

Tsuki ga Michibiku Isekai Douchuu

– Moon-led Journey Across Another World –

**- Volume 16 -
(Chapter 232-250)**

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[Reigokai: Isekai Translations]

Chapter 232

Everyday life and the town's state

TLN: We now enter the Arc 5, titled: Lorel Labyrinth Arc.

The street that denotes the metropolis of Aion kingdom and the name of that very metropolis, Bozuda.

In that city which I had vague recollections of its name until recently, there was a military force uprising that occurred around 1 month ago, demanding the change of the throne.

It was already known that there would be a revolution occurring, and the preparations had gone smoothly. Just that... from the possibilities that Rembrandt-san spoke of, the use of a military force uprising was the one which had the lowest chance to begin the revolution in the capital.

Putting it more accurately, the chances of it occurring was the lowest and it is the one which had the lowest possibility of succeeding, but it was the choice that had the highest effect.

In outline, the result was a failure.

They couldn't kill the king, and they couldn't seize the capital either.

But the people that launched the beacon of revolution managed to withdraw.

The royal family was driven to a corner, but somehow pushed the revolution back and escaped from the predicament.

Tomoe checked out the situation, but when she arrived, the coup d'état side was already taking flight. From the information gathered, we learned that around 80% of the districts and castle surroundings had been seized, but for some reason, the situation of the battle changed and the kingdom's army pushed them back all at once.

Moreover, in a prompt and strong manner that made it feel like the battle until then had been a lie.

What a mysterious thing.

Maybe strong reinforcements arrived, or they used some sort of national treasure-level magic tool.

Tsige has judged that's the reason.

And Rembrandt-san had confirmed that the military force of the people plotting the revolution was bigger than he estimated.

It seems like it was completely unexpected that they were thinking about bringing down the castle at once, and that they possessed the power to manage this in the blink of an eye.

If that really did happen, within all that chaos and civil war occurring, the play of Tsige's independence wouldn't be able to come true.

They would have to change their methods to propping up from the chaos, and at that time, it would only turn into a fight of a town against a nation, so our demands wouldn't be able to get through at all.

Well, we learned that the kingdom has some sort of trump card which is information that can be useful, and this trump card was only used when they were cornered and almost lost.

Whether it was outside interference or a magic tool, it shouldn't be something they can count on so easily.

It was a surprising beginning, but from the first match, there was a lot of information to gain.

"I was tense thinking that it would end from the very beginning, but... it seems like it was just as Tsige predicted, a stalemate. And now it is turning into a muddy situation. Aion has already fallen into a complete state of civil war." (Tomoe)

I was at Tsige, in my private room at the Kuzunoha company.

Lately, my time here had grown longer.

There, Tomoe was summarizing things as if having fun.

It has been one month since the revolution had begun.

The civil wars still continue.

Tsige declared independence towards Aion kingdom.

Of course, the Aion kingdom didn't forgive this.

After that, the revolution force also declared independence from Aion kingdom.

No matter where Aion tries to solve first, Tsige had shown their will to manage it themselves.

Of course, the people that caused the revolution didn't accept this declaration either.

In other words, Tsige was in a situation where the kingdom and the revolution army were saying: 'your place is mine, so don't go doing whatever you want'.

"What was their reaction in regards to Tsige?" (Makoto)

"There's been differences showing slowly. From the kingdom, they revoked the declaration of independence and gave out an executive order. They ordered a feudal lord -that's all name only- to make Tsige accept the government, and there have been entreaties send constantly." (Tomoe)

"The feudal lord is already weeping, but the kingdom's attitude didn't change much huh." (Makoto)

"And regarding the people that caused the uprising... they said something about green-prairies and so on and so forth..." (Tomoe)

"So on and so forth'? Tomoe, you weren't interested at all?" (Makoto)

"None at all. Their sword skills, government ability, and magic, are all on the level of an ordinary person, and they don't have the ability to attract people like the heroes do. The leader of this revolution is a person that doesn't fulfill a single one of the

requirements in his position. He is literally a decoration. Even if those guys were to obtain the country, the country's name will continue being Aion kingdom, and I don't really care whatever happens." (Tomoe)

"I-I see. And so, what was their reaction?" (Makoto)

"They said that they didn't mind a certain amount of autonomy, so come to their side, is the kind of attitude they changed into." (Tomoe)

What a soft change.

In a situation where Aion has been divided by north and south, and fighting, Tsige is at the tip of the west.

In terms of military power, the coup d'etat side is stronger.

The fact that this kind of fighting is still continuing is proof that their plans have been moving the way they wanted.

The kingdom's force at the west side was crushed by the revolution force from the east side.

It seems like there were feudal lords that escaped, and I have created a list of names of those people, so I am thinking about showing that list to the Anslan sisters that are doing their best at the north.

Nobles seldom escape, but there were a good amount that did.

Abandoning their people and land in all this helter-skelter.

Yeah, let's just think that Aion is right now in their closing years.

"...It still hasn't reached the point where they accept the independence huh. This part would depend on Rembrandt-san and Tsige's congress though." (Makoto)

"The surroundings lands have already accepted the independence of Tsige on the surface. They are requesting for the same relationship they have had, so from now on, it is the time where Tsige should be showing their moves." (Tomoe)

"From what Mio said, the port town wants to enter the protection of Tsige. Aion

kingdom is truly unpopular to the point of being pitiful.” (Makoto)

“I have plans on going to that port town, Koran. As a member of this town’s company, I have to work a little bit after all.” (Tomoe)

“I am counting on you. I will check out the Adventurer Guild and confirm the progress of the battle, and tomorrow, I will head to Academy town. This is a different type of busy than I thought, but not having time for leisure is the same.” (Makoto)

“The fires of war reaching the town of Tsige at this early of a stage means that Rembrandt and Sairitz’ plans were completely mistaken. That in itself is interesting, but I feel like the burden of Waka will increase again...” (Tomoe)

“...Please stop that. That isn’t interesting at all. Be careful, okay?” (Makoto)

“Well then, I will be going. I will be participating in this night’s meeting, so see you later.” (Tomoe)

“Yeah.” (Makoto)

Tomoe leaves the room.

I look at the outside.

The sky, the town, the usual street; a blue sky that stretches far and wide, a town that is filled with hustle and bustle.

It really doesn’t look like a town that has declared independence and is in the middle of a war with both the kingdom and the revolution side.

At the very least, I didn’t think it would turn into an everyday life like this.

I did get an outline in the meetings that something like this could happen, but I didn’t expect it would proceed exactly as it was explained.

The towns close to this one, and the neighbouring feudal lord that is aiming for Tsige; they didn’t show any signs of attacking this town.

...That’s not it.

Accurately speaking, it would be that they weren't allowed to attack.

Just as I told Tomoe, I began moving.

While looking at the state of the store, I go down to the first floor and left to the street.

At the first floor, there's a part where there's a stand for food and drinks by Mio's suggestion, but this one has such high popularity that we are thinking about making a new entrance in order to reduce congestion.

Even though it is still forenoon, there's already a line of people that were trying to avoid the congestion and came here to buy their lunch in advance... They couldn't avoid the congestion.

With that amount of customers, at peak time, I would have to make the customers cooperate as well in order to make the serving faster.

In the mornings it gets crowded, so... it is truly great that we don't offer Sake as well and serve until late night.

My employees will die of exhaustion, seriously.

I pass to the side of the line as I bow my head a few times, and hurry to the Adventurer Guild.

As always, this town is prospering with adventurers that aim for the wasteland and the rare raw materials that they bring with them.

That liveliness had not darkened at all.

This is also just as Rembrandt-san said.

In terms of the number of adventurers, their numbers are actually higher than when the war had begun.

Truly unbelievable.

"Eh? Isn't that Raidou-san?! How unusual for you to be on your own!"

Oh.

Suddenly at the crowd of people in front of me, someone had called me.

This voice is...

“Toa-san. Long time no see. You as well, it is rare to see you on your own.” (Makoto)

“Everyone is out you see. We got work from the town, so we are taking a bit of a rest.”
(Toa)

“From the town, huh.” (Makoto)

“Yeah. Meaning that this town still has no plans on dispatching people yet.” (Toa)

“Thanks for the hard work. Then, are you heading to the Adventurer Guild? Were you planning on returning to your main profession?” (Makoto)

“I will go to the guild, but it is not like I will be returning to my main profession. I probably won’t be able to head to the wasteland until this matter is settled. Right now I don’t have any objective to be so hurried to go to the wasteland anyways.” (Toa)

“...I see. I personally want the adventurers to continue associating with Tsige as adventurers, but since it is an emergency, it just can’t go that way huh.” (Makoto)

“In the end, we are simply swords after all. No matter how efficient we are, we can’t become shields, and we can’t serve as substitutes either. The worry of inferior people.”
(Toa)

“Anyways, since we are going to the same place, how about we go together?” (Makoto)

“With pleasure.” (Toa)

Her expression darkens.

In Tsige, they are the adventurer party that have brought the highest achievements and are evaluated as having high fighting ability. And they are currently cooperating with this town.

There are parties aside from hers that have taken this as a request from the guild, as well as other direct outside parties that have accepted to cooperate in this fight.

Their role is to attack.

Just as Toa-san said, adventurers are pros that are specialized in offensive.

