries of the deceased penetrated through the depths of the walls, as well as the stench of rot and blood that seemed to come from hell itself.

This place that looked ostensibly clean at first glance was actually filled with the most sordid, filthy ideations, and the deceased's tormented cries permeated the air.

I couldn't help but use my finger to scratch the layer of black gleaming blood on the wooden bed. The layer was even harder than I thought, for my finger was only stained with a little bit of blackish-red.

Within this bit of blackish-red, Roland's blood is here too, right?

"Roland, if you died in this kind of place, then I understand why you would become a Death Knight, and why you are so determined to kill him."

My eyes were a little moist, but I didn't want to hold back my tears. Both Roland and I were orphans, and he even died for this kind of shady reason. Perhaps I was the only one who felt saddened by his death.

Only I will shed tears for him.

· Tenth Rule of Sun Knights ·

"Carrying out Justice is the Reason for the Sun Knight's Existence"

Judgment and I announced our plan to the crown prince, since it was an impossible task to hide roughly fifty knights without anyone in the palace noticing. The crown prince nodded to show his approval without hesitation, as though he had known this was going to happen.

Some of the holy knights dressed up as royal knights and patrolled the nearby area, while the others dressed up as servants. Since there are many people in the palace in the first place, it isn't that noticeable to add fifty more people.

Judgment laid on the bed, disguised as the person Roland was going to kill. In order to hide my holy aura, I asked the Pope to design a seal for my holy aura, then stuck it on the wardrobe and shut myself inside.

I have to say, furniture used by the royal family sure weren't normal. The wardrobe itself was about half the size of my room and the bottom of it was even lined with velvet. I can't help but to lie down and try it out, and I conveniently snatched a cape to cover myself as a quilt. *Oh pure bliss!* I started feeling sleepy. *This wardrobe is even more comfortable than my bed*.

Luckily, I didn't choose to lay on the bed where Judgment was at the moment. If just lying in the wardrobe had already made me sleepy, if I lay on the bed, I would probably sleep away like a pig due to the too-comfortable bed and then get slashed into half by Roland...

"Sun? Sun!"

"Hmm?" I turned in bed. *What's the problem?! It's so noisy, and I was just getting comfortable!*

The person outside quieted down for a moment, and then suddenly there was a series of shuddering booms as someone pounded on the wardrobe door.

I jumped up instantly in shock and asked in panic, "Wha—! What? Is Roland here?!"

"Not yet," Judgment's deep voice came from outside of the wardrobe. "But I am concerned that even if he were here, you probably wouldn't notice because you were sleeping too soundly."

"Ah...hahaha! That won't happen!" I gave a nervous little laugh. *That is actually possible. Judgment really is the person who understands me most!*

"The night is young. Roland probably wouldn't come this early. So to prevent you from falling asleep, tell me about Roland."

I was silent for a moment, not knowing how to reply. Judgment was being patient as usual, so he didn't say anything to urge me. At last, I sighed deeply and started to talk about the past memories.

"My first time meeting Roland was at the selection for the Twelve Holy Knights held by the Church, when there were only ten children left for the selection.

"You should probably know more or less that it was virtually the biggest betting event in the city, and almost everyone would bet to see which one of the children would become the future member of the Twelve Holy Knights."

"I know," Judgment's voice drifted in. *His voice sounded far away, I think he just laid down on the bed again.*

"Do you still remember your odds?" I asked, leaning my back against the wardrobe door, afraid to lie down again.

"I had never paid attention," Judgment said.

I laughed. "You are as serious as Roland was; both of you spent all of your time practicing your swordsmanship! I still remember: your odds were 1.083 to 1. If someone bet on you, they wouldn't earn much money even if they had won."

"You remember it quite clearly." There was a faint trace of admiration in Judgment's voice.

There's no helping it, since the only thing that I can be proud of myself is my memory!

I continued, “Roland’s odds were 1.052 to 1; even lower than yours. This means at that time, his chance of becoming the Sun Knight was even greater than your chance of becoming the Judgment Knight.”

“But he didn’t,” Judgment replied emotionlessly.

“Yep, he didn’t, and the one who became the Sun Knight was a twerp whose odds were 563 to 1,” I said somewhat mockingly. “A lot of people who bet on me that year became millionaires!”

Judgment’s voice flowed in from outside, “You weren’t that bad; your holy skills and your written test score was the best among all the children. It’s just that the outsiders don't understand holy magic and they don’t know the results of the test.”

Even though this matter had been in the past for a long time, I still felt soothed when I heard Judgment’s consolation. *Right! I am not that bad, it’s only my swordsmanship that is lacking!*

“Your swordsmanship is really awful though,” Judgment continued.

Hey! You don’t have to add that, okay?

“Anyway, at that time, everyone thought that Roland was definitely going to be the future Sun Knight, and as I was the least possible candidate, so naturally the two of us became best of friends. He often helped me out, like—”

“Helping you in fights, climbing over the wall to buy blueberry dessert for you, helping you to beat the dog that bit you, and so on,” Judgment finished my sentence and sighed. “Grisia, you never did change.”

“Hahahahaha...” I laughed dryly. *Right! After Roland left, Judgment took over his place.*

“Did he try to frame you before because you took his place as Sun Knight?” Judgment asked.

“No, he didn’t try to frame me!” I groaned, feeling like crying but having no tears. “He is just being very slow. Even now, he still doesn’t realize that he has caused everyone to think that I was the culprit who tortured him to death. He thinks that he had just accidentally slashed me that one time.”

“About this torture-killing rumor, I suspect that...” Judgment stopped abruptly in mid-sentence.

Just when I was feeling that it was odd, a very familiar voice came from outside the wardrobe. But, mixed in it was a hatred that I had never heard before.

“I said before that I, Roland, would come back to find you, Your Majesty, the king!”

Roland? How? Where did he come in from...? Ah! The secret passageway! Damn it! I never thought that Roland might know about it too!

"You...you are not the king..."

Have we been discovered?

I quickly thrust the wardrobe door open and jumped outside. At the same time, my hand sent out a flash of holy light, the signal for the knights who were lying in ambush outside to come in. The prowess of our elite holy knights wasn't exaggerated, for right after I sent out the flash, Blaze and the Judgment Knight Platoon jumped in through the windows, while Earth and the Sun Knight Platoon charged in through the door.

Judgment hopped off the bed with his Divine Judgment Sword unsheathed.

At first, Roland stared blankly at the horde of people. Then he turned and caught sight of me. He said in disbelief, "Grisia... How is this possible?!"

"Roland, you should have known that I couldn't let you commit murder as you please." I looked at my childhood friend sadly.

"But, I definitely told you that—"

I nodded, interrupting Roland's sentence "You told me that your enemy was the crown prince."

