

あづみ圭
Azumi Kei

月が導く異世界道中

Tsukiga Michibiku Isekai Dachū

9



ALPHAPOLIS
アルファポリス

Tsuki ga Michibiku Isekai Douchuu

– Moon-led Journey Across Another World –

- Volume 9 -

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[Reigokai: Isekai Translations]



主な 登場人物

Mio

元は巨大な蜘蛛。
真と契約して、人の姿を得た。
アニメや特撮作品に
興味がある模様。

Shiki

元は「リッチ」と呼ばれる
骸骨型の
アンデッドモンスター。
真と契約したことで
人の姿となった。

Tomoe

元は「蜃」と呼ばれた竜。
真と契約したことによって
人の姿を得た。

Otonashi Hibiki

リミア王国の勇者。
魔族に対して危機感の薄い
王国上層部の意識を
変えるべく、奔走している。

Iwahashi Tomoki

グリトニア帝国の勇者。
魅了の力を持つ。
数々の武器を操り、
対集団戦闘を得意とする。

Misumi Makoto

本作の主人公。
親の都合で異世界へ召喚
されちゃった悲運な高校生。
女神の干渉に困っている。

Chapter 149

Enquiry with Shiki-sensei

The Academy's main entrance.

In these several days, it is a place that has no people around when it is late at night.

Normally, it is a gate that would have lights on like a nightless city, and there would also be decent amount of students coming and going.

And yet, right now it is just like an antique lamp with a magic formation, shining dimly into the lonely streets.

Shiki and I; only the two of us were walking there. We didn't really have any target location in mind, we were just separating from the noisy place.

If something happens we will run there, but I think they won't call me so soon.

"The Limia King and the Empire's Princess as well. They were showing quite the agitation" (Shiki)

"If their capital city is being attacked, isn't that the obvious state? Even in this world, as expected, it is still bad when your capital is attacked huh" (Makoto)

"Right. It depends on the situation, but in this case where they are receiving a surprise attack, I think it would be considered quite the 'bad' situation" (Shiki)

"Then they would definitely be agitated. But it seems there's Rona and one other demon general. Why are those guys attacking themselves when they were encamped in the Stella Fort that is boasted as the impenetrable wall? If they leave, they will lose that defensive power, right?" (Makoto)

"If their objective is to chip off their opponent's forces, it would be better to not leave. But it's a war, so they must attack at some point in time, or they won't be able to defeat their opponent. Moreover, if they give their opponent the impression that they are usually secluded in their fortress, it would be easy to make a surprise attack" (Shiki)

I try asking about the demon race advance that I heard a while ago, with Shiki.

The imperial capital Asuta and Luinas. Honestly speaking, I don't understand the reason why they made a simultaneous attack.

From what I have learned in history class, having two battles at the same time in war is normally a bad move.

If you want to do something like that, you must have quite the difference in power, or you will be defeated.

I haven't heard the details about numbers and the strategy, but I kind of understood the words my history teacher was trying to say.

Because I think that even if there are two enemies, it would definitely be easier to defeat them one by one instead of going for both at the same time after all.

Moreover, if the demon race gets attacked by both countries at the same time, they possess the means to defend against it.

Making a conjecture from what Tomoe said, I don't think the demon race has that much leeway to go into the offensive though.

"Well, the objective of the demon race is to defeat the hyumans, so attacking isn't something strange" (Makoto)

"Limia and Gritonia who understand the state of the battle of both countries, it seems their agitation differs slightly. Even if they possess a hero, there's no way they wouldn't know... No, they are hyumans, so it might be possible?" (Shiki)

Shiki seems to be trying to answer me, and it also looks like he is asking himself.

I think he also needs to arrange his thoughts regarding this matter of the demon race advance.

Well even if I say this, he probably has a clearer image than me.

Mio is still taking care of something and hasn't returned yet. And Tomoe is in Asora.

Having Shiki tell me is the fastest way.

Root is also an option, but he went somewhere with Saritz-san, so I can't just force myself in between them.

"Is there anything strange?" (Makoto)

"When the demon race stopped their advance, they used their time arranging their domestic affairs, making military preparations, and researching techniques. Plainly said, they were increasing the power of their country" (Shiki)

The latter half was really easy to understand.

They stopped their steps in order to increase their power.

"Yeah, if I remember correctly, they increased their territory, so they needed the time to stabilize, right?" (Makoto)

"Yes. In other words, they are not the selves that made a big march in the past. This is a matter of course" (Shiki)

"They even have a tool that blocks the interference of the Goddess, so that's a given" (Makoto)

"They probably have already predicted that they would create a countermeasure for them. The demon race currently possesses magic that surpasses the hyumans. The hyumans obviously should have this in mind already, but..." (Shiki)

"But?" (Makoto)

"Looking at the reaction of both countries, it felt as if they didn't expect it at all. Even I understand the content of the demon race attack this time. They were taking their time developing magic formations that can hide, so they utilized this and divided the units in subdivisions, slowly mobilizing them by hiding in the forests and valleys. After that, they used a teleportation marker, and had the others teleport to where they are. In the Empire's case, they did it in several points, but I don't think the method differed much. The only thing they most likely did was just increase the number of markers" (Shiki)

"...I see" (Makoto)

It's certainly true that the demon race easily infiltrated this town by disguising as

hyumans, and there were also in Lorel.

A spell that fakes the appearance.

Then what Shiki said: "concealing a unit", might be possible.

When I met with Sairitz-san, I asked her about those two demons disguised as guards, and it seems those two returned by the order of the country.

In other words, in Lorel there's at least another demon infiltrated who is in a position that can give out orders.

The demons seemed to be trying to recruit me, but thinking about the relationship between the demon race and the hyumans, I am most likely a special case. There's probably demons infiltrated in the countries.

The teleportation as well, they just need to make a marker in the coast of a lake and have them gather there. It isn't that difficult of a thing.

If the demon race also has the knowledge of Shiki, it isn't something they wouldn't be able to do.

Be it thought transmission, disguising, or teleportation skill; the demon race is quite ahead of the hyumans.

Hyumans are used to receiving from the Goddess and spirits, so they don't have the conception of developing by themselves like the demon race. Only a few of them possess that way of thinking, and that makes a big difference.

From what I can guess, the difference is comparable to the Industrial Revolution of Europe and that of Asia. But the hyumans have the blessing of the Goddess and her assistance. This is proof that the composition is, so to speak, quite different.

"If the hyumans evaluate the demon race's magic as low, or they think that they will somehow be able to get through this with only the Goddess' blessing... they might lose" (Shiki)

"No way" (Makoto)

"No, I also think there's no way they would do that. There's no way they would think

that they already have victory because of the Goddess' awakening and the descent of the heroes. And countries in the frontline like Limia and Gritonia should have stolen a few techniques of the demons" (Shiki)

"Well, if the enemy has superior technique, that's the obvious course of action right?" (Makoto)

"But they weren't able to handle this level of thought transmission jamming. Don't you think it is strange that the King and the princess were unable to personally deal with it? They are statesmen; not technicians nor magicians. But if they are unable to send thought transmissions from their own capital, which possesses their specialists, to this town, that means they haven't even stolen the technique to use thought transmission in the battlefield" (Shiki)

"....."

Certainly.

"Also, the Limia King and the Gritonia Princess said that the attack to this town was a decoy. And they said it in a way that seemed as if they didn't know what would happen next" (Shiki)

"Why? People of important positions gathered at Rotsgard, and the demons create an incident they can't neglect. It pissed me that they did so without caring that I am here but, this being a decoy shouldn't be a mistake right?" (Makoto)

"Waka-sama, please excuse me. This town was probably in its essence, buying time, or maybe just a simple set off. The point is, this was only something to avert their eyes even if for an instant. Just by having royalty level people coming to Rotsgard, the plan had already achieved the minimum success. In the worst case, where no troops from any country mobilize, it wouldn't have been a problem for the demons. At that time, the variants would overflow in all parts of the town and Rotsgard would have fallen. There's no demerits for the demon race. And in truth, if we weren't here, the Academy wouldn't have been able to find the weak point and by this moment, the town would have over a hundred variants" (Shiki)

By the second day, the increment stopped practically completely and didn't reach the hundreds, but well, I do understand the point.

If the issue was left untouched, there would have probably been several hundreds

appearing.

In the current state, the hyumans can push back the variants with pure numbers.

"Yeah, this town would have probably been done for. With no chance for reinforcements to come. The reinforcements that would have come might have entered the stage where they have to stop the variants from spreading" (Makoto)

"No matter how much the variants rampage, there's no demerits for the demon race. It is actually a grateful thing. Because that would only mean that hyumans will not see the danger approaching from their backs after all" (Shiki)

"Then the town is in a better state than what Rona was planning it to be" (Makoto)

"Yeah. In that woman's plans, it may be a success, but this might be one of the bad scenarios. She was able to somehow draw a part of the Kingdom and Empire's army, and the reinforcements from Aion that were planned to be used for the attack at Stella Fort are being held back in the neighboring towns. I think, at most, she is grieving at the fact that the time she put onto this plan is not giving the appropriate results" (Shiki)

"What about Lorel?" (Makoto)

"You did say that they have demons infiltrated in their escorts, but she probably estimated that Lorel would only send supplies at most. Rona probably thought about pillaging and obstructing, but since the demons here were withdrawn, I don't know the particulars" (Shiki)

Sounds scary.

So they were even planning to cut off supplies.

Truly what I call a worthy decoy!

"Isn't that a splendid decoy?" (Makoto)

"...If that were really the case, they would have probably made the scale a bit wider. Rona's true decoy is... the Empire, Waka-sama" (Shiki)

"!!"

What?!

I was surprised by the sudden words of Shiki that sounded as if he were sure of it.

There shouldn't be that much difference in the amount of information he and I have, and yet, how was he able to reach to that conclusion?!

So the small silence before his words were because he was amazed?

I am actually trying my best here you know.

...Please give me a bit more time.

"From the Kingdom, all troops march from the same direction; at the Empire, they are divided in several places, ones at the direction of Stella and others from Ruinas; and then, there's also the nature of both countries' main forces. On top of that, there's the demon race's current state, period and season. As long as the truth that they are attacking stands, their aim is the Kingdom" (Shiki)

His eyes flashed.

Ah, he kind of reminded me of the past Shiki, no, of Lich.

He has those unpleasant eyes he has when he is scheming something.

"So they are going to bring down the Kingdom" (Makoto)

That's quite the predicament.

It will corner the hyumans by one step more.

"No. Their aim is the most valuable asset of the Kingdom" (Shiki)

"Most valuable asset?" (Makoto)

"Must be the hero. They intend to bring down the hero" (Shiki)

"?!"

Shocking words.

It has only been around 1 year since we arrived to this world.

And the demon race is already at the step in war where they intend to kill the hero?

"I have heard about the natures of the heroes, but instead of the Empire's puppet hero, the Kingdom hero that creates fanaticism is more dangerous" (Shiki)

A puppet and a fanatic huh.

Ah, if I remember correctly, Tomoe and Mio said something about this in the past.

The power to attract people and the power to charm people.

Mio thought of both things as the same, but Tomoe said that those two are different.

Charm them and turn them into prisoners. What's ahead of that path is a puppet that can't move without its master's orders.

Attract people and pull them. What's ahead of that path is a madman that does desperate efforts for the sake of those people.

That's how it goes if you delve deeper into both paths.

At one point, charm does work the same as charisma, but the end result is different, or so she said.

The influence on the people that receive this effect to the limit, I have never seen it, so I can't say much about it.

"Well, the people that are completely charmed won't be able to move without their master's words. The very meaning of pitiful. 'If I take other actions aside from the ones that person has said, that person will hate me, I will be thrown away'; that kind of fear will bind the target. And if they end up unable to do anything, it will be like putting the cart before the horse. Having people that can only move when given detailed orders is no different from Golems" (Tomoe)

"Waka-sama is my everything, but well... I don't intend to lose to anyone in terms of being charmed" (Mio)

I suddenly remember the talk of Tomoe and Mio.

Our side is so peaceful.

"That's the difference of a charm brought upon by a skill, and a charm that's not brought by it. But if I remember correctly, several tens of adventurers from Tsige went to Limia right? Something about them being led by the hero. Isn't the Kingdom a more difficult opponent in terms of fighting force?" (Makoto)

Adventurers that can fight decently in the wasteland.

They possess the know-how of fighting.

Even if the demons want to crush them, I think it would be pretty difficult.

"Waka-sama. Just like how you said, the ones that possess the most power in the Kingdom are those adventurers and the hero party. But those adventurers also have a big weakness" (Shiki)

"Weakness?" (Makoto)

"They are a power that has learned to fight in the wasteland. After going to the Kingdom, they probably learned a few ways to fight in groups. To a level where they can have an active role in the battlefield" (Shiki)

"Well, that's a given" (Makoto)

"However, they have a trait that has been ingrained in them from the very beginning. They are adventurers. Even if they are good at attacking, they are not used to defending towns, bases, and specially places of wide scale. Mercenaries and knights might be a different story, but adventurers are essentially carefree. If we take 100 as one's power, it would be like being able to only bring out 50 of that inside a forest" (Shiki)

"Tsige has also been attacked by mamonos, so they should be able to protect right? It shouldn't be that extreme" (Makoto)

"It would be good if that were the case. 'A base that has held on for 1 year in the wasteland will prosper', is what a saying goes. If I were to fight an adventurer, I would force the fight in a forest. There will be the chance that it will affect victory, and if it is a place that shows clear effects, even more. A defensive battle where they have to fight while minding the residents, even a knight would have a difficult time in that situation.

If you put a surprise attack in that equation, I wonder how the morale will turn out”
(Shiki)

“...Is the Kingdom going to fall?” (Makoto)

Should I go save them?

But it is a hero I have never met before, and a place that has been influenced by the Goddess.

If I go and help Limia, the chances that my connection with them will deepen is really high.

The best would be to have it go well without me going.

I asked Shiki if there's such a chance.

“I wonder. I don't think it will reach the point of destruction. If there's enough damage to consider it fallen, the hero would have run somewhere else already. However, if the damage is only in the capital, the hero is dead. It isn't like the demon race has much leeway. This battle also holds the coercion that this is the beginning of a big march. In other words, a bluff. If they are able to at least kill the hero, I don't think they will go to the point of trampling down the Kingdom. Of course, that's only if my conjecture is correct. I am not a 100% sure. There's a portion that's still opaque, and it would be difficult to predict all the thoughts of the Demon Lord and Rona” (Shiki)

A bluff huh.

But they are fully intent to kill the hero.

I remember the words of Tsukuyomi-sama.

'Please take care of them', huh.

But even if I think about going to save them, we are also in quite the stalemate.

We have no 'means' to go all the way to Limia.

“There's not enough power, so don't delve too deep into it yet' huh” (Makoto)

"The north is entering winter. In that case, no matter if it's defending or attacking, the snow and ice will get in the way. Marching in the middle of intense cold is suicidal. It is a good season to win and escape" (Shiki)

"...But even if we want to go help them, teleporting there is..." (Makoto)

"Ah, right. Tomoe-dono is..." (Shiki)

Right.

I remember the conversation Tomoe had with the important people a few moments ago.

The circumstances about how using teleportation would be bad.

Chapter 150

Root's miscalculation

Tomoe, Shiki and I were approached by the top class guests: the Limia King, Princess Lily, and Sairitz-san; they requested us for the teleport of both countries, Limia and Gritonia.

After that, won't that leave the church people here? It seems the Aion people have already left the neighboring towns and headed towards Stella Fort after all.

'We also used the teleport when assisting the Merchant Guild so it is already close to its limit', is the total lie Tomoe said with an apologetic expression. The Limia King and Princess Lily lowered their heads, lined up words that can only be taken as threats, and requested for the teleport no matter the method needed.

Sairitz-san soothed the situation every now and then, but Tomoe evasively apologized. When those two changed their target to me, I seriously got scared.

As expected, when there's their country at stake, their intensity is different.

It's like, their grit.

Princess Lily looks slightly older than me, and yet, her aura was completely different from mine.

I don't know if it's their lineage or their education, but they are incredible people.

Strangely, it was scary, but I didn't feel that weakness I felt when I was dealing with Zara-san.

In a corner of my self, I still held composure and was able to ignore it.

(Waka, it is already enough. Please nod. You did well) (Tomoe)

Tomoe's thought transmission.

At the moment I was thinking about throwing it back to Tomoe, she came and told me.

That's a great help.

[Understood. This is an emergency situation, so it can't be helped. Tomoe, can you do it?]

After a lot of pushing and pulling, I finally nodded.

It is something that I can do to begin with, and being unable to do it is Tomoe's total lie.

Things will probably line up later.

"...Waka, it isn't something impossible, and if you tell me to do it, this Tomoe will do so as you wish, but if one teleport is done, the sword won't be able to handle another one" (Tomoe)

[What do you mean by that?]

"It will most likely break. And it will probably be impossible to repair. Is it really okay? To sacrifice this sword that has been supporting Kuzunoha Company until now?" (Tomoe)

I see...

Changing the teleport basis to a tool.

In other words, when the tool is broken, it will make the person believe that you will be unable to use it anymore.

I finally understood the true reason as to why they made such a pretext like placing the teleport power to a short katana.

So we will not be using teleport from now on? Or she already has another pretext to use teleport later on?

At any rate, I will follow the play of Tomoe.

[I don't mind. This is a request from the people holding back the demon race in the

war. If we are able to be of help, I want to cooperate. I don't know if there's a substitute for that sword, but if destiny so wishes, we will meet again]

"...Understood" (Tomoe)

With a face as if facing mental agony, Tomoe acts as if she is troubled, and she separates a bit from Limia King, Princess Lily, Sairitz-san, and Root who at some point in time was already beside those three.

Things like: 'The distance to the capital is way too much' and 'If it's the Empire, it will only reach until the town Robin which is close to the highway' are the details she was creating.

After a while, Tomoe unsheathes the short katana, and while placing major emphasis, she opened a mist gate.

Limia's King and the knight entered that gate and disappear. For some reason, the prince stayed.

After that, Princess Lily and several people that seem to be her close aides disappear inside a gate that was created separately. At this side, a number of people that looked like chamberlain stayed.

And then, the sword broke.

With a grim face, Tomoe falls on her knees.

What a nice act. That's a fake sword right there.

Of course, I won't be saying it.

The eyes of Sairitz-san, the prince, and the chamberlains showed slight signs of relief as they look at Tomoe.

Maybe it is relief that we won't be able to use teleport anymore.

Well, we have the teleport ability and the power to fight against variants, so thinking about both of those points, it is probably a pretty scary thing.

I wanted to ask the bitter-faced Tomoe what's with those feelings of hers as a bit of

opposition, but I decided to just go to where she is and place a hand on her shoulder.

[Are you okay, Tomoe? I am sorry]

(Kukuku, those guys are getting relieved. Seriously, it is because they are so naive that the demon race is playing them like a fiddle. How stupid) (Tomoe)

It was a waste to even try to act worried.

In the end, she asked me to leave her alone for a while and I gave her the permission to. After that, we reached the courtyard where Tomoe separated from us.

When she said 'alone', she secretly told me in thought transmission that she will be in Asora, so Tomoe is in Asora right now.

And that's why, if we teleport now, it would be bad.

"The battle's outcome will hinge on how much power the heroes possess. Well, the demon race has already taken that into account, and that's why they are aiming for a short decisive battle. As long as there's no special situation occurring, the events will advance as the demon race planned" (Shiki)

"Is there a good hand we can play while we are in Rotsgard?" (Makoto)

"Yes. It may be bad for us to head there ourselves, but if it's, for example, the winged-kin and the Gorgon who no one knows their connection with us; and there's also the choice on sending the Arkes to provide support" (Shiki)

"That's not a viable option. To send someone from Asora to a battlefield where none of us is in, that's an absolute no. Also, the winged-kin fly in the sky you know? Won't they turn into good targets?" (Makoto)

"...Waka-sama, the winged-kin is quite the strong race. Maybe they can even bring down a country by themselves. Try watching a fight of them against the other races. It is just that their ability to fight against Waka-sama is despairingly low. Also, the Gorgons, if they were sent out to the battlefield, they possess a terrifying ability that can end the battle. At worst, we can arbitrarily dispel the petrification of the ones we want to. No problems there. It is not a petrification that brings instant-death. They are very special ability-users after all" (Shiki)

When I reject the idea of using only the people residing in Asora as fighting force, Shiki comes at me in a slightly serious manner.

Are the winged-kin actually strong?

Not only can't they take my arrows, they even fly all the way into the sky and hide over the clouds. Those kind of weak beings.

Even the Gorgons, if you create a barrier against petrification, their only weapon left would be their moving hair.

I really can't agree to sending only them to fight, and on top of that, it is a battlefield.

"Hmph... If Shiki says so, I will check it out some other time. But this time is a pretty serious attack from the demon race right? Also, there's the chance that the hero will see them as mamonos and attack them. I don't want that to happen" (Makoto)

"Hm... If you say so, it can't be helped. Thinking about the success rate and the demerits on our side, I thought it would be a good plan though" (Shiki)

"I don't want to simply abandon the hero, but we can't just straightforwardly go there. How troublesome. Uhm, hey Shiki, we were talking about the Kingdom all this time but, what about the Empire? If that's the true decoy, then there's not much need to worry about that side?" (Makoto)

I notice that we have only been talking about the Kingdom.

Right, there's two heroes.

"That's the point I can't see clearly yet. Honestly speaking, I don't know. I do have something in mind, but I wonder if that's actually correct" (Shiki)

"Can you tell me please?" (Makoto)

"For the demon race to do a two-sided attack, they still have too few fighting force. Moreover, the forces at the Empire are dispersed. I don't feel like they are aiming for the capital at that side. But if the Empire discovers that the battle there is a decoy, the Empire's hero has a dragon that is boasted for their high mobility, so he will most likely go there to provide support. The demons that haven't brought down the Limia capital will be caught in a pincer attack by the Limia hero and the Empire hero. It seems the

Empire's hero is good against many enemies, so his power isn't something they can ignore. The longer the fight prolongs, the chances the people stationed at Stella Fort for the attack will regroup with the capital, and not only will the demons have inferior numbers, they might even be wiped out. If that were to happen, everything will turn out as pointless" (Shiki)

"Yeah" (Makoto)

"So there should be a reason why they dispersed their forces at the Empire, but I don't know the reason clearly yet. I am thinking that maybe the Dragon Slayer Waka-sama talked about before is slipped in one of the units heading to the Empire. If they were to use her to completely hold the hero back, I don't know the reason for dispersing the forces, but I would understand how it would work to reinforce the plan to attack Limia. But the Dragon Slayer siding with the demon race is something that is not well known yet. If she were to fight in this kind of battle, the truth that she is a traitor will spread through the whole world. I wonder if that person would actually do something like that, is what I am mulling over right now" (Shiki)

"Sofia huh~ I don't know about her at all. I have only met her once, so there's no way I would know what she is thinking" (Makoto)

What we both have in common is that we have a superior dragon accompanying us.

But her way of thinking is something I can't read.

"Depends on where Rona will be appearing huh. If it's in the Empire, the Empire will really be a decoy, and the dispersal of their forces is to draw out the Empire. Is one way of thinking, but..." (Shiki)

It seems like both the Kingdom and the Empire are in a pretty precarious situation.

Limia's side seems worse, so I think that something should be done.

They are fellow Japanese after all.

To think that something like this was happening in the world while we were moving in Rotsgard.

I feel like this matter will become big.



"The miraculous move Makoto-kun did unawarely, the restoration of the thought transmission at that timing; I thought the hero killing plan of the demon race would progress perfectly, but it seems like it will be slightly stormy" (Root)

On a tower at the corner of the Academy, Root looks at Makoto and Shiki who are close to the gate.

Quite the eyesight.

Normally, it would be impossible to see them from that distance.

The most that someone with good eyes would be able to do is see those two as a speck.

At night, it would be even more difficult.

"With that one move, it would be like denying his connection with the demon race. On top of that, showing the power of the Kuzunoha Company to the various countries, they are now seen as a threat. Well, they did obtain a big advantage which is to have everyone in Rotsgard like Kuzunoha Company" (Root)

If the timing were faster, or a bit slower, it would have been possible that it would turn harder for Kuzunoha Company to deny their connection with the demon race.

The actions of Tomoe also influenced, but the setting she created from the very beginning was a bit slow, is how Root saw it in his point of view.

Makoto's timing was good and it was at pinpoint. Not only that, it wasn't his own proposition but something an authority forcefully pushed onto him.

It was a timing that many people thought as something that wasn't his aim and intention.

A chance that even the person himself can't determine, a moment that he didn't even know would be coming.

It isn't something that can be aimed for.

It is something that can't be done unless you have been born in 'that kind' of star.

Root can't do anything but laugh.

But well, there was also another emotion mixed in aside from his irresistible urge to laugh.

"It is Makoto-kun after all. Even if he is below a star where he draws a jackpot from time to time, he perpetrates all those things. Even at this time, it even made me think that he drew a joker along with that ace" (Root)

That's right.

He had no basis, but Makoto is not lucky.

Root knows that well.

That's why Root doesn't think that Makoto just earned that unexpected achievement.

Ending in a fight with a superior dragon without aiming for it, encountering a calamity spider, unable to understand the words of the people he met, having a normal appearance and still be looked down for it; no matter where you see it, he was always involved in something.

Root thinks: he has 'that kind' of fate.

"Furthermore, he has changed all of those into pluses and has reached up to this point. This time, just what will you do next~!!" (Root)

Suddenly opening wide those eyes of enjoyment, he turns towards the empty sky.

"Impossible! You shouldn't be able to move yet! Woman, you also push yourself way too hard!!" (Root)

The expression of agitation and astonishment that Root was showing right now would surprise Makoto if he were to see it.

A rift appears in the clouds that have been covering the sky the whole day and a sunlight shines through it.

A golden light falls from the night sky.

A section of Rotsgard town was basked by a divine light that would make anyone that sees it unconsciously feel solemnity.

Chapter 151

The Goddess' circumstances, Makoto's obstinacy

"Waka-sama, it's Bug!!" (Shiki)

Shiki's agitated voice.

Those words were a signal.

This is one of the countermeasures we made since the time I was kidnapped by 'that person'.

The signal that denotes the interference of the Goddess.

Soon after Shiki's words...

A golden light stretched out from the night sky we were looking at.

A lingering curtain of light, a thin vertical light as if it were forcibly cutting the night.

It can be seen as beautiful and majestic, but for me it was a light that only brings disgust inside of me.

There's no mistake, it is her.

The moment I heard the signal, I reflexively began composing the aria.

Kidnapping countermeasure.

I wasn't expecting to use it in this moment though.

The image of the spell, the structure, was pretty simple.

Against the storm-like forced teleport, I drop down an anchor and endure it.

That's all it is.

Shiki who instantly came to my side, and I, were basked by that light.

When I looked up at it, I felt width in it and its range is quite vast.

It is enveloping the main gate of the Academy and even a part of its garden that's located pretty deep.

Maybe it identified us, the spot of the light was growing narrower, and at the same time, I felt a power as if trying to drag me up.

I felt pulling power.

In other words, I am resisting her power.

I feel slightly happy that I am able to go against the power of the Goddess.

Because I am able to feel that I have progressed since last time.

“What tremendous power. Waka-sama, are you okay?!” (Shiki)

“No problems yet. Tch, she should just give up quickly and disappear. Kugh, so long!” (Makoto)

The interference time is long.

I am able to resist it for now.

It is still possible to go against it, but just like Shiki said, it is still not over yet.

The longer it continues, the more the anchor I have created is being scraped off. In time, it will definitely disappear completely.

This is what's called a battle of attrition.

At the same time, I thought about attacking, but I didn't know 'where' she was, so I was unable to.

“...Waka-sama, a problem” (Shiki)

“What?!” (Makoto)

“This might gather the attention of the hyumans. They will most likely notice that this light originates from the Goddess. And the people that see us going against it would...”
(Shiki)

!!

Crap.

This is the Academy's main gate.

Even if there isn't many people around, it doesn't mean there's none.

This is... bad.

“Ugh”

The power placed in the teleport gets stronger.

That Bug!

Her timing is god-like.

Is she a genius in harassment?!

“Waka-sama, this could nullify all of our efforts in these few days. There's way too many inconveniences in having the Church label us as enemies of God. For now I have covered the surroundings in darkness, but I don't know when it will be blown away by the power of a God” (Shiki)

Shiki is quite composed.

Here I am, totally against being played around by that Bug again though!

...Damn it.

Everyone did their best as members of the company.

I also did my best.

I think the situation was going well until now.

...Damn iiit!!

I didn't lose this battle because of our powers okay?

Just take me, you bastard.

Power leaves my body.

In terms of time, it was around 10 seconds.

My battle with the Goddess ended with me losing.

Fortunately, the ones who saw the light of the Goddess and came here the fastest, most likely have not recognized Shiki and I yet.

I was grateful of Shiki's advice from the bottom of my heart.

We were dragged up along with quite the amount of stone paving and ground at our surroundings, and were engulfed by the light.



"Thanks Shiki. If I was alone there, I would have definitely competed with her out of obstinacy. I am sorry for having you accompany me" (Makoto)

"I never expected a day would come where I would meet the Goddess. D-Don't mind it, this will be good experience" (Shiki)

Even if you tell me that with a pale face, it is totally unconvincing Shiki.

In the first place, I don't know if she will show her face.

I was even doubting that.

Soon after that exchange, Shiki and I were brought to that platinum space that I first saw when I came to this world.

I am grateful that earth and stone didn't fall on top of us.



The place where I heard that person's, that Goddess' voice.

At that the time when I thought I would punch her once when I came back here, I thought I would be the one that would be stepping into her territory.

But remembering the sensation from just now, it seems my countermeasures were not enough.

...Really, it just doesn't go as I expect.

I am still far from the God realm huh.

Even if she is rotten, she is still a Goddess after all.

For some reason, memories of the time when I was dropped into the wasteland were popping up in my mind.

Fufufu.

Why... Why do I have to come here again by the convenience of that Bug?!

“Wa-Waka-sama?” (Shiki)

“.....”

Shiki probably noticed my state, he timidly calls me.

But I silently take out the *uchine* from my pocket. *<Weapon that can be used as a throwing weapon and as a dagger. Chapter 76>*

It is originally bigger and something that can't be carried in one's pocket, but I asked them to be made one size smaller, so it can be used as a hidden weapon.

I unsheathe the scabbard that covers the blade, and hold the long string coming from the hilt in my hand.

I swing the uchine in the air.

Bending my body to half its size, I think of the uchine as a part of my body... and in one breath, I release it forward to one point.

“!!”

Shiki looks at the point where the uchine crashes into.

In the room partition we don't know till how long and to where it reaches to, the uchine pierced a glittering wall that was several meters away from us and several cracks appeared.

Sadly, it seems there wasn't enough power. In time, without making a noise, it fell.

The cracks stayed there for a while, but in the end, they disappeared.

Even if the Goddess is rotten, she is still a God huh.

I let my anger drive me for a moment and vented it onto the walls, but after witnessing one attack, I was able to calm down a bit.

It may be dangerous to deal with her right now.

I have a lot of thoughts about her, and I do think that I should be as calm as possible.

But... honestly, I have no self-confidence in maintaining my calm in front of the Bug.

"This is probably the domain of the Goddess. I have been here before" (Makoto)

Retrieving my uchine, I gave a late reply to Shiki.

"So it really is huh" (Shiki)

Shiki probably felt tense, he hangs his head down slightly.

Right, this time Shiki is here with me.

I feel a bit relieved.

Also, no matter where I am blown away in this world, I can still use thought transmission.

Even at the time when I was kidnapped to a battlefield, I didn't pass through this place, but in the end I was able to escape to Asora.