Frankly speaking, they are not that good at defensive battles.

Even if I say 'not good' that doesn't mean they are not able to, but the problem would be how much percentage of their power they would be able to bring out in a defensive fight.

That's why Rembrandt-san and the congress of this town are investing in them as a surprise attack unit.

I think that's the correct choice as well.

If it's stealth jobs or attacking units that are stationed far away, Shiki or Mio can teleport the adventurers to those places.

Instead of going through front fights, they attack supplies and go for surprise attacks as they annihilate the troops.

In terms of results, just as Toa-san said, it is practically a perfect score.

There hasn't been a single unit that has been able to arrive at Tsige.

As long as there's the need to march here, the other side knows that when they reach a certain distance from the town, it will be catastrophic.

"A defensive force huh." (Makoto)

"Private units from the major companies have been gathered and created something like that, but... honestly speaking, it still makes me anxious." (Toa)

"Are their skills good?" (Makoto)

"Of course. But in this task, it is indispensable to have people with a lot of experience in defensive battles. We are continuing in a state where we haven't experienced this kind of battle, so when the time really comes when it is truly necessary..." (Toa)

"If a defensive unit is formed, the amount of people that can be rotated to offensive

can increase, and it will give us a higher advantage in the negotiations when having the others accept the independence. It is certainly true that it is something good though.” (Makoto)

But it won’t be so easy.

People that have a lot of experience in defensive battles, moreover, talented people that are not tied in the military of other places. Even I can tell that this is something quite difficult to find.

“For me who has bought a house in this town and am thinking about living for a long time in it with my sister, this is a point that bothers me a lot. Raidou-san, don’t you actually have candidates?” (Toa)

“I don’t. What’s that ‘actually’ supposed to mean?” (Makoto)

“I thought that from that coat’s pocket, you would place your hand inside it and say: ‘Ara, there’s a defense unit in a place like this’.” (Toa)

Just what kind of blue futuristic cat do you take me for? <*Doraemon ref.*>

“If I could do that, I would though. Ah, we arrived at the guild.” (Makoto)

“Right. You have gained popularity so suddenly, so it probably would be troublesome for you if people were to see you together with me. Well then, see you later.” (Toa)

“Please give my thanks to Rinon. Tell her that I thank her for always taking care of Komoe.” (Makoto)

“Understood!” (Toa)

Now then...

I have somewhat understood the situation of the war from the information Toa-san gave me, but... currently, the adventurers are the only military force of Tsige, so I wonder just how long we will be able to maintain this status quo.

“Raidou-sama!!”

“Uwa?!”

Is today the day to shout my name?

For some reason, my name was suddenly called.

A person from the guild huh.

“We were about to send a person to look for you. Rembrandt-sama and the others are waiting for you upstairs. You have time, right?”

“Ah yeah, I do. Just that, I don’t remember having any sort of appointment today though.” (Makoto)

“It is an emergency situation and they said that they wanted to know your opinion on it.”

“Understood.” (Makoto)

Rembrandt-san is in the Adventurer Guild?

I don’t think he would need my opinion in such a hurry if it were related to a problem in the discussions for the independence, so did something occur that requires the need for the Kuzunoha company?

I have not stood on the front stage that much, but I have decided to move at the side of Tsige in this matter.

No matter the case, I will just have to go and see.

Tsige is in the middle of war as they aim for independence.

Kuzunoha Company and I are living an everyday life that’s pretty busy right now.

Chapter 233

Tsige's move

“That’s fast. Even though we send someone to look for you just a second ago.”

When I was led to the room, those were the first words directed at me.

Inside the place, there were several people gathered there with maps and graphs.

The owner of the voice is Rembrandt-san.

He must be facing deadly busy days, and yet, for some reason, his face felt as if its gloss had gotten better.

I remember he once said: ‘When it gets incredibly busy, it reminds me of the past and that really makes me feel young’. Was he not joking but actually serious?

“I thought about checking out the Guild. There doesn’t to be any big changes in the situation of the battle though... Is there any urgent business?” (Makoto)

There’s one big round table inside the room.

Currently, this room in the Adventurer Guild is used to decided the tactics of Tsige and the government of it, as well as deciding the direction of the town.

The reason is because this place has higher security compared to any company (aside ours).

Depending on the location, there’s places inside the Adventurer Guild that have become secretive spots thanks to the mischievousness of a certain Superior Dragon.

They can repel most magic, and it is physically impossible to peek or hear the inside.

It is the most suitable place to talk about confidential stuff.

If that’s the case, the other countries would also curry for the cooperation of the Guild

and have them lend them that place, but that's the problem.

The inside of the Adventurer Guild that is the subtenant of several countries but is not controlled by any country.

It seems like the bigger the country is, the less they are able to do confidential talks there.

That's what Root said as he laughed.

If it is requested for, the place would be lend, and the Adventurer Guild doesn't have any intentions of leaking the information to the outside, but... only to the *outside*, that is. He said that if the information served as an advantage for the Guild, he would use that information as much as he wanted.

It is fine for him to move himself, and it is also fine to have the adventurers move.

He probably meant that there's no need to leak it to other countries, there's still a lot of ways to utilize that information.

So that's why, no matter how much the information of the country doesn't leak out, there's practically no occasions where the adventurer guild is used.

But in Tsige's case, no matter what it is heard, there's no hostility towards the adventurer guild. On top of that, they are already in a situation where they have to rely on adventurers for their military force.

If it were a meeting that established the objectives of every company, it would be one thing, but if it's a meeting that decides the objective of the town, there's no problem with whatever it is heard.

Actually, as long as they pay attention to the members that attend the meeting, there's no need to fear about being eavesdropped, which is a big merit.

That's why they asked the adventurer guild to lend them this one room.

It was easily decided that they wouldn't be using the building they have been using for their meetings. It seems like there were various points that brought uneasiness regarding the utilization of that place, mainly in the point of security.

By the way, regarding this room, the adventurer guild in Tsige seems to be pretty strict about protecting the information connected to the wasteland.

Root's style of cutting off the ears and eyes of the walls.

It seems like if someone tries to eavesdrop, they will experience something terrible.

Terrible enough to pray for the spies -or better called as victims.

"I see. First of all, we have received a letter from Koran requesting an alliance -or rather, a request for protection. I wanted to hear your opinion regarding this."
(Rembrandt)

"My opinion, is it." (Makoto)

News that are pretty recent.

It is information that I heard just a few moments ago after all.

Rembrandt-san nods and continues his talk.

"You see, since we wouldn't be able to continue treating them the same as the other towns because of this, our opinions of how we should deal with this has been divided."
(Rembrandt)

...

Is that so.

We would be required to protect them after all.

It is not simply a talk about allying with them.

In other words, Koran is requesting Tsige to let them stand at their back.

That means, if Tsige were to agree with this, Tsige would have to deal with the people that have complains with Koran and the ones that try to put their hands on them.

Ah, this is indeed complicated.

I can understand why there's divided opinions.

If we were to hurry, it would take one day, if they were to mobilize normally, it would take around two or three days to arrive; even so, it is still a different town.

The burden will increase quite a lot.

"It is certainly true that if we were to take Koran under us, we would create an opening. I feel like it is natural for everyone to have divided opinions." (Makoto)

"Umu. We are literally divided in a group of yes and no. There's even people that think this is a method of the enemy to destroy us from the inside. Even so, taking too much time considering this, is evidently a bad move. I was wondering what we should do." (Rembrandt)

"Ah, so that's why Tsige sent envoys to Koran, right? In order to learn their true intentions." (Makoto)

"That's right. Koran is the neighboring town, moreover, a port town. If they are already enemies of ours, it would be as if the blade of our enemies had already approached our throats. We can't lower our guards." (Rembrandt)

Meaning that, Rembrandt-san is prioritizing the dangers that creating a relationship with Koran will bring forth.

Thinking about providing them protection will come after this point is taken care of first.

I see.

But honestly, I don't think that town would turn their fangs towards Tsige.

Koran is currently prospering as a neighboring port town, but not that long in the past, it was a small town that was comparable to other port towns.

To the point that calling them a fishing village was fitting.

The reason this place made a complete turn-over was because Mio went to that town, and then, not long after, Shiki and the Eldwas also went as well and brought fortune to the sea.

Even now, our company still buys quite a lot from that town, and there's a few that are training in shipbuilding at that place too.

In a town like that where I receive reports from so many people inside it, there's no way there's the shadow of another country. Not only that, they most likely hold the same amount of autonomy as Tsige.

They are quite good willed. It is certainly true that it is bothering that they want Tsige to provide them protection in their future association, but I don't think they would be doing something that would set up Tsige.

...No, that's not it.

Even if that's the case, Rembrandt-san wants clear evidence which is why he sent an envoy there.

Whatever it is that is bothering him and making him cautious, it would be bad to simply believe in someone like me.

If it's about the current situation of Koran, Rembrandt-san and the others who are here, probably already know about it anyways.

"It is not like we have won independence already, so I think that going at it cautiously is the correct answer. Koran is pretty good willed on the surface, so when the suspicions are gone and the independence becomes a certainty, there shouldn't be any problems in taking them under our protection." (Makoto)

I at least tell them that they look good willed.