"But," Roland was so angry that he roared to interrupt my speech, "this is the bedroom of the king!"

"Yes. From the moment you told me that your enemy was His Highness the crown prince, I was one hundred percent sure that your enemy was the king instead. Roland, your ability to lie has always been as awful as my sword-fighting ability."

"You..." Roland was dumbstruck.

"Moreover, while I can't be sure whether the crown prince will torture someone to death or not, one thing that I do know for sure is that if he did, we wouldn't find out about it even after ten years." I shrugged. "The crown prince isn't a moron. If he really did torture someone to death, he would definitely get rid of the body plus the clues and be done with it once and for all, and he would never be stupid enough to let his knights dispose of the body for him."

"Plus, rumors saying that I had tortured the Death Knight to death started spreading around. If the rumors only said that I had *killed* the Death Knight, then it could be easily explained away since everyone has heard the Death Knight is going to come back for me, and naturally they would guess the killer is me. But the rumors are so detailed that they even mention *torture*, which is really bizarre.

I glanced at Roland and saw that he looked confused. Just as I thought, that guy didn't know anything about the rumor. But never mind; that sentence was not meant for him anyway.

“The only person who knew the Death Knight was tortured to death, except for the Death Knight himself, would be the murderer.”

I glanced at Roland again, and he was furrowing his brows as though he was trying very hard to understand what I was saying. I kept on explaining, “However, this rumor spread too quickly, so I doubt that it was spread by the Death Knight himself. After all, a Death Knight can’t go around and chat with people on the street.”

“Therefore, this rumor attempting to frame me was probably spread by the murderer.” I smiled and turned to look at Judgment “Just now, when you wanted to talk to me about the rumor, this was what you wanted to say, right? Do you wish to add anything, Judgment Knight?”

Judgment glanced at me impassively, with a “don’t fool around anymore” type of gaze. Nevertheless, he added, “At first, if the Church found out that this case was related to the royal family, we probably would have given up investigating immediately, and the dark secrets of the royal family would not be exposed. However, when the reputation of our Sun Knight was involved in the matter, we had to find out the truth at all costs.”

“That’s right, a dumb and likely to backfire plan such as the murderer being stupid enough to try to frame me and hence forcing the church to find out the truth, isn’t likely to be done by the crown prince,” I said. I sneered a little. ”Next, just think about it a little. Who hates me a lot, is an idiot, and has enough courage to attempt to frame the Church of the God of Light's Sun Knight? Apart from our dear king, who else could it be?”

“Nonsense! You impertinent riffraff!”

The bookshelves at the side suddenly parted to reveal a passageway, and the angry king charged out with the crown prince following close behind, frowning. There was, of course, a large number of royal knights following the two of them.

As expected by me, the secret room they were hiding in was the first one that I had discovered to be sealed tight when I came to investigate secretly earlier. *Looks like they had reopened the sealed passageway in order to lay in ambush inside.*

“AAAAAAARGH!”

When Roland set his eyes on the king, his eyes glowed a blood red color and he instantly charged madly at him. The king was scared out of his wits and pulled his knights over to hide behind.

“Judgment! Earth!” I yelled to remind them, but Judgment’s response was even faster than mine and he was already there, blocking Roland with his sword before the words had left my mouth. Earth hastily stepped in front of the king and cast The Shield of Earth after I finished yelling.

I started chanting an incantation. As my chanting grew longer, the holy light in the room started to glow stronger. This light was a lethal weapon to the undead, so even though Roland was a terrific swordsman in life and was the crème de la crème of undead creatures as a Death Knight

in death, he still couldn't hold out for long under the holy light. Additionally, his opponent was the Judgment Knight, who was the best swordsman out of the Twelve Holy Knights.

As I predicted, not long after they both started fighting, Roland couldn't hold his ground any longer and was disarmed by Judgment. His sword clattered across the room, and he was forced into a half-kneeling position by the holy light in the room.

Upon seeing this, the king, who was originally hiding behind his royal knights, charged out and started stomping on Roland's head. He swore as he stomped, "You bastard, you dared to come back for revenge? It's an honor for a low-life like you to die by my hand!"

"Father, stop!"

The crown prince turned pale. He ran up to his father to pull him away, but his body was too weak, so he was pushed away by the king instead. Luckily, the knights around them managed to catch the crown prince in time, so His Highness didn't fall to the floor.

"Stop stomping him!" the Blaze Knight on the side was the first person couldn't contain himself any longer. He rushed forward and shoved the king away.

"You dare to push me?!" The king was astonished. Then he screamed hysterically, "Royal knights! My knights, he has attacked me! I order every one of you to strike back now!"

When the royal knights received the order to attack the holy knights, they were clearly stunned for a moment. However, they proved that they were worthy to be called royal knights. A short moment later, they drew their swords and orderly advanced on the Blaze Knight.

Blaze was so angry that his face turned beet red. He roared in a low voice, "You dare to point your weapons at me?! Holy knights, prepare for battle!"

Thus, the holy knights turned to point their weapons at the royal knights.

"Everyone, stop this at once!" the Judgment Knight bellowed, furious.

But now, the situation was so out of hand that even Judgment Knight's livid shout couldn't stop it. It's true that the Judgment Knight Platoon did lower their weapons, for they absolutely wouldn't dare to disobey Judgment Knight's order. But my Sun Knight Platoon, the Blaze Knight who has an explosive temper, and the Earth Knight who is honest on the surface and evil beneath the surface—they were all there too.

Due to the king's daily appalling behavior, all these holy knights have probably been looking down on the king in their hearts for a long time. Moreover, this old fellow dashed up by himself to stomp on the Death Knight and even admitted that he killed Roland. It was almost as if he were afraid that the holy knights didn't hate him enough.

The holy knights and royal knights both glared at each other and hefted their weapons, ready for battle. The king added more fuel to the fire by grabbing a vase and throwing it at the Blaze

Knight. Fortunately, the vase didn't hit him and shattered against Earth's protective shield instead.

Nevertheless, this act of disrespect to the Twelve Holy Knights of the Church angered the Sun Knight Platoon. I don't know which member of the holy knight platoon spat at the royal knights, but after that, the situation just spiraled out of control. The knights started fighting each other immediately and the clanking of swords never stopped for a moment.

It's not that I want to boast, but while the members of my Sun Knight Platoon may have explosive tempers, their skills are guaranteed to be first class.

I wondered whether it was my Sun Knight Platoon being unlucky or if it was caused by their natural behavior, for they often get into trouble with someone or something that shouldn't be trifled with. Since their team leader is always smiling and thus looked like a perfect target for bullying, and the leader usually applied the "I don't care" strategy when dealing with the platoon, so obviously, they have to depend on their excellent sword-fighting skills and solidarity to beat up the person so much that the person doesn't even dare to complain to my face.