That's right.

There's no need to be as scared as last time.

I can't say that I will be able to surely defeat her, but I am getting closer to her.

"To be unable to react to it until it was so close, it was impossible to offset it with a counter. If I were on alert I might have been able to notice slightly faster. I am really sorry" (Shiki)

"No, it is fine to just properly do the countermeasure next time for sure. Shiki has also experienced the kidnapping experience, and the anchor was quite shaven off. I think that in the end it wouldn't have worked anyways, so don't mind it" (Makoto)

I respond to the words of Shiki that I can feel slight fear from.

Right after that, I received a thought transmission from Tomoe and Mio.

I told them to stay standby, action-ready, and cut the thought transmission.

While having them in standby at Asora, I leave substitutes at the Academy.

This is also one of the countermeasures.

I don't know how much of our actions the Goddess is aware of, so just in case, move with caution.

With this, my card called Shiki has been discovered by the Goddess for sure.

I faintly think that Tomoe and Mio are still safe.

Hah~ but still, this is a shock.

It is true that I thought my first countermeasure would work against the Goddess.

But I still don't know the details of the ring the demon race used, and the other party is still a God.

But but, the demon race was able to go against the Goddess, so I thought we would also be able to, you know?

Well, it is only one failure.

Let's just leave it as: we will manage next time.

I don't think the Goddess intents to instantly come kill us anyways.

"Y-Yes. But is it okay to be talking about this? If it's the domain of the Goddess, won't everything conversed here be transmitted to her?" (Shiki)

"Isn't that fine? Because you know, even if she hears about it, we will be opposing her in the end, and even this time she should understand that we were trying to do something" (Makoto)

In the first place, is she really that almighty?

I don't think she is as significant as Shiki thinks.

"...Waka-sama is pretty calm" (Shiki)

"I wonder why. Maybe I am just bored of this. I really am self-centered, probably can't say much to Jin. Also, if that woman appears in front of me, I might be able to punch

her once you know. To the king of self-centeredness" (Makoto)

In her case it would be queen? Oh well, who cares.

That's how tired of this situation I am.

It is a surprisingly silent mental state.

"You really are making light of me now, Misumi"

"Oh, Goddess-sama, long time no see" (Makoto)

A presence appears.

A giant presence as if it existed in every part of this place.

I could tell that Shiki's body was trembling.

Pinpointing her location is... not working.

"I ordered you to stay there for the rest of your life, and yet, you readily broke it. And on top of that, when I called you to let you help in the battlefield, you end up doing something absurd. You also acted violently in here a few moments ago, right? Do you understand your own standing?" (Bug)

Quite the big words for someone that kidnapped me.

Also, Tsukuyomi-sama approved my freedom.

Not a bug with the title of Goddess, but a God.

Absurd?

You suddenly made me fight with a Dragon Slayer, so I don't think you have the right to say that.

Even if it wasn't me, anyone would have escaped.

"Without any explanation of the situation, you suddenly had me fight with a scary person like the Dragon Slayer. Even if you are a God, isn't that way too selfish?"

(Makoto)

“...There’s no selfishness in the actions a God takes for the people. The ones being used should be trembling in happiness to receive that honor. ‘I have been given a trial’ is what they would say” (Bug)

“Surely you jest. It is sad that our way of thinking is completely different. And so, are we going to be blessed by your appearance this time?” (Makoto)

I receive her courteously.

Her every word is anger inducing.

Prejudice, no, in this case it would be first impressions.

It is quite the powerful thing.

That her presence can’t be pinpointed like a diffused reflection is also pissing me off.

I am pissed at myself for being unable to pinpoint her.

“How dare you say that after that manner of speech. I don’t have a shape to show the likes of you. Magic power and presence isolation; thanks to you learning something troublesome like that, I had trouble finding your location lately. A moment ago it looked like it got stronger for a second, but right now it is so dim that I can’t tell if it’s there or not. I ended up using the priests. To think that you were actually in Academy Town, you really entered pretty deep huh. Hm? The one with you is... a hyuman? No, that’s not it. But his magic power is certainly that of a hyuman... but it is similar to Misumi, quite the diluted presence” (Bug)

“...”

An indication as if sounding out.

It seems she is interested in Shiki.

He was previously a hyuman, but in terms of magic power, he is a lich. Isn’t his magic power that of an undead?

This woman really knows how to push my buttons.

It is mortifying that I don't know where she is. I can't grasp her presence.

Because I used [Sakai] to search for her location, my magic power leaked out, and it seems she firmly noticed that.

It looks like Shiki also can't grasp the location of the Goddess. How troublesome.

Now that I think about it, the reason I came to this world, and all the trouble as well; there would be no problems if she didn't do all of those and just obediently made me a hero instead of doing stupid things.

Leaving aside that I ended up fighting the demon race like she wanted.

I wouldn't have been attacked by a supreme dragon in the wasteland, and I wouldn't have been called an unsightly man by the hyumans.

Even the business, I might not have done it.

"Well, that's fine. No matter if you are a demi-human or a Golem, it seems you don't hold a significant amount of power anyways. Now then, Misumi. I will be sending you to Limia, save the hero. Because of the surprise attack of the demon race, the situation isn't that good. Seriously, what impertinent fellows" (Bug)

"Goddess-sama should go then. No need to rely on an ugly person like me" (Makoto)

I respond to her filled with sarcasm.

Shiki has not said a single word since that woman arrived.

Maybe he lost his words because of his first meeting with a God.

A conversation with only the voice can be called a meeting?

And so, the surprise attack of the demon race.

To save the hero.

If I remember correctly, the last time was a fight close to the Limia capital, right?

The capital and Stella Fort are close so can't they just regroup?

The demon race's real objective is the Limia hero, from what Shiki judged.

The Goddess went as far as to try using me, so it seems there's no doubt the situation is quite the precarious one.

...The Empire's hero has not headed there to provide support right?

In other words, the chances that Shiki's reading was correct is pretty high.

"No need to tell me. If I could do it, I would have. Gods have their own God circumstances. Circumstances that someone like you doesn't have the qualifications to know. If it were limited interference it would be one thing, but do you think a God can just nonchalantly descend?" (Bug)

She asks me with a tone as if considering me an idiot from the bottom of her heart.

Like hell I would know!

You ask someone that has been raised in a world where one wouldn't even know if there's actually a God out there?!

"But last time even the demon race was able to block that interference of yours, you know?" (Makoto)

"I won't let that kind of thing happen twice. Hm, I don't have the time to talk with you. The only answer is justice. Go" (Bug)

Did the situation deteriorate?

The Goddess' voice faintly stopped, and her tone changed to a slightly faster one.

But to be teleported no questions asked, I decline.

Because in the end I would end up doing as she told, that's no fun.

Especially if I am following the words of this Goddess.

"Even if you do it, at the worst, I might turn to the demon race side, you know?" (Makoto)

Feeling her magic power in effect, I tell her my will with a loud voice.

I create an anchor again.

If it's true that the Goddess can't freely provide support for the heroes and interfere at her will in the battlefield, doesn't that mean I can strike a deal here?

This is what I thought with my mind that was unexpectedly clear.

I don't know if it will go as I expect, but the power of the Goddess begins to lessen.

"...Are you seriously saying that? You are, in outline, a person connected to hyumans. And the heroes are humans born in the same world as you, you know? To go to the demon race without saving them, there shouldn't be a single reason for that. I am not so free as to accompany such stupid defiance" (Bug)

...

De-fiance?

Don't mess around!!

"Ahahaha!! Isn't there a reason?! It's because I hate you! It's because I don't want to obey your will! How is that? Don't you think I would totally get along with the demon race?!" (Makoto)

I remember the time when the Merchant Guild's representative made a sudden change in attitude.

There's a part of me that wants to see what kind of reaction the Goddess would make, but I unconsciously took an attitude like the representative and shouted with a loud voice. Maybe I should have gone all the way and used 'ore' to make it sound more violent? For some reason, saying 'ore' is strangely difficult. <Informal way of saying 'I'>

I have been using 'boku' for a long time, so I feel like it won't change in my lifetime.

Oh right, leaving that aside...

I don't really mind if a deal is not made.

It isn't like I don't want to go to Limia to save the hero.

I do think that this was an act out of my quick temper. That thing about the deal was also just something that came to my mind and I haven't decided what to do yet. There haven't been many things that have gone well in this world when I run by myself and do something on my own.

I know that painfully well!

But!

The Goddess' remarks haven't changed at all since then, and that really pissed me.

Anger welled inside of me with no way to contain it.

Even my throat felt as if something was gathering, and I felt like I was acting according to my emotions.

"What a stupid childish temper. Denying the only God in this world, just what do you intend to do? You and the demon race, no, the residents in this whole world won't be able to live without my divine protection" (Bug)

"Don't make me laugh. I have been living for several years in that kind of world. Actually, the hyumans that are living clinging to God and mindlessly relying on it is what I can't understand!" (Makoto)

Things like blessings or divine protection; the hyumans are just strange.

At least try to develop magic and techniques by yourselves.

If you are boasting big words like being the only God, I think your duty is to properly lead them to strive for other things aside from beauty. Only teaching them to pointlessly look down on the demi-humans.

"Putting your previous world in the same plane as other worlds is proof of your ignorance. In this world I am the rule. If you don't intend to follow it, I am fine with erasing you here and now you know?" (Bug)

"Poorly made threat. If you were able to do that, you would have done that after that previous teleport incident. Because it seems I didn't move like you wanted me to after

all. You are not an absolute rule, you are lying. What God. You can't even change this crooked world as you wish, a defective product!" (Makoto)

I have been thinking a lot about things regarding the Goddess.

That is, the fact that she used a method like human summonings to resolve her problems.

The current state of the world is also telling me that.

Even now, she is being bound by what she calls the rules of Gods and using me to go save the heroes.

Even I can tell that she is taking desperate measures.

"...I see. It seems bringing you here to this domain was too much of a service for someone like you. Without being able to see my figure, you will now..." (Bug)

Ugh...

I felt a chill run down my spine.

"Goddess-sama, the people from the meeting are saying that if you are going to make them wait any longer, they will enter by force!"

"!! Time and time! Just understand it already, I am saying that I don't want to go to that meeting!" (Bug)

A different voice reverberates in the space. It seems to be in a hurry.

I could feel the presence I felt from my back growing further away. I could tell that my emotions were calming down.

As if what was welling up was silently returning to my stomach.

...

Maybe I said too much?

Honestly, my anger was ignoring my reason and I was blurting out thoughtless words.

To stay composed with her, is still difficult for the current me.

That's how much I have been accumulating inside of me.

To only tell me the things to do and use me left and right, I really can't tolerate that.

I did think there was a reason why the Goddess didn't erase me but, maybe there's some sort of obstacle from the shadows?

Honestly, I don't know till how far I can fight against her right now.

I do want to try it. No, I wanted to try it.

Because she is the very cause for everything that's happening.

But when I returned to my senses, I saw the whole body of Shiki trembling.

He isn't trembling out of excitement. He is trembling because of fear.

I have exposed Shiki to quite the danger.

I still don't clearly know my winning percentage against the Goddess.

Shiki probably has some sort of indicator and that's why he is trembling.

In that case, that most likely means it is still not time yet.

Certainly, I still haven't thought of a way to bring out her real form yet.

It might be possible if I use all the output of [Sakai] for perception though.

"But this is from the original world's-

"I understand! I will go right away! You return and calm them down—" (Bug)

"Kyaaa, KYAAAA!"

"Kugh, don't tell me, they are forcing their way?! That no-brain!" (Bug)

I felt slight gratefulness towards the subordinate of the Goddess that interrupted.

I was able to create a blank time for me.

Thinking time.

But sadly, that time was stopped by a scream that was totally not normal.

"Misumi! I now understand that you bear dissatisfaction towards me. Then let's make this the last time. From now on, as long as you don't show straightforward antagonism towards the hyumans, I won't interfere with you. How about that?" (Bug)

That... sounds kinda nice.

But this is a proposition of hers.

Even if I obediently accept it, my heart won't settle.

Even if I was probably about to be erased just a few moments ago, it doesn't mean my anger towards the Goddess has withered.

It may be too soon to fight her, but I still want to oppose her in some way.

"That won't be enough. By your demand, I am going to directly go save a hero I have no relations to, right?" (Makoto)

"...I see. So you were grumbling because you wanted a reward. Hmph, I don't like that greed of you humans. Even my hyumans, I was unable to take out that part of them from the base of humans they were made of. Being a hyuman but living as a human, that's quite the fitting avarice. Well, you are lucky. Your narrow escape from death just now was also lucky, but right now I don't have the time to spare for negotiations. Say what you want, but say it right this instant" (Bug)

This instant?!

What should I ask for?

It is not like I was expecting it would happen.

Honestly speaking, I was just aiming to pester her.

If I am going to get something, what I currently need is...

The dwarfs make equipment already.

In terms of magic, I already have the comprehension this woman gave me, and in terms of amount, I probably have more magic power than the Goddess.

In that case, change this outward appearance?

Not even as a joke.

I have been living with this appearance since I have been born.

I don't have a single intent to go so far as to ask this woman to become a beauty.

What to do?

What should I do?

"Time's up. Without even deciding what you want and saying you want something, that's literally the greed of a child" (Bug)

"...In that case, I want this person to receive the blessing of common language. We have been on alert of you, so we haven't gone to a temple to ask"

A voice resounds from my side.

Shiki.

I see, language.

Being able to use common language would be convenient.

I have been so used to written communication that I didn't think about it.

It even feels like a moderate wish and not an excessive one.

"I don't remember allowing your speech, weakling. But... hmph, common language? You can't speak?" (Bug)

"Yeah, because of your curse" (Makoto)

"I only excluded hyuman words from your 'comprehension'. For you to be unable to speak even when studying it, your incompetence is lower than demi-humans, Misumi" (Bug)

"...Do you have the time to pick a fight, Goddess?" (Makoto)

Ah, amazing.

Even if I don't consciously do it, harsh words just come out naturally.

I wonder how much I hate this woman.

Or maybe this is the backlash for trying to speak courteously with her in the beginning?

"You are missing the -sama. Just how far are you going to anger me. As expected of the child of the people that casted aside my world. It's okay. Something like that, I can pay it to you in advance. Ara, it doesn't enter? How strange. Something like this, shouldn't be unable to enter" (Bug)

My body. Accurately speaking, my head.

I felt a strange sensation as if my brain was being grabbed by two hands and it's being fondled.

Is obtaining common language something this disgusting?!

"Gugh"

"It hurts? How strange. But it should be fine right? You were the one that wished for it, so if something happens because of it, it isn't my fault. Even if you die, properly understand that it is not my responsibility okay? This is something you wished for after all" (Bug)

The sensation gets stronger.

An eerie sensation as if my brain is being crumpled. A pain resembling migraine intermittently reverberates.

Ugh... what a terrible sensation.

I don't want to groan in front of this woman even if it kills me, so I just distort my expression and endure the pain.

I was stumped by a strong vomiting sensation.

"Hmph, done. Well then, you promised. An agreement between a human and a God, if you don't fulfill it, when that happens, prepare yourself. Push aside the danger approaching the hero, and let's see, while at it, bring down that Fort. If you can't, die. No, you will do it even if it kills you" (Bug)

"The contents are... the heroes' protection, and to bring down Stella Fort. These two points, no mistake right?" (Makoto)

I confirm the Goddess' deal.

Damn it, if with this I am still unable to speak common language, I will never forgive this woman.

"...Yeah, disappear at once! Ugh, they are already here. I will head there now..." (Bug)

A sudden floating sensation.

This is... the same as last time.

The presence of the Goddess radically grows further away along with her words.

Her way of saying anything she wants and not waiting for the other side's response is basically still the same huh.

I even think it was close to a miracle that this negotiation was possible.

Maybe the guests of the original world, or whatever it is they were talking about, turned into a tailwind for me?

Please let the Bug have a bad time with those possible guests.

"Waka-sama, a nosebleed... and also, there's blood coming out from your eyes" (Shiki)

I wipe below my nose and the corner of my eye.

Blood was thickly sticking to it.

"Eh, you are right. Damn it. She didn't do anything excessive to my body right?"
(Makoto)

It should be fine, right?

I have experienced nosebleeds before, but having blood coming out from my eyes, doesn't that sound bad?

"Waka-sama, that is... as expected, a God. I didn't feel like I could provide any fighting force there. But in a near future, I will definitely—!!" (Shiki)

It seems Shiki realized his own powerlessness towards the Goddess.

I wonder how Tomoe and Mio will feel after hearing the story from Shiki later.

I was slightly interested.

But Shiki's regret didn't continue till the end.

Shiki and I were covered in an external power.

An unpleasant sensation as if forcefully pushing something unto me.

And then, as experience dictates, we were falling probably from a high altitude, tasting a sensation as if being wrenched from our lower body.

"Oooh?!" (Shiki)

"Shiki, I am happy for that decision of yours. Let's both do our best" (Makoto)

"Waka-sama?! T-This is, just what in the world is?!" (Shiki)

"You know, this is my third time. I have already gotten used. I feel like I would be able to challenge all the scream-inducing attractions of any themepark. We are probably being sent straight to the Limia capital" (Makoto)

While the screaming Shiki clung to me, we pierce through the clouds while our vision spins. We were probably falling to the battlefield. I was pretty composed.

I think there's quite a bit of time before we drop.

The dropping control is definitely self-service, so there's probably the need to act in advance.

We are talking about that woman, so I probably can't expect she will do something similar to what Tsukuyomi-sama did last time.

Right, the Goddess should be busy right now, so maybe I should call Tomoe and Mio.

...Wait.

Tomoe... and Mio.

If it's these two...

No, Shiki said it too.

That I should evaluate the residents of Asora higher.

In that case... yeah.

...Let's mobilize.

The world seems to be in chaos anyways.

(Tomoe, Mio) (Makoto)

I connect the thought transmission with those two.

It seems Shiki is still breathing deeply and in quite the chaotic state.

I should leave the orders to him for later.

(...You were safe, Waka. Was there any serious matter?) (Tomoe)

(That Goddess! What did that Goddess do to you, Waka-sama?! Are you hurt anywhere?!?) (Mio)

(I am okay, both of you. Shiki felt her in a sense, so you can ask him for reference later.)

And so, I have something I want to ask both of you) (Makoto)

(Of course. No matter the place, we will be there. Where are you right now?) (Tomoe)

(Leave it to me!! I will immediately be by your side~) (Mio)

(I am probably in the sky of the Limia capital. But you both don't need to come)
(Makoto)

(?!!)

(Eh?!)

Tomoe and Mio are surprised by my words.

Hm, what should I do?

The winged-kin and the Gorgons still leave me uneasy.

In that case...

(Tomoe, Mio, at this side Shiki and I will be fine. That's why, you guys, and also the Highland Orcs and Mist Lizards, if there are people that want to, let those people in as well) (Makoto)

I stop my words for a moment.

Tomoe probably understood what I am trying to say. Emotions that can't be turned into words were mixed, and I could even tell the atmosphere over at that side.

(Seize Kaleneon) (Makoto)

I can't give detailed instructions.

Because I don't know much about the place itself.

That's why, after saying that, I added a few rough instructions, and leave Tomoe and Mio in Shiki's hands.

I cut the thought transmission and breath in deeply.

Well then, now...

Strangely, as the battlefield gets ever closer, I could tell that my head grew clearer and colder.

In the end it is just me, but these kind of things excite me.

It feels as if I have broken from a shell and have changed.

"Shiki, I will control the dropping, so can you please envelop us in darkness to hide our figures?" (Makoto)

"U-Understood. I will try" (Shiki)

"After that..." (Makoto)

I was able to confirm a big town blazing up.

We barely made it in time.

It is a distance where I can tell that it isn't the moonlight that is lighting up the night, but the light of a town burning up.

The figures of Shiki and I followed the trail of golden light, and we were enveloped by a ball of darkness, plunging directly into the Limia capital.



"...Hey, Mio" (Tomoe)

"....."

"Makes you boil, right?" (Tomoe)

"...Yeah, to the point of trembling" (Mio)

Without looking at each other, Tomoe and Mio who were in Asora, face their front with their eyes closed.

The Goddess' interference. Their master's second kidnapping.

The two of them had several things they wanted to tell Shiki who was with Makoto, but receiving a shock from the words of Makoto, they forgot about such a trivial thing.

It was an order that made them feel a change in Makoto's mentality.

"With this, the four seasons will arrive in Asora-desu wa ne? You must be happy, Tomoe-san" (Mio)

"Fufu, you are stating the obvious, Mio. 'Something like that' doesn't matter right now" (Tomoe)

Tomoe was trembling with a joy that controlled her body, and while her morale increased without any signs of stopping, her mouth slants.

The four seasons she wished for.

And yet, she called that wish of hers 'something like that'.

"This is the first time-ja. The first time Waka himself has ordered us to fight for his sake, to head to the battlefield. I see, so this is how it feels-ja na... Waka wishes for Kaleneon, and has ordered us to obtain it. Kukukuku!!!" (Tomoe)

"Seriously... I am of course happy to move for that person's sake, but to be relied upon in this way and have him leave things to us, I didn't know it would feel so good" (Mio)

What's important for these girls is the reality that Makoto has given them a spontaneous order.

Until now, Makoto has asked them for many things, and has also ordered them as well.

But at those times, instead of calling them something Makoto purely wanted, they were all things that had some other intention in mind.

Even Kaleneon was information he received from the librarian Eva who worked at Rotsgard Academy.

But this region was related to Makoto's parents, so he held strong interest in it.

He thought a lot about it himself, and he reached the conclusion that he 'wished' for it.

Tomoe and Mio's master, Misumi Makoto, said that he wanted it. They would obtain it by his orders and present it to him.

They will grant their master's self-interest.

That made them unbearably happy.

"He said that: 'For starters, it is fine with just the place I pointed out', but... you understand right, Mio?" (Tomoe)

"Of course. The whole region, the demon race, and also all implicated party will disappear-desu wa" (Mio)

"Umu, I would want to go right this instant and rampage-ja ga. But it seems Waka has also acknowledged the races that reside in Asora-ja. We have to share this joy with them as well. As the servants of Waka living in the same Asora" (Tomoe)

"...Yeah. The lizards and the orcs, was it?" (Mio)

Makoto has given them the minimum instructions.

'The place Tomoe pointed out in a map last time, the area where the territory of Kaleneon once was, obtain that area' is what he ordered.

And regarding that, he didn't just assign Tomoe and Mio, but that he wouldn't mind letting in the Highland Orcs and Mist Lizards that want to participate.

For Makoto who only saw the demi-humans and mamonos living in Asora as targets of protection and friends, those were words that one would not expect from him.

But he really did say it.

He said 'the ones who wanted to participate', but Tomoe and Mio were sure that as soon as they tell them the story, not only the unit that was staying in standby in case they were called to Rotsgard, even the other ones will arm themselves and will want to participate.

Actually, Tomoe felt that the lizards, who were called to Rotsgard, were the ones that pulled the least appealing task.

The two already passed through the whole residence of Makoto and were leaving with the troops that were inside the mansion. They were telling the circumstances to every race.

Tomoe headed to the residential lands of the Lizards; Mio headed to the residential lands of the Orcs. After a slight difference in time, a roar occurs.

A war cry of happiness.

Tomoe and Mio nod in satisfaction, and tell the warriors about Makoto's words and objective with a meek countenance.

"Waka is also fighting in another place. Listen here, we will present Waka with a perfect victory" (Tomoe)

"The days you have passed training in Asora, Waka-sama has acknowledged it. It is unforgivable to betray any of those two. Face the challenge with your all" (Mio)

The words of the chiefs, Tomoe and Mio, resonated silently.

And at the same time, a giant mist gate that's rarely seen in Asora appeared.

There were no words for this moment.

Following the two that were walking, the mixed units of Lizards and Orcs silently cross the gate and disappear.

Maybe they didn't want the fire inside of them leaking out even if for one bit, they kept their mouth shut and were deliberately accumulating it for that instant when it explodes.

At this day, Asora approaches their first campaign.

Chapter 152

Participation of the devil (1)

“This is not the time to be saying: ‘Tiring’, right?”

Mio placed her right hand to the front.

Without putting much power in it, she pictured a releasing image and fires it, not from her hand, but from her sleeve.

With her as the center, an invisible magic power expands at high speed.

If someone were able to see it, they would all say that it looked like several spider webs piled one over the other.

After Mio obtained her humanoid body, she learned this spell to cover for her weak point which was her perception ability.

“I am counting on you, Mio” (Tomoe)

“Yeah, look forward to it. Here I go-desu wa” (Mio)

Kaleneon.

The place where there was a small hyuman country in the past.

Right now, the people that obey Misumi Makoto, no, the representative of Kuzunoha Company, Raidou, were standing at this land.

Tomoe and Mio were at the lead, and the mamonos were lined up.

The Highland Orcs and Mist Lizards that lived in the wasteland.

With a total number that doesn’t even reach the hundreds, they were all completely armed, and when the moonlight shines sometimes, their equipment reflects the light.

As if acting in concert to Mio's words, they raised their voices with an: "Oooh!!"

"Web radar and joint link huh. Truly a convenient spell-ja. I can grasp the surroundings as if I were touching it" (Tomoe)

Tomoe's words sounded satisfied.

It was at the moment Mio linked the perception area with the others.

Its range is around 20 km.

Thinking about the area of this time's plan, this range was plenty enough.

In essence, her perception area is actually wider, but it seems she judged that it was pointless to link all that area.

She linked all the area with Tomoe, but she limited the area the Orcs and Mist Lizards received to the space of the strategy.

Tomoe said it was like a radar, and it is quite the accurate depiction.

Right now in the units that have come here from Asora, every one of them has a radar manifesting inside their heads.

They still haven't made contact, and yet, they completely knew how many enemies there were in the location, and just how their forces were distributed.

"Well then, this is a night raid. I wonder how much they will struggle" (Mio)

"This time, a declaration of war is unnecessary. Because it has 'already been done' after all. In this occasion, Waka's intentions will be achieved" (Tomoe)

"Yeah, I can't hold back any longer. I will be heading out, excuse me" (Mio)

"Ah, Mio?! Can't be helped huh. I totally feel the same way after all. You guys, I don't know if I will be able to hold back tonight. Mio will be in charge of the Fortress' inner part. In that case, I will go secure the gate of Asora. Don't get close to us for a while" (Tomoe)

When Mio did one step forward, her figure disappears.

Tomoe confirms the place she is heading to and makes a smile. Then, she turns towards the units.

To the words and expression filled with fighting spirit that can't normally be seen in Tomoe, the Orcs and Lizards silently nod.

While showing an unconcealable fire in their eyes.

"Everyone must be feeling the same. Highland Orcs and Mist Lizards, rampage to your heart's content. It is okay to not pursue the ones escaping. You understand, right? In context, this a war between Kaleneon and the demon race-ja" (Tomoe)

Cutting her words, Tomoe inhales.

Thrusting her unsheathed katana to the sky, she gathers everyone's will.

"A war dedicated to Waka-ja! Everyone that opposes! Completely! Trample them down!!" (Tomoe)



As soon as she finishes her speech, Tomoe kicks the ground, and in the moment she reaches mid-air, she was enveloped by mist and disappeared.

Immediately following that, a war cry resonated in the whole region.

With excess vigor, a blaze of many colors shine in the sky.

This is the deed of the Mist Lizards.

This was the beginning of the war, no, of the genocide.

With a force that can't be called a big army at all, they shouted a thunderous roar that made the ground tremble as they march.

Their aim is a part of a town that has been repaired and utilized as a fortress. The stronghold that pertains Kaleneon.

From what Tomoe investigated, there are around two thousand demons stationed in that place.

They are not tempered enough to be in the frontlines, but as an army, they are a force in a level plenty enough to stand in battle.

They were distracted by Mio who had already begun rampaging, but when they noticed the group of mixed mamonos, with a reaction slightly slower than usual, they began preparing.

At night time the gate was already closed, and they apply a defensive enhance to it. Immediately after, the archer and magician units position themselves at the outer walls and grasp the position of the enemy.

They commence their attack on them.

Their moves were not bad.

If taking into consideration that Mio is rampaging within, it can be considered a reaction speed worthy of praise.

However...

Their enemy was too much.

What they are currently facing are crazy fellows that have been living in the world's border as if it were only natural, moreover, they have been trained by a Supreme Dragon, the Black Calamity Spider, and also demi-humans. Of course, the defense unit has no way of knowing this.

They in itself are formidable enemies, and yet, right now their morale is at their climax.

It isn't something they can deal with.

Actually, if they were to teleport with the help of Tomoe or Mio, they would have been able to fight from the inside as well.

But the Orcs and Lizards wished to fight right from the front.

Everything was for the sake of showing their power to this distant land, about the power of their Lord.

For them, Kaleneon is an offering.

The arrows and spells that were fired towards them were all thwarted.

Not even a rock could reach.

-Something is wrong.

By the time the defense unit noticed the strangeness of the situation, it was already too late.

The attackers moved.

“GO!!”

“Ooooh!”

A large-builded Orc roars with a giant mace in hand.

Being ordered by the delicate-looking magician female orc, the Giant Orc kicks the

ground.

That body radiated a red luminescence, and as if being pushed forward, he soared the sky.

The one who valiantly ordered this, was Ema.

She was currently showing the face of a warrior, something that no one would be able to imagine from the girl that normally does deskwork.

Applying a specially dense enhancing magic to the warrior that plunged in, she again blocks the attacks from the outer walls.

“How is the fortification of the defensive wall?!”

“Sufficient! After placing another layer, we will soon be able to shift to defense”

“Good. First we will begin by crushing those Orcs!”

The charge of an Orc that was in the units.

Understanding the reason why he was trying to plunge onto the gate, the demons immediately react.

“Ooooh!! Like hell they will stop me!!”

Drawing a parabola, the Highland Orc suddenly draws closer to the gate.

Holding the mace that looks giant even when in the hands of the big-builded orc, he brandishes it.

Without showing any signs of breaking his stance, he smashes that one attack onto the gates.

A specially loud sound, as if a lightning fell, resounded in the Fortress at night.

In the smoke that ascends, a big shadow rises.

Smoke was rising from the Orc's body as well.

The solid gate protecting the fortress was already turned into a miserable wreckage.

They most likely thought that it would be best to attack the Orc while his vision was still not clear. Several shadows commence their attack.

It seems several lights from inside the fortress served as illumination.

The result was a tragedy.

The mace was quickly swung horizontally.

All the shadows were thrown to the opposite direction with good momentum.

“Don’t underestimate the pigs of the wasteland. Don’t lower your guard, do your best. There are plenty behind me that are a lot stronger than me! If you guys are weak, we can’t show our best you know!”

“On my lead!!”

“Don’t let them have their way! To let this no-names do any further than this-!!”

“They are just Orcs and Lizardmen. On top of that, there’s not even a hundred of them!!”

The troops of Asora flood into the fortress.

It doesn’t even reach the hundreds.

That’s exactly right.

Normally, Orcs and Lizardmen are not that much of a high standing among the demon race army.

That’s exactly right.

In the lands that are under the rule of the demon race, no one would imagine that strong troops originating from the wasteland would be attacking them.

Therefore...

Their utmost resistance was being trampled down.

The morale that the people of Asora emit hasn't shown any signs of weakening.

The two thousand soldiers protecting the fortress were being challenged by an enemy of less than a hundred, moreover, they are dispersed.

Because of Mio's favour, the Lizardmen that are able to accurately grasp the enemy's position and situation, divided in groups of 3, which is the smallest configuration they have, and were tearing down their foes.

It was nothing other than reckless.

If Makoto were to give an impression of this fight, it would be that this is a battle that disregards strategy.

It's a difference in number of troops that normally wouldn't even be able to break down the gate.