It seems like the Neptunes have been going to those parts of the sea as well after all.

I don't know how the inside of the sea works, but from what Serwhale-san and the others say, the sea of Koran is a good place, kind of like a resort.

"...Hoh~, Koran is good willed huh. Now that I think about it, Kuzunoha company has been going there to buy marine products, right?"

A representative from a different company, who has jewels and crystals adorning his clothes and possesses influence, enters the conversation.

A man in his fifties, short build but has good personal appearance. Because of that, he has a gentle atmosphere at first glance.

But his eyes are scary.

Narrow eyes as if seeing through you.

I heard that he is the third or whatever, but it seems like he is quite the able person.

I received the information of everyone from Tomoe, and I remember I got scared by how accurate the atmosphere of everyone was described.

If I remember correctly, his name was Schirra-san.

“Y-Yeah. This time as well, within the envoys that were sent, there’s one of my employees accompanying them.” (Makoto)

“Her name was Tomoe-dono, right?” (Schirra)

“Yes.”

“There’s past records stating that Kuzunoha company has done previous negotiations with Koran without much problems, so I am looking forward... to the results of how they clear away the suspicions towards Koran.” (Schirra)

Hm, in other words, Schirra-san is on the side that approves of letting them under our protection?

That must be it, right? If he were against it, he would have just said to be careful and there would be no talk at all.

“Schirra-dono is in favor of having Koran under our protection?” (Makoto)

I confirm just in case.

“Yeah. The crystal corals that appear in that town at times have a strong resistance against water element and it is not a bad addition to armors. In the past, our place acted slightly violently and have been prohibited to enter Koran. I was thinking about fixing our relationship with this chance.” (Schirra)

Slightly violent.

It is definitely not slightly. Being banned from entering the town, just what did they do?

“We simply thought about buying the crystals from the fishermen that seemed to be troubled with their meals though. But it seems like for some reason, there was a misunderstanding somewhere. Hahaha.” (Schirra)

They probably tried to buy them at 10% of their market price.

It is certainly true that if he contributes to this matter, it can become a good chance to fix their relationship.

At any rate, crystal corals huh.

Our place only goes there to buy food sea products, and we practically don't buy things like raw materials.

“Is that so. I also feel like if we can just achieve the goal of independence, we can get along with Koran. It would be great if both of our companies were able to create mutual prosperity for both towns, right?” (Makoto)

“...Yeah. It is just as you say. Even if this was something caused by my family predecessor, we have already reflected on our actions. Now then, please send my regards to the people of Koran.” (Schirra)

Schirra-san showed surprise for a second at my words, but he soon showed a smile and spoke out words of agreement.

And then, after a bow, he returned to the round table where the map is spread out.

“Can I, Raidou-dono?” (Rembrandt)

“Go ahead.” (Makoto)

“Raidou-dono, do you think that there's no betrayal from Koran?” (Rembrandt)

“I don't have any conclusive proof, but that's the impression I get. But even I can tell that it would be dangerous to take upon Koran in this current state where the matter

of independence is still left hanging, so I consider that Rembrandt-san's thoughts of being cautious are sound." (Makoto)

"I see. There's been two points that have been bothering me. Why is Koran, who is having a radical growth, going through the trouble of requesting for the protection of Tsige even when they should know how dangerous that move is?" (Rembrandt)

"..."

That's a part that's been bothering me too.

Normally, that's the part where they would say: 'let's get along from now on, and even if you are to get the independence or not, let's continue a relationship without any changes'. Saying that, they would be able to create a safe secret agreement for themselves.

Tsige would be okay with that as well.

"And the other point is... this is a bit hard to say, but I thought that the sparks this matter will create, will not only bring damage to Tsige but to others as well." (Rembrandt)

"Eh?"

This is the first time I have heard of this.

"If we brought that place down, it could become a beachhead for Tsige after all. But that town has not received a single damage at all. Even though they shouldn't have a satisfactory military force either. Their excessive pleading to Tsige, in a situation where they haven't suffered any damage yet. It would be hard to not suspect that." (Rembrandt)

"Y-Yes." (Makoto)

"But it seems like Raidou-dono sees something different. Waiting for the envoys, and depending on whether the report makes my worries unnecessary, I might end up stepping into the wrong path. If I were to choose the wrong path at this point, the town will fall to ruin. It is certainly true that our relationship with Koran has been good lately. If Koran is really only thinking about being under our protection, there's no doubt it would be an option that's plenty enough to take into consideration."

(Rembrandt)

Maybe Rembrandt-san tried to see through what I 'am seeing', his eyes had become sharp like the eyes of Schirra-san.

Stop it please.

I have faced plenty enough of that with Zara-san.

My trauma will resurface.

"W-Well, I really don't have any conclusive proof though. You see, Koran and Tsige are like the boundaries to the wasteland anyways." (Makoto)

"Hm, if we are to talk in a broad manner, then yeah, you are right. We both are at the west border of Aion. Even if we are slightly separated from each other, the difference is whether one is up and down; whether we are close to the sea; or how close we are to the wasteland." (Rembrandt)

"Then why don't we just make ramparts covering both towns and combine it into one town?" (Makoto)

"Tsige and Koran?!" (Rembrandt)

"Tsige is troubled by the lack of land, and we have already picked a fight with the country. If we were to increase the length of the Golden Highway to Koran, the population will be able to increase by many times more..... wait, just what am I saying? Not even in Rotsgard, there's a town with such a scale." (Makoto)

If we were to group up the Academy Town with all the surrounding towns, it would be quite vast, but each town is not that big.

Or more like, just what am I saying?

What a stupid thing.

This world is completely different to modern Japan.

There's no way they would be able to create a town that's too big.

“Becoming one... till Koran. No, but such a thing is..... if only we could solve that problem... but, could it be...” (Rembrandt)

“R-Rembrandt-san? Sorry, I remembered something I had to do...” (Makoto)

“...Wait, my business was an extra to begin with. Sorry but, can you please go to the room that’s two spaces neighboring here? I want you to lend me some more of your time.” (Rembrandt)

“Okay. But...” (Makoto)

Rembrandt-san, who was spacing out, stopped me from leaving.

Even though I said something so embarrassing that I would jump into a hole if there was one!

“Sairitz-dono is waiting at that place. It seems like she has something to talk regarding the matter of Tsige’s ‘shield’. She said to please have Raidou-dono come. Sorry, but please.” (Rembrandt)

He brings his face close to me and whispers.

Rembrandt-san voiced out that name; the name of the empress of Lorel Union who is moving in the shadows of Tsige’s independence.

This is the real reason of calling me.

I can’t just run away because of embarrassment.

This is a concern that the adventurer Toa-san was worried about.

Well, I will be able to escape from Rembrandt-san anyways.

“...Understood. Then, I will be leaving now.” (Makoto)

“Umu. Sorry for troubling you..... A town that you can walk from one end to the other in one day. In this wasteland, not only would we be able to obtain large amounts of land, we would even obtain a sea..... Is this... the time to place our hand in the fire even when knowing the dangers of it?” (Rembrandt)

Leaving Rembrandt-san who was still muttering something, I head to the room where Sairitz-san is supposed to be waiting in.

Chapter 234

That shield is deep underground

“Picnic Rose Garden?”

What an incredibly fun-sounding name.

And it is also such an *unfitting* name, I unconsciously said it again.

“Yes. That’s the name of the group. The problem is that they are in Lorel, but are a force that doesn’t have intentions of being attached to a specific country.” (Sairitz)

Sairitz-san welcomed me happily when I entered the room, and after guiding me to my seat, she immediately said that name.

It seems like it is a mercenary group that has high ability and excels at defense.

Even so, they are not participating in the war.

What’s with that?

Be it their name or their attitude, they are quite the shady group.

In the first place, is a mercenary group able to get a decent amount of money if they don’t participate in the war?

“And you are saying they will ally with Tsige as it currently is?” (Makoto)

“It is at a stage where there’s the possibility.” (Sairitz)

Sairitz-san shakes her head to the sides in regret.

“I heard that you had Rembrandt-san call me specifically. Why is that?” (Makoto)

For now, I don’t see much reason as to why this should be related to me.

In the first place, the mercenary group is staying at Lorel, so I don't have much understanding.

Rather than me, I think that these are circumstances where Sairitz-san would have it easier than me.

"They are a slightly special existence in Lorel Union. They possess an ancestry with the Wise." (Sairitz)

"Wise..." (Makoto)

She means Japanese people.

Accurately speaking, she refers to the people that come from the same world as me, but after investigating, I can only think Wise are Japanese. If that's not the case, they were people that possessed a lot of Asian characteristics.

Thinking about the special culture that has taken root in Lorel, it is practically settled that they were Japanese.

"Sairitz-sama, I have told you this before but... I am..." (Makoto)

"You are not a Wise, right? Yes, I understand. But in my eyes, Raidou-sama has enough traits to mistake you for a Wise-sama. The aforementioned mercenary group has strong faith towards the Wise because of their Wise ancestry, you see. If Raidou-sama were to go meet them, I think the conversation will go well. I -Sairitz- am sure of this." (Sairitz)

...

Wise huh.

I have heard this word many times already, but there's no doubt that's a word denoting Japanese people.