I ignored the fight behind me and stepped in front of Roland. Looking at him, I felt my emotions stirring.

"Grisia, Grisia!"

Roland called out my name in a low voice. He looked up at me, expressionless, but the flames in his eye sockets slowly turned to black. He stared at me with those black flames and asked, "Did you become the Sun Knight to protect that kind of person?"

I quietly replied, "Roland, there are many things in this world that we have to compromise on. I am the Church of the God of Light's Sun Knight, so there are many issues that I have to consider."

"Is this your answer?" The flames in Roland's eyes grew even darker.

"Roland, look at the situation you're in." My eyes were filled with sympathy. "No matter what the king did, he's still the king, and I will have to stop you from killing him."

"Even if he deserves to die?" Roland stared at me, the black flames already pouring out of his eyes sockets.

"Yes, even if he deserves to die a thousand times," I declared calmly.

"Such a good Sun Knight!" Roland suddenly burst out laughing, from a light chuckle to a loud laugh, until he was laughing hysterically. The flames in his eyes burst out of his eyes, burning its way down his cheeks, like black tears.

"Ack!"

Without warning, Roland sent me flying across the room with a hard shove from his shoulder. The holy light flooding the room immediately disappeared without a trace. After the holy light vanished, Roland stood up from his half kneeling position.

I landed and stumbled back onto my feet. The Judgment Knight Platoon that was guarding the door saw what happened and tried to give me a hand in standing up, but I waved them back to their posts. But no one saw what happened except for them, because the bedroom had turned into a disordered battlefield. Including the royal knights, Blaze Knight, Earth Knight, and my Sun Knight Platoon, there were more than fifty people fighting in the room.

Even though the crown prince and Judgment were yelling for them to stop, the king kept on adding fuel to the fire. My Sun Knight Platoon completely ignored Judgment Knight's order, as their leader was me and the Judgment Knight was my sworn enemy after all! It was natural that they wouldn't listen to Judgment.

His Highness the crown prince's face was so pale that he looked like he would pass out at any moment. In contrast, the Judgment Knight's face turned a frightening shade of purple from his anger.

Luckily, this was the king's bedroom, and this room was as large as a conference room. How else could it fit fifty dueling knights inside?

I chanted the spell and holy light flooded the room once more, but it was even brighter this time. However, I employed a small trick as I did so, making the holy light fill the whole room *except* the space around Roland.

I need Roland to transform into a Death Lord. Only then would my plan be a success.

The holy light successfully blocked off the dark aura seeping around Roland as he transformed from a Death Knight into a Death Lord. The blinding light also prevented anyone from seeing Roland clearly. The Judgment Knight Platoon probably thought I had subdued the Death Knight already, so they did nothing.

I don't even need to mention the others. They were so busy fighting that I doubt they noticed the holy light reappearing after a brief lapse.

My holy light can't block my vision however, so I saw the birth of a Death Lord with my own eyes.

Roland's skin color was grayish white and the flames in his eyes turned pitch black and spread across his face, leaving behind two tear-like markings. Now, the markings kept burning downwards. I can't see where they went underneath his clothes, but the markings quickly spread to his bare arms.

Except for the black flame markings flowing out from his eyes, the dark aura surrounding Roland seeped into his body and "grew" out from his back. It shaped itself into...dragon wings, exactly

like the type you would see in a mural! The only difference was that on the tip of Roland's wings were sharp claws.

Grey-white body, black flame markings, dragon wings with sharp claws... Is this what a Death Lord looks like? I thought.

I have to admit, it looks really powerful and striking. Now I can only hope that my plan will stop Roland or else...haha, I guess I will have no choice left but to die together with Roland!

At this moment, Roland opened his eyes. He examined the markings on his arms with some curiosity and touched the wings at his back.

It's time! I dashed to Roland's side and faced him head on, the distance between us less than a foot wide. When he saw me, his features twisted with anger. He sent me flying again with a palm strike, but this time, I couldn't even see his attack clearly.

I landed on the floor again. *Ouch! Now, that really hurts!* I'm very suspicious that he had punched a hole into my chest or, worse still, straight through!

"Sun Knight!"

The Judgment Knight Platoon was the first to notice my tragic state. They all gasped in shock, and then tried to run to my aid. But before they could, Roland stuck his hand out and chanted a spell. He summoned a whole slew of dark creatures: zombies, skeletons, spirits, a human-faced vampiric spider... There were even more that I can't even name.

Oh my god! This is WAY out of my league! I thought, blanching. *Don't tell me that my plan is going to backfire and I will be killed on the spot by Roland?*

The Judgment Knight Platoon had no time to help me now. The attack had taken everyone by surprise and they were having trouble fighting back, but I finally managed to attract the attention of the knights engaged in heated battle in the middle of the room.

The royal knights all yelled, "Protect the crown prince!" But when they heard that everyone was shouting the same thing, they quickly added as an afterthought, "Protect His Majesty, the king!" *That old geezer sure isn't popular with his people...*

As for my Sun Knight Platoon, when they found me vomiting blood on the floor, their surprised expressions were so varied that you could make an "Encyclopedia of Shocked and Scared Faces" from them.

I suppressed my pain and ordered my platoon, "Stop the dark creatures. Don't let even one out of this room."

"Yes sir!" my Sun Knight Platoon answered simultaneously. They were so well disciplined that it was hard to believe that they were fighting a heated battle just a moment before.

Even though they usually mess up everything, as soon as I order them to do something, they are as obedient as puppies. This is because I told them once before, "If I tell you to jump off that cliff, you have to jump, or else I will kick you off the cliff and push down a boulder as your companion."

They weren't afraid at first, for I was a smiling Sun Knight after all. How could I be scary? But after I kicked two members of the Platoon off the cliff and pushed two boulders down after them with a smile on my face, the rest of them decided to jump down by themselves.

My Sun Knight Platoon was making faster progress in clearing up the dark creatures than the Judgment Knight Platoon. This is to be expected, as the dark creatures were terrified of spells like holy light, holy blessing, and other holy magic, and these are the spells that every member of the Sun Knight Platoon must learn.

I saw that it wasn't difficult for my Sun Knight Platoon to defeat the dark creatures, and it was just a matter of time before they cleared all the dark creatures. I felt more relaxed at this.

At this time, both Blaze and Earth Knight came to my side and helped me up. After I stood up, I started issuing orders to both of them. "Blaze, take care of all the spirits. Earth, observe the situation and provide assistance wherever it is needed. I don't want to see anyone seriously injured."