But even so...

The fortress' gate was opened, and the warrior that opened it, taunted the two thousand that were there.

All the troops of Asora understood the situation of the battle.

They knew that Mio had already arrived at a place that has a big reaction, and Tomoe is heading to her target location at an incredible speed.

Every single one of them led the way and placed strength in their fists.

For the demon race, this nightmare-like fight had just begun.



“Ara, I am sorry for Tomoe-san but, it seems I drew a winner-desu wa” (Mio)

“...If I asked who are you, woman, would you answer?”

“Of course. My name is Mio. And you?” (Mio)

“...I am one of the soldiers under the rule of Demon Lord-sama. Is there any need to know more?”

“If I don’t know your name, I won’t be able to report who I did what to. It would be troublesome” (Mio)

Mio pleasantly laughs while responding the man.

In the inside of the fortress, at a space where it was most likely used as a big meeting room.

At this place, she met what the bunch at this place would call: ‘the strongest amongst them’.

His upper half is close to that of a hyuman, but his lower half is that of a serpent.

He had presence, and power can be sensed from him as well.

Wanting to defeat the biggest game to report to her master Makoto, in Mio’s eyes he was the most suitable game.

“This one’s name is Reft. A variant dragon, Mildi Dragon Reft”

“Ara, a mutation of the dragon race. How rare. I thought you were a snake” (Mio)

“You said your name was Mio, right? Without even a declaration of war, just what in the world are you bastards? A force that commands Orcs and Lizards. I can’t think of it as a hyuman army”

“Ufufufu” (Mio)

Mio was truly in a good mood.

So happy, so happy, so ever happy.

Even when she understands that she is in the battlefield, she can’t stop her face from smiling widely.

“So you don’t even intend to answer huh. Sorry but, that I was here was unlucky of you guys. I will have to crush you—”

“No, I will offer you the answer-desu wa” (Mio)

“?!!”

“We have already finished declaring war. No, you guys were the ones who declared war upon us, you know?” (Mio)

“...What?”

“We are Kaleneon. The ones that should leave this country are you demon race-desu wa” (Mio)

“Kale-neon, you say? The hyuman country that was here before? Are you saying you guys are an army from a ruined country?”

“No. Kaleneon has not fallen. It has always been here” (Mio)

“...Are you crazy?”

Reft made a dubious face at Mio’s entranced way of talking.

From his point of view it was natural, since Mio was acting as if she were under the effects of a drug.

“Fufufu. ‘That’ will become the truth, from now on. By our hands” (Mio)

Mio continued without changing her behavior and way of speaking.

Even if it wasn’t Reft, anyone would have felt madness from it.

“All the land until Stella Fort, is land under our control. This Kaleneon is also one of the lands the demon race possesses! I am not free enough to accompany you in your nonsense!”

“...That’s why it is convenient-desu yo. Hyumans won’t believe much of what you guys say after all. Even if one obscure country wasn’t destroyed... no one would be able to deny it. If the country in itself was truly there, that is” (Mio)

“Wh-at?”

“–Is what she said. Honestly, I don’t understand well myself. I actually don’t care about those kind of matters. I will deal with you, and offer this land to Waka-sama. That is the only most important thing. No matter if this place was Kaleneon, or a place that continued being Kaleneon; I don’t care whichever one it is-desu wa” (Mio)

“You... you guys, just what are you...”

‘Let’s begin’, is what Mio says as she holds her folding fan and points it at Reft.

“It seems like I can’t simply kill you. Because I still have things I have to ask you”

Reft turns his giant spear at Mio.

His half-human, half-snake body twists.

“If you are able to win against me, do as you wish. Ufufu, the gate has been broken huh. It seems like they are also doing their best to offer victory to Waka-sama. Of course, today, in this very day, there’s not a single one in our forces that are unable to do that though” (Mio)

“This pressure is... not something a simple lunatic group is able to exude. To think that I would have to do this kind of battle before meeting the hero”

The variant dragon, Reft.

One of the demon generals that was at this fortress by chance.

An upper echelon of the demon race.

While receiving the blood thirst with her body, Mio narrowed her eyes and laughed.



“I see”

Outskirts of the imperial capital.

The woman that had obtained several amounts of data, crumpled that paper into a ball and threw it onto the table.

Blue skin and no horn.

Wearing a tight suit, she has an exaggerated coat on her shoulders.

One of the demon generals, Rona.

Even if she is in the outskirts, she is still inside the imperial capital.

The exaggerated coat is something that is only provided to demons in the upper echelons.

To wear that in the capital of hyumans is pretty dangerous.

Even so, Rona paid it no mind, and with no impatience, she stayed sitting in the room.

“Good work. I have no right to say this but you know, Rona, you are pretty daring”

“Sofia. I don’t mind you rampaging as you wish you know? With your power, you should be able to stir trouble even without encountering the hero after all. Also, you easily slaughtered the so called treasured corps of the Empire, right? Keep going that way” (Rona)

Rona glances at Sofia and the boy that entered the room along with her, and then turns her eyes towards her documents again.

“They showed no resistance. I came to hear Rona’s: ‘I see’. I was interested in the reason for this weird dispersed attack which I don’t know if you even have the intention to attack or not” (Sofia)

“Isn’t there plenty enough casualties appearing from the Empire’s army? We have sufficient intent to attack. Don’t worry about it. Also, Sofia, and Lancer as well. Isn’t it bad to show yourselves in the imperial capital? The unit here is being pushed back, so I would be grateful if you provided backing though” (Rona)

“At the beginning that’s how we did it. Using a unit that seemed to be close to wipe out as bait, we get them in a pincer attack and crush them. I thought this was that kind of strategy. But that’s not it, right? Rona has thrown away quite the amount of units before. We are not subordinates but collaborators, so I would like you to share information you know~” (Sofia)

“...Fuh~ The strategy huh. Well, for the time being, you two are under my care. If you are collaborators, cooperate in making the strategy proceed smoothly” (Rona)

“So she says, Mitsurugi” (Sofia)

“Words that chip away my motivation. To hear those kind of words from the person in charge itself makes it even more so” (Lancer)

The faces of Sofia and Lancer were showing clear dissatisfaction as they look at Rona.

The female gestures and that playful behavior Rona used when she was confronting Makoto, were nowhere to be found.

With cold eyes and a strict expression, she organized the information that came up and was looking at the situation of the war, but she temporarily stopped reading the documents.

Maintaining her face as a commander, she looks at the two collaborators.

“The Empire’s hero has a two-sided nature. At times he will become aggressive, and at others he will show caution. And those two sides are switching no matter what type of plan we use. I thought that it would be best to understand the reason of this, since I felt that this would prove beneficial later on. So I have been concentrating the investigation mainly on this point. Other than that, I wanted to know the strength of the cherished force the Empire was raising. In that point, you two easily brought them out and, even if it was only one corp, you wiped them out. You were a great help. Thanks to you both, I think I will be able to make some countermeasures. How is that, is this enough? Let me tell you this, you owe me one with this, okay?” (Rona)

“I see~. Open as many drawers from the Empire as possible, is what you are trying to say. Hmph, well well. That corp wasn’t a big deal anyways. Even if it wasn’t me, things would have managed somehow. They were unbalanced and left a lot of openings after all” (Sofia)

“I was worried that the adventurer system would interfere, but there were no problems. Now that I fish out and see, this is indeed one of the special traits of a hero. It may have been troublesome if this were to reach the ears of the Kingdom, but fortunately, they hold no proof. At that side Io is going at it seriously, so they are done for anyways” (Rona)

"It seems that girl's party has broken free of the level restrain. It was eerie to see high leveled soldiers being mass produced, but even if their levels are high~" (Sofia)

"Rona, if you say we owe you, you should talk about that two-sided nature of the hero you speak of, right? Don't worry, I have a proper collateral prepared already" (Lancer)

"...How unpleasant" (Rona)

Rona looks at the boy with heartfelt unpleasantness.

Both of them don't even differentiate the things that can and can't be said.

It's not that they pursue without knowing. They pursue while knowing.

An extraordinarily bad personality there.

It is also because Rona doesn't trust them at all.

Even if she has to admit their skills, she can't trust her back to them.

As long as she can't be sure that their interests match, she didn't want to make them participate in important strategies, is how she truly felt.

That's why, instead of having them participate in the Limia capital plan, she had both of them act at the Empire where Rona herself can keep a check in their actions.

"The Empire's hero, Iwahashi Tomoki, is a hero that is equipped with anti-army equipment. Maneuverability of a flying dragon, defensive power of a royal guard, a golem-user alchemist; the type that uses diversions and boosts in several aspects to avoid the opponent from drawing closer. It may look like force-pushing, but he actually thinks relatively well" (Rona)

"I don't care about such a regular assessment though" (Lancer)

"...Got it. What we understood from this time's strategy was the peculiarity of this switch of his. He is probably changing his fighting style depending if it's day or night, in a more specific way, the lunar phase. Probably the time of the moon. Just in the nights, he gains some sort of strong healing power, is what I think" (Rona)

"A healing power that only activates at night?" (Lancer)

"Yeah, I have heard of no such thing though. I don't think there's a mistake there. That's why, if we are going to corner him, it would be best if it were at noon. I think it would be best to continue the strategy by avoiding the nights or letting them pass" (Rona)

"...In other words, he is stronger at night, right?" (Sofia)

"That's the conclusion, yeah. It is clear that he is using high powered skills and making bolder moves mostly at night. Lancer, what is the collateral?" (Rona)

"Oh, right. Princess Lily is returning. Accurately speaking, she has already begun giving orders from several towns away of the town of Robin she was in" (Lancer)

"?!! Are you speaking the truth?!" (Rona)

"Of course. This is certain" (Lancer)

"...Tch, so she is already moving. It depends on what happened to Rotsgard though. If that woman has returned, it is unnecessary to stay here for long. We have already achieved our objective anyways. After this, it would be enough to just go from the back huh. A step faster towards Stella" (Rona)

Nervousness appeared in Rona's face.

It was information that changed the situation of the war greatly.

It was definitely information that she couldn't speak of even if negotiated.

'As I thought, I can't trust these two', is what Rona reaffirmed.

Just like what the saying says 'Can't see the forest for the trees', Rona was giving orders inside the capital itself.

She swiftly burned the documents and headed to the entrance of the room.

"...What are both of you doing? We are returning" (Rona)

"Fufu, I have received good information. With this, the return is just not enough right, Mitsurugi?" (Sofia)

"Sofia, people like you are just..." (Lancer)

Rona tilts her head at both Sofia and Lancer who she thought would be accompanying her, but were not showing signs of moving.

"Rona, I will give you a bit of service. You should cross the river and go to the safe sphere. I will... go play with the hero for a bit" (Sofia)

"?! Lady, were you listening to what I said?! At nights we don't know his strength accurately, you know?! Even if we seal his powers with the ring, he is currently only using weapons that are suited for him, so it doesn't have much effect. In the past we would have been able to crush him with just this much, but in the current state..." (Rona)

"I will leave the thought transmission open, so shut up. If you go as far as saying all this, I won't be able to stop anymore. I wonder if every person that has connections with the Goddess ends up like 'that person'. I am looking forward to it" (Sofia)

Sofia was emitting a blood thirst from her whole body which she wasn't even trying to hide.

In the latter half, she muttered as if talking to herself and felt like it wasn't for anyone to hear.

Just who is 'that person'?

There's only one other person that knows this.

After Lancer makes a small sigh, he disappears along with Sofia.

"Hey, wait— Just how difficult they are to deal with! But if Princess Lily is returning, staying here would be dangerous. No choice but to return huh. If she were to just die off, the variables would decrease" (Rona)

Without chasing after the two, Rona leaves the building.

She is not disguising herself. She was in her natural demon form.

She must have judged that it was unnecessary to do so.

Without turning back, she blows up the building that was there and activates the previously set-up teleportal, escaping to the outsides of the capital.

Chapter 153

Participation of the Devil (2)

“Fufu, it’s that huh. How valiant is the Empire’s hero-sama” (Sofia)

“Those are flashy attacks, but the firepower is also plenty good. It seems the information was correct that he gets quite stronger when night comes. Sofia, don’t underestimate him” (Lancer)

“There’s no way I would underestimate him right? I will think of this as practice for the time I kill the Devil. I am going to be doing this without holding back. That’s only if he is worthy of me doing so, that is” (Sofia)

“The Devil huh. That’s true. With this atmosphere, it wouldn’t be strange for that guy to appear. The current you might not get caught off guard, but no doubt he is still a formidable enemy” (Lancer)

“That’s how it is. Then, let’s do this!” (Sofia)

Sofia unsheathes the sword at her waist.

This is a different sword from the one she used to fight Makoto with.

The tinge and material properties of the sword blade share the same traits, but the great sword has been changed for a one handed sword, and a thin one at that.

Of course, Sofia was holding the sword with both hands.

Those eyes already seized the figure of the hero and his party that were flying around the battlefield faraway on their dragon.

“Good grief” (Lancer)

The superior dragon in the appearance of a boy, Lancer, cracks his fingers.

As if acting in concert to his nonchalant gesture, several shining swords appear in the

sky.

It also appeared at the hero's surroundings, and the movements of the flying dragon grow duller.

Even if it was far away, for Sofia, this is practically the same as saying there's no distance at all.

A ferocious smile appears on Sofia's face.

Lifting Lancer with her free hand, the two of them disappear.

"Ara, that kid noticed me" (Sofia)

"...He probably has a tool to search for enemies. I have heard that there's ancient tools with outstanding perception power. More importantly, this one is still your partner even if provisionally, you know? Stop carrying me as if you were pinching a cat" (Lancer)

Slightly at the front of the flying dragon, the Dragon Slayer combi that appeared above ground were surprised that the Empire's hero noticed their presence.

It may be sparse, but it is still a place where battle is unfolding.

To notice someone that has suddenly appeared in an instant, isn't something ordinary.

The two that were able to perceive the hero's state were also abnormal, but those girls didn't seem to mind it.

The number of swords surrounding the flying dragon increased in a second.

It goes without saying, it is to confine them.

The confusion of the Empire's hero, Iwahashi Tomoki, and his party; Sofia didn't let it slip by.

With a spell that they couldn't tell just how strong it was or who placed it, their mobility was killed temporarily.

Ton

“Good evening, Empire’s hero-sama” (Sofia)

“?! Who are you?!”

Sofia drops onto the back of the flying dragon.

Her movement was done by changing her position with a light sword, but for Tomoki who doesn’t know that power of hers, he could only see her as someone suddenly falling from the sky.

Tomoki is equipped throughout his whole body and, leaving aside his own moving ability, his appearance was one that left no doubts for his high defensive power.

“Sofia. Dragon Slayer Sofia. Have you not heard of me?” (Sofia)

“Dragon Slayer... Dragon Slayer you say?! That Sofia?!” (Tomoki)

“I am happy. For the hero-sama to know my name. You are the Empire’s hero, Iwahashi Tomoki, right?” (Sofia)

“Y-Yeah. What do you need so suddenly? Did you hear about the danger the Empire is facing and came to help me?” (Tomoki)

“This degree cannot be called danger for the Empire, right?” (Sofia)

After Sofia laughed away the words of Tomoki, she returns with a question herself.

“Well, even if Lily is not here, I am. This degree of attack from the demon race won’t defeat us” (Tomoki)

“How valiant. It seems I can expect something from this, maybe” (Sofia)

“But then, just why did you come to the Empire? I have heard that you wander here and there, and even if someone thinks about meeting you, they can’t find you” (Tomoki)

The name of Dragon Slayer Sofia is well known, but since she doesn’t show her face in the guild much, there were many times where people that want to meet Sofia, just can’t.

Not only that, she doesn't cooperate much with the Guild's calls, and there's rumors saying that maybe her relationship with the Guild isn't that good.

That's why even the hero Tomoki hasn't met her before.

A woman, and strong.

She fulfills these two requisites, so for Tomoki, it is a person he would like to meet once and ask for her cooperation.

Of course, that cooperation will be by using his charm powers, but since he possesses a method that makes them unable to betray him, there's no reason to not use it.

“I was interested in you” (Sofia)

“In me? That... makes me happy. Then I invite you to the castle. Let's talk plenty” (Tomoki)

“Fufu, I don't care about your charm or anything like that. What I am interested in is...” (Sofia)

“Tomoki-sama!! Look out!!”

“Wa?!” (Tomoki)

The royal guard Ginebia, who was at the proximity of Tomoki, was paying attention to every action of Sofia, and places herself to the front of Tomoki.

A high-pitched sound of metal clashing reverberated on the back of the flying dragon.

“Quite the reaction there. Tomoki is a minus, but you knight lady, I give you a plus evaluation. That's right, this scent. You have obtained the power of the dragon, right? The “Sand Wave Sazanami” huh” (Sofia)

“What are you playing here, Sofia? Pointing your sword at the hero Tomoki-sama. I don't think you are a person that doesn't understand the meaning of this action” (Ginebia)

Tomoki has his eyes wide open in surprise.

Aside from the two clashing their swords, Ginebia and Sofia, there's also the dragon summoner, Mora; and the alchemist user Yukinatsu. Both of them had their body stiffened.

Because they have understood that the person that has appeared so close to them is an enemy.

"Of course I understand. Right, I forgot to mention this. Currently, I also have another title. Demon race vice-general Sofia Blue. Nice to meet you, hero-sama party" (Sofia)

"?!"

"Wa?!"

"A demon race!"

"Vice-general?!"

"I heard about hero-sama's reputation of being strong at night, so I thought I would like you to dance one song with us. How about it? The moon is beautiful this night, you know?" (Sofia)

Sofia jokingly does one bow.

Even though she is in a situation where she is technically surrounded by enemies, she doesn't show any signs of tension.

"...No matter who you are!!"

Tomoki increases the strength of his charm power.

There's only few people that this power hasn't worked on.

On top of that, maybe because he has gotten used to utilizing it, its power has steadily increased.

Not only that.

He has been secretly training it himself for the sake of it working against the Kingdom's hero and the Priestess. Right now, he would be able to even bring down an

unprepared demon race with a glance.

But...

"That's not good, hero-sama. That doesn't work on me. If you want to charm me, you have to be able to charm a Superior Dragon in an instant. But you know, hero-sama~, there's a much simpler way" (Sofia)

"You... you know about the charm eyes?" (Tomoki)

"Such an outside tactic is useless. Hey, try winning against me. If you are able to do that, I will become yours. Even without those eyes, I will offer you my mind and body" (Sofia)

Turning the tables on Tomoki's charm, Sofia emphasizes her breasts and thighs with a pose, and provokes him.

"Your level is still higher than mine, but I will teach you that a fight isn't decided only by that!" (Tomoki)

"I am totally of the same opinion. Then first of all, this lizard is in the way" (Sofia)

At the same time as Sofia says this, her sword shines once again.

A scream leaks out from the flying dragon, Nagi, that was staying still in the sky.

"Nagi?! Y-Your wing! You, what have you done?!!" (Mora)

Mora's words came fast. Nagi's posture crumbles.

At that instance, the wing at the other side touched the light sword. A burning smell, and also another scream occurred.

The feet of Tomoki's group was unstable, and yet, Sofia was firmly standing at the back of the dragon that was shaking violently as it drops.

"Well then, I will be waiting at the bottom. It is fine to come with your companions, and it is also fine to come alone. Just that, the moment you point a sword at me, no matter if you are a child, I won't care. Come with the proper resolve" (Sofia)

Sofia jumps down from the back of Nagi which could only be seen as a suicidal action.

Confirming Lancer's position with the light sword's navigation line, she returns to her companion's side.

"How was it? Was it a man worthy of being serious for?" (Lancer)

"There's not even the need to use 'that'. No matter how many come, no, it would be an opponent that would be easier if coming in groups. At that rate, I feel like he would be stronger alone" (Sofia)

"Hoh~ but I heard that he rarely fights alone though" (Lancer)

"That's just my intuition. Also, that flying dragon, it was a bit good. If possible, I would want to make it mine" (Sofia)

"...It is better to have as much spoils as possible huh. Do as you wish. For a flying dragon, I think the "Crimson Light Akari" would be plenty enough though" (Lancer)

Lancer shows amazement at Sofia's evaluation of the flying dragon.

At the same time, he mentions the name 'Crimson Light' which is a Superior Dragon just like himself, but because of his vagueness, the true meaning of those words were not understandable.

"That has other uses. Ara, they are here. The flying dragon is down huh. It would be troublesome to look for them later then" (Sofia)

While Sofia and Lancer were leisurely talking in the battlefield, Tomoki's party showed themselves.

Nagi was nowhere to be seen.

'It is probably resting at the landing point' is the conclusion Sofia arrived at.

The place spoken of is in no way a safe place. It is in the middle of the battlefield after all.

Of course, the demon race won't come attacking them.

But in the battlefield, there's plenty of moments where your own allies make mistakes.

Hyumans and demons are desperate in defeating each other.

Sofia and Lancer were only talking together, but it wasn't as if they weren't receiving attacks from any side.

The attacks that were raining down and the attacks that were done by soldiers that have lost their mind, were all dealt with by freely controlling the several abundant light swords of Lancer.

In the midst of that spray of blood, those two were talking worry-free.

"No cares if it's hyumans or demons? You guys are crazy"

"Ara, they are attacking us after all. That's why I am just properly responding them. Well then, let's begin. If you lose, the Kingdom and the Empire will be in a big pinch. Do your best, okay?" (Sofia)

"I am a hero that holds the divine protection of the Goddess. Don't underestimate me just because you are a Dragon Slayer!" (Tomoki)

"Yeah, I won't be sealing it. Let me test it, my current power!!" (Sofia)

Sofia approaches with sword in hand at the place Tomoki and Ginebia are preparing themselves in.

That assassin's blade seizes the hero and the royal guard.

"?"

"You fell for it! Earth Doll's restrain, Mad Rail!"

With a puzzled face, Sofia looks at the two that were cut down the moment they readied their stance.

As if answering her questions, a voice resounds from afar.

It was the voice of Yukinatsu who is adept in the use of Golems.

The figures of Tomoki, Ginebia, and also the other two that remain, crumbled, and then it coiled around Sofia as if they were tentacles.

“...Heh~ I couldn’t tell the difference. What an impressive spell” (Sofia)

“The consciousness is being sent directly from the person itself. Quite elaborate, right? Let me tell you something, it won’t be good to try getting out of it!” (Yukinatsu)

“Really? Is it made of a strong material or something-?!” (Sofia)

“I was just making noise until it finished transmuting, but it looks like it wasn’t needed” (Yukinatsu)

“It turned hard. Well thought out” (Sofia)

Sofia who confirms that the restrain changed into a black shining mineral, praises Yukinatsu.

“Is that composure? Or could it be, self-conceit? I wonder how long you can protect yourself from concentrated fire in that restraint state. Show her! Tomoki-sama!” (Yukinatsu)

“Well done, Yukinatsu! Ginebia, just in case, maintain defensive stance; Mora, match me. Let’s give some presents to Sofia! At a level that won’t kill her, okay?” (Tomoki)

“How dare you do that to Nagi! Unforgivable!” (Mora)

“It’s okay to not hold back. Come at me full force. That ojo-chan over there as well. You might not be able to meet that flying dragon ever again, so come at me with the intent to kill” (Sofia)

At Tomoki’s orders, the angered Mora shouts for her injured partner.

However, while completely restraint, Sofia, instead of saying hold back, provoked them to not hold back.

“...This woman is getting ahead of herself. In that case, I will do as you wish!” (Tomoki)

“Die!!!” (Mora)

The five types of weapons Tomoki possesses all activate at once.

Strong armaments that don't depend on the divine protection of the Goddess, weapons that he himself possesses and were suited for him.

Dagger Gladius, Spear Artemis, Thin Sword Rapier, and the Small Arm Hand-Gun.

These are the weapons he currently possesses in his general firepower.

Right now he is treating the God-spear he considered a companion in his fight in Stella Fort, as a sub.

The strongest line-up for firepower.

In his left hand, a gun; at his right hand, the God-spear; the other three weapons were floating in mid-air and were around Tomoki.

This is the reason why he uses these three weapons.

Those three are weapons that can show their highest firepower even without being in one's hands.

They possess powerful might, and they are able to endow elements in its attacks.

The gun in his hand is something that the Empire is strictly safekeeping in a certain town.

It possesses the light element and was given to Tomoki by the princess.

From its shape, Princess Lily thought that it would be useful for her development in guns, but this magic gun that is specialized in shooting magic power, was not that much useful when developing small arms that use gunpowder.

Because its inner structure couldn't serve as reference.

Its outside shape was similar, but she judged that it was something different.

But well, as a powerful sacred treasure in the hands of the hero, it was fulfilling its role plenty well.

The five attacks Tomoki fired and the two attacks Mora released, rained onto Sofia.

A thunderous sound and an explosion.

If it were released onto troops, its firepower would easily kill at least a hundred.

Thinking about the after-effects in the military formation and the damage, it can be said that this is quite the strong attack.

And this attack was received at close range, concentrated in a single point.

If Ginebia's defense wall wasn't protecting Tomoki's party, it might have injured them as well.

Even within the Superior Dragon's, 'Sand Wave' is considered as having high defensive power, and it was because it was Ginebia herself who was given this power that made it possible to mitigate this attack.

"Heh... If she is alive, I wouldn't mind adding her as one of my women" (Tomoki)

"Onii-chan! It is the woman that left Nagi in that state you know?! I am against it!" (Mora)

"Tomoki-sama, I am also against that idea. I felt like that person holds a dangerous ideology" (Ginebia)

"Even if you want to add her, it would be better to consult Lily-sama first" (Yukinatsu)

At Tomoki's victorious words, his companions unanimously object.

Just Yukinatsu showed an 'on hold' mood, but her expression was displeased.

"Oioi, you guys. Why are you being so carefree? You are fighting against Sofia, you know? Pile up more attacks and shower her" (Lancer)

The boy shows a behavior not fitting his appearance and reproaches the hero's party.

His voice came from a place where their vision didn't reach, at a faraway location.

The boy was at the back of Sofia a few moments ago.

Of course, he must have received a direct hit along with Sofia, or somewhere close to it.

There's no way he would be okay.

At the very least, he wouldn't be without injuries.

Tomoki looked at the cleared up place with eyes filled of disbelief.

Without obeying the words of 'Continue piling up attacks'.

"Oioi"

"No way"

"Impossible"

"It was certainly a direct hit"

From each mouth came out a denial of reality.

"That was impressive. See? The restraining magic from just now was destroyed into pieces" (Sofia)

Sofia was standing.

"Also, even when you mixed that many elements, the firepower didn't mutually intrude each other. What an artistic attack. Your coordination with that ojo-chan was also perfect. I was making fun of your charm, but it seems you are able to perform quite the good coordination" (Sofia)

While cracking her shoulders, she swings her sword.

As if doing warm-up exercises.

"But well, it wasn't to the level that it would create a lake. I already have experience in that kind of out-of-norm attack. And we both were able to defend perfectly against it" (Sofia)

Sofia was showing those ferocious eyes she showed on the back of the flying dragon

for a second.

The movements of the woman that looked as if she were doing stretches, were calm, and she slowly raised her right arm.

The thin sword points at Tomoki.

A smile steadily spreads at her whole face.

Conversely, Tomoki's face showed slight agitation.

"I ended up reminiscing a bit. I was thinking about caressing you with about 5% of my power, but if you are able to do this much, I think it would be fine to increase it a bit, right?!" (Sofia)

Sofia's figure disappears.

No, it didn't disappear.

And as such, Ginebia showed a response.

It is just that an ordinary person wouldn't be able to follow her moves.

As the strongest shield that protects Tomoki, she fulfilled that role.

"Now, Tomoki! Show me the power of a hero! Don't finish with just a warm-up!" (Sofia)



"Well then, I have cleaned up the surroundings. Sofia is... fumu, done huh"

Lancer looks at the surroundings and nods. He confirms the state of Sofia who was rampaging at his front.

It was silent.

There's already no one there.

It was the deed of Lancer.

At the back of Sofia who had begun seriously fighting the hero, he was killing everyone that entered his line of sight.

Reduce the amount of witnesses, is also one of the reasons he had, but it was mostly because he wanted to confirm his own power.

Being almost killed by Sofia once, his own power was quite weakened.

Even at the time when he was fighting the Devil, with Makoto, he was only able to use about half of his power.

After facing a painful experience because of him, for about half a year, Lancer was finally able to completely recover his power as a Superior Dragon.

'It has finally returned to this point', is what Lancer thought as he nods satisfied.

"Sofia! What are you going to do with them? If you kill the hero, you would be able to get the Demon Lord to owe you. I think it would be good to do it" (Lancer)

He talks to Sofia.

Right now she was looking at the 4 defeated ones.

Miraculously, no one was dead.

No, there's no way something so convenient has occurred.

It is just that Sofia didn't kill anyone.

"...That means not everyone is as out-of-norm like that guy huh. Lighting up my fire in such a half-baked manner. Hey, you are a hero right?! You have more cards to play right?! Stand up! Fight!" (Sofia)

"Yareyare, he can't hear you anymore huh" (Lancer)

Without holding back, Sofia slices at Tomoki who can't even react properly and can only moan.

Without caring that Tomoki was already prostrated on the ground.

His abdomen, chest, arm, leg, neck, head; each time he was cut, he convulses, but there was no other reaction from him bigger than that.

It regenerated immediately and returned to its beautiful state, but it wasn't a sight to behold.

The Royal Guard Ginebia who is normally the one that should be protecting him, has received a fatal injury and is lying at a place faraway from him.

If there was a miracle or whatever, she would have immediately gone to help Tomoki, but the convulsing self that didn't care if she is conscious or not, made it harsh for her.

Her wide open eyes had blood flowing out, but she wasn't blinking.

While her whole body had few wounds, the hole that's opened at her side was overflowing with blood.

She was in a dangerous state.

Mora and Yukinatsu were in a similar state, no, since they have low defensive power, those girls were in an even more precarious state.

Mora had both her legs severed from her knees, her right hand was chopped into pieces, and was in a crouching position as if doing a dogeza. Yukinatsu was crucified on the ground, her limbs were pierced by light swords and her whole body didn't show a single movement.

The three of them were still breathing.

Considering the number and ability of healers in the Empire, their wounds were severe, but they were still saveable.

That is, if they are able to escape from this situation.

It's quite the low chance.

Tomoki, knowing this or maybe not, he screamed several times before shouting and standing.

This is an astonishing action that can be done by Tomoki exactly because of his

regeneration abilities limited at night.

Sofia didn't pursue and was motionlessly staring at Tomoki who is standing and moving his shoulders up and down.

His expression was filled with exhaustion.

Can't be helped.

The night provides him with a body that won't lose; it provides immortality.

But even if that's the case, it doesn't mean he won't get stressed when cut.

It will be carved in his body, so there's no way it won't burden him.

The silver boots, that were bestowed by the Goddess, eliminated his exhaustion, but it won't remove the burden in his heart.

Even Tomoki who doesn't feel pain anymore, being sliced infinite amount of times by Sofia was something his mind couldn't take.

A merciless instantaneous regeneration that anyone who sees it would think that it would be better to just die.

Even if his sense of pain is gone, if he were able to maintain a normal state of mind in this situation, he wouldn't be an ordinary person.

If Tomoki is still sane, his heart would clearly make a change and would have obtained an abnormal level of tenacity.

"Ara, I'm glad. Do you still have something? Hey, Tomoki-kun?" (Sofia)

"You... monstrous lunatic. Against an unmoving opponent, you sliced again and again!" (Tomoki)

A voice that one can feel exhaustion from.

But the will in his eyes was not that different from the time he was on the back of Nagi.

Looking at the glaring Tomoki, Sofia was internally in admiration and opens her

mouth.