It seems like Lorel Union has been politely inviting the people that have slipped into this world to their country (not sure if that's really the case though).

And by doing that, it affected the country's culture as well.

For the people of Lorel Union, the Wise are special existences.

Yeah, how to say it...

“That’s why it is me? Moreover, right now?” (Makoto)

“Yes.”

Sairitz-san responds immediately with a smile.

The Aion revolution is currently in a lull state, and from what I know, the matter of Koran is not a big problem.

Tsige currently wants military force that can serve for their defense.

If it were a small matter like going to the Academy to teach lessons, there would be no need for hesitation, but to go all the way to Lorel and negotiate with the mercenary group, and then bringing them here. That’s a big job.

But... it is true that if we are to move, it has to be now.

Even if I can come and go from there to Tsige, I would still have to stay at Lorel for several days.

Sairitz-san, who still has that saint-like smile on her face, didn’t avert her eyes from me.

It is a face I can’t handle well.

For me who has been locked on by her since the time at the Academy festival and told to go to her country.

Honestly speaking, I feel like it will be very troublesome.

If only these insecurities weren’t in the way, it is true that I would like to go to Lorel.

“Uhm, Sairitz-sama, I do think as well that it would be beneficial to negotiate with that mercenary group. Thinking about the situation of Tsige, I can’t leave for so long, and I think it will be difficult to have a prolonged leave from the country.” (Makoto)

“Of course, I am not thinking about doing any formal event. Our priestess Chiya-sama is currently not in the country, and a person that serves as a replacement has not been elected either. It is disheartening that we are unable to entertain you adequately. You visiting our country is also one of our objectives, so in this time around, I was thinking about asking you to travel incognito. It may not be much in return, but I will do the best I can to accommodate the movements of the people of Kuzunoha company.” (Sairitz)

I was going to tell her to please spare me any stiffening events like the time when I went to Limia, but a joyful proposal was made.

...Fumu.

In that case, I would be able to go quickly and return quickly, probably.

I really do have a slight interest in Lorel, but with the situation of Tsige, there's no time for that.

If it's a negotiation with a mercenary group, it will probably be done in a few days.

Information of Kuzunoha company is relayed to me in real time, so in case anything happens, I can return immediately.

If I don't need to worry about any strange entanglement with the country, this proposal of hers is valid.

Yeah.

“...You don't mind it being incognito?” (Makoto)

“That's right. I will prepare a promissory note by the time of your departure, so when you show that, you will be able to go anywhere you wish, Raidou-sama. I will also strongly order them to refrain doing any excessive reception. Of course, I will do my best to make it possible for Raidou-sama to make contact with the places and people that you get interested in.” (Sairitz)

“Ah, there's no need to go that far.” (Makoto)

Being given too many privileges will make me stand out instead.

Just being able to freely walk in a foreign country is already a pretty big deal.

“No. Right now Lorel and I have been unable to give back anything worthy of repayment to Raidou-sama.” (Sairitz)

“Eh?” (Makoto)

“You have saved Chiya-sama and I several times... That’s how I feel.” (Sairitz)

“Haha...” (Makoto)

“And now then, about the place where the mercenary group, Picnic Rose Garden, are using as their base.” (Sairitz)

“Ah, yes.” (Makoto)

It is probably in the capital.

I know.

That’s always how it is.

It seems like that group has a lot of freedom, but there’s no doubt that Sairitz-san wants to invite me to the capital, so behind that smile of hers with no openings, she is definitely going to do something.

Lorel’s capital. If I remember correctly, the name’s Naoi.

Sairitz-san spreads out a map of Lorel as I was searching in my memories.

“...”

I unconsciously gulped.

What she had spread out, was a pretty detailed map of Lorel Union.

Towns, roads, and even the topography was shown.

The current me understands the worth of this.

...There's no doubt that this map also shows confidential information of the country.

This may be too late since I have already seen it but, I feel like I have been trapped in her scheme.

It feels as if I am being led to her pace.

"Our Lorel wants to have a good relationship with the Kuzunoha company and Raidou-sama. If possible, we want to have a long lasting equivalent relationship. So for us, disclosing this amount of information is a given. Please don't mind it." (Sairitz)

"I also think that would be great. But it seems like your priestess-sama is scared of me, so I don't know if it is a good idea to show me this." (Makoto)

"It is certainly true that the words of our country's Priestess-sama are sacred. Her will translates to the will of the country, and there are many cases where it translates to the will of the people as well. However... I don't know what Chiya-sama has seen of Raidou-sama, and what she feared of it, but currently, she is in a special standing in our country. In a sense, that is." (Sairitz)

"What do you mean by 'In a sense'?" (Makoto)

"I would have to explain various things if I were to delve deeper into it, which would be difficult to do with the limited time we have now. If I had to put it briefly... it means that the words of the priestess are not necessarily always absolute." (Sairitz)

"Not absolute huh." (Makoto)

From what I interpreted, the words of the Lorel priestess were practically absolute, but... is that not the case?

Also, Sairitz-san. I think she definitely did it on purpose but, when she said priestess, she didn't add the '-sama'.

There's probably some sort of meaning behind that.

It is a bit impossible for me to guess what that is though.

"Yeah. For the people of Lorel, animosity towards the Priestess-sama is treated as a definite evil, but Raidou-sama doesn't see Chiya-sama in that way." (Sairitz)

“I have no intentions of bringing harm to the Priestess-sama.” (Makoto)

Just what kind of idiot would go through the trouble of being hostile to the person that a foreign country treats as valuable?

In Japan, there’s a great teaching saying that when entering a country, you should treat their people well.

...I slightly forgot that in the Empire though.

“...Thank you very much. And so, regarding the place that Raidou-sama will be going, it is here.” (Sairitz)

Just like I thought, Sairitz-san pointed at the capital of Lorel, Naoi... and from there, she slowly moved her slender finger to the right.

Eh?

“This is the second city of our country, Kannaoui. There was a time when this place was our capital, and there’s been history of this city fighting with the current capital Naoi.” (Sairitz)

Kannaoui...

Hm?

Naoi...

No wait, isn’t that...

“Kannaoui, is it. The mercenary group is there?” (Makoto)

“Raidou-sama, is the name strange?” (Sairitz)

...

I had my doubts, but I definitely didn’t show it in my face, and yet, she saw through me.

“Ah, yeah. I was just thinking that Lorel really does have some peculiar names for their

places.” (Makoto)

I tell her the most plausible excuse I find.

“I see. Actually, Naoi as well. It isn’t recorded in the official history books, but there was a time when it was called Oonaoi, or something like that.” (Sairitz)

Oonaoi and Kannaoui.

I also think... that’s the case.

If that’s *really* the case, the ‘real’ names would probably be Oonaobi and Kannaobi.

Then there should be another place with a name similar to the other one.

“Oh, I have derailed from the topic. Raidou-sama, after you have finished your preparations, can you please visit this other place that’s slightly north?” (Sairitz)

Uwa, there it is.

A place that definitely doesn’t look safe.

“Yaso-Katsui Valley. I want to ask you to please head to the labyrinth dungeon that stretches underground this valley.” (Sairitz)

Underground.

Labyrinth.

And Yaso-Katsui.

It is probably Yaso-Katsu*hi*.

It is probably based on the 80 calamities God, Yaso-Magatsuhi.

Ah~, I have a bad feeling about this.

Placing such a name to a valley.

And it is underground, moreover, a labyrinth.

In the first place, I don't like confined places much.

I already had an experience not long ago which made me know that I hate participating in things like dungeons or labyrinths.

The 80 calamities God wasn't necessarily an evil God, and there's people that worship him as a God that purifies misfortune, but... in this case, I think the name was placed because it brings forth misfortune.

Just what is it hiding there?

The Goddess?

Is it that damn Goddess?

"W-Why the labyrinth?" (Makoto)

"At the 20th floor of that labyrinth, also known as Rose Garden, they live there. I have already told them that we will be going there, so it is fine to go there to have a talk and negotiate." (Sairitz)

20th floor underground?

What's with that pleasant depth.

Don't tell me that labyrinth is connected to hell.

Hm, labyrinth?

Not a cave?

"Ah—"

"It seems like there's been a problem recently, but Yaso-Katsui labyrinth is currently calmed down. Raidou-sama shouldn't have any problems at all in that labyrinth, right?" (Sairitz)

"By the way, uhm... why is it not a cave but a labyrinth?" (Makoto)

"Oh, sorry for that. I thought that Raidou-sama would already know. What a blunder

of mine.” (Sairitz)

Okay. Second bad feeling I am getting here.

Why did Sairitz-san assume that I knew?

“The big labyrinth that extends underground Yaso-Katsui is where the Superior Dragon ‘Night Clad’ lives. A place the Shadow Dragon that governs over darkness - Futz- has created. It isn’t a labyrinth that was created naturally, but a honest-to-word labyrinth.” (Sairitz)

The labyrinth being big was bad news, but learning that the main cause of the place’s name was actually a Superior Dragon is good news.

What. It wasn’t that it was connected to hell or that it had something to do with the Goddess, but just about a Superior Dragon.

Then there’s no need to worry.

I honestly think that it is a pain to go 20 floors down, but if it’s that kind of dungeon, there should be things like shortcuts and those kind of stuff.