They both nodded. Blaze Knight joined the battle as soon as his two-handed broadsword was alight with purifying flames, and he specifically picked off the spirits first.

The Earth Knight stood beside me, keeping a close eye on the battle situation, casting his protective shield every now and then.

Roland was surrounded by dark creatures. He observed the battle raging around him with a slightly evil grin.

That's not a normal expression for him. I was growing suspicious. *Roland... He hasn't been driven insane from rage, has he?*

As I was speculating, Roland did something that confirmed my suspicions that he had lost his mind. He used his dark aura as a net, shrouding the room and trapping everyone inside it. After that, he summoned more dark creatures so that the number of dark creatures was equal to that of the knights in the room.

No wonder the Basic Knowledge of Undead Creatures *textbook said, "Never let a Death Lord be born, or else it's would be a catastrophe"...So the Death Lord really is unimaginably strong!*

Looks like this time my plan was way too reckless.

I saw the Judgment Knight was off to the side asking the prince, "I am sorry, Your Highness. The situation has gotten out of control. May I ask how long will it take the other royal knights or guards to notice that something has gone wrong?"

The prince was very pale. He also had to deal with his own father the king's bellows. He smiled bitterly and answered, "Given that we were settling private matters that were...not really fit for public knowledge, I have posted all the guards far away, and I also ordered everyone that even if there was a commotion, they are not to come near."

Hearing this, Judgment Knight frowned, and he looked towards me. I could probably guess what his plan was. He wants me to escape first and alert the others in the palace and the church.

This indeed was the best way. The reasons? One, I was seriously hurt. Two, even if I weren't seriously hurt, my fighting skills would still be equal to a person who was seriously injured anyway. Three, my whole body was surrounded with a holy aura, so it would be easy for me to break out of the web of dark aura.

But I have my own plan, and now there is only one final step left.

"What did I pay you knights for? Go and kill that bastard for me!" The king was so angry that his whole flabby body couldn't stop shaking. He even slapped one of the royal knights.

My dear Majesty the King! I have never wanted to kiss that fat oily hand of yours more in my life!

This kind of attitude and speech would absolutely infuriate Roland, and this is exactly what I had been waiting for!

As expected, Roland's anger exploded. The flames in his eyes burned even higher and he uttered a terrifying, inhuman roar. His dark aura flared up like a storm and made the entire room shake.

I immediately started to run towards the king. Even though I don't know how Roland would break through the royal knights and reach the king, that guy would definitely find a way. All I needed to do was stick myself in front of the king before he attacked.

As I ran, I turned to look at Roland. Faintly, I saw that the air around Roland was warping slightly. *Don't tell me...?*

I ran faster, afraid I wouldn't get there in time to stop Roland.

Roland's figure disappeared.

Before anyone could react, the Death Lord suddenly appeared right in front of the king, and flashed a satisfied evil grin. "Your Majesty, it is time for you to pay for your crimes."

The king was so scared that his legs gave out and he sank to his knees.

This is the spacial elemental magic: Teleportation. It enables the person to shorten the distance between him and the destination in an instant. I never thought that a Death Lord could cast this kind of spell!

"Stop, Roland!"

When I saw that Roland had raised his sword and thrust it towards the king's head without any hesitation, I leaped in front of the king just in time. With a combination of holy magic and the protection of Light Shield, I stopped Roland's attack.

Even so, a deep gash appeared on my chest, and the blood from my wound sprayed onto him. Every drop of my blood full of holy element was extremely harmful to him. He growled lowly in pain.

Although my blood had corroded part of his body and made him looked awful, it seemed that he had already regained his senses. The flames in his eyes weren't as black as before. Seeing this, I couldn't help but sigh in relief. *This guy has finally calmed down. I was worried at first that he would keep on going berserk!*

"Grisia..." Roland lifted his head and asked with some confusion, "Just now, why didn't you stop—"

"Roland!" I interrupted him. *Are you kidding me? If the people here knew that I didn't stop Roland from becoming a Death Lord, then the day when* I *get burned at the stake wouldn't be far away.*

"I know that you are obsessed with killing the one who tortured and killed you. But I also know that you are not doing this for revenge, but to save this beautiful country from the rule of a cruel murderer, preventing the murderer from endangering the people and creating more unfortunate Death Knights, right?"

When he heard my question, he heard many of his own intentions in there. He nodded reflexively.

I calmly looked at him and said, "So if the king willingly abdicates as a sign of repentance for his crimes, then you should be able to pass on peacefully. Is that right, Roland?"

"Sun Knight, wha... What kind of nonsense are you spouting?!" The king was so angry that his face was as red as a beetroot.

Roland frowned, as if he were unsure of my true intentions what my true plan was.

"Roland? You can't be... Captain Roland?!" a royal knight exclaimed. When they heard this shout, all the royal knights seemed to recognize the name Roland, and started to examine the Death Lord's features. Soon, one by one, all the knights began to recognize Roland.

The royal knights started talking among themselves, "It really is him! He was youngest of the royal knight's captains..."

"It's Roland! I patrolled with him once."

"He was such a talented knight! How did it turn out like this...?"

“Captain Roland! Weren’t y-you k-killed by enemies while away on a mission?” the royal knight who recognized Roland first yelled out agitatedly.

Roland turned toward the young royal knight. His face softened visibly. He replied, “Oh, it’s you, Hele.”

“It really is Captain Roland!” When he heard his own name being called out, Hele was so agitated that he dropped his sword. In disbelief, he shouted, “How did y-you become a Death Knight?!”

Roland turned his head slowly to look at the king. His expression of hatred told everyone there that this man was the one who had murdered him. The gaze of the royal knights all fell on the king. Many showed expressions of sudden understanding, without a trace of doubt at Roland’s words. Besides, the way the king generally acted told everyone that this was indeed something he could do.

The king seemed to be shamed into anger. He roared loudly, “Even if I did kill him, he’s my royal knight. If he did something wrong and I executed him, what’s wrong with that?”

The crown prince was standing to the side, resignedly buried his head in his hands as if tired of the mess his father had created.

“Nonsense! Captain Roland was the most law abiding knight, he wouldn’t do anything wrong! If you say he did something wrong, then tell us what crime he committed!”

The knight called Hele was obviously a member of the “Roland Support Group”. He was even brave enough to contradict the king, though after he finished he wore an expression of extreme panic. Even so, other royal knights evidently agreed with his speech. Nobody else contradicted the king, but looking at their cold glares at the king, it was obvious that Roland had a good image amongst the royal knights in the past.

“He, he took unwanted liberties with the princess!” The king slyly chose a crime that is very hard to investigate without a thought to the good reputation of his own daughter.