"It's because I thought you couldn't move anymore. Different from those girls there, you were still able to move but were trying to let it pass by not moving, right? 'Don't you have something more~?' is what I thought. Ah and also, to call a woman monster, that's discourteous, you know?" (Sofia)

"...Even though you are a hyuman, you went and allied with the demon race. I don't want to hear that from someone like you!" (Tomoki)

Learning that his thoughts were seen through, Tomoki internally clicks his tongue.

If Lily were in a place where she can grasp the situation there, she might have used better moves and would have carried the situation to a more favorable one, is how he thought.

He soon shakes his head to the sides.

Because he thought that she wasn't an enemy they can defeat in any way.

Because he judged that their current selves wouldn't be able to defeat her.

That's why he confirmed the other three were still breathing and intended to let it pass by playing dead.

But Sofia persistently tormented Tomoki.

Knowing that the limit of those three was closing, Tomoki got impatient.

He held an item that let him know the current state of their party members.

That's why he was waiting until now.

That's right. Tomoki had a grasp of the state of his three companions.

They were still okay, but as long as their enemy doesn't give up, the limit will reach in time.

And that critical point was now.

“Tomoki-kun, show me. The power of heroes. You are not in checkmate yet, right? Your eyes are not dead” (Sofia)

“Don’t mess around!!” (Tomoki)

Tomoki shouted abusive language.

Just like how Sofia said, he still had a trump card.

He has one, but it is something he can’t use right now.

That dilemma was making him hesitate even more.

Without preparing a weapon, or setting up a spell...

“Damn it... damn it, damn it!!” (Tomoki)

“...Hmph~ is there some sort of prerequisite? Ah, those girls being here are your shackles, right?” (Sofia)

At the abusive language Tomoki was repeating for unknown reasons, Sofia seems to have comprehended something and nodded.

She was sure her intuition was not wrong and does an inner laugh.

“What... did you say?” (Tomoki)

As if seen through, Tomoki gets surprised.

“It’s fine. So, should I kill those girls first? Or do you want to try saying: “Please save me”?” (Sofia)

Sofia laughs with amusement.

Lancer, who at some point had gotten close to her, sighs at the bad habit of Sofia.

“...If they die... I won’t show you my trump card even if it kills me. You want to see it right? In that case, bring my companions back to the Empire first. You guys should be able to do that” (Tomoki)

"You are half correct. Right, it would be troublesome if you don't show it to me. It's sad that I didn't hear a 'Please save me' but, can I ask you to do it?" (Sofia)

Sofia looks at Lancer.

"...Fine. It's okay to just bring those close to death fools to the Empire, right?" (Lancer)

"In front of the castle" (Tomoki)

"So many requests. Is being shameless one of the powers of a hero?" (Lancer)

"Say whatever you want" (Tomoki)

When Lancer shows a smile filled with contempt at Tomoki's maddened eyes, he disappears along with the three severely injured to the Empire, and to the castle gate to top it off.

"I have kept my promise. Now then, show it to me. The seriousness of the Goddess' divine protection!" (Sofia)

"How regrettable" (Tomoki)

"...What?" (Sofia)

The peaceful voice of Tomoki made Sofia show a stern face for a second.

"What I am going to show you now is not the divine protection of the Goddess. It is a super rare power that only a few who have gone around the world and fulfilled the requirements, are able to use. Even Hibiki can't use it" (Tomoki)

Tomoki returns the contempt Lancer threw at him, right back at Sofia.

"Hibiki... the Kingdom's hero huh. Hmph~ I heard the heroes came from a parallel world, but within them there's rank divisions. That's surprising. But if it's that, I don't really mind. Go on!" (Sofia)

"...It's fine, taste it. The humiliating light that burned my country in the past. I will reproduce it in this world! This was your own doing so, prepare yourself!" (Tomoki)

"How exaggerated. Are the otherworlders devils, or are the devils from other worlds?

If you are going to confirm it, I don't really care" (Sofia)

Tomoki pushes both arms to the front.

Connecting an aria that she has never heard before, Sofia was looking at him.

But she had her sword prepared. She already deployed her strongest defense and was waiting for Tomoki's attack.

In time, a light is born in front of the hands of Tomoki.

It shines dazzlingly, a light so strong that one can't see it directly.



The expression of Sofia dyes in joy.

Because she is sure she would be able to endure ‘that attack’ that was almost able to kill her in the past.

Tomoki shouts what seems to be the name of the spell.

At that moment...

The ball explodes with them as the centre. Ripping up the night, a dome of light was born.



In a place slightly further away from the Empire, a giant crater was created.

Moreover, outside the diameter of the blast, a gruesome scenery of destruction was spread out.

It didn't reach till the Empire.

Tomoki's attack had created a scar a lot worse than the one attack Makoto did when he created a lake.

What was slightly different was the cast and the conclusion.

At the centre of the explosion, there's one person who had lost consciousness and fallen to the ground.

And then...

The other one had its sword back at its sheath, and standing with blue light enveloping its body.

“Quite the brutal trump card he had” (Lancer)

“Mitsurugi. Yeah, it was more fiendish than the arrow of the devil at that time. If we received this attack at that time, I would have been dead” (Sofia)

“Hoh~ to make you say all this, as expected of a hero huh” (Lancer)

“Hero... no, I wonder about that. It might have been Tomoki-kun’s own willpower”
(Sofia)

“Tomoki-kun, you say. You are completely friendly now. Did you get charmed as well?”
(Lancer)

“No way. This spell... well, not sure if it’s actually a spell but, it had quite the powerful fire element” (Sofia)

“Fire huh” (Lancer)

“And it’s a strenuous skill that shaves off some of the life of its user. But you know, the scary part is not that” (Sofia)

“What then?” (Lancer)

“Counting you, everyone that received the attack, the people that luckily survived, and also the people that luckily weren’t around the scope as well; they have been endowed with a special poison or curse” (Sofia)

“?!”

“Fufufu, a power that can’t be scolded. Maybe it is easier to call it a poisonous fire? Come here, I will cure you” (Sofia)

“I have also been endowed with it huh. Sorry, I am counting on you” (Lancer)

When Lancer finds Sofia at the center of the crater, he glances at the fallen hero and begins to talk with Sofia.

And then, after listening to the trump card of Tomoki from Sofia, he headed to where Sofia is while in shock.

An invisible poison, this curse isn’t something that Lancer knew about, but if Sofia says so, it should be believed, is what Lancer thought.

He obediently gets bathed by the blue light.

“Hm, so long. Was it so strong?” (Lancer)

"Yeah. I still haven't completely removed mine either. When I checked my body just in case, I was already afflicted by it. He really got me there" (Sofia)

"By the looks, I can't really tell though..." (Lancer)

"But it certainly eats into your life. It distorts the foundations of your body and alters it. A fiendish type. Without caring about allies or enemies. It seems he himself is excluded from this, but it is quite the lovely power. I think he said something like 'Nuke'" (Sofia)

"No matter if ally or enemy huh. Certainly that's to your taste huh, that so called 'Nuke' spell. And then, Tomoki, it was him huh. Having the flying dragon killed, I thought your mood would be bad, but it seems there was no need to worry about it" (Lancer)

"Flying dragon huh. It is regrettable, but I was able to see something nice so it is fine. Well then, connect the thought transmission that was cut off. Ah, Mitsurugi. Don't touch the hero-sama that is lying there, okay? That boy seems to be interesting, so I won't kill him yet" (Sofia)

"Not yet huh. Well, with that composure of yours, it doesn't seem like it will become an hindrance in the future. This one doesn't mind" (Lancer)

Sofia stretches widely at the centre of the explosion and closed her eyes as if feeling good.

(Rona, do you hear me?) (Sofia)

(I felt tremendous magic power! The thought transmission got cut off, so there's no contact from the units. Just what is going on?!?) (Rona)

While laughing at the demon general Rona that responded immediately at the thought transmission of Sofia, she explains the situation to Rona.

Of course, halfheartedly.

(I was fighting Tomoki-kun and he used his trump card you see~. Ah, looks like his regeneration ability at night was true. If I had to correct anything, it would be that he is close to immortal. And so, that tremendous magic power was from his attack. He really got me there~. I wasn't in a position where I could mind the other units you see) (Sofia)

(Trump card?! What was it?) (Rona)

(It seemed to be a quite vast scope fire element magic. It had a wide area and high power. The range and power were standing at the same height, so it was difficult to deal with) (Sofia)

(A spell's standard notion doesn't matter to heroes. How irrational. And so, what happened to the hero? Did you finish him?) (Rona)

Rona asks the hero's state to Sofia.

Sofia lowers her gaze and looks at Tomoki who is still unconscious.

His chest was systematically going up and down. It can be seen that his life is safe.

(It's regrettable but, he escaped. Sorry) (Sofia)

(...I see. If you even brought out his trump card, it is enough. Good work) (Rona)

(About the details of the scope, you can just check the crater later. The outside has also received quite the damage, so you can probably estimate the effective range to a certain extent) (Sofia)

(Thanks. I will soon send subordinates there. Can you two return to Stella once?)
(Rona)

(Yeah. We are quite tired. Can you please let us rest—) (Sofia)

(Sofia?) (Rona)

The thought transmission of Sofia suddenly stops.

It wasn't jamming.

It felt like she just lost her words.

Thinking that it was strange, Rona calls Sofia, but there was no response.

“Mitsurugi, you saw that, right?” (Sofia)

(Mitsurugi, you saw that, right?) (Sofia)

After a while, Sofia's thought transmission and words overlap.

Normally, she would have cut off the thought transmission before saying anything.

It was a rare mistake for someone like her.

Rona was about to respond to her voice, but refrained from doing so.

Because she noticed that she began talking while forgetting to cut off the thought transmission.

Concealing her breath, she waits for the next words of Sofia.

“Yeah, I saw it. Certainly... it’s that fellow” (Lancer)

Lancer looks at the same direction Sofia is looking at and mutters.

It wasn’t exactly the same as last time, but a moment ago, a light pillar shone and descended to Limia.

A bitter memory is recalled in both of their minds.

“Yeah, no doubt. If it’s in this current situation, it is definitely in the Limia capital. Your powers have already returned, so you should be able to fly right, Mitsurugi?” (Sofia)

(Yeah, no doubt. If it’s in this current situation, it is definitely in the Limia capital. Your powers have already returned, so you should be able to fly right, Mitsurugi?) (Sofia)

“Yeah, if it’s to Limia, it won’t even take 30 minutes. But it appeared again at the crisis of hyumans huh. As expected, he is actually the protector of hyumans?” (Lancer)

“Well, who knows. But... we will kill him, this is our longstanding desire. Isn’t this an unparalleled chance?” (Sofia)

(Well, who knows. But... we will kill him, this is our longstanding desire. Isn’t this an unparalleled chance?) (Sofia)

Just what are they talking about?

Rona still couldn't understand the particulars.

The only thing she understood is that an uncalculated factor has occurred at the Limia capital.

"That's right. Sofia, let's go. We are bringing him down" (Lancer)

"Just you wait, Devil. Right now I am coming to eliminate you, to kill you" (Sofia)

(Just you wait, Devil. Right now I am coming to eliminate you, to kill you) (Sofia)

Rona was close to lifting her voice, but desperately held it back. She silently cut off the thought transmission.

What a dilemma.

To think that the greatest insecure factor would not appear in Rotsgard or the Empire, but in the Kingdom's capital where they want to succeed the most.

There's still no reports from the capital yet.

The thought transmission has already been restored.

The detailed information should soon be relayed.

Rona bites somethinh while waiting for that moment.

"If even those two monsters are going to fight the Devil, Hibiki should die without doubt. Also, I should soon be receiving contact from Io's unit, that's why..." (Rona)

Even if Io is weak at thought transmission, it doesn't mean that no one in his unit can use it.

After not much lag of a time, she should be able to understand the situation at the capital.

(Rona-sama)

It's here.

With the highest concentration she has had as of today, Rona receives the transmission.

(Report) (Rona)

(Yes!! We are currently at the capital. The strategy of bringing down the hero is in progress. The battle between Io-sama and Hibiki has begun. Confirmed that we are in the advantage)

(...)

A good report.

If they are already in battle, Io won't make mistakes, is what Rona thought.

She silently listens to the continuation of the report.

(While our losses are big, we are also fighting against the forces of the capital. But...)

The words of the subordinate stagnate.

(Continue) (Rona)

(Yes. We have confirmed a mysterious light piercing the royal castle. Based on the report of a close-aide of Io-sama, an intruder appeared after arriving from a golden light or a ball of darkness!)

(The numbers? Name? Is the standing indicated?) (Rona)

(A Lich with extraordinary magic power and a pure white humanoid being; two people. Anything else is completely unknown, is what the report said)

(A humanoid being? Not a hyuman?) (Rona)

Hearing the word Lich, she had a connection in mind, but more importantly, Rona was irritated by the vague report of a humanoid being.

If the words of Sofia were true, that is the Devil. The chances of it being the insecure factor is incredibly high, so it couldn't help.

(We don't know. It would be good if we were able to assist as well, but the opposition

is intense and we can't break the balance)

(Kuh. Okay, good work. Please continue by supporting general Io) (Rona)

(Yes. I will be fulfilling my task with my life on the line!)

The thought transmission ends.

A Lich and a white humanoid being.

Is it the Devil or another person, no, more importantly, is it an enemy or an ally?

Rona stands up.

A face that says this is not the time to be fortifying Stella.

Giving orders to the small remaining troops, they finished the attack to the Empire. Rona, who was going to wait and see how the events at Io's side would turn out, repeatedly teleports, the destination was the Kingdom's capital.

This is not the time to be worrying about the fatigue of another rally.

For her, no, for the demon race, this is an incredibly important strategy.

Its failure and success are hanging on the line.

Chapter 154

Participation of the Devil (3)

The sudden march of the demon race to the Kingdom's capital.

While the Kingdom's hero, Otonashi Hibiki, held strong agitation and uneasiness, she still conducted herself.

Against the march of the demon race, Hibiki suggested for the Limia capital to change their functions to another place because their forces were in a disadvantageous position.

But there was strong opposition from the nobles, the history in it being one of the reasons. The suggestion was not heard, and in the end, they ended up facing this day.

At the Stella Fort capture operation, the capital was close to receiving the flames of war, and yet, they still acted this way.

Their lack of contemplation irritated her.

(We are doing war, you know? If we lose, this town, this castle will be brought down. The historical value itself would lose all meaning) (Hibiki)

Talking about the knowledge of Hibiki in war, she doesn't hold that much experience.

She was just summoned from the peaceful Japan as a hero. And in terms of war experience, the soldiers and nobles of this world have more than her.

But after being forced these many close battles, their tendency of looking at the demon race as lower beings still persists.

Especially the nobles of higher power and the upper stratum department of the country; they were looking at the threat of the demon race in a somewhat positive manner.

There's no basis. It's just an optimism stemming from their view of the demons as an

inferior race.

That irritated Hibiki.

The King and a part of the nobles have begun criticizing this optimistic view of the demon race threat, but it is hasn't reached the point where it can change the country.

No matter how much the country's thoughts change to a favorable direction for Hibiki, it will be pointless if it doesn't change in time.

"Hibiki! The castle gates have been grappled! Those guys, with these numbers, they are seriously trying to bring down the castle!" (Bredda)

The words of her party companion, the knight Bredda, pointed out at the deteriorating situation.

Right now, the King who can give absolute orders, was not in the capital.

Because he was participating in the event of Academy Town, Rotsgard.

The school festival that comes once a year.

In this time when they are planning on attacking Stella Fort again in the frontlines, this wasn't something that would normally merit the King himself to participate.

In the past years, the King rarely participated.

However, there was information that this year the person who has the most influential power over the Empire's hero, Princess Lily, would be participating in the school festival.

Being allied countries that are fighting together against the demon race in the frontlines, at the same time, both the Kingdom and the Empire are rivals as well.

Unable to understand the reason why the other party has taken an action they didn't take in the past years, the King ended up heading there himself.

It would have been fine to have Hibiki do that, but she is also a direct fighting potential in the attack to Stella, so it was judged that there was no need for her to head there herself.

Also, they are the ones attacking the Stella Fortress.

The hyumans will be attacking the fortress that the demon race is protecting heavily, with their objective being recapture.

The timing of the attack was decided by the hyumans, in other words, it was thought that it would be decided by the Kingdom and the Empire.

That's why it was decided that it would be fine to just attack after the school festival was over.

(And this is the result. A march from the demon race. I didn't expect it either, but the sequence of events was the total worst. This happened because the hyumans showed an opening by pulling their legs mutually after all) (Hibiki)

Just what kind of method did the demon race utilize to get pass the Limia Kingdom's army that were posted at the frontlines and were able to suddenly appear at the vicinity of Seiko?

What a ridiculous thing.

Seiko is in a place not that far from the capital. It's the lake that was recently created by the mysterious being called Devil.

It was an incident that mercilessly dragged a great amount of troops from the hyumans and the demons, but because of this, they were able to prevent the surprise attack to the capital.

It is also an existence that reminds them of a harsh lesson.

Depending on the speed of the march, from Seiko to the capital, it would take around several hours.

If it's mostly composed of foot soldiers, it would take even more. In normal circumstances, the defense unit would deal with it immediately.

However, it is close.

It's fine to even call it point blank range.

This kind of surprise attack was not done towards a town close to the regional borders, but at the capital, which left Hibiki in shock.

At least, it was unthinkable that this was brought upon by the looseness of the current Kingdom's army.

They were ready to attack Stella Fort within these few days, in other words, they were close to a battle-ready state.

They should have been putting force in their alertness as well.

And yet, they easily let their forces invade.

In the past, they were surprised by their advanced technique in thought transmission, but with this time's events, Hibiki was thinking that maybe the techniques of the demon race greatly surpassed that of the hyumans.

And in truth, there have been orders to improve the thought transmission, but there has been no real progress in sight.

(Even if we surpass them in numbers and individual talent, if there's this much difference in technique...) (Hibiki)

"The adventurer unit is securing the retreat path. Hibiki-sama, Bredda-dono, and Chiya, please head there with haste"

When the thoughts of Hibiki were heading to the harsh state of the war, the voice of a male other than Bredda reaches the ears of Hibiki.

Wudi.

A royal court magician and, among the magicians of Limia, there's no one with more ability than him.

In ability and knowledge, and also as a researcher, he is an existence whose name is known around the world.

"Escape? We are going to escape... in this situation?" (Hibiki)

"Hibiki-sama, please understand. The movement of the enemy is way too fast. We

should retreat from the capital, and after gathering the troops that are around the towns in the vicinity and in Stella, we can siege the capital again. I think that this is the ideal move in order recover" (Wudi)

"...Heh~. Wudi, are you saying that we should let the demon race have the history-filled capital, even if temporarily?" (Hibiki)

"...Hibiki-sama, please stop the sarcasm. Right now the King is not here, and the idiots that cry about history and tradition have already ran away. We are currently the ones who hold the highest authority in this castle. At this occasion, I think it would be good to show them results and have them shut up. Doing a defensive battle in this place is already reckless" (Wudi)

"That's why I told them to move at least the functions of the capital to a place around the Hopelace household. There's leg pulling even between the high nobles. How unbearable" (Hibiki)

"Ilumgand-dono was quite in favor of this proposal though" (Wudi)

"Ilum huh. Something is happening at the Academy Town he is in as well. It seems like this situation has been relayed to the King-sama already, but the information relay is so slow it is displeasing. In this kind of times, I really can feel the inconvenience of thought transmission. Cell-phones were pretty impressive huh" (Hibiki)

"Portable phones, was it? Our technology has not developed as far as Hibiki-sama's country, so something like that is just... We have no choice but to pray for their safety" (Bredda)

The information sharing between Academy Town and the Kingdom can be considered quite deficient.

'If there were cellphones', is what Hibiki complained about. Based on her own customs, it couldn't be helped.

Hearing the words of the magician, Hibiki falls into thought.

The person himself is probably still in the thought that it hasn't been revealed yet, but Hibiki is already aware that Bredda is the prince of this country.

It is originally something that can't be hidden anyways, so it is obvious.

But she didn't really make any allusions to it.

Bredda is a competent companion, and more importantly, because he is accompanying them, the discretion towards them increases.

She easily judged that there was no merit in pursuing the subject.

"Right, sorry. And then, Wudi, what are the chances of success?" (Hibiki)

"Plenty enough. Don't know if it's because it's a surprise attack, or because they have already reached the limit amount of troops they could conceal; they don't have the actual numbers to bring down the capital. Adding to that, the capital is our garden. We are familiar with the hidden passages and the methods of infiltration. I think we can definitely wipe them out" (Wudi)

"That's true. It looks like they are plunging onto the castle as if they were impatient. Evading and surrounding them would have less casualties huh. To go through the trouble of playing along would be stupid" (Bredda)

"That's how it is, Bredda-dono. Those guys shouldn't be able to keep that same speed against the castle. In this situation, it's actually convenient that the King was absent. Now, if we and Hibiki-sama manage to escape—" (Wudi)

"Hey, hey~"

In the conversation between Bredda and Wudi, the youngest girl among the group intrudes into the conversation with reserve.

Lorel Union's Priestess, Chiya.

Adoring Hibiki, she is accompanying her.

Her travelling together with the hero party is causing diplomatic problems between Limia and the Lorel Union, but her abilities as a priestess are high.

The healing and support she provides, and depending on the situation she also cooperates in adding firepower; she has already become an existence that is indispensable in their group.

"Chiya-chan, what happened?" (Hibiki)

Hibiki prompts Chiya to continue.

“Yeah. If we run, what will happen to the people here?” (Chiya)

“...”

“...”

“...”

There was no one who could immediately answer Chiya’s question.

No, they couldn’t say it, is more accurate.

What would happen?

The fate of the people that couldn’t escape in time... there was no need to think about it.

“Chiya-chan, listen well” (Hibiki)

“Y-Yeah” (Chiya)

“This town, and this country, I will definitely not let the demon race have it. For that sake, there have been many lives lost in the process. We have to shoulder the feelings of those people, and we can’t escape from it” (Hibiki)

“...”

“We will win this war. We will stop the march of the demon race and obtain peace. We will survive. We have to accomplish this. No matter how painful it is, we have to endure” (Hibiki)

“...Are you talking about Naval-oneechan?” (Chiya)

“...Yeah, that’s also... part of it. That’s why...” (Hibiki)

“Hibiki, are you still here?! So you were! Great!”

While Hibiki was persuading Chiya, a new voice calls her.

The leader of the adventurer group that decided to fight alongside her against the demon race and went with her to Limia in the time she stayed at Tsige in summer.

"Sorry, Wudi-san. Securing the escape path might have turned a bit bad. The contact with the people that headed there has ceased. And that's why I am here, but I am glad you are fine"

"...The evacuation of the citizens that I asked of you, how far has it progressed?" (Wudi)

Wudi asks him about the progress of the job he asked of them.

He just told them the request from Hibiki, but Wudi was also worried about it.

It is also because his family is also in the people that are evacuating.

It seems he had self-control to not ask directly about his wife and child.

"It's difficult. At best, I would say around 30%. There's fires happening here and there, and it is causing a panic state. It is taking us all. We do have several people guiding the citizens, but it will probably not reach the 50%. If it reaches that number it would be great, is how it would be. The sole relief is the distribution of demons"

"The demons' distribution is a relief?" (Hibiki)

Hibiki felt like those words were contradictory and asks the man that is explaining.

"...In the group that is attacking this place, there's orcs and goblins as well"

The names Orc and Goblin come out from the man's mouth, and in that tone, there's scorn mixed in.

It is a matter of course.

At times, they have been employed to defeat high-ranking mamonos and demi-humans with special abilities. But the Orcs and Goblins are loyal to their instincts and their conduct is ugly.

Even in the people that have opposition to killing mamonos, Orcs and Goblins are existences that are hated enough to kill.

“Yeah, that’s obvious” (Hibiki)

Hibiki has already seen with her eyes their loyalty towards their own greed, and she has cut down an innumerable amount of them.

“But in this capital, the places that have been plundered and the women that have been violated, from what I have seen... there’s none”

“None?!”

“That’s right. Even those guys are being precisely commanded, and aside from the defense unit and targeted citizens, they don’t waste time in other things. They are aiming for the castle and charging at it”

“...”

“I was honestly surprised. For our side that is working at evacuating, it makes it easier, but as an army to fight against, I think they are several times more troublesome”

“Then, the citizens are somewhat safe, right?”

“No. They don’t steal or violate, but the people that catch their eyes will be thoroughly killed by them. If the people hide it is easier to be saved, but if they find you, it would be a lot harder to escape from than how it would usually be”

“...”

“Anyways, to break down this situation, I think that encirclement is the only method. We should leave to the outsides of the capital”

“But the escape route...”

“That’s why I came to ask Wudi-san. Hey, instead of going from the capital to the outside, isn’t there a path that we can use to stealthily escape from the castle to the town? In this occasion, it would be easier to use the chaos to run through the town in one breath. And so, that’s how I want you guys to escape”

“...I see. The method that has the less insecure factor huh. Certainly, if it’s to run through in one breath, me and Chiya are here, so it is more advantageous for us than the bunch rampaging at the capital” (Wudi)

Wudi answers the man that turns the conversation to him.

Communication ceasing doesn't equal to emergency situation.

But they have experience in a previous battle.

If they consider the possibility of the thought transmission being jammed, it would be better to think that some kind of problem occurred in the escape path they were trying to secure.

"Yeah. When I leave the capital, I will send thought transmissions to the defensive units that are around the area and will deploy them at once. I would like to hurry as much as possible"

"Understood. I will guide you. Also, it is okay to have the units currently fighting to steadily fall back. I will contact the other units myself. It is okay to fall back until this audience room. This place won't be destroyed by anything normal, and there's also a strong support barrier. They should be able to endure for a while" (Wudi)

"That would be helpful. I will tell them immediately"

The man and Wudi begin their thought transmissions.

Hibiki was thinking about the high-leveled forces that were charging at the castle without looking aside, while she places a hand on the shoulder of the slightly nervous Chiya and waits for the moment to escape.

"...What? Hibiki, be careful. I feel some kind of vibration" (Bredda)

Bredda takes a battle stance and prepared for the abnormality he felt.

The small vibration that resounded from the floor, steadily got stronger.

Hibiki unsheathes her sword as if covering Chiya and prepared herself by facing a different direction from Bredda.

"Could it be... no way" (Wudi)

Wudi finishes the thought transmission and it seems he has noticed the abnormality as well.

He probably had something in mind. He looked at the King's throne, around the area where the stairs are.

And then...

Exactly in the place where he was looking at, a thunderous sound reverberated along with an explosion.

Several fragments reached where Hibiki and the others were and it was all intercepted.

The shadow that was slowly shaping at the rising smoke, Hibiki knew it.

She could feel her body stiffening.

"If you secured the escape route from the beginning, the people being chased would normally rely on that place. In this case, it would be better to consider that, from the very beginning, you were planning on intercepting us here, is that right, hero Hibiki?"

"Io... so you left Stella empty and came here?" (Hibiki)

With a face as if hearing a bad joke, Hibiki responds to the familiar voice.

A large builded body of 4 arms appeared, and it instilled tension to the people that confirmed this.

"The attack and defence is in constant fluctuation. Even if we are the side that is protecting the fortress, it isn't like we promised not to attack, right?" (Io)

"If we were to attack the fortress right now, you would lose that location. Is that really okay? (Hibiki)

"Is that supposed to be a bluff? Because it seems that your side has already begun moving to return here though" (Io)

The overwhelming difference in the knowledge of the current state of the war.

Hibiki bites her lips.

She can't even use the units that are stationed far away as bluff, so it is obvious why she had a bitter expression.

“...And? What reason you had to come out from that place like a mole?” (Hibiki)

“Hibiki-sama, that place is the escape route we were planning on using” (Wudi)

“!!”

The hesitant words of Wudi.

“It seems that way. I waited for a while and you guys showed no signs of coming you see. So I came here instead” (Io)

“...Our soldiers should have been there though” (Hibiki)

“Yeah, they were” (Io)

“Where are they?” (Hibiki)

“Do you even need to ask?” (Io)

The demon general asks as if amazed.

“Io, again... my comrades...” (Hibiki)

“That’s a difference in inclination, hero. Those people were originally adventurers from Tsige, weren’t they? The one who dragged them to this fight was no other than you. The man over there as well, if I remember correctly, he is also an adventurer from Tsige, right? Our side didn’t pay much mind to your exploration at the borders” (Io)

Io’s words were correct.

If Hibiki didn’t bring them here, the adventurers of Tsige wouldn’t have died.

It is also true that this isn’t something the killer himself should be saying though.

“Hoh~ For a demon general, you are quite generous towards the Tsige adventurers”

Being glanced by Io, the man responds with an exaggerated gesture while sweating from his forehead.

The moment he matched Io’s eyes to confront him, he understood the difference in

powers.

It's the class of enemy that he would have to escape with all his might when sighted from afar.

If he were to move as an adventurer, there's no other option aside from running away.

The demon general Io is that level of existence.

"...The adventurers of Tsige are the people that traverse the harsh wastelands. Our Lord respects you adventurers who put your base at those lands. He has ordered us to not lay our hands on you guys unless you point your sword at us" (Io)

"That's... thanks?"

"There's demons and demi-humans in that place, and there's also people who don't hold prejudice towards mamonos. From our view, that is something worth of respect. If you didn't come to Limia, you guys wouldn't have died. How regrettable" (Io)

"At the place you came from, there were some pretty strong guys though?"

"They were strong. What stood out was their fighting style that used coordination as their core. In the middle of winter, the things I have to teach my subordinates has increased. I can't mourn for them in this time of battle, but I am grateful" (Io)

This is out of his reach.

That was the conclusion the man arrived to.

He was in complete agreement that this man is a demon general.

Ridiculous ability and composure.

And yet, he shows no openings.

Even in the middle of the conversation, he didn't give any chances to move.

"Hibiki, the match is too bad. Even if we are inside the support barrier, we shouldn't have a proper fight with him"

"Hey there, that would be troublesome. Hibiki, I will have you fight me here... **and die.**
I will think of this support barrier as advantage in location" (Io)

Io's body dyes in black.

The memories of losing Naval in Stella Fort revive in her mind.

A heavy and bitter memory.

At the same time, anger welled up as well, but without being controlled by it, she silently exhaled.

"...Sorry but, I have no intentions of fighting you here" (Hibiki)

"But you don't have that option. If you escape from this place, I don't think I will be able to hold back my subordinates that came with the resolve to die. The moment you guys abandon this place, there won't be a single resident here alive. After killing them all, if we end up encircled, we would have no choice but to chase the ones that escaped as well" (Io)

"That's dirty. As expected of a demon. Don't you know of cowardice?" (Hibiki)

The desperate provocation.

Leaving aside if this will actually work on the man called Io, she couldn't leave it unsaid.

"Of course I know this is not a moral thing to do... as a military man. However, right now I am the general leading the demon race. I am here as a soldier" (Io)

"Killing innocent people is a soldier?!" (Hibiki)

"This is not a war between countries. This is a war between races. And that ending will lead to the downfall of one side or endless slavery. You should have vaguely felt this too, right? Or don't tell me, the times you went destroying the settlements of mamonos, you were minding if the opponent was a soldier or a resident?" (Io)

"..."

"Our side is also desperate. Now then, what will you do? Will you still run away even

when I pursue you, or will you bet on the small chance of defeating me here? Choose whichever you want. Of course, I will be beginning this by my own volition!"

The black body charges towards Hibiki and the others.

And in those four arms, there's gauntlets with devoted design equipped on them.

Hibiki was pressed for a decision.



Mio was on her knees.

The one she is against is the demon general Reft who has his lower half in the shape of a serpent.

The kimono that Mio is wearing was greatly damaged and her skin was showing.