It is the country that’s the most related to Japan after all!

“I see. So that’s how it is. Understood. Sairitz-sama, thank you for the information. I will take it into consideration with a positive outlook. And so, I want to meet you before long.” (Makoto)

“I am happy to hear that answer. In around a few days I will be able to give you the promissory note. I will contact you once again via the guild.” (Sairitz)

A mercenary group that seems to be living at the 20th floor of a giant dungeon.

It is certainly good information.

I will talk with Rembrandt-san about this and gather information about them.

And if there’s no problem, I will try meeting them.

If possible, I want them to become the shield that protects this town.

“Ah.”

“What is it?” (Sairitz)

“Sorry, I just thought of something. Well then, I will be taking my leave, Sairitz-sama.”
(Makoto)

I bow and leave the room.

And then, I turn my thoughts towards the reason why I let out my voice.

Which follower should I bring with me?

It is not a task that has to be done by today, but I feel like there will be an intense battle royal occurring in Asora once again.

Since it is Lorel, Tomoe is going to be persistent.

A Superior Dragon might be appearing in this matter, so I feel like Tomoe is the better choice, but I don't think we will be able to have leisure time there.

With the matter of the birth of hot springs, Tomoe's interest in Lorel has dimmed slightly compared to the past.

Now then... I pray that this matter somehow resolves in a calm and peaceful manner.

It will probably be a wish that won't become true.

For now, I decide to just go to Rembrandt-san's place to give him the report.

Chapter 235

Dinner and reports

Makoto here.

After explaining the situation, it resulted in two women scattering sparks in Asora.

Shiki and the new addition Tamaki had already stepped back and declared their standing, so that part is fine, but...

No, because of that, it turned into a one-on-one fight.

Both of them should have their own jobs to do, and yet, I can tell that their priority right now has become Lorel.

To the point that I could read it in their eyes.

I thought that today would be okay though.

Before all this happened...

We didn't have any plans with anyone at dinner, so we ate dinner with everyone at Asora, and well, we were able to have a peaceful dinner with Tomoe and Mio in our last meal of the day.

Ah, today was tofu.

It was delicious.

Cold tofu is a template in those kind of meals, but there was also agedashi tofu and tempura.

That white thing does well even in boiled food.

"Okay, then that's fine!" (Tomoe)

“Yeah, I don’t have any complains!!” (Mio)

But after the dinner...

I deny the voices from entering into my ears, and while holding my tea in one hand, I endeavour to look at a part of the landscape while some sort of fierce battle began.

Eh?

Since things had begun breaking, I thought they would already change the stage to the outside but...

“Ah~, and so?” (Makoto)

I ask the two that are approaching to where I am in an excited state.

Shiki, Tamaki, and Ema and the others have already been sent to another room to take refuge. There’s only us three in this hall.

“It has been decided that fighting is unnecessary.” (Tomoe)

“Heh~.”

That was Tomoe.

“Since the beginning, this wasn’t something to fight for.” (Mio)

“Please notice that before we had to evacuate everyone.” (Makoto)

Mio also said this as she cooled down.

“We noticed that there’s absolutely no problems if we both go.” (Tomoe)

“Bringing us both would be the best option-desu wa!” (Mio)

Ooh.

Because of the matter with Koran, Tomoe is in a situation where she will be on a leave from town for a while, and the part of the store Mio is involved with is prospering.

That store has a lot of things that were made with the concept of Japanese-style food, so it is still at a phase where I still want Mio to look after the store.

Because Mio and I are the ones that know the most about the seasoning and way of making it after all.

The people that are working at that store are still in the stage where they are still following after Mio.

I also thought about just going by myself, but this is about me, going alone to a country gave the feeling that something would definitely happen, so I dismissed that idea.

In the end, it is settled that I will be going to Lorel, but after dinner, I began the talk that I wanted one person to accompany me.

...Ah, now that I think about it, it would have been better to evacuate Ema and the others and leave only the followers beforehand.

Or just nominate Shiki?

Not that long ago, I was told that I favour Shiki too much though...

“...You two, if both of you were to leave, the company and the town will receive quite the burden, you know?” (Makoto)

“Shiki will work hard.” (Tomoe)

You say that pretty easily, Tomoe.

I am sure he will take on the job, but Shiki also has a limit in his 24 hours.

“Yes. If there’s the need to, we can just use Tamaki and Sari, that way, there won’t be any problems for a while, Waka-sama.” (Mio)

“Tamaki is a no. I have something planned for her, and at present, I will only make her do jobs related to Asora. She still has to manage that big shrine, so I don’t want to be lax about it.” (Makoto)

Mio also easily brought out the two people that I have a policy of not letting out of Asora.

“Regarding me, I will be reporting at a later time, but honestly, I have already understood the actual state of affairs of Koran by today, so I think there’s no need to waste time there. If this were a leave of several months, it is certainly true that it would cause several inconveniences, but isn’t this a business trip? With the Winged-kin radar that serves to search for enemies from high altitudes, and the network of Forest Onis that can seek for the cooperation of villages in the areas, there should be no problems.”
(Tomoe)

“That’s right. Tsige is not in such a strained state where Tomoe-san and I have to participate regularly in it-desu wa. If something happens, we can return immediately. A dungeon may be unappealing, but looking at the ingredients and cooking of a foreign country will become an irreplaceable experience. Especially Lorel where the vestiges of Waka-sama’s fellow countrymen remain. Just what kind of form has the Japanese food taken in the region and how much it has been raised. I am really interested!”
(Mio)

...

At this rate, before we move to the report meeting, we will end up in an unnecessary fight just like the two said, and then there’s the possibility of everyone getting tired by it.

The persuasion of the two wasn’t a simple ‘I don’t care about the town’, but something more concrete by understanding the situation of it.

Even if an unexpected situation occurs in the dungeon, I can’t imagine a situation where we three are unable to make a recovery in a few days.

The only thing there is a simple Superior Dragon after all.

“Mio, is the store okay? Isn’t it difficult to operate the store with only the girls there?”
(Makoto)

“I was planning on doing something next week. For that reason, I trained them quite a bit, so they are currently slightly better than what Waka-sama thinks they are-desu wa~.” (Mio)

That’s the first I have heard of it.

However, that Mio said she trained them ‘quite’ a bit and they got ‘slightly’ better.

She is super spartan.

I hope the amount of cooks in Asora won't decrease.

I should ask the people that are at the store about the actual circumstances.

Because I don't think I will be able to hear anything accurate from the manager in front of me.

There has been a previous experience where Mio said that she had a 'bit' of an idea and proceeded to seclude herself in the kitchen for *two weeks* making dashi.

"Plan, you say?" (Makoto)

"This is only limited to the early morning and at noon, but I was thinking about making a menu for take out." (Mio)

"Take out meals... Sounds like a *bento*." (Makoto) <*boxed lunches*>

"Yes, it is exactly that. The name is Bento fair." (Mio)

"I think it is an interesting idea but, why?" (Makoto)

"The congestion at noon is specially terrible, so I thought of it as one of the methods to soften it. We have also gotten the permission from the town to place tables and seats at the front of the store when it is lunch, but as expected, it would be easier to just increase the people that buy and eat somewhere else. That way, I think the situation would get slightly better." (Mio)

"There's a limit to how many tables we can place inside the store after all. Also, take out huh. I see." (Makoto)

"I was thinking about reporting this later, but I have done it now. I will bring the detailed documents later. It seems like we will be able to sample the menu in our journey-desu wa ne. Ufufufu." (Mio)

It is certainly true that there's few take out meals that have rice and side dishes present in Tsige.

If we are talking about taking out, it would be mostly fast food after all.

There will be people who will be able to learn about the taste of our store, and I can expect quite a variety of synergizing effects from this proposal.

But...

Thinking about how that publicity-like method might have a good effect, I don't think the use of bentos will decrease the amount of congestion.

The customers who are aiming to buy bentos will increase, and the customers who think that it was delicious will come to the store again to have meals there.

In terms of result, it will be good for the sales, but regarding the congestions, I think it will turn into a vicious cycle.

No well, I will just keep silent about it.

If there's the need to, I can ask the neighboring store via the Guild to please move from there -with good conditions, of course- and expand the food store of Mio.

At present, there's no problem if we simply increase the space of the store at lunch time... probably.

Eating the sample food of the bento made by Mio and her disciples at Lorel huh.

Aside from going to the dungeon, it might actually be unexpectedly fun.

"There's no need for you to go regularly to Koran, right Tomoe?" (Makoto)

"Of course. I think I will be able to give a good report regarding that town." (Tomoe)

"I see..." (Makoto)

Currently, Shiki is quite busy with the Academy town and Tsige.

Tamaki has the management of the shrines, and she is getting acquainted with the inside work of Asora alongside the residents. I don't really want to let her out.

Regarding Sari... well, depending on the situation, I think it is fine to loosen a bit, but for now, she has the work in Asora filling her hands.

Then that's fine huh.

Tomoe and Mio had finished giving their opinions, and were watching my state.