What happened next was quite an impressive sight. Twenty or so royal knights all showed a strange expression on their faces at the same time. Hele explained while looking like he was at a loss whether to laugh or to cry, “Everybody knows that Captain Roland doesn’t date, doesn’t care for money, doesn’t gamble, doesn’t drink, and doesn’t brawl. All he does is practice swordplay, and then practice more swordplay...”

This kind of person is really hard to accuse. I bet that’s what the king is probably wailing about inside his mind right now...

“I... As the king of a country, I won’t randomly kill one of my own knights for no reason. If I said he took liberties with the princess, then he did take liberties with her!” the king insisted obstinately.

The royal knights all quieted down. If the king stubbornly refused to admit his crimes, then they couldn't do anything. Even if he did admit it, what could the knights do except for feeling disappointed in their hearts? Unless they were going to revolt...

"His Majesty the king wanted to kill him because..." a voice rang out that was so relaxed that it seemed out of place in this tense situation. As everyone's eyes were about to pop out from shock, the Storm Knight walked out from behind a dressing mirror. He seemed relaxed, and his face bore a smile that nobody should have after seeing a Death Lord.

Storm is pissed!

I can tell when Storm's mad. Every time that guy gets angry, he would put on a relaxed air, and with this relaxed air on, he'll suddenly attack when you are not vigilant, doing severe damage to you.

For now I am the record-holder for the highest number of times of making Storm mad. Over thirteen years I have made him mad ten times, and have suffered his sudden revenge nine times. There was one less retribution because one time right after I infuriated Storm, I infuriated my teacher too.

When he had put on that air of relaxation and came to me for revenge, I was already lying helpless on the bed, with my entire body bandaged like a mummy. He stood silently at my bed for a full ten minutes. Then, his sympathy defeated his desire for revenge (or was it because he couldn't find any place that wasn't already hurt to begin with?). Anyway, he left without doing anything.

This time it seemed that the secret torture room really had made Storm mad.

Storm forcefully pushed the dressing room mirror away. The dressing room mirror slammed the wall with a bang, and if my eyes weren't wrong, the wall was cracked...

"He found out about your hideous crime of torturing and killing maidservants, so he tried to expose you. But you caught him, and tortured him for three months until he died."

How the hell did he find out such an exact time like three months? I was very confused. *Even I don't know how long Roland was tortured for.*

The king's face twisted, and snarled, "Perjury! This is a false accusation! How could you know how long I had imprisoned Roland?"

Storm said impassively, "There is no wall under the sky that does not leak and there is no secret that cannot be found out. If I even know that you are wearing red leopard print underwear right now, what else is there that I cannot find out? Do you want me to repeat how you tortured him? Whipping, branding, pulling fingernails out, skinning, tongue cutting, soaking in salt water, pouring sugar water and then putting ants on him... Do I need to continue?"

The king's face paled visibly.

When Roland heard the torture methods, he put his face into his hands and howled. Evidently he remembers the inhumane torture process.

Bravo! I nearly gave Storm a standing ovation. Originally, I had only ordered Storm to jump out in the middle of the plan to help me expose the existence of the secret torture chamber. I didn't think that he was such a responsible guy. He even found out how long Roland was imprisoned, how he was tortured, plus the color of the king's underwear. I sincerely prayed to the God of Light, *Please protect Storm so that he won't die from overwork!*

Storm stepped away from the mirror. Only then did I notice that Storm had pulled away the curtain in the torture chamber. Without that curtain, the smell of rotting flesh and blood instantly wafted out, further emphasizing the heinous crime that Storm had revealed.

By this time, my Sun Knight Platoon had cleaned up most of the dark creatures. Roland didn't notice that there were no more dark creatures at his back protecting him, but nobody charged to attack Roland anyway.

In fact, judging from their expressions, their desire to attack the king outweighed their desire to attack the Death Lord.

"Blaze, go and purify the lingering air of resentment in the secret torture chamber," I ordered.

Blaze nodded, but when he stepped into the torture chamber, he did not cast the purifying flame immediately. Instead, he just stood there, dumbfounded. In that second, it was deathly quiet in the room. Then, after a long moment, we heard Blaze release a long breath.

The flames of purification had just lit up when the screams of the resentful spirits rang out through the torture chamber, like the most pained scream from a man during the most tortured moment of his life.

Many people paled when they heard the screams, and they immediately lowered their heads and start muttering a prayer.

When the screams ended, an even more shocking sentence rang out.

"Father, please abdicate and enjoy the rest of your life peacefully."

As the crown prince finally spoke, tiredness was thick on his face. Clearly, he was deeply weary with the foul play tonight.

"What are you talking about...?" The king stared at his son in disbelief.

The prince said to his father with a stern expression, "Please abdicate to show responsibility for your crimes. As your son, I will take care of you for the rest of your life."

Hearing that, the king's eyes darted to and fro. He looked around him. The royal knights were looking at him coldly, while the holy knights' face were full with disdain, and near him was a very powerful Death Lord who hated him to the bone.

Lastly, he looked at me, but I turned away slightly, and using my hair and the angle of my face to conceal my expression, showing him only the evil smirk on my face.

The color drained from his face. Clearly, he had realized who was responsible for tonight's plan to throw him off the throne. Coincidentally, this person was the head of the Twelve Holy Knights, who was able to mobilize the entire Holy Temple. I'm guessing that maybe this fellow will also think that this whole thing was the Church of the God of Light's dark plot or something similar.

"I— I abdicate," the king announced at last with a grey face.

When he spoke that sentence, I reached lightly into my pocket, and crushed a pink glass heart.

At this moment, some unusual situation began to happen to Roland. He floated very slowly off the ground, and at first, everyone thought that he was going to attack. However, he just looked down confusedly at his feet, as though as he also didn't understand why he was starting to float.

His dark aura slowly ebbed away, and it was replaced by a soft pink glow.

Why is it a pink glow? I clearly asked for white... I muttered silently in my mind.

"Is it because he has resolved his obsession, so now he is moving on?" one of the holy knights who clearly had read the undead creature textbook cried out in surprise.

"Captain Roland!" Hele looked at Roland in mid-air and yelled out, sobbing apparent in his voice.

Roland's expression looked very confused, as if seriously doubting the reason he was able to move on. He started to struggle, and the dark aura pushed away some of the pink glow. . . .

"Death Lord, let me give you a hand!"

I yelled, and then covered Roland in a cage of holy light. The dark aura immediately disappeared, leaving only the pink glow, which grew stronger and stronger. Finally, a cloud of pink glow had appeared in mid-air and it began to descend, covering Roland.

At last, Roland seemed to understand. He looked at me with a meaningful look and said "Grisia, good...bye[1]."