Even so, the person in question, Mio, was not showing agitation nor anger.

Licking her lips, she stands up.

In that face, happiness could be felt.

"I don't understand. Your attacks don't work on me anymore. Or are you saying that you still have some sort of method against my 'reflection'" (Reft)

"I don't-desu wa ne. At first, you were being easily beaten up and I was disappointed thinking that you were a weakling with only his body as a trait. I am surprised that you were analyzing my attacks. I will praise you for that" (Mio)

"...I can't understand. You don't have other methods of attacks aside from shooting, cutting, or punching. Why can you still stand up when everything has been sealed? And that regenerating ability is clearly abnormal" (Reft)

Reft used his own body to analyze the attacks of Mio.

He grasped all the attacks she used, coped with them, and with his special ability 'reflection', he closed it.

She continuously repeated attacks that would be reflected.

It looked like a child throwing a tantrum, but there was no visible agitation from her.

Finally, Reft threw words to Mio.

He wanted to know the reason for her strange behavior.

“Don’t have a choice-desu wa. Because the revolver and walther are guns and the only thing I have that can cut is the one that can only cut konnyaku. Other than that, I only have my bare-hands” (Mio)

“...I don’t understand at all what you are saying” (Reft)

“The number of bullets is only 6 and 8, so in total there’s 14. The sword is limitless yes, but...” (Mio)

Mio is counting something with her fingers.

“Is it related to the reason why you aren’t giving up?” (Reft)

“Ara, walther still had one more shot?” (Mio)

“It was a mistake to try understanding huh. It’s fine already. I will let you continue until you die” (Reft)

“Hm, if I’m not mistaken, it still has for one more shot. Let’s shoot it this time” (Mio)

Mio points her left hand’s index finger and middle finger towards Reft.

“That again? For darkness element, it does have quite the power, but it already doesn’t work on—” (Reft)

The darkness bullet is shot from her hand and with a spiral rotation, it hits straight at Reft.

It certainly did hit.

But at that moment, the one who was send flying was Mio.

The attack that should have hit the left side of Reft's chest, for some reason, made a hole in Mio's chest.

"...No matter how many times I do it, it is amusing. It feels like it is something I wouldn't be able to copy at all-desu wa. Its weak point is that you have to do some incredibly complicated calculations before using it though" (Mio)

Mio stands up as if nothing happened.

The hole at her chest closed in an instant.

Reft's eyes open wide in surprise for who knows how many times already.

No, it seems he also reacted at the words of that girl.

"Seen through huh. Even so, what a frightening regenerating speed. You are without doubts not a hyuman. But if that's the case, why are you rebelling against Demon Lord-sama?" (Reft)

"I have shot them all, so if I just reload it, it will return to how it was before, right? Now then, the next 15 shots, will you be able to reflect them?" (Mio)

"It's useless. No matter how many times you do it—" (Reft)

"This is the only thing I will do-desu wa. As respect to you, I will not do anything aside from this. 'No matter how many times you do it', is what you said, but... no matter how many times-desu wa. In this fight, you still don't notice that this isn't something that places you in a superior position?" (Mio)

Mio giggles.

She does have more varied methods of battle.

But the three types of attacks that Reft dealt with, can be said to be the most easy to comprehend states within the things Mio has learned in summer.

From the concept of guns she heard of Makoto, Mio has produced two famous guns with darkness bullets.

And then, the spell she used in the beginning that emits ki.

These were ideas that came from memories of Makoto from a certain anime which Mio likes.

She created her own type of rules and was having fun by bringing out these spells.

If the situation of the battle in Kaleneon were worse, Mio would have killed Reft without minding her methods.

But the situation in Kaleneon was overwhelming.

The one hundred of Asora were easily dominating the two thousand of the demon race.

The small reinforcements that were coming in succession from the vicinity were being scattered away.

In that case, Mio thought about grasping this mysterious art-like strategy if even for a bit.

That's right.

Just like how Reft analyzed Mio, Mio was also analyzing him.

And also, it wasn't as if Mio was standing up without giving up.

It's Reft who has no 'after'.

"What did you say?" (Reft)

"You continue your artistic-like reflection. The moment you are unable to continue doing it, that will be the moment of your defeat. The result outside has already been determined after all" (Mio)

"Impossible, there's no way we would lose in such a short amount of time. You are spouting nonsense" (Reft)

"And you won't be able to see its state. Well then, here I go" (Mio)

"Kugh... in that case, even if it's only you, I will bring you down! Even you shouldn't be able to infinitely regenerate! I will show you that I can return tens, hundreds of your

attacks!" (Reft)

"If you stop defending them, you will die at that moment, you know? Do your best. If you continue for several thousand times more, you may have a chance of winning" (Mio)



The darkness bullet and the ki travel through a vaster area. Each time, a hole opens up in Mio's body and she is smashed to the walls.

And yet, the attacks didn't stop.

In the midst of this strange spectacle, the fight continues.

"Yareyare. Even so, it is rare to see Mio enjoying a fight. Is she intending to learn that reflecting ability? At my side there were only guys who showed no opposition" (Tomoe)

Peeping at Mio's situation, Tomoe shrugs her shoulders at the summit of a hill.

The Highland Orc and Mist Lizard units were trampling down the enemy without mercy.

Thanks to that, Tomoe had nothing specially important to do.

There's the choice of joining Mio's fight, but from what Tomoe has seen, not only does she not need her help, she may even hate her for it, is what Tomoe thought.

"Fumu... there's the option of going to where Waka is but... at this occasion... Let's just do some miscellaneous work. If I just randomly split the land around the national border, it should decrease the trouble in the future. Putting a bridge won't take that much trouble, so it would be better to have an easy to understand boundary. Umu, let's do that" (Tomoe)

Tomoe's figure disappears from the hill.

At the place she disappeared from, there were heaps of corpses piled up.



"Something that can hide your figure, is it?"

"Yeah. Because you know, if I go to Limia in this appearance, they would soon know that I am the merchant Raidou, right?" (Makoto)

"True" (Shiki)

“If that happens, all the effort Tomoe and everyone else did in Rotsgard will probably go poof. I don’t think that Goddess will take into consideration those points after all” (Makoto)

“Since it has already come to this, I think it would be difficult” (Shiki)

“Shiki, you can just wear your previous form, right? You have done so before after all. Even though Tomoe and Mio said they were unable to. Shiki is truly skillful” (Makoto)

“...Yeah, you are right. I can manage with that but, what about Waka-sama?” (Shiki)

A mass of darkness that plunged into the capital.

Inside of it, I was consulting with Shiki.

Regarding the matter of hiding our appearance.

I didn’t bring my mask, and going bare-faced would be bad.

But if I don’t go out fast, I won’t understand the situation.

I am greatly troubled by the fact that the Goddess didn’t give me any time to prepare.

“Isn’t there something?” (Makoto)

“If anything goes, I do have something though” (Shiki)

“In this occasion, anything is okay” (Makoto)

“Then, this” (Shiki)

“?!!! Why do you have something like that?!?” (Makoto)

“Well I thought that throwing it away would be sad, so when Waka-sama threw it away, I picked it up” (Shiki)

“So unnecessary... No, in this case, should I call it: fine play?” (Makoto)

“It isn’t something bad after all” (Shiki)

What Shiki handed me is a long slender cylindrical-shaped thing.

The size is enough to fit in my palm.

It is something that Mio gave me in the past in moments of danger... a transformation item.

That's right, a transformation item.

A crazy item that instantly equips you with a full-body suit like the ones from special effects heroes.

If this were sold in Japan, it might have been super popular.

In terms of power, it doesn't match me so, in the end, I didn't use it.

Or more like, after I pushed the button like they told me in Asora, I threw it away half in embarrassment and half in anger.

To think that Shiki picked it up.

...I have no choice but to use it huh.

If the hero is here, it would multiply my embarrassment though.

It's a lot better than having my identity discovered.

I resolved myself and press the switch.

“Waka-sama, the wall will be released. Are you ready?” (Shiki)

“Okay... eh? The color is...” (Makoto)

“In the past it was blue, but this time is white huh. It looks like it doesn't change the power that much though” (Shiki)

“White is... white is...” (Makoto)

White is kind of more embarrassing than the time it was blue.

That I can't tell its power must mean that it is decreasing my defense and increasing my attack huh.

If it were the other way it would have been better.

In the first place, who the hell would do a transformation that decreases their defense?

Not that long after, just like how Shiki said, a big crack appears in the wall and breaks.

“Let's go then” (Makoto)

“Yes, Waka-sama. I will do my all to protect you!” (Shiki)

Giving a side glance at Shiki who was showing quite the motivation, I do one step outside.

Not only Shiki, this time I am also here with the intention to fight.

In that sense, this might be my first battlefield.

Me in white clothes like a special effects bastard, and a skeleton wearing a black robe with golden embroidery drawn around it; both of us stepped into what is supposed to be a battlefield.

If there's someone that saw us right now appearing in the battlefield, their eyes would be wide open.

Yeah, no doubt.

“...”

And just as I thought, several people were staring at us speechless.

The 4 armed giant that looks like he is from the giant race, is the one who is showing the most vigilance towards us.

Hm, is that someone from the demon race army?

There's several people around that seem to be related to the demon race as well.

And also, there were a few hyumans only. It looks like they are fighting in a quite bad situation.

...

Hmph.

Even when just looking like this, I feel like supporting the demon side.

The so called Demon Lord-sama is quite the popular and has people that sympathize with him.

I silently felt respect towards the Lord of the demons that I haven't met yet.

A so called Centaurus with half-hyuman, half-horse; a so called Minotaurus with half hyuman, half ox.

And also, a giant with 4 arms.

That giant is probably the boss.

In other words, the demon's side is composed of demi-humans and mamonos, and its general is not a demon but a giant. Meaning that they are sorted out by demi-humans and mamonos.

Even if the demon race is also a category of demi-human, this is impressive.

In the hyuman armies, the demi-humans are only used as disposable vanguards.

I also thought that their way of thinking is quite advanced.

As long as I am here fulfilling the promise, I have to take the side of the hero though.

Hah...

"The hero is... there huh" (Makoto)

From the positioning, I estimate the person that is supposed to be the hero.

...

What impressive attire.

The exposure rate is crazy.

It's like I am looking at an extreme cosplay.

Hm?

...Eh?

"Could it be... no way" (Makoto)

"Waka-sama?" (Shiki)

"President Otonashi? Is it you, senpai?" (Makoto)

An injured girl that is looking at us.

That person who is probably the hero, has an attire that even in this world it is not normally seen, and holding a sword. That appearance is...

No, even if I say it looks exactly the same, if she is a hero, then she is from the same world as mine.

Tsukuyomi-sama also said it, that one of them was quite close.

She is a senpai from high school at my previous world. A famous person in my hometown.

In terms of connection with her, I have only talked a few times with her regarding the budget of the club. She looks like the student council president.

Senpai is... the hero?

I unintentionally mutter her name in a low tone.

Forgetting that I was currently in a battlefield, I motionlessly watch that figure of hers.

Chapter 155

Participation of the Devil (4)

Is that really senpai?

I do want to confirm it, but that will be for later.

If it were the usual me and that is actually my senpai, it wouldn't be strange to wave my hand and talk to her in this type of reunion.

It is like coincidentally meeting with an acquaintance while travelling abroad.

Even so, I was able to arrange my thoughts because of the atmosphere in this place.

I once again look at the place I have descended to.

We are probably at the audience room of the king or something like that.

It has a space that fits the bill, and in the place that seemed to be the highest spot in this location and most likely where the throne was in, there's a wreckage.

There's signs of destruction here and there pointing out at an intense battle. Most of the people here are injured.

The only ones who look fine at glance are the small girl in the hero party and... the Giant who exudes personality.

Looks like the Goddess has thrown me right in the middle of the battlefield, as per usual.

"Waka-sama, the hero is probably that person there. Should we begin by safeguarding her? " (Shiki)

With a small voice, Shiki asks me.

...This is bad. If he calls me by Raidou or by Waka, I feel like my identity could be

guessed.

Even so, as long as ‘that person’ is here, Makoto is also no good.

Should I increase my names?

There’s a limit to how troublesome that would be.

Moreover, in this white attired state, I don’t think I will be using that name in the future at all anyways, so maybe it is fine.

“Shiki, when talking to me, there’s no need to call my name, just state your business. No matter what you call me, my identity might be exposed after all” (Makoto)

“That’s true. Understood... Then, just in this occasion, I will call you master. About me... please call me Larva. If you call me Shiki, it might be exposed after all” (Shiki)

“Larva is a name Rona knew. Is that okay?” (Makoto)

“That woman doesn’t think that I am actually serving under Waka-sama. In that case, I am thinking about using that misunderstanding. For those kind of people, instead of a far off lie, it is more effective to use this” (Shiki)

“I leave it to you. For now, I want to test if I can actually use common language, so I will step forward and go to where the hero is. The demon general... well, from what I see, it looks okay” (Makoto)

“...Is that so. Understood” (Shiki)

“I will probably have Shiki move A LOT later, so for now, just wait” (Makoto)

“I appreciate the consideration” (Shiki)

My head is still a bit heavy.

If with this I am still unable to speak common language, I won’t be able to bear it.

Looking at the skeleton that is slightly hanging down his head as if disappointed, I implicitly tell him that he will have his turn later.

Because in truth, it felt like that's how it would turn out to be.

In this embarrassing attire, the magic power is being confined inside, so I don't need to use [Sakai] to conceal it.

That's why I am able to use [Sakai] for perception and area understanding after a long time.

If we put aside the part about looking like a special effects hero cosplay, this is equipment that would fit me the most in my everyday life.

But that one bad point is the biggest reason why I can't use it for everyday life, so there's no point though.

"!!"

"..."

I begin to walk towards the place where the hero and the giant are confronting each other with about 10 meters of distance between them.

When I began moving, tension ran through them. And they mutually, no, they were both staring at me.

The distance between them and me is around 50 meters.

Of course, I was taking into consideration their movements as well.

While keeping my perception [Sakai] to a level where I don't lack in details, I expand the domain of my [Sakai].

From the castle to the town, I watch the battles that appear in my mind and are occurring in several locations while I grasp the topography.

Looks like I can do it now.

The composition of the demon race forces are, as expected, demi-humans, mamonos, and also demons.

There's no real inclination, but the demons are slightly fewer.

The equipment is quite good and it really does feel like a soldier.

Also, the points of battle are really easy to tell.

It looks like the invasion points are all aiming at the castle.

Is it to secure the entry paths or are the battles concentrating in a long and narrow isosceles triangle area with the castle at its summit?

I have mostly understood the information in the vicinity.

I will decrease the precision and increase the scope.

To the point that I can't tell the races of the people here, I was able to reach until the outer walls of the capital.

I see... the demon race even destroyed the walls huh.

Looks like they have some incredible weapon or magic.

It seems that's the base for the triangle area.

The number in the demon's side is... it is probably because it is a surprise attack but, it looks like there's several thousands.

In terms of numbers, the ones protecting the Kingdom are many more.

Just that, this isn't a fight in a plain or with military formations, so if there isn't a difference of 10 or 20 times, it might not be a decisive difference.

It is out of the question to have less people at the attacking side, but the demon race that has invaded into the town have already taken relatively solid mobilization, so for the Kingdom side that is dispersed like crazy, they are probably being faced with an attack as if piercing their stomach.

Looking at the fires occurring around the locations that are not in the march's course, a cooperator of the demon race or a spy might have been infiltrated.

In Rotsgard, the incident occurred from the inside after all.

"Looks like Limia intends to abandon the capital temporarily. Units are gathering at the outsides, so maybe they are going to encircle the capital?" (Makoto)

"...For the hard-headed Limia Kingdom, that's quite the flexible choice. Is this the influence of the hero?" (Shiki)

Again, I talk with Shiki in a small voice that can't be heard on the other side.

I have already reduced the precision to the point that I can only tell how many people are gathered and expanded the scope in a breath.

I could tell that a mass of people are coming from the several towns in the vicinity and were heading towards the capital.

I felt that, in contrary, the people in at the capital were trying to leave, so I thought that maybe they are aiming for encirclement.

Shiki looked like he was slightly surprised, but I could tell that a battle aura was coming out from his whole body.

It has an overpowering sensation that would make anyone who has a weak heart to faint.

Also, everytime he talks, his dark red light for eyes flicker, so the intensity doubles.

Fortunately, my expression can't be seen. I turn my face forward while making a wry smile.

"I don't know who you are but, stop"

The giant gives me a warning.

A voice filled with dignity fitting his appearance.

Also, as expected, he is big.

Even with only one finger of his, it would make an arm of mine.

But I didn't stop.

Because I can't protect the hero from here.

"..."

The hero's side is still silent.

If I could hear her voice, I would be able to tell if it's senpai or not though.

If it's really senpai, I will have to change my plan into a slightly gentler one for the hero.

No matter what, doing terrible things to my senpai is a bit, you know.

The giant, seeing that I showed no reaction and continued walking, send a glance towards his surroundings.

They were still lying in ambush. The soldiers that were hidden appeared from the pillars at the sides and charged towards us.

If the person ignores the warning, it is immediate elimination.

As expected.

I can tell that the hero is gulping her breath.

So she didn't know about this huh.

For me, they were enemies I already perceived with [Sakai].

This wasn't a surprise attack or anything of the sorts.

From up, down, and the sides; from each direction, 4 attacks were directed at us.

It wasn't at the same time, but those movements show coordination.

I can tell they have been trained.

"..."

As if holding me back from doing something, Shiki silently moves.

In his hand, there's a pitch black staff.

It isn't the one he uses at the Academy.

Because there's no gem that is said to be completely necessary for a magician's staff.
That's why I told him not to use this one at the Academy.

In terms of appearance, instead of a staff, it is more like... a rod.

I am not used to moving in this suit so, well, it can't be helped. I will let Shiki have this one.

"I finally have the chance to be of use in battle. I will give you my thanks, weaklings.
Depart painlessly" (Shiki)

A cold voice.

At the same time Shiki says this, he lightly taps the lower end of his staff to the floor.

Shiki really does like activating his spells like this huh.

Immediately following, the two winged people that were coming at us from above,
both explode at the same time.

Just like that, he soundlessly moves towards my right side where a black clothed
demon is.

Taking out a blade from the designless staff, Shiki cuts off his neck.

It isn't the spear-shaped blade he normally uses, but a giant curved blade.

A giant scythe huh.

Since his appearance is that of a skeleton, it is totally a death reaper.

The last one changed his aim from Shiki to me, he changed the stance of his sword to
a stabbing one and lunged at me.

Will Shiki make it in time?

It was an unnecessary worry.

In front of my face that was facing the side, the back of Shiki was reflected.

Even though he is good at this kind of short range instantaneous movement, I wonder why it gets harder the longer the distance?

I thought he would be more fit for this kind of thing than even Mio, but it seems Shiki is not good at teleporting in long distances.

Well then, the last one...

The one who is being held by the skeletal hand at her head and being lifted up is... a black skinned Elf-looking person.

She has a hood, so I can't really tell.

Is this what they call a dark elf?

The sword she held struck around the sternum of Shiki and broke.

Her figure while still holding her broken sword that couldn't accomplish its task, was tragic.

"Gugh..."

Those were her last words.

The important portion that molded life was sucked by Shiki. In an instant, she was bleached white and died.

Wiped out without doubt.

I nodded once and resume my steps silently.

Shiki lightly brushes off the dust and follows after me.

The hero side and the demon race side.

In time, we arrive.

“You won’t mind... considering you an enemy, right?”

The words of the giant.

It seems he is asking me, but he is already filled with hostility.

“...Are you an ally?”

The words of the hero.

...As I thought, she is really senpai huh.

In the voice I have heard before, I make a small sigh.

Why is she in this kind of place?

With no discomfort, she would have been able to live her life stably in a practically tranquil manner.

Thanks to Mio’s strangely detailed work, my voice is changed.

In this kind of appearance, it is practically impossible to recognize me, but if I ask her: ‘why did you come to this world?’ she will most likely grow suspicious.

Right now I am an enigmatic character, and there’s merit in having my identity unknown.

It isn’t something I want to ask at the risk of exposing myself.

I was indeed interested, but I didn’t voice it out.

“Through an agreement with the Goddess, I will safeguard the hero. Also, the demon race should abandon Stella Fort at once and take shelter. If it’s with your side’s thought transmission skills, you should be able to communicate with them” (Makoto)

“So you really are an enemy huh. I have never seen that appearance before. Is that ancient equipment, or could it be, judging from your voice, are you some type of golem? So the Goddess still had more pawns”

The giant has regarded me as an enemy and takes his stance.

The glossy black skin of his that looks like obsidian, shows flexible movement. He takes the stance of a martial artist.

Is his style hand-to-hand combat?

At his four arms he has equipped gauntlets, no, it reaches close to his shoulders, so it is probably more accurate to call it an order-made arm gauntlet.

"That's a misunderstanding, giant. I don't hold the will to be hostile towards the demon race. If you guys leave this place and abandon Stella Fort, I promise you that I won't let the hyumans pursue you" (Makoto)

"Can't do that. I will eliminate the hero here. My subordinates fighting in this capital and I have come here for that purpose. We also have no reason to abandon Stella Fort"

"Even the orcs are not pillaging and violating women. Leaving aside their skills, if you have a force that is this well trained, it would be a big loss for the demon race if you were to lose them, right?" (Makoto)

"It's strange to be praised by the enemy, but for now, I will say thank you. But between losing my forces and abandoning our objective, the level is just totally different. The two conditions you have mentioned are not things I can accept in no way"

He isn't attacking me in my no-stance state.

Instead of calling it the spirit of a military man, it is most likely that he is trying to measure me.

This person is a military man and a soldier as well.

And for some reason, I knew what he is currently by instinct.

"That's regrettable. The demon race's army has demi-humans and mamonos without any discrimination. Honestly, I think your thinking is a lot more advanced than that of hyumans. You have a disciplined army. I feel like you are worthy of respect" (Makoto)

"...It's regrettable for me too. The fact that someone who has that kind of thoughts is a vanguard of the Goddess, that is. No matter how many races we include, we are the sword of Demon Lord-sama. The sword that our Lord swings must be filled with dignity and awe. Vulgar behavior will only dirty that sword and will only deduct the

worth of that Lord and its country”

He probably still has spare energy to resume battle.

The giant looks like he doesn't want to speak anymore.

“So you are trying to finish it in one swing?” (Makoto)

“That's right. Our Lord says that it will shoulder all our actions. In that case, no matter if we end up breaking in fragments after one swing... we will certainly destroy our enemy. If we can't do that, we won't be able to answer its trust. Your proposal is rejected. Move aside. If you are going to cover the hero, I will have to destroy you as well. If you are able to think that much, you should have noticed the darkness under the rule of the Goddess as well”

“I have received my payment in advance. I think this is a villainous role, but in this occasion, I will be standing at the hero's side. Even if it's a promise with a person that I don't feel any speck of trust, I don't want to break it” (Makoto)

“That's regrettable. In that case, I will be bringing down both you and the hero. My name is Io. Demon General Io” (Io)

“...”

“You won't name yourself huh. Fuh... but to think that I would be interfered twice in killing Hibiki by a white person. Is this what they call the destiny of the hero?” (Io)

As I thought, it is settled, she is senpai.

I don't remember the name of the Empire hero either, but he had a Japanese-like name and Japan is super popular in parallel worlds.

Maybe he is doing this as substitute for a greeting, Io pushes out his fist.

Placing a small quantity of strength in my lower half, I stop it with my left hand.

“You stopped it?!” (Hibiki)

The surprised voice of senpai resonates from my back.

If we consider the difference in heights, it would certainly look abnormal.

“Limia’s hero-san. Along with her companions, Larva, place them by your side and take them away” (Makoto)

“From what you have said, it felt like you weren’t an ally but... is it okay to believe in you?” (Hibiki)

“Of course. I won’t let them put a finger on you. Larva” (Makoto)

“Yes” (Shiki)

“Io is crazy strong. Don’t try fighting him in strength, not even by error. This is advice from a defeated person that couldn’t compare in technique” (Hibiki)

“I will take it as reference” (Makoto)

I will probably be competing in strength though.

I stop the other attack of the giant with my right hand.

“How can you do that with that body?! But!” (Io)

“I see, I don’t have enough arms” (Makoto)

“That’s how it is!!” (Io)

I can feel a dull and distant impact from my flank.

And while at it, another attack hit my chin in between the space of the thick arm.

How skillful.

But that’s not enough.

His strength that is.

“WA?!”

“Your reaction is fast, but you see...” (Makoto)

Noticing that his attack isn't showing the desired amount of power, Io immediately jumps back.

As if matching him, I chase after him.

If it's the agitated Io, I might be able to hit him at least once.

"Guugh?!"

Entering to his bosom, I turn my back from him.

Just like that, I make a turn and do a backhand chop.

It was perfectly guarded by the four arms.

But it looks like there was some damage.

"...The backhand chop of a Dragon Slayer" (Makoto)

"It is scary that you don't sound like you are joking. There's no way you are a Rose Sign as well but... you might be more fun than Hibiki" (Io)

I am half serious you know.

Releasing his guard, Io looks at me with cold eyes as if raging.

Now then, enhanced attack power, lowered defensive power; in this kind of state, will it bring good fortune or will it bring bad fortune?

Even when I am in a battlefield, my thoughts are simple, but can stay composed.

How mysterious.

Just by having a change of motivation, it feels this different.

I might even be more relaxed than in my time I was teaching at the Academy.

I once again place myself in front of Io who is looking for an opportunity.

My battle in the Limia capital has begun.

Chapter 156

Participation of the Devil (5)

I have lost again.

I have certainly gotten stronger than before, and this time I even had location advantage.

Everyone had become stronger with the equipment obtained at Tsige.

The way of thinking and fighting style of the adventurers that came with us from Limia have also been a good influence to the Kingdom's army.

It was for me too.

It isn't to the level of Mio-san and Beren-san who I met at the remote region, but there were a lot of things I learned.

It wasn't just skill at hand-to-hand combat.

I also began acting towards breaking down the fetters of the nobles that have been clotted, the discomforting politics.

It would be one thing if it were after bringing down Stella Fort, but in the current state, the position of the capital is quite dangerous, and I thought that each noble held way too much power in military affairs.

In that aspect, I have shown a relative amount of results.

Repeating careful talk with the heirs of the next generation, I was able to focus their attention in the view that the Kingdom's current way is wrong.

It wasn't like the objective was a rebellion against the royal family, and I can't just create a big civil war in the middle of our war against the demon race, so right now I am just stopping it at only awareness in reformation.

The second son of the Hopelace who are high nobles and yet are very close to the royal family.

The fact that Ilum-kun approved this proposal of mine in an early stage allowed me to move smoothly and it was also a big help.

I think that in the future I will be asking for his cooperation too.

Facing the plan to bring down Stella, I felt like I was doing everything I could.

And yet...

Not only were we unable to defend against Io's surprise attack, we were pushed back. We let them reach till the audience room.

I intended to run away, but after coming this far, it was difficult.

I honestly can tell that it would be hard to leave the castle and escape the town with Io chasing after us.

And I don't know how much damage our surroundings would take because of this.

In the end, I chose to settle this in an early stage with the support barrier of the audience room.

Using the Minotaurus and the Centaurus that Io said he brought from the border's wasteland, Bredda was completely shut out, and I was forced to fight with him in a one on one.

With Wudi's support attacks, Chiya's healing support, and also the support barrier of the audience room, furthermore, the silver band which Horn dwells in, and the sword Beren-san made for me.

Even if it's against Io who has already turned black and going at full-power, I thought I would be able to confront him.

Right now, in front of my eyes, there's a white guy that suddenly bursted in and joined the fight.

I felt like shouting: what kind of joke is this?!

That guy had an attire like one of those daily special effect heroes. He stopped an attack of Io right from the front, and while receiving two of those attacks, he made Io step back and gave one attack to him.

I felt like an idiot for warning him to not compete with Io in strength.

He is strong.

And quite strong at that.

His moves are not that good, but the white guy has already deployed a pretty high-ranked enhancing magic and fighting in close quarter combat against Io.

For me who knows about special effect heroes, his appearance is quite embarrassing, but he is defending against the attacks of Io precisely.

Physical strength and speed; in my eyes, it looks like the basic specs of him are higher than Io's.

And in another aspect, the body movements and technique are higher in Io.

...Well, in terms of attires, I don't have the right to say much about others.

I take a look at my own body.

There's no wound that can be considered a wound.

I have already used my own healing magic and I had Chiya heal me as well.

I have quite the amount of physical and mental fatigue, but I will have to hold it down with willpower.

I am practically naked, so I can tell that I don't have any sort of scars.

It's embarrassing, but this is necessary to display my best performance so... I can't just

not do it.

In the resonance with my guardian spirit Horn, I always end up in this appearance so it can't be helped.

A strenuous skill that lets me clad the silver band and Horn at the same time.

Different from possession, my will doesn't get inhibited in any way. It is uncomfortable that I end up in a state as if wearing a risque fur-made string swimsuit. The defensive field that it creates is slightly superior to the equipment the dwarf Beren-san made for me.

To fight against the blackened Io, it was necessary to have the power and speed of this form.

It wasn't the moment to say that gravure would be a lot better.

That's why I had to do it.

He is not an opponent that a normal bluff would work on, so I perform the weakness I showed in the past and tried to lure some sort of opening.

It was practically useless though.

I was somehow able to do some effective attacks in my starting dash, but with his usual regeneration, it was all made into zero again.

That's right, this sword.

As expected, Mio-san and Beren-san are incredible.

The moment they made this sword for me, I could tell that those two had already seen through my specialty.

A great sword that had its wind power sealed, in the past.

In Io's battle, I finally realized the power of this.

With an inhuman voice, the sword called me.

Just like how it asked me, I forcefully controlled the power that the sword emitted.

I didn't unify with the sword like I did with Horn, it was as if I was doing a competition of power with the sword.

An ear-piercing metallic sound rang in my ears several times, and the great sword compressed into the size of the bastard sword I used in the past.

The originally transparent emerald green sword blade became more pronounced and the degree of transparency decreased.

In exchange, the power of the wind was felt even stronger.

It's not to understand the weapon; the condition for activation is to thirst for power and make the power obey. I felt like it was a latent disposition with bad specifications and I felt grudge welling up.

But its power was tremendous.

Just by holding it, my power increased by several times and my senses became sharper.

The sharpness also increased remarkably and I was able to cut even the blackened Io.

If I used my specialty attacks that harbor the fire element, the wind element increased its power by even more. If I endowed an element in the sword, the fire would not be red but became an emerald green that looked as if it gushed out from the blade of the sword.

In the past I wasn't blessed with a good weapon, but now I was being brandished by the weapon itself, is what I felt like bantering about. It had such a high efficiency that I even felt uncomfortable.

The wind element boosts the fire element.

Beren-san must have thought that, going by my style of fighting, instead of a fire weapon, it would be better to use a wind element one.

Io was unable to catch up with my speed and I was able to continuously attack him. 'With this, I have won', is what I thought at that moment.

And yet...

Becoming black wasn't his trump card.

Those big gauntlets that were equipped on his arms that served as weapons as well as armor... those were his trump card.

That he didn't use them last time, was it because at that time they still weren't made?

Each one of the 4 gauntlets had one of the 4 main elements: fire, water, earth and wind. Even when it is simple, he cladded elements in his attacks.

Wind with earth; my movements were restricted.

Water with fire; my attacks were weakened.

If he didn't have those, I would have been able to decide the battle before he got 'used' to my attacks.

It was only a single pattern he read from me.

From there, I received a counter, and Io, without defending against the follow-ups of Wudi and Chiya-chan's spells, he received those attacks with his body while approaching me, and I received a combo attack that felt as if my body was being torn to shreds.