"Understood. Let's go to Lorel, both of you. Forest Onis and one Eldwarf... if there's anyone that you two want to bring as well, can you please choose them?" (Makoto)

"Yes! We are finally able to go to Lorel, right?!" (Tomoe)

"Understood. There's one Arke that's soon able to move outside. Also, about the bento..." (Mio)

"Ah~ wait wait. We will be having a report meeting, so let's group up with Shiki and Tamaki, also Tomoe will give me the details about Koran, and... Mio, tell me the line-up of the bentos and the information of the employees you will be using while we are away. I have lessons tomorrow, so I have to hear all of it today." (Makoto)

"Right. Understood. Then let's do the meeting in the room where Shiki and Tamaki are then." (Tomoe)

"Yes, Waka-sama." (Mio)

Accompanied by the two who are in a good mood, we move to the room where I had Shiki and Tamaki go to.

I thought they would be doing some complicated talk there, but they were just silently turning documents and checking them.

The two of them have quite a big amount of subordinates, so the number of reports is large as well.

When the talk of Lorel comes out, the burden they will take will most likely increase in a lot of meanings.

I am truly sorry.

"Shiki, Tamaki, sorry for the wait." (Makoto)

"Don't worry. It was a lot faster than I thought it would take." (Shiki)

“Yeah. The both of them didn’t seem like they would be taking it outside. Who gave up first?” (Tamaki)

“Both-ja, Tamaki.” (Tomoe)

“Too bad your expectations didn’t hit the mark huh.” (Mio)

“Ara.” (Tamaki)

“This time, I have decided to bring both of them to Lorel. The work in Asora will be handled by Tamaki, and the work of Shiki in Tsige will increase, but... please adjust to it. I will hear about any suggestions and requests to the best of my abilities.” (Makoto)

“The two, is it. Understood. Waka-sama, what do you intend to do about the lessons in Rotsgard?” (Shiki)

It seems like Shiki already expected this. He easily responded.

“The lessons will continue as scheduled. Even if we are going to be travelling far, we can teleport, so both can stand together. Tsige is currently in a lull state, so if we are able to find the people that can become the core of its defense, it would be advantageous.” (Makoto)

In terms of constancy, employing mercenaries can become a big burden to us, the town, and the mercenary group depending on the circumstances.

If possible, it would be great if they were to teach the ins and outs of defense to Tsige, and after surpassing the big mountain called independence, it would be possible to terminate the contract.

“That’s true. Being busy is the usual for us anyways, so it is to the point that lately there hasn’t been enough work. Hahaha.” (Shiki)

Shiki laughed and agreed.

“Having Kuzunoha company continuously helping out Tsige as a whole will only be disadvantageous if we think about the future. I think it is a good idea. Sari is dependable, and I don’t mind at all that the work in Asora will increase, Makoto-sama.” (Tamaki)

“Thanks. That helps me out a lot.” (Makoto)

“Well then, it has been decided that Tomoe-dono and Mio-dono will be accompanying Waka-sama to Lorel. Waka-sama, there’s no problem if we begin the report meeting now, right?” (Shiki)

“Yeah. Tomoe will tell me about Koran; Mio will tell me about Tsige’s state and your plan with the food store; Shiki about the Academy town and the surroundings of the Merchant Guild; Tamaki about Asora in its entirety.”

“Okay.”

My four followers speak out their acknowledgment.

The meeting of Kuzunoha company, we were somehow able to safely begin it.

Chapter 236

Results of Kuzunoha company

Ah, right.

Koran is a port town, so it is obviously close to the sea.

No well, it is an obvious thing, but it is now that I know the meaning of it.

“And so, Koran -with the consensus of the town- wanted to have a permanent collaboration with Tsige -no, with the Kuzunoha company. Speaking more accurately, it would be with our shipbuilding group and the Neptunes.” (Tomoe)

After safely resolving the matter of who will be going to Lorel with me, the meeting with the followers gathered at Asora had begun.

First, it was the report of Tomoe regarding the cooperative attitude of Koran towards Tsige, to the point of being eerie. The reason why has been revealed.

“It is true that the scale of the shipbuilding work of that town has been steadily increasing. It is not at the level of Tsige, but every time I go there, the scenery always changes. They have already absorbed a number of neighboring fishing villages and have gained plenty enough strength on their own, so they will probably grow even more.” (Shiki)

“They properly understand that it was all thanks to us. They are a smart bunch-desu wa ne. They are a more understandable bunch compared to the major powers.” (Mio)

Shiki and Mio are the ones who have been coming and going to Koran the most within the people here, so they are knowledgeable about the personality of that town.

The two of them seem to be convinced about the report of Tomoe.

“With the technique of the Eldwas, the shipbuilding techniques also get better, and it provides an overwhelming advantage against the other neighbouring towns. As of now, there’s no port town that can compete with them and the favorable wind

continues. Also... the cooperation of the Neptunes must be playing a big part as well. It seems like they haven't shown themselves, but the fishing boats that are from Koran are clearly getting more catch and have a safer travel compared to others." (Tamaki)

It seems like Tamaki has grasped the current state of Koran, which she has never gone to before, by reading the documents and hearing the report of Tomoe.

Just as she has pointed out, Koran and the towns that are related to it have not faced any accidents in their sea route since a certain time.

That time was when Shiki had spoken about Koran to Serwhale-san.

The Neptunes had a faction conflict at the sea in the past, so they have only been to the neighboring areas of Koran where they know it is safe, but it seems like the other sea races are quite far into the sea. That's why, along with the information gathering of the Neptunes, they also help out with the sailing of the ships in Koran.

It seems like the Neptunes don't want to meet with the Neptune force related to the brother of Serwhale-san after all.

Well, they abandoned that side and decided to follow his little brother Serwhale-san, so that's natural though.

"I certainly do remember agreeing with the sea residents about their request to protect the fellows of Asora that are in Koran, but... I didn't know that they were doing this much. Doesn't seem like Mio and Shiki knew either." (Tomoe)

"Right. So that's the reason why there were no attacks." (Shiki)

"Well, there's no real problem with that-desu wa. Isn't that rather something praiseworthy?" (Mio)

Yeah, I also heard about that.

There are around 10 people from Asora in Koran.

And so, since it is a beach and the attacks of marine demonic beasts on land are not that big of a deal, they said they would be looking after the sea to a certain extent. This is something that the people from the sea told me not that long ago.

I think it was at the time when the talk about increasing the number of Eldwas for shipbuilding had come out.

It seems like the fruits of their efforts had changed Koran's view of Tsige in a terrifying manner.

The ships that Koran is using are mostly made by our craftsmen, or ships that they have had a hand in the work.

And it seems like with the craftsmanship of the Eldwas, they have made the ships so that they can be recognized even when looking at them from under the sea.

So when they are spotted, they help the ship out in their cruising, defeat the marine beasts that might be a threat, and at land, our employees would be provided information about fishing grounds, the environment of the sea, and things like that.

Well, it is natural that the races that live in the sea have more information than the humans that use ships to travel through the sea. And it seems like the fishermen and sailors are already seeing us as a priceless treasure.

When Tomoe introduced herself as being on the same standing as Mio and Shiki, they gave her a warm welcome as if she were the representative of Tsige.

"The fishing amount, as well as the information they possess, overwhelms that of the other towns. And because of that, they have begun taking interest in the ocean and their expertise. For that sake, they want to get along with us even more. And coupled with the information that Kuzunoha company is based in Tsige... it seems like it turned into them thinking that they might as well just get under our wings. The matter with Koran is already settled." (Tomoe)

Hmph.

So Levi, the mermaids, and the sirens have been doing a lot as well huh.

They have sunk every ship that has been approaching Koran to seize it in this time of revolution, since they are practically pirates.

Well, it is certainly true that ships look like leaves when seeing them from within the sea, and lately, that girl Levi has been saying strange things like: 'I have been getting good at sniping~'.

Just by opening a big hole in the ship, you can create a disaster after all.

The sirens and mermaids as well.

They find land and islands, and hunt hostile ships mercilessly.

Even without Levi, they can show them a painful time with their magic.

Once at the sea, humans become weak.

I pity them.

“In that case, leaving aside unification, the reason why Koran wants to enter Tsige’s wing is because they already know that by doing that they will be able to enjoy the merits that they can obtain, right?” (Makoto)

“Right. They didn’t look like they would suffer any disadvantages from it.” (Tomoe)

“They possess a good quality sea, and in terms of shipbuilding, they possess techniques that are valuable for the Eldwas. I think that Kuzunoha company will continue their relationship as it has been until now.” (Shiki)

“Yeah. The carapaced types and shellfishes are currently the easiest to prepare and their taste is also good, so they are pretty useful-desu wa. The part that they are lowering their head to Waka-sama is also cute, isn’t it?” (Mio)

“I know about the sea of Asora, but I think it would serve as good reference to have the data of other seas. If this doesn’t bring any danger to Asora’s residents, I think it is okay to maintain the status quo, and it would also be okay to advance that relationship.” (Tamaki)

So everyone is in favor huh.

I also don’t have much reason to go against it.

Or more like, from what I have heard in the reports, I feel like it would be good to go there once.

To show my face there.