[1] **good...bye:** This phrase is 再见, zài jiàn. It literally translates to goodbye in Chinese. But if you read the two Chinese characters separately, it also can mean "again (再) meet (见)". So while Roland on the surface is saying goodbye to Sun, what he actually saying is "meet again soon".

I nodded at him.

A brief flash of light, and the Death Lord disappeared. Soft and delicate pink flower petals floated down, their fragrance clearly telling everyone that there were no more dark creatures about.

I watched the petals falling in the room and rejoiced in my heart. *Fortunately, the whole thing has gone as I planned*.

Only when Roland had become a Death Lord could he truly pose a threat to the king's life. And since I risked my own life to save the king by jumping in front of Roland's attack, no one will think that I am trying to help Roland. Next, Storm came out and exposed the true face of the king, making the holy knights, and more importantly, the royal knights, turn against the king... Though I have a feeling that they had already been at odds with him, even without me sowing discord.

Under the threat from the Death Lord and isolation from the royal knights, the crown prince would, first, be worried that the Death Lord might try to kill the king and perish with him in the process; second, would want to confront the royal knights; and third... Maybe there was a small, selfish motive from the crown prince who was nearing his forties. In the end, he spoke to urge his dad to abdicate.

The crown prince already had the main say in kingdom's politics for a while now. Even the king doesn't dare to risk the consequences of the total falling out with his son that would occur had he refused to abdicate.

At last, I have forced the murderer to abdicate. I believed that after I said, "He might create more Death Knights", the prince will watch over his father carefully now and prevent him from creating more tragedies.

Roland, this ending probably won't satisfy you, but all in all, I am not a Death Knight, and I can't kill to solve a problem.

The dead can kill people, take their revenge, and then pass on, but the living have to stay and take on the burden of cleaning up the mess. So, the living must always look for a compromise. Roland, I hope that you can accept this as justice.

***

The king abdicated and the Death Lord passed on.

The matter was resolved in an unexpected way, but it was still considered as a good ending!

We fifty or so holy knights naturally went back to the Holy Temple. We couldn't avoid having light to heavy injuries on our knights, but under the hard work of the Sanctuary clerics, nobody had any injuries after half an hour.

As I was the Sun knight and had suffered severe injuries, obviously I was the first person that got thrown ten or so Advanced Heal from ten or so bishops. I estimated that they even healed the split ends on my hair! I immediately turned around to head back to my room and catch some sleep, but Judgment followed me.

“Sun, can I ask a few questions?” Judgment asked.

“Yes?” I looked at him and smiled

Judgment hesitated, but still asked with a frown, “When you brought Blaze and Earth along with you, it really should have been for stopping the Death Knight, and not because of their fiery temper which easily causes conflict, so as to squeeze out time for Roland to transform into the Death Lord, right?”

“The Earth Knight is very kind and honest. How could he be someone who causes conflicts easily?” I choose the right moment to look confused.

Hearing my answer, Judgment only frowned. I know that he can’t object to that, since the entire continent knows that the Earth Knight is kind and honest!

He could only keep on asking, “When the royal knights and the holy knights started to fight, you talked to Roland for only a few minutes and then he had started to transform into a Death Lord. You didn’t use your friendship with Roland to anger him into transforming, right?”

I had just only opened my mouth to answer in the “nonsense-style” again, but Judgment kept on asking, leaving no chance for me to speak.

“When Roland was about to turn into a Death Lord, did you really have no way to stop him?”

Judgment paused hesitantly after hurling the two questions at me, but he finally said with an air of almost complete confidence, “Tonight, when the matter had progressed to the abdication of the king... Did you do it all for Roland? If you—”

“Judgment Knight!” I smiled and interrupted Judgment’s flow of questions. “You only need to know one thing: it doesn’t matter if the Death Knight is Roland or someone else, the progression of the matter wouldn’t change at all. The ending will not be any different.”

Judgment furrowed his brows, obviously doubting my words

I calmly placed my hand on the Sun Knight crest on my chest, and said seriously, “The first thing my teacher ever taught me was, 'Carrying out justice is the reason for the Sun Knight’s existence'.”

My teacher said before, “Child, the Sun Knight may not reach complete justice, and the Sun Knight may compromise. But, the Sun Knight may never give up carrying out justice. When you give that up, rip off the Sun Knight crest off your chest, because you are not a Sun Knight!

“Do you understand my answer? Judgment Knight?” I asked.

Judgment was silent for a moment, and then he nodded, “I understand, Sun Knight. However, I have one last question.”

“More questions?!” I smile helplessly.

“The Sun Knight wouldn’t leave a Death Lord to roam the streets freely, right?”

“Of course not!” I flashed my most innocent smile, and yawned widely. “I’m sleepy! I’m going to sleep now. You should catch some sleep too.”

The Judgment Knight was silent again. When I quicken my pace and was about to turn into another corridor and be out of his sight, Judgment asked, “So, will Grisia let Roland go free?”

Hearing that, I stopped, unconsciously touching my pocket. After I had crushed the glass heart just now, an advanced necromancy spell book, a necromancer student certificate and a note that I haven’t read yet had appeared in my pocket.

I laughed bitterly, and secretly opened the note up while trying to finagle my way past, “About this, it’s too late now, so Grisia is already asleep. He will talk to you again another time!”

The note read, “My dear student, don’t dream anymore that your Roland will pass on. He told me that his real obsession is to become the Sun Knight.”

Gahhhh!

I should have burned him at the stake in the first place!

· Shared Rule of Sun Knights ·

"No Matter what Happens, the Sun Knight is Perfect"

"Is Sun actually Supreme Dragon?"

A large banner was pinned up in the middle of the conference room. In order to avoid attention, no candles were lit. Inside, eleven knights sat at the long table, each person's face and figure hidden in the darkness.

One of the knights spoke up first, "Although Sun Knight's Sun-Style Swordsmanship has always been so messy that it is difficult for people to recognize it, but of course he could not hide his face from Blaze—"

Another knight immediately interrupted the former's words. "No! I've never said that Supreme Dragon is Sun, nor would I ever admit that Supreme Dragon is Sun."

"Even if he is, I advise you to pretend that he isn't," a deep, severe voice rang out. As the voice pierced through the silence, everyone straightened up in their seats.

"While we have always helped to uphold the principle that Sun Knight is the personification of Light and Justice, he really went too far this time. Even using necromancy… Don't you think he needs to be warned?"

Hearing that, everyone rushed to put in their two cents' worth.

"But he has already learned it. What are you going to warn him about? He won't be able to forget what he has learned anyway."

"At least advise him not to learn any higher levels of necromancy."

"Idiot! Ask him not to use necromancy as long as he lives, and forbid him from using magic as well. What sort of knight uses magic?"