Counting the kick, I received a combo of probably 7 attacks.

The rapid fire of Wudi that disregarded his remaining magic, created a smokescreen, and I had Chiya-chan heal me.

When I reached the state where I can make arias myself, I added my own regeneration spell.

In the moment Wudi's magic power was sacrificed by quite a lot and our force had diminished, the situation showed a change.

A black mass with slight golden light clad on it, plunged onto the audience room from the sky.

In front of us, a sinister skeleton and a white guy that looked like a special effect hero appeared.

He ignored the words of Io and drew closer and the skeleton easily took care of the ambush troops that we didn't even notice.

After saying something vague that I couldn't understand if he was an enemy or an ally, the skeleton led me and my comrades to lean on a wall.

It is probably a subordinate of that white guy, but I was silently looking at the fight between the white guy and Io.

The skeleton didn't show any signs of entering to help.

It seems like he affixed a field of some sort around us, but it doesn't look like he is doing anything aside from that.

It is certainly true that the white guy is fighting Io in a more than advantageous way, but I have to question that skeleton's action of not even providing support.

"He is... not your master? Is it okay to stay here without going to help him?" (Hibiki)

"...No problem. If it's only at that level, supporting him would only serve as an hindrance. Hero... Hibiki, was it? That weapon, is it something you obtained in Tsige?" (Shiki)

"What's with that so suddenly?" (Hibiki)

"I just thought that it is most likely a weapon from Kuzunoha Company" (Shiki)

"You know them?!" (Hibiki)

"Only slightly. It is more like, I have have a past connection with that material" (Shiki)

"Material?" (Hibiki)

"Yeah, there was an experimental subject that I had it eat a wind spirit. It resembles

the sickle of it" (Shiki)

"...T-That was a mamono you made?! Or more like, it was used as a raw material for this?!" (Hibiki)

"Well, that doesn't matter right now. That just means it was an individual that served only as a mere material after all" (Shiki)

"...So you say. Just who in the world are you?" (Hibiki)

"Larva. Experiment loving and former Lich. Hey, that magician and knight over there. Don't move. Stay there" (Shiki)

The skeleton that named himself Larva stopped Bredda and Wudi who were trying to stand up, while he talked to me.

Wudi still hasn't recovered his magic power properly.

I do think that it is still impossible for him to resume his actions.

But...

I knew the reason why.

At the line of sight of those two, there's two enemies.

The Centaurus and the Minotaurus.

As expected from enemies native of the wasteland, they are strong.

At this situation, I should be the one going.

I can already move my body after all.

"Hero, you as well. Stay there" (Shiki)

"Can't you see the enemy? Against that level of enemy, I wouldn't even take 3 minutes. Just leave it to me" (Hibiki)

"...Don't misunderstand. I am not giving advice nor am I asking for an opinion. I am

ordering you" (Shiki)

"Quite the words there. I am grateful for your help, but this is also something that benefits you too, right?" (Hibiki)

I take my sword in hand and stand up.

It's not at the quality of that white guy, but even so, to use standard enhancing magic exhausts quite a lot of magic power.

Slightly feeling that my strength was giving away, I place the spell again.

The weakness is that it is easy to cancel if I lower my concentration.

But its effect is balanced, so for someone like me who has a lot of magic power, this is a magic that fits me.

"If there's even a slight chance that you will be wounded, there will only be disadvantages for me. Sit down. Be silent and don't move" (Shiki)

A tone of voice from the former Lich that didn't forgive any objection.

It seems like these guys are not enemies but they are not our allies either.

"I will finish it quickly" (Hibiki)

"If you leave the field, I will kill your companions" (Shiki)

"?!"

"In the agreement we exchanged with the Goddess, there was nothing mentioning the safety of your companions. As long as you are okay, I don't care about what happens to the other humans" (Shiki)

What a thing he is saying.

Just what was the Goddess thinking when he brought this kind of people to the capital?

I can't feel any sort of joke in his words.

At the very least, I could tell that he doesn't feel anything for the life of hyumans.

"...In that case, what are we going to do? See, they are coming!" (Hibiki)

"I will do it. You guys should just silently wait here" (Shiki)

"You bastard, there's a limit to rudeness—" (Bredda)

"Bredda-dono, let's leave things here to this personage. Increasing our enemies in this state is a bad move" (Wudi)

Wudi holds back Bredda who couldn't endure it anymore and was going to complain to Larva.

It's certainly true. This is not the time to be increasing our enemies.

As long as we have decided to fight Io, we have to speedily drive out the demons attacking the capital.

For that sake, I would have to steal the march on Larva somehow, but...

"Then, I will be seeing what you got. The power of Larva-dono, please show it to me" (Hibiki)

I decided to send slight sarcasm to him.

It's true that this Larva is strong.

That instantaneous movement and the speed of his spell activation, the weapon he holds is not normal either.

In terms of magic power, Wudi is lower than Chiya-chan and me, but just like in levels, the magic power doesn't completely decide the skills of a magician.

That Centaurus and Minotaurus are not normal enemies.

If it's me, I would be able to push them back with overwhelming speed, but just how will the most likely-magician Larva fight?

Let me see it.



A big frame ox faced warrior swings down his battle axe.

Fumu, is this a demi-human, or a mamono?

It is kinda... interesting.

If I meet another one in the future, let's check it up.

Because I stepped back and avoided it, the axe hits the floor and it left slight damage on it.

What an excellent support barrier.

If it were average, fragments would have scattered and the floor would have been splendidly gouged.

“And you use a bow huh” (Shiki)

I slap down the shot arrow with my staff.

The Centaurus is a demi-human and quite the prideful race.

It seems there's many who choose bows and spears, and it seems this one has chosen the bow.

A vanguard and a rear guard; their roles are properly set.

As expected, these two are stronger than the ambush troops from before huh.

“Io-sama is fighting. We can't just stand and do nothing. Move aside, Lich”

“You have shown us your power, but that level won't work against us”

“...I don't like showing more power than necessary after all. Sorry for that. Master said that he would be giving me my turn later. In that case, I will be using you guys as warm up” (Shiki)

Fufu.

Those so called warriors are really easy to utilize by using their pride.

Their temperament clearly changed.

“Very well. You are without doubt an obstacle that has defeated our brethren as well”

“I already know your power to a certain extent. In our home, you would be treated as a troublesome livestock” (Shiki)

“!!”

“Fool. Just what benefit would it bring you to anger us?”

“Who knows Horses would be too frail for us to mount after all. I don’t know much about you. Sorry” (Shiki)

“!!!”

The Minotaurus and the Centaurus heat up in an amusing manner.

Well then, let’s begin.

“I was a former Lich you see. Why I am ‘former’, I will show you here” (Shiki)

I finish my aria. I release the spell that is suited for me from within me.

“How long will you accompany me for? I am looking forward to knowing. ‘Thirteen stepping-stones’” (Shiki)

The moment I became a servant of Waka-sama, I was embedded an uncontrollable amount of power inside of me.

I assimilated it, but it is a power that is not mine.

I have finally been able to change, not everything, into my power.

You guys are my first prey.

Inside of me, it has been sleeping, changing, and has awakened.

...the power of Waka-sama's rings that is.

"From the first step to the fourth, release. 'Wand', 'Sword', 'Cup', 'Coin'" (Shiki)

"Gugh!!"

"This is?!"

I won't say 4 times, but I can tell that a magic power close to that is sprung out to the surroundings.

I can tell there's a different nature of magic power raging about in my body.

This sensation that enlarges my maximum amount of magic power is peculiar.

I look at my left hand.

There, I see 4 rings dyed in crimson red in all the fingers aside from the pinky finger.

Power wells up as well.

Until the fourth step there's: magic empowerment, body enhancement, magic power enhancement, equipment enhancement.

Until this level, I am able to utilize it without any risks.

Depending on the situation, I would want to release higher steps, but that is slightly harsh.

"You guys are also stirred up because your superior is there right? Try to struggle a bit, okay?" (Shiki)

I prepare my staff.

The two instantly take defensive stances.

Directly below them, several floor-turned-spears thrust upwards.

I have to properly utilize the support barrier after all.

“Hoh~, the horse evaded it huh. The ox... it seems he has endured it” (Shiki)

The Centaurus shoots an arrow towards me.

In the middle of its way, it splitted up and rained down.

The Forest Oni Akua does something similar to this.

“Burn” (Shiki)

Instead of magic, I used a special soul language to forcibly activate a spell.

I changed all the arrows into dust.

“This magicaaan!!”

This time is the Minotaurus.

Yareyare.

Can't see the difference in power yet?

At the battle axe that was swung down obliquely, I purposely don't take a defensive position and decide to take it.

“Impossible”

The axe stops at the tip of my shoulder.

My magic power, equipment and even my physical body has increased in power.

I don't even need to defend against this kind of attack.

“Well then, it is my turn now, right?” (Shiki)

I prepare my black staff and begin an aria.

While looking at the expression of despair from both of them, I finished the remainder of my spell.

“Don’t worry, it won’t hurt. That life, offer it up” (Shiki)



Chapter 157

The Devil's change, the awakening of the hero, an intruder appears

“...Oh, they are flying~. If it’s that level of enemy, he should be able to easily defeat them though” (Makoto)

“To look somewhere else! Is that supposed to be leeway?!” (Io)

After saying so, an attack with no showiness came at me.

I cross my arms and stop Io’s fist.

“Nah, I am fighting hand-to-hand against an enemy that surpasses me in skill. I have no leeway at all” (Makoto)

“So you say. An enemy that my attacks are not connecting properly is saying that he has no leeway” (Io)

“You as well. There’s been 6 in total counting the ambush troops. Your subordinates are dying one after the other. Don’t you care?” (Makoto)

While stepping back, I evade several attacks coming my way.

The Minotaurus and the Centaurus have both turned into dust.

It seems Shiki activated the rings aware that it was overkill.

From what I see, it is the four basic ones.

“...Everyone that came here attacking the Kingdom were all prepared. To feel for their deaths would be an insult to them” (Io)

“Death soldiers huh. Even though this isn’t a period novel” (Makoto)

I remember the word 'prepare for red'.

A kick huh.

Even though he is a giant, he is truly skillful.

A technical giant doesn't match the image I have, but this demon general Io, even in my eyes, I can tell that he possesses excellent martial arts skill.

He may even be an expert.

This is the first 'properly big guy' I have met in this world, so it leaves quite the impression.

I even feel like killing him would be a loss for the world.

"Suffer for the death of your soldiers huh. As expected, an opponent hard to deal with. But!" (Io)

Magic power from the gauntlets?

The fist of Io which I was unable to stop in time, had fire spouting out of it.

Ooh~.

"An equipment with element endowed in it huh. Impressive" (Makoto)

An equipment that even a warrior would be able to use with a strong endowed element is valuable.

It's even said that a hyuman blacksmith wouldn't be able to make one.

Not only is it a wasted treasure for a person who has a relative amount of knowledge in magic, it is also, obviously, high priced.

It is a lot more economic to endow an element depending on the situation by using magic, it requires lower level of magic, and it is requested more often.

So this giant can use magic to a higher than average level.

"Even if you say that, not only did you say it as if it was nothing, you weren't even send flying!" (Io)

Even when entering at point blank range, his techniques still show.

In all this twisting and spinning at close range, he still manages to add up strikes.

To be able to see this incredible technique so close, I am deeply moved.

"Hmph, I won't receive that one!" (Io)

Io kicks away my pushed out fist.

Even though I did that with my small body and in point blank range.

I basically have better physical strength and speed than him, but it is still like this.

Can't be helped.

Let's repeat the steps and take distance from him.

"A warning and a confirmation. Do you have no intentions... to withdraw?" (Makoto)

"Of course. I also have no intentions to continue prolonging this fight" (Io)

I am an enemy after all.

Even if it's a person I have respect for, if I am fighting him in a battlefield...

I don't have any choice but to kill him huh.

If it were the usual me, I would have thought of a different way.

Why can I take a decision like this so easily?

Is it because of some evil addition from the Goddess when she was giving me the common language? Or is it something else?

My head is serene.

Thoughts fit for battle are being created by my head.

...It is really, comfortable.

"I see" (Makoto)

"Come at me seriously. I am not so simple as to be dealt with without showing your real power" (Io)

Right, if it's this person...

No.

It's not necessary to show my real power.

I can kill him even in this form.

To both fight at full power... why did I think about such a 'useless' thing?

How stupid.

In the future I may have to fight senpai, no, the heroes.

There's no need to show it.

This is plenty enough.

"Looks like you are not at your full power either. Then I will keep you company"
(Makoto)

Should I randomly use the powers that Mio attached to this?

Just by going like this and prolonging it, it would be checkmate for the demon race.

In that case, it would be better to not show my real power and just half-heartedly do this.

It's the most efficient way and I won't be showing my cards to the hero.

It will also match my objective of protecting the hero, and if I just have Rona get wind

of the warning I made towards Stella Fortress, there won't be any problems.

Right.

I should also have Shiki move and reduce the amount of damage to the town.

It might be a bit boring for Shiki to do a job like buying time, but right now he has the most suitable power for it.

"Larva, half-release the seventh step" (Makoto)

Shiki's power has an incredible power in dealing with varying situations.

There's points like not being able to release it unless he has until the fourth step activated, and that he can't activate more than one or two others. And if he changes them in the moment, he is able to advantageously fight against most opponents.

If he trains those weak points, he will be able to conquer them in given time, so a day might come where he is able to turn all that power to his own and release them all at the same time.

Shiki bows, giving me the sign of his positive response.

Then me as well.

Let's fight in a deserving manner.

To fight seriously in this form means that after all.

I will probably... be able to kill him.



~Io Pov~

A sinister power is gathering at the fingers of the Lich.

He continues an incantation that hurts my ears.

If possible, I would like to interfere with it, but sadly, the thing in front of me won't let

me do so.

I know the basics of how to move my body, but I don't have experience in martial arts.

This is my diagnosis.

Although, from what I heard of the name, this martial art technique is most likely only known by a part of the demon race and the demi-humans.

The hyumans normally prefer to use weapons instead of learning techniques to move their body after all.

I have also heard that it is hard to bestow the blessing of the Goddess to people who train in bare-handed combat.

It is not like the people who don't like the Goddess will develop in this path.

...Seriously.

Being intruded by these unknown people and having to fight them. A soldier really doesn't have it easy.

I miss a little those times when I fought as a common soldier in the way I desired.

"When you say full power, do you mean being supported by that Lich there?" (Io)

"By no means. I have mostly understood the state of the battlefield already, so I am just having him buy time" (Makoto)

"!! You have that much power, and you still don't intend to fight properly huh. I thought your ideology was close to ours, but it seems it was my misunderstanding" (Io)

That's right.

In the beginning, from this white guy's way of speaking and thinking, I thought he was similar to us.

But after the fight began, I felt like he had some sort of... gap.

As if he were changing into something else while we were clashing. A strange

sensation.

At first, I felt honesty and drive in those fists, but now I feel coldness. I even felt like it was devoid of emotion.

It is rare to encounter an opponent that changes this much in the middle of battle.

If it's now, I would be able to agree if they told me he was a golem, but well...

"Our objective is the safety of the hero and Stella Fort's capitulation. That's it. I don't have any real problems in prolonging the battle. To pointlessly show my cards in a situation where I don't know who will be hostile against me, that's only plain foolishness" (Makoto)

The hero will overcome this situation. At least that's what's going to happen if he reaches his objective.

Then, what he means by not knowing who will be hostile against him... does that mean he is also thinking about confronting the hero?

Just who in the world is this guy?

"I have understood this in the fight we have had until now. You are not a golem. That attire is an equipment that has quite the high performance. You... have an inside" (Io)

I try throwing a lure.

"Of course. I am not a golem. This is equipment. When I put it on, I am unable to use magic though. Even if it's inelegant, the reason is just awful" (Makoto)

Not even trying to deceive huh.

I have never seen nor heard of a full-body armor that has this much strength. But at the very least, this is indeed an equipment.

That leeway of easily telling me this...

I will have you regret it.

"It is actually not that compatible with me. If I forcefully use a spell, it seems it will

self-destruct, so it is quite problematic" (Makoto)

"Even when you have obtained an equipment of that degree, you say such extravagant things" (Io)

There's a restriction huh.

It's inadvisable to use magic.

So that means it practically doesn't have restrictions towards warriors.

There's no real merit in having a magician use it, so it is not an article that has an actual restriction.

"Here I come. The Heisei series is a standard, so it is a demonstration" (Makoto)

The white guy politely gives me a sign and I take my stance.

But he suddenly squatted.

Right in front of me, he bend his knees.

What?

What is he intending to do?

"Claymore" (Makoto)

Along with those words, right next to his bend legs, a box-looking thing appeared.

Just where did that come from?!

"Wa?!"

Hibiki is shouting something.

As if shaking off her shout, around 4 things were fired from that box!

A projectile weapon huh!

It isn't that fast.

Even if I receive some of them, there's no need to take them all.

More like, there's nothing to lose in evading things I don't know the power of!

"Hm"

I evade the cylinder-like things coming at me.

Umu, I was somehow able to evade th- what?!

It looks like they changed their directions and came flying at me from angles I can't dodge from.

Can't be helped!

I use all of my arms to defend against it.

An ear-numbing explosive sound reverberates.

Heat and shock.

Smoke.

A weapon that has explosion magic endowed?!

This kind of thing, even we don't have it.

"Scissor hands Knuckle"

While my normal senses still hadn't returned, I heard his voice.

I received a shock, different from the explosion, on my chest.

"You, what did you..." (Io)

"Eh, this is not where the heart is?" (Makoto)

"Oooh!"

Leaving myself to the impulse welling up from inside me, I give him a strike to the sides.

His evasion won't make it in time.

The guy was blown away in a horizontal direction.

"Hah... hah..." (Io)

I look at my chest.

There, two blades were pierced into it.

How annoying!

I pull them out and throw them away.

I glare at the guy that was send flying.

There, a white person stands up like nothing.

The scissor-like thing that is extending from the back of his hand, was broken around the middle.

"The scissor isn't useful for practical use it seems. This is... an anchor. That Mio, she is being driven by her hobbies way too much" (Makoto)

It's coming!

The white guy is casually running towards me.

This black skin is insufficient against him huh.

He is a preposterous monster!

In a place slightly farther from the range of my kick, he makes a sudden brake.

What's coming this time?!

His gesture of abruptly lifting his left hand only makes me agitated.

He is going to shoot something.

Is he going to use another projectile weapon to attack?!

Wait, then why did he get this close?

No matter which it is, at this distance and with that speed, I have no choice but to defend.

I can tell that my irritation towards losing the initiative is increasing.

Slipping through my gauntlets, I feel something piercing the top of my shoulders.

But it doesn't seem to have much power in it.

Just what in the world—

“Uooh?!”

Suddenly, my body was drawn towards that guy in an instant.

I can't oppose it!

Against someone that has practically the same stature as a hyuman, I can't oppose it?!

“Guuugh!!”

While I was floating midair, I receive a right punch from him and was send flying.

This kind of thing... this kind of thing, just how in the world does it happen?!

The attacks of the white guy doesn't stop.

The effect of the projectile weapon must have stopped already, he came at me himself.

But he doesn't know about my high speed healing and regeneration yet.

I received quite a lot of damage, but I concentrate and return my condition to normal.

I made it in time!

He still has quite a lot of distance to cover, and yet, he kicked the ground and jumped to the air.

So this time it is from above huh.

...This is, a chance!

If he is in the air, he will obviously have to come down.

It is possible to add power with the descend, but on the other hand, it leaves lots of openings.

Then he is prey for a counter!

Matching the timing, I will do a turning kick with all my might and—

“Wh-at?” (Io)

My kick hit the air.

That guy, without showing any signs of using magic power, was standing still in mid-air.

To possess flying abilities even when he has that size and doesn't have wings... just who would be able to imagine that?

“If I remember correctly, it was this, right? Kick” (Makoto)

That guy mutters something and in the moment he says ‘kick’...

In a speed I don't know from how high one would have to fall to be able to reach that velocity, he pushes out his legs and plunges at me.

I twist my body.

But I did a turning kick just a few moments ago.

I can't do a satisfactory evasion in time.

His kick connected at my flank and was atrociously gouged out.

I felt like screaming at the intense pain.

But my eyes reflected the figure of that guy that is landing at my back.

Heal, heal, heal!

If it's in that stance filled with openings, I can use the combo attack that crushed Hibiki!

He has more weight than Hibiki, so I will definitely be able to strike the whole attack on him!

I confirm every part of my body.

No problem.

My decision speed and legs were faster.

One of my left arms grabbed his neck.

You damn monster.

Even so, I can't lose!



The white guy poured on Io an attack that looked like the ones special effect heroes do in commercials.

Unbelievably, it seems to be doing damage to Io.

A signature move of doing a jumping kick.

It seemed to have attack power surpassing mine. It gouged out a great part of Io's abdomen.

And yet, Io regenerated in a few seconds and grabbed the white guy.

Even though he regenerated that much when he was fighting me, are you telling me his regeneration is bottomless?

There's mamonos who specialize in regeneration, but they mostly have a limit to it.

When I think that Io still had a lot of leeway left, I felt my emotions growing darker.

As I thought, maybe to truly defeat Io, there's the need of a big attack.

That is something I 'still' don't have.

Io grabs the white guy and just like that, as if drawing an arc, he threw him onto the ground.

That's it.

I had a hunch.

The combo attack I received where I felt like I was going to die and was unable to maintain my clad state with Horn.

I was able to instinctively clad it again, so I was saved, but it was an attack that wouldn't be strange for me to die.

"Hey there, Larva rear guard. Your master is in a pinch, you know?" (Hibiki)

Within the barrier, I call Larva who has stopped his aria.

The Lich is overflowing with incredible magic power.

Since the moment he put on those strange rings, his power clearly sprung up.

Right now, his magic power surpasses mine by more than 2 times.

The amount of spells he can utilize are plenty and I can tell he is on a completely different plane compared to the Liches I have battled with before.

Even in the moment when he first took out his scythe I thought: 'He is a strong Lich', after all.

"My answer is the same as before. He is not the type of person that would need support for something of this extent. Don't think he is the same as you who thinks that everything can be resolved by joining powers" (Shiki)

“...I said it as an advice out of good will though” (Hibiki)

“Unnecessary. Rather, you should make sure not to make master feel at a lost with that severe exposure. Prepare something to wear” (Shiki)

“?!! You said that we shouldn’t leave the barrier you made, so isn’t that cruel?” (Hibiki)

“Fumu. Then I will randomly search something for you. Wait for a bit. Seventh step, ‘Hell’ half-release. Equipping and activating” (Shiki)

...

What?!

A disgusting presence as if blocking my breath was spreading.

It seems the inside of the barrier had no changes, but in every space of the audience room, there’s some sort of mist coming out.

...No, it isn’t only this place.

The whole castle?

Are you telling me that he activated such a wide ranged spell?

“...It should be fine until the outer walls of the town. Just by using mist, that person’s mood will be harmed, but right now he can stay relieved. Go, ‘Mist Temple, Nivlheim’. Bring about weakness” (Shiki)

Outer walls?

The town’s?!

Larva looks at the pinky finger that had nothing on it but now has a black ring in it, and nods in satisfaction.

“Outer walls you say. Just what did you do?” (Hibiki)

“I have covered this place in weakening mist. It was master’s order to only use it as weakening. You should be grateful” (Shiki)

Half-release huh.

As it looks, it is a spell that affects in a wide range.

If holding back is weakening, then I feel like if it is all-out it would be quite bad.

In this world, individual power can easily surpass the bounds of strategy.

The concept of numbers and way of fighting is totally different from the modern world.

Larva is without doubt a tactical level power.

Mio-san as well, there are way too many outside powers that are way too strong.

"Well then, I will go search for something to hide your skin" (Shiki)

At the side of Larva who was talking carefreely, a heavy sound was made.

Right.

The white guy.

When I look at the source of the sound, it was as I thought, the white guy.

A boisterous dance of fists and kicks.

Moreover, synergy with the gauntlet's elements.

It is slightly different from Wu Xing, but he went from wind to fire; fire to earth; earth to water; is how it flowed in order to increase the power of the elements.

That it is not in a rotation is probably because there's still a hidden element, but I don't know what it is.

I don't even know if there's actually one, and it isn't something I need to investigate immediately.

In other words, Io is using that function to increase the power of every subsequent attack even when it is supposed to be a combo attack.

I unfortunately couldn't see it, but when I think about the lapse of time it took, he most likely increased the number of attacks compared to when he did it against me.

That white guy... is he still alive?

While I was looking, the white guy that was lying down at the bored out ground, stood up and cracked his neck as if it was nothing.

He is seriously a crazy existence in every meaning.

Ah, he staggered a bit.

Maybe it did actually have some sort of effect.

"Master, is it okay to look for something for the hero to wear?" (Shiki)

...Just what kind of master and servant relationship is this?

Those are words that make me doubt their relationship itself and the word 'master'.

"Ah, yeah. Do so. Ah~ it hurt. You even used some sort of stiletto in the middle of it. It felt like a thud" (Makoto)

A stiletto he says?

If I remember correctly, it is like hidden daggers?

The one where they equip them in their fists and shoot it out to do damage to the inside of armors.

It exists even in this world.

In Japan I haven't seen it, but I feel like it was a technique that I have been told to be careful of. But to actually hear it from someone is quite fresh.

"Master, I don't think this brings too much harm but..." (Shiki)

"What?" (Makoto)

"I think that it isn't good to get absorbed in the fight that much. I advise that you place

everyone in a part of your head" (Shiki)

"...Understood. I will be careful" (Makoto)

"Then, be careful. Excuse me" (Shiki)

It is obvious, but his attitude is clearly different from when he is talking to me.

To have this Larva obey him, just who and what in the world is he?

My interest was piqued again.

He is... most likely not from Gritonia.

If it were Lorel, Chiya-chan should have known.

Then, Aion?

At that place, I have been to Tsige and I don't know much about the atmosphere of that country.

At the very least, if they had something like this, I think they would have send him to the frontlines a long time ago.

I heard from his Majesty that the country is quite worried about their decline in authority.

"Certainly, it would be better to have something to wear. Get too absorbed in it, huh" (Makoto)

"Hey, could you at least tell me your name?" (Hibiki)

I make up my mind and try asking.

I understand what he is saying and it seems like he understands my words too.

"..."

Ignored?!

I thought the white guy was intently looking at me, but he turned his heels and returned to fight with Io.

A ghastly existence that we have an abnormally low amount of information about.

To entrust my life to someone like him, I even felt disgust towards it.



In the audience room that has turned into a battlefield, a strange silence was born.

The person that is wearing a white suit and fighting against the Demon General Io, Makoto.

At the back of Makoto, the hero party is covered by a barrier from Shiki.

And just at its side, there's Shiki himself.

With his Lich form, he is standing still with 5 rings worn in all the fingers of his left hand.

Hibiki has a big mantle covering her body that Shiki obtained who knows where.

The healing has already been done, and they are unable to move away from this place because of Shiki's glare and words.

They were surprised by the out-of-norm fight, and for Hibiki, she really wanted to go repel the demon race forces that are rampaging in the castle and the town.

The current situation is that it is gradually turning worse.

"...You came out unscathed from that huh. Seriously, you aren't a superior dragon or a spirit inside that suit right? I even feel like there's more than one inside. A guy I can't tell the nature of" (Io)

As if the fight had returned to its initial stage, Io, who felt the meek atmosphere of Makoto, said this as if amazed.

Was the change in the middle his real nature, or was it not?

As expected, even Io can't sound out such a thing in this short amount of time.

"I am not unscathed. It hurt quite a lot. To be able to move this much and on top of that, you have regenerative powers. How unbelievable" (Makoto)

"Hmph. If it weren't in this situation, it wouldn't be bad to enjoy this kind of fight but..."
(Io)

"Hm?"

"Uooooooooo!!!"

Io inhaled greatly and suddenly shouted.

A big voice that would make one wonder if it resonated in the whole region.

Was it anger, or encouragement?

In the shout that continued on for a while, Hibiki and the others cover their ears.

Makoto and Shiki stayed the way they were.

Shiki's robe fluttered, but the two of them didn't show any signs of covering their ears.

"What? Is the real show starting now?" (Makoto)

"No. I was just announcing that I am an incompetent general, that's all. Right now, the people who didn't hear my voice must be receiving a thought transmission and passing it around" (Io)

"?"

"In the people that are participating in this attack, I was given some competent soldiers you see. They are people that my demon general companions went through troubles gathering" (Io)

"..."

That just now was a signal to use them. Maybe they have already used several of them though. What you said before... right, death soldiers. I told my soldiers to literally

become that" (Io)

"Become, you say? They should be going through desperate effort already though" (Makoto)

"No. The latent power of living beings is quite profound and big. I learned this from the white woman that was the companion of that hero there" (Io)

"Your atmosphere... changed. So you were the type of person that used 'ore', huh" (Makoto)

"I will probably have no more chances to act as a general. There's no need to keep up appearances either. It won't be affecting the army itself anyways" (Io)

"That is?" (Makoto)

Makoto looks at the blue plant that Io takes out and asks him.

An item that looks like a rose.

It even looks like a work of art.

When Hibiki confirms that item from afar, she gulped her breath.

Not only her.

Everyone that was inside the barrier of Shiki showed an uncommon state.

Io only laughs lightly at Makoto's question.

"Master! That is a fragment of the 'Rose Sign', an enhancing item. Its pseudonym is 'the evil drug of power', it is said to consume your soul, and in exchange of devouring your whole soul, it provides power to the user! It is normally light brown, so please think of it as being remodelled in some way" (Shiki)

"Fuh, as expected of a Lich. They are knowledgeable about this type of tools. That's exactly right" (Io)

Even when its identity was revealed, Io didn't show any agitation at all.

On the other side, Makoto narrowed his brows.

Well, in his current state where his face is hidden, no one would be able to tell his expression though.

“...Did you make your subordinates carry it as well?” (Makoto)

“It is a battle which many soldiers would be lost after all. It was dangerous to let hyumans hold it, but at first the objective was mainly to collect it. Fortunately, it seems like it takes time to purify this, so I was relieved when we were able to gather quite the amount. However... I didn’t expect that I would be giving the order for forced usage. Well then, just what’s the extent of the improved version of Rona; I will be testing it with my very own body. Rona told me to return no matter what, but having around a hundred subordinates use Rose Sign, and only having me survive is just no. Rejoice. I recognize you as a threat that has enough worth for me to use this” (Io)

“...”

“Gugh!! I see, this is dreadful. This swelling of power. What’s wrong? I will have you accompany me, white guy!” (Io)

“Io, your subordinates are already dea- weakened through the power of Larva. They can’t move properly” (Makoto)

“...The hyumans as well, right? Even if I look like this, I am able to do something like understanding the state of the battlefield. If I can’t use thought transmission just because I am in the middle of battle, I wouldn’t be fit to be a general after all. For the whole capital to be the target... that’s amazing. If we had that power on our side, we would have been able to kill Hibiki before you arrived” (Io)

“Thought transmission huh. My ears hurt. Io, do you understand the meaning of having your subordinates use that item?” (Makoto)

“Of course. My brethrens that are welling up with power will stand up once again, and will slaughter all the hyumans that can’t move. We won’t steal and won’t violate. But, we will kill our enemies. As long as it is alive, it doesn’t matter if it’s men or women of any age. If you want to stop it, I don’t mind you leaving here. I still have my mission of killing the hero after all. I won’t chase you” (Io)

“The war must end in a win, or it will be pointless huh. If all the soldiers that are

attacking here have this kind of mentality as well... they are a threat" (Makoto)

"To think that you would think that way, I am happy. Demon General Io, forward!" (Io)

Makoto grasped that the capital which was gradually turning silent, became enveloped in chaos again.