“Since they are relying on us that much, maybe I should show my face there at least once?” (Makoto)

“They are also expectantly waiting for that moment. In terms of popularity and amount of transactions, the Rembrandt company and the Kusunoha company are basically viewed as the representatives of Tsige. They courteously received the envoys.” (Tomoe)

“...Ah.” (Makoto)

“Waka, is there something bothering you?” (Tomoe)

“There’s a merchant that went to Koran, Schirra-san, right? The representative of the company that deals with things like gems and crystals.” (Makoto)

“...Yeah, there’s that one.” (Tomoe)

“How did it go with him? It seemed like he had some sort of incident in the past with Koran though.” (Makoto)

I try asking about the man that I suddenly remember.

“It seems like they did quite an unethical thing, but it wasn’t he himself who did it but their family predecessor anyways. It is still only one day since we arrived at Koran, but it seems like the ban they had has been lifted.” (Tomoe)

“I see. And so, do you think they are scheming something in the future?” (Makoto)

“Doesn’t seem like it. He was simply happy that he would be able to do transactions on the same standing as the other companies. From what I see, he is a man that has reasonable skill.” (Tomoe)

“He did look like a capable person. And so, what did they even do at Koran?” (Makoto)

“...The crystal corals that can only be found at the sea and are treated as a gift of the sea. It seems like they weren’t satisfied with the amount, so they were demanding to let them go to the depths of the sea to take more. To the place where the fishermen of Koran treat as a sacred place.” (Tomoe)

Uwa, that’s low.

“Ah, those crystal corals huh. It is true that they are beautiful, and it was also prohibited to take them. It is not like they only grow in that place, but if we are talking about the place that is the closest and can be entered the easiest it would be that place huh.” (Mio)

“A foolish move that creates animosity towards the locals. Seriously, the very definition of a fool.” (Shiki)

Mio seems to know about that place.

Shiki seems like he also knows about it, but it looks like he also knows how important that place is to the locals.

So they tried to put their hands on a place they shouldn't have even tried to huh.

Or more like, they have done something like that and yet, just because he was one of the envoys of Tsige, he was forgiven. I have to be careful on that.

Be careful on what I say that can be taken as some sort of approval.

So that it doesn't happen, I should meet with the influential people of Koran and create a connection promptly.

I don't want the name of our place falling because of something weird those guys might do.

It was a reputation that the Eldwas, Mio, Shiki, and sea races had build up after all.

“There's no need to tell this to Waka-sama, but... for the people that live on the blessings of the sea, the places that are established as prohibited for fishing have an important meaning behind it. And if on top of that it is being treated as a sacred precinct, it can be considered miraculous that they didn't get executed for the simple fact that they are outsiders that tried to enter. For the people, the sea is a place that they can't control, so things like superstitions and jinx are plenty enough to bet their life on.” (Tamaki)

“...Well, that's right.” (Makoto)

“And yet, there's already enough trust build up that just by being in the same group as us, they can forgive this sin. Kuzunoha company is truly trusted. I am moved.” (Tamaki)

“Thanks.” (Makoto)

The words of Tamaki still can't enter in me as honest.

But it is not like what she is saying is strange or anything.

It is a matter of course to endeavor in not betraying expectations after all.

“I think there's worth in trying to visit with just Rembrandt company and our Kuzunoha company. And so, in outline, I will be acting for a few days together with the envoy group that are over at Koran, but there's probably not going to be anything worth reporting. Doesn't seem like there will be any problems in having Koran under Tsige.” (Tomoe)

“Understood. Thanks, Tomoe.” (Makoto)

“Well, in my opinion, I just want to go to Lorel quickly. Mufufufufu.” (Tomoe)

“I will make it so we can go as fast as possible. Now then, the next one is Mio. You will be telling me the detailed menu that you will be making... ah, this one, right? Next, is the state of the town. Is there anything that has changed or something of interest?” (Makoto)

“Uhm, I have already talked about the bento, so... regarding the state of the town, it isn't hasty like the time with Rotsgard, and in the sense of tension, this town is able to maintain it at an ordinary level. There's nothing of interest. If I had to say something... the birthday of Rinon is coming soon. Toa said that she wanted to have the party at our place.” (Mio)

...That's really just saying whatever comes to mind.

I see. Rinon's birthday is coming. How old was she?

She isn't in school, so there's nothing about student year and that makes it harder to know.

There's already the income of her sister's party, and they are also okay with their house expenditures, and Rinon herself is gaining income too.

Just what's the point of age?

“I see. Ah well, she is an adventurer we are well acquainted with so, isn’t it fine to let her do it?” (Makoto)

“I was intending to do that. Komoe was also excited about it, so I will have her help out in something. Is that okay, Tomoe-san?” (Mio)

“Of course-ja. Go ahead and use her.” (Tomoe)

Shiki and Tamaki were also in favour of the party, and they were lining up suggestions and ideas.

What a peaceful scene.

For some reason, Shiki and Tamaki have a lot of ideas for magic performances.

Why do these magicians know so many recipes for magic tricks when they can do actual magic?

Ah right, Tamaki is a shrine maiden, not a magician.

She is wearing a red and white shrine maiden outfit at this moment and all.

She actually has a black outfit as well. I saw her once wearing a black shrine maiden outfit, but that felt so ominous and uncomfortable. And so, I asked her to please not venture too much with the outfit of a shrine maiden.

And well, while I was thinking about something out of topic, Tamaki had suggested a number of ideas for the bento menu to Mio. Things like sweet-and-sour pork, mapo doufu, and ebi chili were added to the menu.

The topic about onigiri for the adventurers was brought out, and the two of them got strangely heated in the discussion.

I personally like onigiri as well.

The one I like the most is lemon chicken, but I feel like it might turn into another unproductive discussion, so I refrain from saying it out loud.

There was no need to worry about such things. The two of them were discussing about the distribution of salt and the blending of it. They are talking about things like the

kind of rice uniformity and are already entering a domain I can't join.

"Ara, that's why I don't like ignorance. Listen well, adventurers are people that obtain their provisions from the actual place as they think of their food supply situation. There's no need to have their food last for a month! In the first place, with this distribution of salt, the taste will drop radically! The viscosity of the rice will decrease, and the salt will overwhelm the sweetness of it!!" (Mio)

"The taste is a trivial problem compared to starvation! Having food that can serve for emergencies serves for peace of mind, so even if it is slightly salty, they wouldn't mind!" (Tamaki)

"There's no idiot who would stuff their bags with onigiris just for that as they go to the wasteland! People like that would be laughable!" (Mio)

"That's why you increase the amount it can fill up your hunger by increasing the size and adding..." (Tamaki)

"I am thinking about providing onigiris as bentos. I don't want to feed something strange that's comparable to a ninja pill." (Mio) *<Ninja pills had many things stuffed in them for their diet.>*

What Mio proposed first was an onigiri that was salted so it could last for 1 week.

I don't think that's so different from ninja pills though.

In the first place, if the importance is directed at its preservation, wouldn't it be better to put dried plum in instead of not putting anything?

Let's try saying it... no, entering this dispute is most likely a bad move.

No matter where it rolls, it won't turn into a good result.

I can't imagine onigiri that can last for one month to begin with.

That's really made out of white rice, right?

I can only see it as some sort of onigiri mutation though.

Well, this is a place to talk about reports, so I will have them tell me their arguments

at a later time.

“Mio and Tamaki, STOP! Can you please have that debate at another time with the two of you and the related people? I want to hear the report of Shiki after all.” (Makoto)

“...That’s true. It is not something that can be decided after talking here for a little.” (Mio)

“We have not touched the possibilities of the ingredients after all. It would take more than one night. I am truly sorry.” (Tamaki)

As expected, they were intending to leave the boundaries of onigiri huh.

How scary.

Not only a night, it is practically being treated as a research topic.

I am glad that they at least agreed in stopping.

“On my side, it would be about the report of Rotsgard. The merchant guild that has been reorganized by Zara as the center has already settled down. From the top brass and the representatives that compose the organization, there’s no one who wants to be hostile against us. Waka-sama’s attendance to the meetings has increased compared to the past, and they already know that with Akua, Eris, Lime, or I, the meeting can proceed in a satisfactory manner anyways, so it is incredibly easy to handle.” (Shiki)

“It is true that I have tried to participate more than before. Simply showing your face and drinking tea can create some credence.” (Makoto)

“Yes. Also, before the attack in Rotsgard, Kuzunoha company had shown radical growth and didn’t expose itself much, so the representative was riddled with mystery. Since everyone related to the guild participated in the meetings except for Waka-sama, it created an unnecessary sense of distrust. After becoming the saviour of the town, moreover, provided assistance to the reconstruction of it, the unnecessary filters placed on us have disappeared. I think that played a big part in how easy it is to move now.” (Shiki)

“So the relationship we have with the guild is going well. And so, how’s the town been lately?” (Makoto)

Gotta know about the latest info of the reconstruction.

“This might be considered a great achievement brought by injury. A part of the town that had been destroyed by the variants has been put in order. With this, more effective renovations can be done, more people will gather, and the liveliness will grow. There’s been cases where people that left are now returning, and the population is recovering favorably. Also, regarding the slums where the demi-humans lived in, there has been no requests for demolition, and it is still being used as their dwelling with slight repairs.” (Shiki)

Fumufumu.

Not a bad report.

The places that have been destroyed are being renovated, but that doesn’t mean there’s no people living there anymore. Rather, there’s more people now.

And yet, the demi-humans that would normally be driven out first, have been admitted to live just as they have been.