"Oh please! You know how crappy Sun's swordsmanship is. If you ask him not to use necromancy and forbid him to use any magic, he'd probably get slashed to death with a single strike by someone two days later."

"…Point taken."

Knock knock knock!

There was a sudden rapping at the door. Everyone quieted down and looked at each other, not knowing whether or not they should answer.

"Come in." The knight with a deep and severe voice was the one who finally spoke.

The door opened. A large amount of sunlight filtered into the dark conference room. The person who entered was like the sunlight as well, all shiny blond hair and bright cheerful smiles. No one could associate this light-filled person with anything related to darkness.

This was the person who held a title befitting his appearance: Sun Knight. He looked around with a smile, as if he did not see the words "Is Sun actually Supreme Dragon?" posted on the wall.

Sun Knight wore an apologetic and sincere expression as he spoke with an impassioned voice, "My dear brothers, Sun is extremely sorry for interrupting your secret meeting. Disrupting everyone's conference is a sin that cannot be forgiven! However, Sun could not bear to wait to share with my brothers this miracle the God of Light has granted me."

Sun's expression was once again filled with joy. "Sun has just received the God of Light's blessing, and finally understands the true meaning of Resurrection! Ah! Even His Holiness the Pope could not help but rejoice! My brothers can now fight evil with no qualms about getting any heavy injuries, for Sun believes that so long as my brothers' heads remain, Sun can save everyone from Death's hands!"

Having said that, his joyful words took a sharp turn, and Sun sighed. "Alas! It is unfortunate that Resurrection is a very unstable holy magic; it is not known when it will succeed and when it will fail! If the skill fails because of 'unknown reasons' and causes any brothers to lose their chance of living, Sun will feel extremely sorrowful."

"…" Everyone was silent.

"After sharing this joyful news, Sun shall not disturb his brothers from communicating the God of Light's compassion, and shall wish them all happiness."

With a smile so bright that it looked a little scary, Sun Knight slowly closed the wooden door, and the room returned to darkness once more. After a moment of silence, someone finally asked in a forced voice, "Was that…a bribe?"

"No, that was a threat!"

Judgment Knight slowly stood up, having decided to leave this pointless meeting, and only left one piece of advice, "I warn you all, our Sun Knight has even dared to expose the king. If your position is not above that of the king's, it's best not to mess with him."

Storm Knight also stood up and lazily added, "He mastered the Resurrection skill, which even the Pope can't cast, and he's proficient in holy magic, elemental magic, and necromancy. He has a teacher with the title of 'The Strongest Sun Knight in All of History' to support him from behind, as well as a necromancy teacher, and, incidentally, Sun just might be good friends with a Death Lord."

Luckily, his swordsmanship isn't even an ordinary type of lousy… everyone thought silently.

"Goddammit! Is he the Sun Knight or an evil overlord?" Earth Knight growled, livid.

Leaf Knight chuckled as he said, "Oh Earth, have you forgotten what our teachers taught us when we were young?"

"Remember, child, no matter the circumstances, the Sun Knight is always perfect!"

Additional information: "Child, even if you've unintentionally discovered the Sun Knight's imperfection, you had better just admit that he's perfect unless you want to experience his imperfection yourself."

· Epilogue ·

Character Introductions

Grisia Sun:

The Sun Knight, the head of the Twelve Holy Knights and leader of the "good, warm-hearted" faction. Has a radiant smile, a flawless personality, and a benevolent heart that will always forgive others.

Storm Knight:

One of the Twelve Holy Knights and a member of the "good, warm-hearted" faction. Has a carefree personality, is a footloose charmer, and there is always the presence of a woman at his side.

King:

The king of the Kingdom of Forgotten Sound. His physique is exceedingly stocky and is extremely similar to a particular animal on Earth – the pig.

Crown Prince:

The crown prince of the Kingdom of Forgotten Sound.

Ice Knight:

One of the Twelve Holy Knights and a member of "cruel, cold-hearted" faction. Has a personality as frigid as ice and is always expressionless.

Earth Knight:

One of the Twelve Holy Knights and a member of the "good, warm-hearted" faction. Has an honest and loyal personality and is the Sun Knight's good friend.

Lesus Judge:

The Judgment Knight. One of the Twelve Holy Knights and the leader of the "cruel, cold-hearted" faction. Has a personality that is stern and cold and he will never forgive criminals.

Leaf Knight:

One of the Twelve Holy Knights and a member of the "good, warm-hearted" faction. His personality can be described with only three words: a nice person.

Pink:

A necromancer that has an appearance of a young girl. Is extremely fond of the color pink and loves to eat strawberry lollipops.

Roland:

A Death Knight, the Sun Knight's deceased friend.

Blaze Knight:

One of the Twelve Holy Knights and a member of the "good, warm-hearted" faction. Is hot-tempered and blunt. Idolizes the Sun Knight.

Dragon's Saint Brigandine:

A set of assassin clothes. Main characteristic: can talk.

***

[Yu Wo, who doesn't have a typical pen name and doesn't have a typical brain, wrote an atypical book, 'The Legend of the Sun Knight', and inside the book there is an atypical main character who meets a bunch of atypical side characters, unfolding a legend that is entirely atypical.]

Here, I must first thank my good friend Shuǐ Quán, who connected me with the Spring Publishing House and even helped me check for mistakes in the book with much toil. Thanks for your trouble, noble Shuǐ Quán!

I'm also extremely grateful to the adorable boss of the Spring Publishing House. Sorry to bother you with my repeated trips to the publishing house and even make you wait this long for the complete draft. I'm really sorry about that.

I, Yu Wo, have actually always wanted to write on the subject of knights.

The word “knight” is simply one of the many nouns that the heart of every maiden has fantasised about before. Incidentally, “prince” is a noun that is usually even more popular in maidens’ fantasies.

Ahem! In conclusion, even Yu Wo has experienced before the rose-colored fantasies of a maiden. (Hey! You’re not allowed to show that look of suspicion!) So, I decided to write this book about knights.

However, as Yu Wo has accidentally passed the phase of having a maiden’s rose-colored fantasies while writing this book, thus, this book has turned from a typical legend of a knight into an atypical novel unmasking the cruel realities of a knight.

From the start, I had already decided in my mind that I wanted to write about a setting that was “conventional, yet striking”. Hence the “God of Light” came into play. The appearance of the “Church of the God of Light” then followed. Since it is a religion of light, of course the first thing that pops into your head is the incomparably bright sun above our heads. This is how our “Sun Knight” came to be. After that, using a lousy number, the “twelve” holy knights appeared.