While slightly holding back his own battle immersion that was accelerating inside of him, he casted his body towards his fight with Io.

On the other hand.

There was someone who reacted heavily to the words of Io.

Hibiki.

Her comrades, the people that love her dearly...

She heard that they are being targeted for slaughter.

And by using Rose Sign to top it off.

Her past companion, Naval, used this tool to sacrifice her own body when fighting against Io.

They are using that very tool to cause a slaughter.

This isn't something forgivable.

She is someone that can look at the death of people in a wider point of view.

She is also able to properly understand the worth other people place on her and their hopes.

That's why, that proposition about leaving the capital temporarily and the sacrifices that this will create, Hibiki was able to accept it.

The intrusion of Io made it difficult to escape so she was unable to implement it though.

But the sacrifices that will be created right now, they are sacrifices that can be stopped.

If the white guy is going to stop the demon general, it is plenty possible to stop the demon army that has turned into death soldiers, is what she thinks.

Even if they are enhanced with the Rose Sign, Hibiki and the others are currently quite recovered already.

There's no point in staying still.

"Don't joke around. I won't overlook such a slaughter. If he is going to stop Io, we will gain control of the town! Everyone, prepare!" (Hibiki)

She stands up.

The mantle leaves her body and her skin is exposed.

As if concording to Hibiki's voice, the party stands up.

They began moving towards leaving the audience room, but then, they notice something.

The barrier has not dissolved and they can't leave outside.

"We can't leave... Larva-dono, release this barrier! We will suppress the chaos in the capital—" (Hibiki)

"I refuse. Yareyare, it was the correct choice to make it so you can't leave. Didn't I say this from the very beginning? My objective is to safeguard the hero. There's nothing that states about the freedom of the hero in this safeguard" (Shiki)

"Io is being held back by your master, isn't it?! It is vexing, but that person is way stronger than my current self. I have understood this after watching. But you see, in that case, there's no reason for us to be here! I am a hero. I understand what needs to be done!" (Hibiki)

"That's reckless" (Shiki)

"...Larva-dono, please listen. We have plenty chance to win. Io won't chase after me. That white guy will most likely hold back Io for a while. If you support him, that will

be certain. And I know this town completely. I won't die no matter what. Even if I have to use guerrilla tactics, I will wipe out the demon race" (Hibiki)

"I am not asking you for the contents of your plan. What I mean by reckless, is the fact that you guys are trying to oppose me. Right, at least show me that you can break this barrier by your own efforts. This is the Kokyu-whatever it is called, no matter the name, this is something that uses as reference a barrier that is pretty strong. It is weaker than the real thing though. If you are unable to do at least this much, you won't be able to save anyone" (Shiki)

"...'If you oppose me, I will use all my power', you won't say that huh. Is it okay with that condition? If we are able to destroy this barrier, you won't stop us from heading to town, right?" (Hibiki)

"Master said half-release, after all. I can't do anything by my own convenience. If you are able to break this barrier, I won't go as far as saying I won't stop you, but I will think about it" (Shiki)

"It is irritating that I have to do so anyways. Can't be helped huh. Let me say this, my attack power is quite up there, you know?" (Hibiki)

"...Do as you wish" (Shiki)

Shiki was looking at the fight of Makoto and Io.

Even if Hibiki were able to destroy the barrier, he just needs to make a new barrier.

He had no intentions of letting Hibiki free.

More importantly, Io.

The tool called Rose Sign that Shiki knows, doesn't have that much potency.

Moreover, the speed in which it devours the soul is quite slower.

It is in the very word, 'improved'.

Makoto has now turned into a defensive fight.

He has done counterattacks, but in appearance, he is being pushed back.

(Well, it's not like he is actually receiving damage, so there's practically no need to worry though) (Shiki)

Is what Shiki thinks.

His master Makoto has high defensive power.

Right now he is using that armor to hide his appearance, so attacks do reach his body, but in normal circumstances, Io wouldn't even be able to touch Makoto at all, is how Shiki thinks.

That's why, he is looking at one of the few battles of Makoto with peace of mind.

He is following his master's order loyally.

Shiki is still preserving his own power.

At worst, if anything were to happen, as long as he, who is specialized in healing magic, is standing at the back, there's no fear of Makoto dying.

(Normally, people who rely on their armor for their defensive power, are brittle when receiving attacks directly. But this doesn't apply to Waka-sama. He possesses quite the amount of endurance against pain. If it's against an opponent so fast that the eye can't catch, it is fine to just finish it off with a spell by increasing its scope, but for that person who is able to bear it normally no matter what is thrown at him, even I don't know how to fight him. That demon general said he was going to show master hell before dying. That's quite pitiful) (Shiki)

Shiki silently overwatches the fight of Io and Makoto.

Just in case Io charges to where they are, Shiki had several spells stocked up.

He is sufficiently prepared.

Shiki felt power activating several times from behind him, but he didn't even turn his head.

He has a grasp of the approximate range, and he understands that they are attacks that can't break the barrier after all.

A remarkably strong power rises.

Shiki showed a slight reaction.

Along with Hibiki's battle shout, an attack from her flashes at the barrier.

But the barrier wasn't destroyed.

"More... power. I can still do it. I will show even more power!!" (Hibiki)

The muttering Hibiki falls down.

If she has lost consciousness, it is good to have silence.

Shiki once again lost interest in her.



"Where... is this?"

Hibiki looks at her surroundings.

She is suspended in the starry sky.

She doesn't fall nor rise.

Without getting unsightly confused and without losing her vigilance, she was trying to understand her surroundings.

"It resembles the time when I was called by the Goddess, but... I feel like this is different" (Hibiki)

Her closest experience to this kind of thing has been in Japan, in the one act where she was called by the Goddess.

But she felt like something was different this time.

It was just her instinct telling her, but Hibiki is putting importance in this sensation.

Thanks to it, she was able to put a good fight against Io, and she was able to bring out

the powers of the silver band and evolve the sword that she received from the Elder Dwarf Beren.

“Nice to see you have come, person who has transferred worlds”

“...Who are you?” (Hibiki)

A voice directly resounds in her head.

As expected, this really does resemble the time with the Goddess, is how Hibiki felt.

“Being asked who I am will only trouble me. I don’t have a name. In the end, this is the only time we will meet, so no need to mind it”

“I am grateful that you have brought me out of the barrier. But if you have business with me, can you leave it for later? Right now I have something I must do no matter what. Return me to the capital” (Hibiki)

“Don’t rush. Your body is still inside that barrier. What’s here is only your soul. Also, the time passage in this place doesn’t even reach an instant on the other side. You can rest assured”

“Instant? Is it okay to think of it as a second?” (Hibiki)

“That’s how it is. Well then, I will continue the talk. Person who has transferred worlds, Otonashi Hibiki”

Hearing the voice that knows of her own circumstances, Hibiki increases her vigilance by a bit.

“...You know that I am a hero, right?” (Hibiki)

“Of course. You and another person, Iwahashi Tomoki. You who has been chosen by the Goddess and holds the mission of being a hero”

“You also know about him?” (Hibiki)

“Yeah. He has already come here after all. Oh, there’s no need to talk about him. What you need to know is about what will happen from now on”

The voice shows slight agitation at the fact that it let out the name of Iwahashi Tomoki.

So it was a verbal slip, is what Hibiki imagines.

In a situation where she practically knows nothing, she didn't even understand if this was an advantage or a disadvantage though.

“From now on?” (Hibiki)

“That's right. You have obtained the qualifications. The qualification for a special privilege given to people that transfer worlds, that is”

“Qualification?” (Hibiki)

“Yeah. It is not such a complicated thing actually. The amount of dying transferred are not low. Saying it in a rough manner, the main point is to strongly think of your own purpose. What you have to do and what you crave for. Well, even if those varieties are good or bad, it doesn't matter”

“Good or bad, you say. I don't understand the meaning” (Hibiki)

“Even if it's love or friendship, even hatred or jealousy... Hm, for some reason, I end up saying more than necessary when talking to you”

“...”

“Doesn't matter the circumstances. Let's continue. I will have you answer several questions”

“A quiz?” (Hibiki)

“No. Questions that have no correct answer. There are quite a lot of those right? Questions that have correct and questions that don't. It's those kind. Depending on that, your privilege will change”

“Privilege... Is it possible to increase my power as well?” (Hibiki)

“The details will come after inquiring your nature. Well then, let's begin. Just what color will be the result~ I am looking forward to it”

.....
.....
“Okay, good work. Fufufu, Hibiki, your results have appeared”

“Make it quick. Even if you tell me time won’t pass, my feelings get agitated. You said something about color, right? Tell me quick” (Hibiki)

“Yes yes, Otonashi Hibiki, you are ‘black’”

“Black?” (Hibiki)

Hearing an unexpected color, Hibiki repeats it.

She hasn’t been compared to black that much.

There’s a lot of good opinions about black, but there’s also a lot of bad ones as well.

There’s the impression of a shadow, and it isn’t a color Hibiki likes that much.

The amount of black clothes she wears are low.

“That’s right. Black. A section of one of the most superior colors”

“Most superior... it is a good result then?” (Hibiki)

Even if she is told the ‘most superior’, she has never heard of a classification in colors.

Hibiki was unable to make a conclusion.

“Yeah, of course. Tomoki was also the same. The transferred people that have come are truly exceptional”

The same as Iwahashi Tomoki.

When Hibiki hears this, her expression darkens.

It isn’t truly the case, but the moment she heard that they were the same, she didn’t feel that good.

“...And so, what does black do anyways?” (Hibiki)

“You see, black is... a color that Gods will never be able to obtain. Just a few rare cases happen where humans are able to obtain this color. Its alias... ‘omnipotent color’. Attack, defense, support, healing, summoning, etc. The amount of things it can’t do are fewer”

“An omnipotent color...” (Hibiki)

“Now then, Hibiki. Let’s make a power. First of all, make suggestions one after the other. I will tell you the price of it. It is okay to decide by taking that into consideration. That is the privilege of the transferred. Oh right, there’s one point I have to warn you about. You can’t choose the same type of system that another person of the same axis of time has chosen. I ended up saying it before, but the other hero has obtained an attack power, so you can’t choose an attack type of power. But well, something like summoning a star is possible though”

“Then a power than can control the world, is also possible?” (Hibiki)

“Of course. The price of that power would be your whole magic power and around 80% of the living beings in that world. You can’t choose who remains, but you will definitely survive”

“...Rejected” (Hibiki)

“I see. The war would definitely finish, you know? I don’t know what that Goddess would say, but she wouldn’t be able to punish you. Ah, I said something unnecessary again”

“Shut up” (Hibiki)

Hibiki ponders.

It seems like the attack system is already in the possession of Tomoki.

In other words, it would be safe to assume that he has an incredibly powerful attack magic.

There’s also the method of attacking by summoning a star and hitting with it.

(Then, should I obtain a defensive magic that can go against Tomoki? No, can't do that. If that happens, I wouldn't be able to destroy even a single one of Larva's barriers. Then, healing? I do think this is useful, but if I am unable to save the capital, there's no point. A power that can become an attack in essence. It is possible but...) (Hibiki)

The suggestion was so grand and vague that Hibiki is troubled.

Then... after enumerating the things she can't do, she felt some sort of aim in mind.

"You won't tell me the things I can't do aside from the attack system?" (Hibiki)

"Fufufu. I can't do that. You have to choose the power you want yourself. That is also one of the rules. It isn't something that's normally asked, but you have quite the good head there"

Maybe the voice found her question interesting, he answered in an amused manner.

His answer was rejection though.

"Hey... is it possible to return to the past?" (Hibiki)

After a while of thinking, Hibiki opened her mouth.

It isn't something that will save the current capital, but it is one method to do everything again.

"Sailing against the currents of time? If it's that, it is possible. If you repeat the times on a same world several times, the price gets higher, so it is more practical to narrow your cases though"

"Repeating several times... in other words, if I return to the same past, the price will get higher, right? Is it not okay to just place a restriction on the amount of times? There's no point in going to the pasts of other worlds anyways" (Hibiki)

"It is not like there's no point. The parallel worlds are also worlds as well after all. Because two humans have influxed into that world, right now an enormous parallel world has been born, so the world you think about is your own world. Isn't it interesting to test out the probabilities in different worlds? You might be able to create a world where the capital has not turned that way, after all"

The voice states an opinion as if it is suggesting time travel.

“By the way, what is the price?” (Hibiki)

“If you are going to sail through the times of the same world, it will only be once. You will die at 30 years old. If you are going to move through parallel worlds, your lifespan will be scraped off one year each time”

“...That’s messed up” (Hibiki)

“Ahaha. There’s a hidden technique about this as well. You have to give up being a human, but if you change into a race that doesn’t grow old and has no lifespan, the demerit would disappear. If you weren’t black, you wouldn’t be able to use a power that interferes with time, but after leaving this place, there won’t be problems if you just forsake your humanity”

“Thanks for your kindness. A retry is, in essence, practically impossible huh” (Hibiki)

“Yeah. Time travel is a return, not a retry. If something like a loop is okay and if it’s a parallel world, it can be given to you at a low risk though”

“...You, do you want me to have a power that can manipulate time?” (Hibiki)

“I only honestly answered your question, that’s all. No other meaning”

(If possible, I want something that can be used several times and the price is small. Something that can break-down the current situation) (Hibiki)

Being troubled, Hibiki sinks into silence.

The voice doesn’t seem to be giving any suggestions itself. It doesn’t propose anything.

“...Something that can disperse any magic. A dispel magic is possible?” (Hibiki)

“Uwa, what a boring power. Well, it is possible. The price would be magic power only. Right, if it’s the current you, you would be able to use it 5-6 times without any problems”

“I see. Meaning, there’s no permanent price, right?” (Hibiki)

“Yeah. But something like dispel, isn’t that kid there able to use it as well?”

The voice nonchalantly says something surprising.

“Ha?!”

“The kid fighting that giant. He said that he is able to use dispel. Another person is already able to use it. In other words, it is a power that can be obtained through effort. Isn’t that boring?”

“The white guy. That guy, he is able to do something like that?!” (Hibiki)

“Why don’t you try asking him? If it’s your request, he might hear it out”

“...Wait a moment. ‘Him’? Do you know that white guy?! Could it be, he received that special effect hero set from here?!” (Hibiki)

“Buh– Hahahahaaha!! There isn’t a single person that has wished for something as unsightly as that. Well, if asked if I know him, I do though. He is a hyuman after all. I wonder... I don’t think he will ever come here”

“If you know him, you should be able to talk with him right?! Hm? If it’s my request he might hear it out? Does that mean—?!” (Hibiki)

“Sadly to say but, he is not an acquaintance. I just one-sidedly know him. Also, I can’t be that supportive. Okay, this talk is over. Hibiki, decide your power”

“Kugh... you were the one who brought the topic!” (Hibiki)

The voice stays silent.

Hibiki once again ponders.

“...In that case...”



“Too bad. That girl didn’t choose the time power. But even so, for her to imagine a power that is practically the ground of being a hero. Hmph mph, that kind of power is a first”

The voice muttered in a space where no one is anymore.

Even when Hibiki is not there anymore, its appearance was nowhere to be found.

"A power that is passively activated. To change the concept that people place on her into power, huh. She is a charismatic girl so, I wonder, just how much will this enlarge her? The price was only to decrease her amount of magic power, so it is something she would soon get back anyways"

Hibiki's guess was right.

It seems like the voice was trying to make her choose the time travelling power.

It wasn't thinking about it that strongly though.

"If she were to explosively create more parallel worlds, I thought I wouldn't get bored though"

A slightly disappointed voice echoes in the empty space.



"What?"

"I have destroyed it, Larva-dono! I will be leaving okay?!" (Hibiki)

With a level of power completely different from before, she destroyed the barrier from the inside.

At the unknown power-up of the hero, Shiki reflexively turns around.

"You are practically a different person. Is that also the power of a hero?" (Shiki)

"That's a secret. Do you intend to stop us?" (Hibiki)

"It's master's order after all. Hm?" (Shiki)

Shiki turns his gaze away from the spirited eyes of Hibiki, and looks at a certain place.

There's nothing. Hibiki thought that he was looking at a corner of the ceiling.

“That helps! I will be going now!” (Hibiki)

“No, wait! Something is coming! Master!” (Shiki)

Hibiki and the others use the opening he created to leave the audience room.

While clicking his tongue, Shiki calls them out and Makoto as well.

Makoto who was fighting the shining Io, takes distance from Io the moment he hears Shiki’s words.

But Io didn’t let him escape.

Within the multicolored storm of fists, Makoto was swallowed again.

“Larva! It’s okay! Go together with the hero! I am leaving them in your hands. Are you serious? In this situation, even you are coming, Sofia?!” (Makoto)

Maybe Makoto had a bit of leeway, he answers the voice of Shiki.

He understood that the situation was deteriorating.

“What are you saying? Your opponent is me right?! Or are you saying it is fine to chase after Hibiki?!” (Io)

“I can’t let you chase after the hero! It should be fine to just do a rematch after the winter passes! Withdraw!” (Makoto)

“A youngster like you that doesn’t even know about war, shouldn’t be prattling like you know! It is necessary to defeat the threats no matter what!” (Io)

Makoto knew about the being that was drawing near.

Inside of him, that person is the strongest opponent he has fought with.

An opponent he has clashed against with hostility, ill will, and bloodthirst.

“They are planning on doing something! Be careful!” (Makoto)

“Understood. I won’t let them see here. Depending on the situation, please go ahead

and take it off" (Shiki)

"Understood. It will probably turn out that way" (Makoto)

Shiki turns his back towards Makoto and chases after the hero with teleportation.

Makoto saw off his follower as he felt his suit creak at the fists that have increased its power to a stupidly high level.

Changing his [Sakai] from perception to strengthening, he makes a recovery.

While at it, he clashed his fist against the fist that was approaching him with all he had, and a recoil occurred.

Distance was created between them once again.

Without magic, he also had no winning move, is something he has thought as well.

As long as the time is up, Makoto thought that his win would be decided. And there was no chance he would lose.

For Makoto who was trying not to immerse too much into the fight, he was even thinking about having Io live if it was possible.

If it's an enemy, he will kill.

Right now he was fighting in a way that he doesn't have to enter that step.

But if the enemies increase, the story changes.

Shiki's words were a grateful thing for Makoto.

Because if he is able to use magic, his safety levels will increase after all.

Increasing his physical attacks is not an advantage in any way for his current self.

The suit has no merit aside from hiding his appearance.

That's why he let Hibiki go.

If Shiki accompanies her, he judged that she would be safe.

Because he knows that Sofia will definitely aim for him.

Makoto had a strange confidence in this.

Makoto looks above in an annoyed manner.

—At that moment.

A countless number of swords rained down on the capital.

A light and an explosion.

It looked like the metropolis of Limia Kingdom was approaching destruction.

Chapter 158

The revelation of the Dragon Slayer

“At this kind of times, I am jealous that you have a toughness that can shrug anything off by regenerating”

In the audience room that had turned silent.

In that place where it has completely turned into a stargazing garden, I release my defensive stance.

“So you can turn into a state where you can fight against the current me at practically the same speed huh. That you don’t even need regeneration power, I can only laugh!”
(Io)

Io who recovered at a relatively fast speed, releases a combination with his four arms.

His aim is my chest.

The four attacks were with the stiletto version. After being blown away and destroying several pillars along the way, I felt my breathing clog up.

That hurts.

I was thinking about taking off my disguise and erasing the effect of that self-sacrificing item of his, but when I checked the abilities of this transformation suit that Mio humbly made, I found something.

Inside the helmet, there’s a futuristic three-dimensional image of its manual projected at the retina.

How uselessly high spec.

The ones with the spider mark are the special techniques list huh.

I didn’t use anything aside from the kick, and there was a whatchamacallit before the

kick itself, but I felt like I would get exhausted by doing it, so I decided to omit it though.

When I omitted it, there was a polite voice telling me about the input miss and that there would be a penalty of 40% reduction of damage.

Just how far is this a toy and just how far is this serious, I don't know.

Forced transformation release.

From what Mio commented, it seems like it is okay to use it when a similar hero appears as an enemy.

'If you use it, you will also be a dark hero-desu', is the part I ignored.

When I look at the ability in detail, it was a dispel magic with heavy restrictions.

The magic spell is several times easier to use than this, but when thinking about the connection between Io and Rona, this one is better.

My face won't get exposed after all.

Also, the condition about being obligatory to make contact with the target is actually pretty easy to clear in Io's case.

Even if I just wait, he will be coming himself anyways.

And it seems like he won't be breaking with the attack after all.

"That toughness is not only coming from your armor. Even if you were using an enhancing magic, I can't think of you as a hyuman" (Io)

"I will take it as a compliment. Even when you have such an indiscriminate attack like that, your target is still me. What about the hero?" (Makoto)

"...The reactions of my subordinates are mostly gone. Instead of looking for the hero

in all this rubble, I will first deal with you. Fortunately, I still have several hours left”
(Io)

“The person that made this attack, from what I remember, should be a companion of yours though. What’s that about?” (Makoto)

“So you know. You really are even more of an unknown being. But if you know about them, you should also know that they are not people that one can place collars around, right? Their fangs were coincidentally not directed at our side, so we are using them, that’s all the relationship we have” (Io)

“...I see” (Makoto)

“And, what is with your stance? What are you going to show me next?” (Io)

“Who knows. Just wait and see” (Makoto)

I stand up at half-length and raise my right hand high.

The knife hand is facing Io.

Io is exchanging his soul for power. I find the core of the magic formation that is cladding his body in light particles.

In Mio’s comment, it said: ‘Use the eye of your heart to find the weak point of your opponent’ or something like that. It seriously didn’t help at all.

I expand [Sakai] to a range that covers me and Io, and grasp the flow of power.

Because I reflexively changed into defense when the light swords rained down after all.

That I was able to instantly change it back must be because of the fruits of my hard work.

I see.

At his right shoulder, close to the joint huh.

“Then, show it to me!” (Io)

“ ”

Io who had taken a muscle bane and obtained scary acceleration speed, charges at me in a straight line.

By nature, just by doing this, a giant is a threat.

Their body weight is a weapon.

And if that body weight is coming from his muscles, that danger increases by several times more.

If a giant learns martial arts, a hyuman who is by nature losing in body weight overwhelmingly, has no chance of winning, is how I think.

Big, fast, and tough.

It is truly great that I didn't encounter this kind at Japan.

“?!”

I calmed down and steadied my aim.

But Io suddenly kicked the ground and jumped through the air.

This is agitating!

It is agitating, but it is a cold sensation I have felt when I was fighting him.

Without turning too much attention to it, I place my awareness in several areas of the place.

...

It is fine for it to be a mutual strike.

Right now, his strongest advantage, that weapon, I will be stealing it.

I drop the kick that was approaching me.

If I received that one attack, leaving aside the damage, my posture would break.

But with my half-length stance, I am able to easily avoid it.

Success.

I couldn't find the opening that should come after a landing.

2 arms are coming to grab my head.

It is here.

"[Spell Break]" (Makoto)

"!!!"

As if dropping directly from below, I cut Io's right shoulder with my right arm.

Just as aimed, I made a straight line at the place where the Rose Sign's power concentrated the most, and my right hand reached the floor.

My head was grabbed and I was thrown.

The fist combo didn't even reach ten hits before stopping.

If it's only this, there's no problem.

The suit creaks, but it doesn't result in destruction.

A kick approaches my face.

I curl up my body and do a kick myself, I meet him with the same attack.

Even if I receive some attacks, as long as I destroy my opponent's strongest weapon, it will become more easy.

The return for this is higher than the amount of punches I have received.

"Fuh~" (Makoto)

I exhale.

I make my respiration as big as possible.

I return my heart to a point where I don't enter to the cold side anymore.

And I look at Io.

He was standing in place just like that.

The place I cut has already been healed.

As expected of his regenerative powers.

However.

There's no light coming from his body anymore.

“...What did you do?” (Io)

“I destroyed the Rose Sign” (Makoto)

“Destroyed you say?!” (Io)

“That's right, destroy. The gone portion will not return, but that power has already disappeared” (Makoto)

“Impossible. Such a crazy thing is just...” (Io)

“You shouldn't have any spares of an item of that type. Do you still... intend to fight?” (Makoto)

Io, Sofia, and also Lancer.

I don't want to fight them all at the same time.

If asked if this castle can still be resided in or used, my answer would be no though.

If I go against those kind of people here, this place will, without doubt, turn into less than an empty plot of land.

With those light swords and the explosion, the capital is already done.

They would have to use another town as their capital, or create a new one all over again.

I think that the demon race has gained at least 2 or 3 years against Limia Kingdom with this move.

I don't know how much damage Gritonia has received, but even if Stella is forfeited, the demon race still has sufficient plusses out of this.

As long as the hero is in good health, I don't think Io and the few demon race troops remaining have any intentions of withdrawing though.

"King of dragons that live for eternity..."

"?"

"Sofia... this is, an enhancing aria? That woman, why did she suddenly appear in the capital? What happened with the Empire?" (Io)

An enhancing aria.

With Io's words, I notice a voice that resounds in my whole body.

This is certainly Sofia's voice.

She isn't just shouting loudly, she is doing an aria.

She is at the sky.

I have already grasped her location.

...I know that it is pointless with someone like her though.

What she is doing right now is purposely continuing her aria in a wide space and have her voice echo to declare her spell in a grand way. A special type of aria.

I can see quite the elevation of power.

Just, the composition of the spell is easy to read, and it is easy for your opponent to make a countermeasure for it.

In other words...

If it's a spell that is seen for the first time, it is quite effective.

Even so, in towns and castles there's a nullifying barrier for large scale magic, so even if you fortify your magic that acts like artillery and shoot it to the town, there's not much point.

For them to have a barrier that nullifies magic of a certain level is quite well thought.

If it is a lower leveled spell, it will be discovered when doing a fortifying aria, so the town is most likely taking precautions in that point. It is also normal for the power itself to be insufficient.

“Blade Dragon, Water Dragon, Fire Dragon, Shadow Dragon...” (Sofia)

Quite the long aria.

On top of that, the flow is directed to the inside.

Is it a buff skill for herself?

From what I remember, support magic that uses aria and is targeted to yourself has quite the brutal efficacy.

Io is probably measuring the true intention of Sofia as well. He is looking at her grain-like figure that is floating in the sky.

If even the ally in outline doesn't know, there's no way I would understand.

But I will prepare myself for it.

It seems like Sofia's aria will be continuing for quite a while and Lancer seems to have descended to town, but hasn't shown much movement.

Shiki is also in that state. Leaving aside if he is able to defeat Lancer or not, he will most likely be able to hold him back.

After that, I can only pray that senpai doesn't do anything reckless.

This is the first time I see such a busy-body senpai.

From what I remember, she was a person that always finished things with a composed face though...

When one lives at a parallel world, many things are just different huh.

While being vigilant of Io, inside of the suit, I confirm my body enhancement and the magic power construction.

A rematch with the Dragon Slayer huh.

“Everything else, omitted!” (Sofia)

“Hah?!” (Makoto)

I unintentionally let out a voice of surprise.

Power converges at Sofia in high speed.

How irrational!

“Die”

That voice was sensed by my [Sakai] and reverberated in my ears when I was turning.

It reached the moment a flash flew straight at the crown of my head.



I am confronting Sofia.

While feeling the gaze of Io from my back.

Damn it, the suit is...

“You won’t die from that huh. Not only that, I only destroyed the suit and you were left unscathed. As always, you are way too interesting” (Sofia)

A ferocious smile I am familiar with.

A sword with the same color and is smaller in size compared to the one in my memories.

Even if I knew it with [Sakai], the feeling of confronting it in front of me is as expected, different.

“Sofia Blue” (Makoto)

“Yeah, that’s right. I am honored that you remember me. After that time, a lot has happened you see. I was sure you wouldn’t die from something of that extent” (Sofia)

“I was slightly hoping you were killed by that so called ‘Devil’ though. But as expected, you are still alive huh” (Makoto)

I barely didn’t encounter it though.

Seriously, what a lucky person.

“? What are you even saying? But I am happy. You were able to endure that after all. You are a lot stronger than that Empire hero-kun” (Sofia)

“...You killed the hero?” (Makoto)

Hey hey.

If she killed the hero, the Goddess would definitely get angry.

Maybe the Goddess will even bring it on.

Is Sofia gonna take that on too?

“No. Still not. He showed me something interesting, so I let him go” (Sofia)

“It seems like I also entertained you, so how about you leave for today?” (Makoto)

“Impossible. Lancer and I have recognized you as an obstacle. You will probably, no, definitely become an hindrance for us” (Sofia)

“...Intuition?” (Makoto)

“Yeah. This time, I will certainly slice into pieces that defense of yours” (Sofia)

I can feel that the blood thirst residing in Sofia’s eyes were rising close to its critical point.

If I fight with the current her, I must concentrate even deeper into the fight compared to when I was fighting Io, or I will end up hurt.

But Sofia is an enemy.

She has already declared her will to kill me. There’s no enemy as hostile as her.

Then what’s so bad about concentrating?

It’s fine as long as I return alive.

That’s right.

As long as I don’t forget myself, I will be fine.

“Now then...”

“Both of you, stop!”

“?!!”

“Ara”

“Rona? Why are you here?”

Rona?!

Right now when my face is revealed because of Sofia’s attack, she has come here?!

Just how unlucky am I?!

The Goddess, having to transform, Hibiki-senpai, Sofia, and now even Rona?!

It is like playing poker with joker being valid and having a five card thrown at me!

I was doing my best in Rotsgard, and was being happy about my straight and flush!
And yet!

Everything is going down the drain.

No.

This time is, as expected, no good.

Not only me, the company; I have even dragged everyone of Asora in this.

Tomoe, Mio, and Shiki as well.

I definitely cannot give up.

Even if it's by force, even if it's against their will...

Even if the form and shape has slightly changed, I have to accomplish this no matter what.

Like hell I will give up.

“Sofia, and also the white... eh, you...” (Rona)

“...”

It has been exposed.

Damn it. When the time comes, it just happens so easily.

“Rai... dou?” (Rona)

“What?! This guy is Raidou?!” (Io)

It seems like Io also knows the name Raidou.

If Rona told him the features of my face, even without Rona coming, it would have been finished the moment I turned my face huh.

"Ara, you know Rona as well, Raidou?" (Sofia)

Sofia says so as if just remembering.

How dare you say it as if it's nothing.

"Raidou, what is the meaning of this? You should be at Rotsgard at this moment, right? Why are you at the capital? Why are you being glared by Io and Sofia?" (Rona)

"...That is..." (Makoto)

"It seems like he exchanged an agreement with the Goddess. And he wants to save the Kingdom's hero and bring down Stella" (Io)

"Wow, Raidou. For you to lie to me, well done. As I thought, you were really the pawn of the Goddess huh. Even so, Limia is misfortunate. If you hadn't come, the castle and the town wouldn't have turned out like this. If you went to the imperial capital, Mitsurugi and I wouldn't have come here you know. How regrettable" (Sofia)

"...Agreement. I only made an agreement with the Goddess. We only made a promise to each other. It is not like I am her pawn" (Makoto)

Sofia uses an excessive gesture of surprise from the words of Io.

It is crumbling.

I felt a lot of things crumbling.

"Raidou, you promised that you would meet Demon Lord-sama, right? Then, you fighting the demon race, isn't that an action that goes against your words?" (Rona)

Rona.

Even though you didn't try to understand the hidden meaning of my own words.

She is probably saying this because she considers me easy.

For her, I must have been quite an easy to utilize hyuman in Rotsgard.

If Shiki weren't there, I would have most likely been used even more.