Therefore, the rough framework for the Legend of the Sun Knight was completed, and Yu Wo started helping everyone reveal the true faces of the knights. Inside the book, many of the problems depicted of a knight are actually genuine, such as weapon repair fees. I’m not sure if this has given everyone a glimpse of what it’s actually like to be a knight?

If someone has become disillusioned with the word ‘knight’ after reading the book, please don’t come and find me…

P.S.: Going off-topic, as the author, I actually wrote more than forty thousand words before I actually started thinking about the main character’s name. Has everyone done that before? The main character actually went through half of the book before his name was mentioned. Poor Grisia!

Following that, everyone should be able to count and see:

In the “good, warm-hearted” faction, there is Sun, Storm, Earth, Leaf, and Blaze.

In the “cruel, cold-hearted” faction, there is Judge and Ice.

Obviously, one can tell that within the book, not all of the Twelve Holy Knights have been mentioned. This reveals an important message…

There will be a sequel to this book!

So remember to buy the next book, the book after that, and the book following that—

Ahem! What Yu Wo really wanted to explain is that the Legend of the Sun Knight is not a one-book novel, and will be a series of novels.

The main character will always be our Sun. However, every time he will encounter different plights and missions (and sufferings). Of course, this will unfold into several (series of) different stories!

At this point, I hope that everyone will like Grisia Sun's legend of adventures (read: sufferings).

Also, everyone is welcome to visit Yu Wo's website (http://www.wretch.cc/blog/kim1984429). I often have a hobby of organizing character popularity polls, to see which characters people like. Yu Wo would like to let the characters that are popular appear more often in the story, as well as on the cover pages. So if anyone is very fond of a certain character, please come place a vote!

Compilation of Footnotes

You've been reading The Legend of Sun Knight. There's a particular footnote that you're trying to find, but after three minutes of scrolling around looking for it, you're starting to feel pretty *pissed off*... Well, thankfully that scenario will never happen, because we've thoughtfully complied the footnotes here for you. They're categorized under *Chinese Cultural/Linguistic References, Gamer/Manga References,* and *Others*, and arranged alphabetically after that.

Chinese Cultural/Linguistic References

Cradle-robber: Original saying is 老牛吃嫩草, lit. "Old cow eating young grass." It means an old person who has a young spouse. [page 114]

Descendants of Dragons: Chinese people sometimes refer to themselves as such; (龍的傳人) lóng de chuán rén. [page 77]

Desolate: The actual words the author uses to describe it are **千山**鸟飞绝、万径人踪灭 (qiān shān niǎo fēi jué , àn jìng rén zōng miè), which are lines from a famous Chinese poem. It basically mean desolate/very lonely place where no one ever goes.

Original poem:
柳宗元
"江雪" (Snow on the river)
千山鸟飞绝, (There are no flying birds in the thousand hill nearby)
万径人踪灭, (No sign of people in the ten thousand pathway nearby)
孤舟蓑笠翁,(A man wearing a coat(raincoat kind of thingy) on a lonely boat)
独钓寒江雪 (Fishing alone on the cold river with the snow) [page 45]

Eyes muddled by clam meat: A Taiwanese proverb “眼睛被蛤蜊肉糊到”, which is considered to be vulgar. It means that a man is infatuated with a woman's female charms and so he ignores the existence of everything around him. [page 82]

Forgetting friendship at the sight of beauty: A proverb which means to be so infatuated with beauty, usually in the form of a person who may or may not be one’s lover, that one neglects one’s friends and in the worst case, betray them. [page 19]

good...bye: This phrase is 再见, zài jiàn. It literally translates to goodbye in Chinese. But if you read the two Chinese characters separately, it also can mean "again (再) meet (见)". So while Roland on the surface is saying goodbye to Sun, what he actually saying is "meet again soon". [page 133]

Judgment Knight: In Chinese, his name is "审判" (shěn pàn), which can mean quite a lot of things, such as "to judge", "to interrogate", even "to hold a trial". There may even be an element of torture in said proceedings as well. [page 19]

Kingdom of Forgotten Sound: In Chinese, this name can also be interpreted as "Kingdom of Forgotten Fame", because the character here which we translated as "sound" is actually closer to "ringing", and it also sometimes loosely associated with the notion of fame or renown. [page 4]

Storm Knight: Two things to note. Firstly, "Storm Knight" is a name and also a position, so on occasion we translate it as "the Storm Knight" and other times as "Storm Knight". Secondly, in Chinese, Storm's name in Chinese is actually "暴风" (bào fēng), which can mean anything between a fierce storm and a typhoon. The second character is the character for "wind", which may explain Storm's "personality" a bit. [page 4]

Sun is fine: In Chinese, speaking of yourself in the third person is not always a cutesy affectation. There are two ways to talk of yourself in the third person: the first is to say "rén jiā", which means "others". This is the cutesy way. The second way, which Sun uses here, is to say your own name. This is used in ancient China as a formal, even courtly way of speaking. [page 38]

Supreme Dragon: Sun is pronounced Tai Yang in Chinese. In this scene, the Death Knight actually said "Tai" as the first word of Sun's name, and Sun named himself as Tai (Greatest/Extreme) Long (Dragon). We've changed the name into an English equivalent for consistency. [page 91]

"The boss usually only talks and does not take action": Another play on words. The original is 君子动口不动手, which means, "A gentleman should reason with his mouth instead of brawling with his hands." [page 59]

"The Holy Knight who is having difficulties at the execution grounds is being bullied by knights": This is a play of the original idiom, 虎落平阳被犬欺 (hǔ luò píng yáng bèi quǎn qī), which literally means the tiger fell to the plains (in China, tigers are considered the kings of the mountains) and is being bullied by dogs. (Meaning that strong people who are in a difficult situation can't even fend off the weaklings.) So, in this case, Sun is saying that he's in a difficult situation and is being bullied by people weaker than him. [page 55]

GamerManga References

Light Shield: Basically, it works like a layer of light around the caster that helps to increase physical defense. For those who play Ragnarok Online (RO), it works like *Kyrie Eleison*. [page 57]

Wings of God: A spell that increases agility. Basically works like Haste. [page 57]

Other References

Drink fiend: What Sun calls himself here is closer to being "someone who will not fall unconscious even after a thousand drinks". It implies that he has a very, very high tolerance for liquor. [page 5]

Footloose charmer: The description for the Storm Knight here means a man, such as a wandering hero, who is both extremely attractive to women and not tied down to particular responsibilities. [page 5]

Platoon: A military unit typically composed of two to four sections or squads and containing 16 to 50 soldiers. (For more information, see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Platoon) [page 84]

"...provide the badge with 300cc": The original unit is "grams" but blood is measured in volume, not weight. 1g = 1cc roughly. (Blood density ~1.02 g/ml) [page 78]