"It is certainly true that I made a promise to meet the demon lord. But, I don't remember promising to not hinder the demon race in any way. Rona, you must understand what I am trying to say here, right? I was asked to protect the hero and capitulate Stella. This is something that can be done even without killing the demon race. If you don't want to lose brethrens, give up this time" (Makoto)

"Just a few days ago you called me Rona-san though. I see. The variant strife at Rotsgard angered Raidou this much huh. You didn't seem like you had any special attachment to hyumans, so that should have had an effect in your strenuous life as a merchant there though?" (Rona)

"...By killing all the merchants that antagonized me?" (Makoto)

"The variants that the demon race released did whatever they wanted. So they won't make you take responsibility, nor will they suspect you. It just happened to occur, after all. Raidou and the others were just taking refuge, and after that, the reinforcement units of the different countries would appear and subjugate the variants. If you just returned to your business, you might have had a better environment for your work. That incident shouldn't have that many demerits for you" (Rona)

"That's unneeded help" (Makoto)

"...Right. Larva, no, Shiki huh. It is a company that has that kind of person close after all. Because of ethics, I didn't get involved much in it. But for you guys to have a part that schemed from the dark, it was quite the miscalculation. To think that in the act of being a naive and kind merchant, you were able to obtain the cooperation of that Larva" (Rona)

"I have done some cleaning at Rotsgard" (Makoto)

"I have gotten the report of it" (Rona)

"...The demon race should have been away from the town though?" (Makoto)

Isn't the report way too fast?

"Yeah, the demon race, that is" (Rona)

A demi-human then?

Looking at the army that Io leads, I have understood that the blue-skinned demons are not the only enemies of the hyumans.

I see. So there was a collaborator within the demi-humans huh.

Even if they have numbers, the ones who have enemies on all sides are the hyumans.

“That’s crooked” (Makoto)

“I did protect my promise with you, you know? How about it. Want to make a deal with me again? I will support your business in the demon race territory with all I have. Of course, I won’t stop you from doing business in the hyuman countries. I won’t interfere with it either. In exchange, withdraw from here” (Rona)

“...I did tell you that I have a promise with the Goddess. Rona, you should be the one taking Io and returning to the demon base fast. And after that, have the personnel of Stella Fortress evacuate. If you leave them there, it will only increase the pointless sacrifices” (Makoto)

“Sofia there has already obtained power surpassing that of a hyuman, you know? Also, adding Io as well, do you think you will end up fine after that?” (Rona)

“...I have also been told many times that I breach common sense. No need to worry. It is fine. Rona, if you want to, how about joining as well? Because it seems like you are underestimating me a bit here after all” (Makoto)

“Wa?” (Rona)

Rona is left speechless.

These are words that don’t fit me much.

But in this occasion, no matter if it’s two or three, it would be the same.

It wouldn’t be too much for Shiki, but I wouldn’t mind even if Lancer were to come as well.

Concentrate, concentrate.

My magic has already been unbanned.

I should debut the results of my training.

Just how far can I go?

It wouldn't be bad to confirm it with my enemies.

"Rona, those words are not haughtiness. Just a few moments ago, I used Rose Sign and was unable to finish him" (Io)

"ROSE—?! Io, I told you to return no matter what, right?! Why did you use something like that?! I had Reft hold it, so why do you have it?!" (Rona)

"Like hell I can let only my subordinates hold something like that. Also, Reft was an adjutant of mine in the past. He agreed to my point. Also, if I am able to bring down the hero here, I don't mind leaving the path to the future generations. She had become stronger than expected after all" (Io)

"Listen here! You who climbed up till the ranks of demon general, don't go easily saying that you will die and leave the path to others! It is certainly true that the Lord we serve is the same, but the direction of that loyalty is different. I am not so narrow-minded as to not approve of a rare type of military man like you, Io. If you want to leave the path to others by all means, why didn't you become an instructor and properly pass on that technique of yours?" (Rona)

"Ah, no well, sorry" (Io)

"And? The time you have left is?" (Rona)

"Well, that is..." (Io)

"There's already no light coming out at all... You can't return to the metropolis anymore?" (Rona)

Rona makes a voice that one can feel bitterness.

This person does have affection towards her companions huh.

No, Io also has an expression of surprise, so maybe the face she is showing is quite rare?

Sofia is pointing her sword at me, but she isn't moving.

While surprised, I stealthily put [Sakai] in concealment and finish expanding my power.

Compared to all the misfortune combo I have received, this is a small blessing.

"The effect of Rose Sign is gone" (Io)

"...I see. Do you have any words you want to leave? No matter who, I will take responsibility and make sure those words reach that person" (Rona)

"No well, that man Raidou, cut it off" (Io)

"..."

"While the Rose Sign was activated, Raidou forcefully negated the Rose Sign. I don't know what he did though" (Io)

"...Eh? Then, could that mean..." (Rona)

"...It is still not certain that I will die" (Io)

"!!! Then say so from the beginning! How misleading!!!" (Rona)

"More like, you should calm down. You were the one who didn't let me talk properly" (Io)

"Uuuh"

Rona glares at me.

No no, I am not at fault here, you know?

Or more like, from what Rona has said, she should actually be thanking me.

"Fufufu... fufufu, ahahahahaaha!!" (Sofia)

The big laugh of Sofia rang in the audience room.

Even if the night sky is visible, an invisible barrier is placed here.

It is the support barrier that temporarily lost its effect because of the light swords.

As expected of the capital.

I expected no less from the castle of a major power.

Even if it's destroyed, it is made so it can reactivate.

After she finished laughing for a moment, she looked at everyone here.

I thought that this would thin down her motivation.

But if it's her, that's just a fleeting dream though.

"I see! Even when Io placed his life on the line, he couldn't deal any proper damage! Fufu, fufufu! It is great that I 'released' first. If I am not in full-power, I might not be able to win" (Sofia)

"Full-power, of the Dragon Slayer huh" (Io)

Io mutters as if sighing.

"I feel like taking refuge" (Rona)

"Same here" (Makoto)

"Don't say that. You have that much worth, Raidou" (Sofia)

Sofia makes an evil smile like the one children make when they think up something bad.

"Ah right, Rona. About the matter of Seiko" (Sofia)

"What is it so suddenly?" (Rona)

"The name of the Devil, I remembered just now" (Sofia)

"Hah?" (Rona)

The name of the Devil?

As I thought, Sofia did fight against the Devil that was able to create a lake?

And she is still alive.

What impressive life power.

I was strangely moved by the battle junky.

“Let’s go for a rematch, Devil Raidou!” (Sofia)

“.....”

“?!”

“Devil?!”

Placing the one-handed sword that has some sort of red light clad on it and has extended its reach to the front, Sofia charges at me.

...Eh?

Devil?

Me?

Devil?!

Why do my fights with her always end up like this?!

My thoughts were temporarily stopped and I was able to somehow bring it back. While still stirred up, I clash with the Dragon Slayer.

The figure of Sofia disappears.

I know.

This is her conventional method.

I don't know where her attack will come from.

That's why, I aimed for this kind of power.

Different from the time against Io, I open my legs around shoulder width and stand in place.

I don't think about evading. This is a stance for an exchange of blows.

Gakin—!!!

An ear-piercing sound.

It was from the left huh.

"This is!!" (Sofia)

"I faced quite the painful time with your surprise attacks after all. It just means that I have also gotten stronger" (Makoto)

Sofia's sword stopped in a place a bit further away from me.

No, I 'stopped it'.

"Ah, I thought I felt something. Raidou, when did you learn to speak? Does that have to do with you getting stronger?" (Sofia)

Changing her expression slightly, Sofia grabs a black darkness mass with her free left hand and pushes it towards me.

That also makes a dull sound and stops in the same place as the sword.

This woman, the elements she can use have increased from last time?

"Common language huh. I learned that just a few moments ago. What's wrong Sofia? Your attacks are not reaching at all. How about using that red ki from before?"

(Makoto)

I change [Sakai] from concealment to strengthening.

Dense bluish magic power spreads out from my body and takes form.

“Blade Dragon’s sword, Fire Dragon’s flame. Do you intend to block it?” (Sofia)

“It is a prided attack of yours that you tried using to kill me in one hit, right? I am telling you that it is okay to try it again” (Makoto)

I can tell that Io and Rona were gulping their breath from behind me.

Io is not moving yet huh.

Or is he measuring the possibility of doing a joint front that doesn’t entangle Sofia in it?

The thin sword of Sofia gets clad in a strong red light again and gets longer.

Here it comes.

“Then let’s test it. I will also be exposing that trick you did just now!” (Sofia)

A flash.

Without taking a stance against the sword that is coming right from the front, I just watch over it.

Sofia went at it straight. It collided with the bluish magic power enveloping my surroundings.

And then...

That swung attack left some sort of colored trail, and as if her jumping back was some sort of signal, it exploded.

Just like those light swords. Was Sofia specialized in fire element?

Within the time my field of vision was clearing, that question popped up.

"Hyuman shaped... Is that constructed with magic power? No, but that is... no way"
(Sofia)

"...That is his... true armor huh" (Io)

As expected of a demon general.

Since it is not concealed, it can be seen and analyzed as well.

The gears in my brain are not fast, that's why, instead of something that is scary strong depending on the way it is used, I wanted something simple that, even when discovered, it would still be the same.

And this is it.

From my body, the silhouette of the upper half of a human is constructed in a size slightly bigger than Io.

Something that is created by my magic power.

尊
世界道中

Tsukiga Michibiku Isekai Dōchū

8.5

Azumi Kei

あづみ圭



アルファポリス

It doesn't matter if it is discovered and it is able to deal with surprise attacks. Even I who can't use a giant amount of magic power at once, this method allows me to utilize a large amount of magic power.

"...It isn't a barrier against physical attacks, right? Raidou, are you sane? Having that much defensive power, and you are telling me that you have obtained another defensive skill?!" (Sofia)

"I can easily endure the charged attack of a Dragon Slayer. I have gained confidence now, Sofia" (Makoto)

"There was no magic activation either. There was no rebound characteristic of barriers. Just what does this mean? That thing clearly blocked my attack physically, right?" (Sofia)

Sofia is making a face she never made once in the past.

So she had that much confidence in that one attack huh.

Or maybe this ability I have obtained was completely out of her expectations.

Ah, I thought this felt familiar.

That's the same face Tomoe, Mio, and Shiki made.

"Yeah. I can materialize magic power. I can also return it to its natural state as well. The minus is that I can't take out its visibility, but I had another method to hide it anyways. That defensive power, is just like how I showed you just now" (Makoto)

The attack of Sofia and the explosion as well, didn't put any sort of damage to the magic power body (temporary name).

Well, of course, it doesn't only defend.

Even in attack, it is quite the foul play.

...I had a lot of hardships.

The materializing in itself and that domain and form as well.

As a result, I took as reference a certain fighting game that has a character with a spirit.

“Materialization of magic power huh. I have never heard of that before” (Sofia)

Sofia’s words.

Well, yeah.

Until the time Eva-san showed me that thesis, I also had no idea about it. And there were no other thesis that were similar to that one.

In this world, it is a technique that was completely given up on after all.

“Rona, what is the materialization of magic power? Making things with magic power?”
(Io)

“It is probably different. What Raidou is doing is... giving the physical attribute to magic power. Is how I think” (Rona)

“In other words, that mass of magic power shaped as the upper half of a hyuman, if it wanted to, it would be able to exchange fists as well? Isn’t that awesome?! If it is possible to deploy it in that way, magicians would also be able to add to their defense”
(Io)

“Yeah, probably. But... even the demon race has given up on that technique. The cost and performance is just way too bad after all” (Rona)

The tone of Rona was as if she was having a nightmare. She looks at the hyuman shape and me with eyes of disbelief.

“Io, if it is you, would you think that using one gold as material to make a copper coin is impressive?” (Rona)

“...No? I would actually think that’s stupid” (Io)

“Right? That’s exactly it. The materialization of magic power is just way too disbalanced. Honestly speaking, it is abnormally inefficient. There’s place to research in the change of specific substances in magic power though” (Rona)

“Is it different from physical barriers?” (Io)

"Sofia said it as well right? A physical barrier is a spell that activates by reacting to attacks of weapons and fists. What Raidou is doing is... not even magic. I don't understand. Why did Raidou obtain that kind of skill?" (Rona)

Rona is grumbling as she enquires.

"Sofia, this time it's my turn" (Makoto)

For me who couldn't put a proper use to the magic power no matter how much I had, this power opened a large amount of possibilities. A revolutionizing thing.

First of all, the Dragon Slayer in front of me.

I will defeat this one first and conquer one of my traumas.



Chapter 159

Realizing he is the Devil

“Just as it is big, the speed isn’t much to consider huh!”

Dodging the fist that the magic power body punched out, Sofia jumps to close range.

She came at me with several attacks using her red light cladded sword.

But, it didn’t reach me.

“Well, I am not a master in martial arts after all. At any rate, those are quite the strong attacks. It doesn’t even compare to last time” (Makoto)

“...That’s obvious! This is—” (Sofia)

“The power of dragons huh. Taking into account the aria, did you borrow the power of another superior dragon?” (Makoto)

“How about this?!” (Sofia)

Not even an answer.

The figure of Sofia disappears.

It must be her prided teleportation.

Just that, it is slightly different from before.

At that time, she was exchanging her position with swords, but it looked like she is currently using a different method to teleport.

Is it the power of a shadow dragon or something?

Diagonally to my front, at mid-air, I feel her presence.

As if shouldering her back, she prepares her sword and around her chest there's a red sphere.

A long distance attack?

Sofia swings her sword diagonally and leaves a trail.

At that moment, the red sphere turns into something similar to a laser and heads towards me.

I reflexively use the magic power body's hand to stop it.

Crush it and erase it.

"Hmph~ it was like a laser. Is that the power of the fire dragon that you mentioned in your aria? When talking about a fire superior dragon, it would be the crimson fire dragon "Crimson Light Akari" huh" (Makoto)

"...This didn't work either. Crimson Light is the one that holds the strongest attack power among the dragon race though" (Sofia)

The Dragon Slayer that landed glares at me with intense eyes.

"I don't remember being hated by a dragon though" (Makoto)

Actually, I am being liked way too much by a dragon that has both sexes and it's even troubling me.

"Ara, don't worry. It is not like Raidou is being hated!" (Sofia)

Without learning, she charges at me again.

While repelling, I also launch my own attack.

"!!!"

The fist is evaded once again and, from the surface of that fist, a magic formation expands. From there, a laser type of attack like the one Sofia used, was shot.

But... Tch.

It was a surprise attack, and yet, she was able to block it with her sword.

As always, she has crazy intuition and an unbelievable sword.

But there's no need to care about that.

This magic power body also serves the purpose of strengthening my spells.

Actually, that's its main purpose.

I contain the magic power that has come out from my body in my surrounding.

Set [Sakai] at perception.

Because if it's her attack power, there's no need to use strengthening even if her power increases by double after all.

"How about, this?" (Makoto)

I look at where Sofia has taken distance, and make a short aria.

Several ripples appear from the front part of the magic power body.

Balls the size of fingers detach from the human shape and float.

"Is that, a defense mechanism?" (Sofia)

Maybe she understood what I intended to do, Sofia mutters as if groaning.

"It is not only that right, Sofia?" (Makoto)

Immediately after the balls trembled slightly...

An attack similar to the laser from before was shot in several small lines towards Sofia.

Bundles of light that were no fewer than hundred were heading at Sofia, but she uses her usual teleportation to evade it.

But that's futile.

Her teleportation isn't the type that lets her escape into a different space.

She is just moving to a different location.

On top of that, from what I have seen, there's quite the limitation in distance.

Yeah.

There she is.

With [Sakai], I find Sofia hiding under cover.

To all the lights that were heading against a wall because they lost their target... I tell them her location.

"They curved?!" (Sofia)

All of the lights changed their direction and lunged towards the mountain of rubble that Sofia was hiding in.

Curving a laser type attack.

It is one of the dreams of men. Natto missile is also good.

The voice of Rona that I heard from the back was dyed in surprise.

Homing trait isn't that unusual of a thing though.

What I did just now wasn't homing but something close to adding a new input. It doesn't look that different though.

An explosion.

I can't tell the location of Sofia.

There must have been some damage there.

I turn to my back.

Io and Rona were looking at me.

"Io, you should release that dangerous stance. If you are going to get in the way, I will be taking proper steps" (Makoto)

"I think that our fight is still in progress though" (Io)

"I see. I did warn you, okay?" (Makoto)

"Raidou, that thing there, is it all your magic power?" (Rona)

"Rona, I don't have any intentions to answer that. But I will give you an advice. Quickly pull back your personnel from Stella. It looks like I will be finishing this soon" (Makoto)

Io was facing me and showing a stance.

He is the same type as Sofia, so doing a joint front is difficult.

And yet, he is still trying to join into my fight with Sofia.

"Ah, right. You did have such an attack right, Raidou?" (Sofia)

Oya?

From inside the smoke, Sofia was standing.

I thought that she wasn't unscathed though.

"You are practically like Io. Did you learn regeneration? How about calling Lancer?" (Makoto)

"I am calling him. It doesn't seem like he is listening though. Looks like your servant is not letting him go, you know?" (Sofia)

"Ah~, I see. Then let's finish this already, Sofia" (Makoto)

"...4 superior dragons" (Sofia)

"Hah?" (Makoto)

"It is not only Mitsurugi and Waterfall like last time. I was elated by that time with the

lake, so I also ate Darkness Clad and Crimson Light" (Sofia)

Ate?

She didn't obtain the cooperation of the superior dragons?

"..."

"I noticed, the ability to eat the power of the dragons and assimilate it. I can brag about being the strongest among adventurers, but adding to that, I have also obtained the power of 4 superior dragons. I have enough power to destroy even a country" (Sofia)

A country?

With only this level?

"Next would be the Sand Wave Sazanami and the Invincible. If I kill those two, I would be able to reach the stage where I can devour Myriad Colors as well" (Sofia)

From the superior dragons I know of, those are all of them huh.

Among the 7 superior dragons, 4 are already within herself, and yet, she isn't able to touch me. It must be quite the shock for her.

Also... Root.

Looks like her objective has something to do with Root, but... do I have to carry his destiny as well?

I will complain to him about this later.

"How exaggerated. You are able to destroy a country with only this level of power?" (Makoto)

"Plenty enough. That Io over there as well. He is able to destroy a small country. An army is just a power that weaklings flock to. For you and me, those kind of things just serve as targets. The power of individuals, that itself is national power" (Sofia)

"..."

Is that, how it works?

No well, I thought that individuals would be powerless against a flock like an army though.

Certainly.

When looking at this town's situation and the progress of the battle, I did think: 'Is this all they have?'.

Even if it's a surprise attack, I wondered if this is the extent of armies and knight corps.

This world might be a lot 'weaker' than I originally thought.

"Seriously. Having scales coming from my skin is just unsightly. How dare you" (Sofia)

Sofia's power increased a step higher.

The 4 colored powers that were residing in her body as well as her own power, it looked like they were merging and turning into some sort of marble pattern.

The color of her skin darkens slightly.

Just like how she said, I could faintly see scale-looking things.

Her nails lengthened and her eyes changed like the ones of Tomoe which were close to the vestiges of a dragon.

Instead of a Dragon Slayer, she looks more like a Dragon Kin now.

"A transformation? I don't know about Graunt, but I don't think you would be able to defeat Shen and Root" (Makoto)

"?! Shen and Root. It seems like the things I will have Raidou open his mouth for have increased" (Sofia)

"For you, that will be impossible" (Makoto)

"Leaving aside the Invincible Shen, the name of the Myriad Color superior dragon is known by practically no one. I will have you tell me a lot of things. Before you die, that

is!" (Sofia)

"I see. Lately, I have been eating quite a lot with him though" (Makoto)

"Just how long can you keep that condescending tone?!" (Sofia)

Sofia touches the magic power body.

Just how many times will you do the same thing?

No.

She touched the human shape without holding a sword.

At the same time that I was thinking what she was intending to do, from Sofia's hand, a pitch black mud-like darkness was spouted out.

I could tell that the darkness that was sticking to the magic power body was declining its strength at those portions.

The sword of Sofia that shone remarkably stronger, accurately makes a flash at the black marking.

"Heh~"

While raising my voice, I include an attack against Sofia.

Making several magic compositions, I fire it off from the human shape.

Spear spheres.

Firing off several attacks, they also did hit the target, but...

She didn't stop.

Maybe she activated an instantaneous healing magic, she is cutting and cutting and cutting at me without caring.

While covering only her vitals and her right hand, she recovers everything that injures her.

It seems like she has judged that this is the moment to decide the battle.

Oh.

At this moment Io is coming too huh.

I can tell that Io is charging at me from behind.

I have [Sakai] expanded with perception, so I can stop surprise attacks.

It seems like Rona is trying to stop him though.

Like Sofia, Io must have thought that this was the chance.

“Raidou, don’t think bad of m—” (Io)

“Io, why don’t you return? I will kill you, you know? Last time was advice, this time, it is a warning” (Makoto)

I firmly look at Io and tell him this.

The binded Io.

He is being grabbed by the hand of the human shape.

A third arm.

“Wa?!”

“Just because it is hyuman shaped, that doesn’t mean it will only be restricted to 2 arms. Even you have 4 arms after all” (Makoto)

Straightforward.

Facing the starry sky, I lift him up.

After an advance notice that I will kill him if he returns.

Well, he will most likely not return though.

“Rocket Punch, just kidding” (Makoto)

“Uoooo?!!!” (Io)

I cut off the arm and shoot it out at high speed.

The grabbed Io was unable to shake it off and while still struggling, he disappeared into the starry sky.

He was slightly valuable to kill, so well, no matter where he falls, he will most likely be able to repatriate.

I did release him towards Stella so there should be no problems.

“Don’t look away!!” (Sofia)

Along with Sofia’s words, she makes a swipe with all her might.

Ah, this one will be hard to maintain.

It has black markings placed here and there after all.

Kii—n!!!

An ear-piercing sound.

The human shape broke.

“With this-!!” (Sofia)

Well.

Gagih—!!

“!!!!”

I never said that I can't reconstruct it though.

The reality that what she destroyed had appeared in an instant again and blocked her sword; without letting escape that moment of disturbance by the reconstruction, I grab Sofia with the hand of the human shape.

"I wonder, just how good is your defensive power in that form?" (Makoto)

The fist that grasped her tightly, releases heat along with light, and explodes.

"Aaaaah!!"

A serious scream of pain.

This is the first time I have heard the voice of Sofia sounding like this.



Looking at the fight occurring right in front of me, I felt fear.

An emotion close to pure terror.

Io who saw as if Raidou was being pushed back, decided to join the battle as well.

But, he was dealt with in an instant.

The strongest general from our prided army was.

It was something that happened not too long ago.

The hyuman shaped magic power of Raidou grew a third arm from around the armpit and grabbed Io, and just like that, it separated from the body and flew to the sky.

Io is unable to use teleportation.

I see. From a realistic standpoint, he has been shut out of this fight.

If Raidou uses a hand like that, Io has no way of doing anything against it.

If I go look for him, it might be possible to rejoin the battle, but it is a reality that 2

demon generals are unable to compare in any way.

It is simply a bad situation.

Just one thing, what I am hoping is that, Raidou's trump card is that magic power body.

It is certainly true that that thing is troublesome.

It's a mass of magic power that can even put spells to use. With a simple aria, it can activate the spells in an instant.

Moreover, as long as he has magic power, it seems like it can even regenerate.

Just by being able to construct such a magic power body, it is proof that he possesses an amount of magic power that rivals the scale of a country.

It doesn't seem like it is a pure object, so I don't know about the conversion performance, it might even be slightly better than the one I know of. But the truth is that, this is a literal threat.

"From the demon race experiments, a normal magician would have to use all its magic power just to make a single grain of sand. He is able to make such a mass and materialize it strongly enough to defend against attacks of a Dragon Slayer. In that case..." (Rona)

There's no doubt that it is an amount of magic power that she doesn't even feel like calculating.

But in the end, it is magic power.

If it is with my trump card, it is quite good against it.

Even if it's Raidou, there should be a way to fight it.

If it's now, I can also expect the support of Sofia.

That is exactly the reason why I am still here.

For the demon race, the Dragon Slayer and that boy will become a threat the moment they turn into enemies.

That's why, if I can eliminate at least one...

That's how it is.

It is originally a special attack of mine that needs the permission of my Lord before using, but as expected, right now I have no leeway to fill the forms.

Silently...

I begin my preparations.

I connect my aria and without the two noticing me...

"Rona, I don't know what you intend to do but, if you continue forming your spell... I will crush you" (Makoto)

"?!!"

Raidou!

That guy, at this distance...

Without even turning this way, he warned me.

Now that I remember, when we were confronting each other for fun at the academy, he was strangely able to predict my attacks.

Different from the other students, my habits shouldn't have been read, and yet...

I feel a cold sweat running down my spine.

Just a few days ago, the last time we talked and I thought he was as naive as always, in just that small amount of time, did something happen to Raidou?

I don't understand.

But, the reality that he made such a change is important.

At the very least, he is not someone that can be rolled in the palm of my hand at the battlefield anymore.

I send saliva to my dried throat.

It's completely dry.

I can feel the fear that I hadn't felt for so long swelling up inside me.

It wasn't the time to be concerned about this.

As if hiding the fact that I have yielded to fear, I began to line up several reasons to negate the antagonism towards him.

With thought transmission, I am able to grasp the general location of Io.

He has quite the distance, but it isn't at the level where I can't go look for him.

...

It is the time to step back.

If what Sofia says is true, she has the power of 4 superior dragons and has released the power to the point that her hyuman shape has begun to change.

Blade Dragon's sword, Fire Dragon's flame, Water Dragon's healing and support, Shadow Dragon's special ability.

It is certainly true that it is power that could bring down a country.

But with a fresh face and with literally no sweat, Raidou was confronting her.

He is also...

No, he is way too much of an unknown number.

At the very least, I have been underestimating him way too much.

"It was a joke, Raidou" (Rona)

"Ah, I see" (Makoto)

"...Your conditions were to give up on the hero and Stella Fortress, right? Okay. I don't

know about Sofia, but Io and I will accept those conditions. We will withdraw" (Rona)

"And the condition is?" (Makoto)

Raidou looks at me.

While confronting Sofia, he has the leeway to look away as many times as he wants.

To think it was to this extent...

"There's no condition. You will meet with Demon Lord-sama, right?" (Rona)

"Of course. I do want to talk with that person at least once after all" (Makoto)

"Then that's plenty enough. That girl is a vice-general, but doesn't lead any army. I will be leaving her here but, you don't mind, right?" (Rona)

"...I can't assure you her safety" (Makoto)

"Okay. It seems like she doesn't intend to stop fighting even after hearing this talk, so I will just accept it as an outcome of the battlefield" (Rona)

"Then go ahead. Let me tell you this just in case. If you intend to place a hand on the hero, Shiki is also outside" (Makoto)

"I am not so stupid. Well then, excuse me" (Rona)

Scary.

Leaving the place and heading to where Io was, this single thought surfaced in my mind.

Raidou is the Devil.

Even if it's not a name he called himself with, it is a nickname that truly fits him.

This is what I thought as I was finally able to wipe the sweat off my face.



“...It looks as if the sword is adhered to your hand though?” (Makoto)

“This is originally like the crystallization of Mitsurugi’s power. The stronger I release my dragon power like this, it turns closer and closer to fusing” (Sofia)

In the audience room that now only she and I remain, Sofia once again stands up, clads herself in blue light, and heals her wounds.

In those eyes, there’s still fighting spirit.

“You know, why don’t you leave that fighting style of slowly shaving off your cards to someone that is weaker than you? Or are you thinking that I won’t be killing you?” (Makoto)

If that’s how it is, Sofia would be the naive one.

Because I do intend to kill her.

The moment she reacted to the name Shen, she revealed the intentions of devouring Tomoe as well.

Even if her ability is insufficient, there’s no reason to let her leave.

“I am not in the age where I dream about fighting in a battlefield without being killed. You as well, aren’t your attacks lacking in power more than the Empire’s hero?” (Sofia)

The Empire’s hero?

Why did his name come out so suddenly?

It seems like she let him go though.

“Who knows. I have never met the Empire’s hero. And there’s no need to decide the fight in one attack, right? Go ahead and utilize each one of your cards” (Makoto)

“...Just because you are in an advantage... you are being sarcastic... As I thought, that kid there was at least cuter than you” (Sofia)

“...”

“That kid’s attack was incredible you know? Shadow dragon and Water dragon; I was somehow able to endure it by utilizing two dragons at full power. It wasn’t to the point that I had to use this form, but it was higher than you though” (Sofia)

“...”

“He does think about his companions, and he also had the resolve to shave off his own life in order to reach his objective” (Sofia)

“...”

“If I was asked who I wanted to work together with—” (Sofia)

“I see. The Empire’s hero is surely impressive” (Makoto)

“What?” (Sofia)

“He was even able to use his charm power against an out of standard woman like you. On top of that, even if it was somewhat, he firmly left an impetus. If he meets you a number of times more, it may even reach perfection” (Makoto)

“?!”

It was as if she didn’t notice at all. Her expression dyes in surprise.

“Hahaha, you didn’t notice huh. It seems like you were unable to completely resist it, you know? Iya, as expected of a hero. If it were me, I wouldn’t even think about making you a companion” (Makoto)

Finding a fragment of magic power that was confined inside of Sofia, I felt admiration.

To think that he was able to charm Sofia.

That Empire hero, he doesn’t care as long as it is a beautiful girl?

I should properly make countermeasures so that it doesn’t create victims at Asora as well.

If it's a power that can work even against Sofia, it is quite the threat.

"Ch-arm? Me? You, what are you..." (Sofia)

"You overlooked it huh. I wonder, maybe the true reason you didn't kill the hero was because you fell in love with him? Fufufu, a Dragon Slayer did" (Makoto)

"..."

"As a sign of pity, that charm, want me to dispel it for you?" (Makoto)

Even if she is charmed, it doesn't affect my battle with her.

But.

Seeing her flattering the Empire hero at random, she looked like a buffoon.

Sofia is not a threat that I need to stay cold to deal with.

Is it conceit, or maybe confidence?

I just felt pity for her.

"...Shut up" (Sofia)

"Sorry. I won't do anything strange. How about it, can you let me eliminate that charm? Dispelling magic is safe magic you know?" (Makoto)

"...I told you to shut up" (Sofia)

"And it seems like it is already something you can't do by yourself after all. Even if you wait, it won't turn into an advantageous development for you, you know?" (Makoto)

"That mouth of yours..." (Sofia)

"Hey" (Makoto)

The moment I was about to continue my words...

The back of Sofia burned.

No, it isn't burning.

Flames shaped as dragon wings were spread.

"Shut it up!!!" (Sofia)

Her figure!

Teleportation?!

No... it is not!

It is simply at a speed I can't catch with my eyes.

I look above.

A red trail as if drawing a line.

It is moving freely from left to right.

High speed movement.

So she still had such a card in hand huh.

She really does have a lot of tricks up her sleeve.

From several locations of the magic power body, the marks of cuts and black stains were being left.

Sofia who talked a lot, at this moment, she continued her attacks without saying a word.

"...Fuh~"

"When Mitsurugi returns, you are done for" (Sofia)

Hm, she talked.

But, that's off the point.

No, maybe the ‘others’ are just way too out of standards?

“Mitsurugi -Lancer – won’t be returning. If you who has the power of several superior dragons is only at this level, then... our Shiki is a lot stronger than that Lancer” (Makoto)

That’s right.

While receiving the slashes I can’t see, I held confidence and answered Sofia.

At the same time, I told Shiki who has been sending me thought transmissions several times to ask for permissions:

‘Do as you wish’



PtFF by: traktorA7EN