That must mean the standing of the demi-humans has increased a bit.

“How is Bor and the others doing?” (Makoto)

“They are cooperating with the reconstruction. There’s still a lot of simple manual labor left. Also, a part of the town’s companies have begun copying our part-time job policy. For the demi-humans, this is a chance to show their strength, so they are doing their best in order to obtain employment.” (Shiki)

“What about the area where there’s that variant turned into a giant tree?” (Makoto)

“It has completely become a public park that represents the town. Rotsgard is still not in a finished state yet, but they are already at the phase where they are polishing the finer details. Representative Zara seems to be thinking in the same way. He promptly settled a plan to provide assistance to the surrounding towns and he wanted to request for our cooperation.” (Shiki)

“The satellite towns huh. After Rotsgard, they have to do something about them as well, right.” (Makoto)

“That’s a matter that representative Zara, the merchant guild, and the Academy have to tackle themselves. Zara will request for our cooperation, but I think there’s no need for overcommitment there. Kuzunoha company has already cooperated plenty enough with the reconstruction of Rotsgard. The store is thriving everyday, Waka-sama.” (Shiki)

“I see. That’s great.” (Makoto)

“Yes, thanks for your hard work. With this, we have created an environment where we can concentrate only on the lessons at Rotsgard.” (Shiki)

I didn’t continue by saying: ‘it is fine to take a good rest then’.

Rather, Shiki’s motivation is literally read as serious. I feel like fire is swaying at his back.

“Tomorrow’s lesson huh. If I remember correctly, we are integrating the new students, right?” (Makoto)

“That’s right! It will be the step-up for Jin, Amelia, and the others, and it will also be an important moment to make new students for Waka-sama!” (Shiki)

“Y-Yeah, I understand.” (Makoto)

I am not that passionate like Shiki though.

From the documents that he brought out, excluding Jin and the others, there’s around 30 students.

That’s pretty high.

That Shiki, he isn’t being too passionate and trying to create a Raidou faction within the academy, right?

I don’t want that.

I definitely don’t want to get involved in the power strife inside the academy.

“There’s a lot of new students, but well, this is just to please the people at the office. After doing some classes, there will most likely be only a few remaining.” (Shiki)

“That’s how it will end up.” (Makoto)

“Tomorrow will be their first lesson, so I would like to have Waka-sama move as well. Is that okay?” (Shiki)

“I don’t mind.” (Makoto)

I am the teacher anyways.

There’s not many classes where you just talk and that’s all.

“Thanks. Well, we will have the students understand first that the class of Raidou is not one where we treat the students gently like customers. It may be troublesome but, please do take care of it.” (Shiki)

...

Ah, there’s a few students in the list who are from pretty famous noble families.

I thought after seeing the tournament, they wouldn’t want to join our class so there was no need to worry, but it seems like I was still underestimating humans.

Jin and the others have vomited their share of blood and pushed their limits in order to stand where they are now.

As long as there’s no people here that have some sort of outstanding talent, there’s no person that can get better by simply being praised.

Rather, it would create misunderstandings and make them full of themselves, and that can cause them to commit a fatal mistake.

Just as Shiki said, we have to make them understand that first.

Even I don’t know how to easily make people stronger.

The reason behind that evil smile of Shiki is probably because of the part about pleasing the people at the office.

I can understand that too.

Having them telling us to increase the number of students all the time does get in your nerves.

“Understood. Then after the matter with the lessons calms down and Tomoe returns from Koran, Sairitz-san will most likely have the promissory note ready, so we will be going to Lorel then. Wrapping the matters outside with this... Tamaki, I think you have already gotten used to Asora, right?” (Makoto)

“Yes. I am deeply moved at how splendid of a place it is.” (Tamaki)

“How is it going with the shrine administration and the familiarity with the races that have been living with you, Tamaki? Is there anything that’s been troubling you?” (Makoto)

“There’s nothing troubling me, but there’s a number of things I would like to report to Makoto-sama, and ask you about.” (Tamaki)

“Yeah, I am listening.” (Makoto)

The Asora reflected in the eyes of Tamaki.

The newest addition in my followers, and also the one I can’t get my grasp on the most.

Now then, just what does she feel?

I hope I can understand her better with this...

Chapter 237

A place that's nowhere

It has been a while since the shrines (and Tamaki) have appeared in Asora.

I have done shrine visits once a day.

The change in atmosphere after passing through the shrine archway, the refreshing grounds; that silence that is detached from the sounds of life... is something special even in this world and Asora.

Also, the scent of the trees and the incense make me remember Japan and it makes me nostalgic, which is one of the reasons of my daily visits as well.

But it is not like I stay that long there, so I don't know about the state of it at the other hours.

For the people that live in Asora, just how has the existence of a shrine taken form in them? I have been slightly interested in it.

That's why I have been looking forward to seeing if Tamaki's report has something regarding that.

"First of all, about the administration of the shrine: thanks to the direct request of Makoto-sama, all of the races have been helping out frequently. Most people would show there at least once, and now, even children come to play." (Tamaki)

"Heh~." (Makoto)

"The cherry blossom viewing event probably worked as a saving for the image of the shrine in Asora. That's most likely the reason why they can go there with ease." (Tamaki)

"As expected, it didn't become a place where people gather because of faith huh. Sorry, Tamaki." (Makoto)

It is a place where it has a Shinto shrine, a Buddhist temple, and a Parthenon temple, moreover, there's a shrine maiden as well. And yet, it is being treated as a big public park, which makes me feel bad.

Tsukuyomi-sama, Daikokuten-sama, Susanoo-sama, Athena-sama; these place was created because of our connection with them after all.

But it is not like they are the Gods of Asora, and aside from me, there's no one that has any familiarity with those names.

Well, it can't be helped that it isn't treated as a place to give prayers religiously.

If that's the case, the divine vessel might starve for worship, so well, at that point, it should endure with my visits.

Does it even have a will? I don't know if it gets hungry either though.

The divine vessel literally looks like a simple ball after all.

"Please don't mind that. This is a place where races that didn't even pray to the Goddess are gathered. Just because a place connected to Gods -they don't even know about- appears, it would be strange if they immediately take it as a religious place."
(Tamaki)

"If it's been taken as a resting place at the very least, does that mean it is doing well?"
(Makoto)

"Yes. Also... Makoto-sama visits it everyday. Thanks to that, there have been a number of people that come to offer their prayers. The residents here are mostly people that naturally accept things and share their thoughts. Their compatibility with shrines is definitely not bad."
(Tamaki)

"I see. It is good that there have been people going to give their prayers."
(Makoto)

"Yeah. Temples and shrines don't discriminate races, and the temple one has been expanded, so it is mostly being visited by the sea people. But..."
(Tamaki)

"...Is there a problem?"
(Makoto)

Honestly, I don't want to hear about any problems regarding the shrine.

It would be one thing if they were not interested or they are treating it as air, but I wouldn't be happy to hear that they are against it. This is just my personal opinion though.

"There's no problem but... the target of their prayers is... uhm..." (Tamaki)

"Yeah, 'the target is'...?" (Makoto)

"Makoto-sama." (Tamaki)

"...Hah?" (Makoto)

Why did it turn out that way?

The ones that are enshrined there are different Gods (well, to be precise, Tamaki says that there's only a mysterious divine vessel and there's nothing like the divine protection of the Gods or their will in them though), and in the first place, I am not a God.

And I am no overlord either.

This is so unexpected that it just doesn't make sense.

"...Kukukuku." (Tomoe)

"Ara, that's wonderful." (Mio)

"I see. That's how it turned out." (Shiki)

Tomoe, Mio, and Shiki, muttered this with joy.

But it doesn't seem like they find it strange.

Why?

In the first place, even if I am not always in Asora, I do come here often and they can totally talk to me and touch me as well. I'm totally a feudal lord.

"It probably means that for Asora, Makoto-sama is a living God, or something proportionate to that. It has been a while since this Tamaki here has seen a person

that is a ruler, and yet, treated as a God. Moreover, the ruler himself doesn't see himself in that way, but the people still treat him as a God." (Tamaki)

"..."

"I have explained the manners and attitude they should take, but... in terms of the divine vessel I spoke about, just by giving their prayers is enough. Currently, it is a trifle matter, but if I had to say one concern of mine, this would be it." (Tamaki)

"This is not trifle, it is incredibly concerning!" (Makoto)

"Ara~" (Tamaki)

"Can you please explain it well to them? Like seriously, please." (Makoto)

"If it's the order of Makoto-sama, I of course will handle it carefully." (Tamaki)

"I am sure you will be able to explain it properly, so I am counting on you." (Makoto)

This is no joke.

I am not such a splendid person to be prayed by at shrines.

Those kind of things are probably more fit for people that leave their mark in history.

...Ah, but well, in modern times, there have been people who have done great achievements like flood control which have been revered.

If I remember correctly, they were treated as living deities.

Both cases are way too disconnected from me.

It feels as if something incredibly heavy has fallen on my shoulders.

Sorry, please spare me.

"To persuade them will certainly be relatively hard though." (Tamaki)

"Of course, I don't think it will be solved only with words. Don't worry." (Makoto)

“That’s a relief. And so, regarding matters aside from the shrine.” (Tamaki)

“Yeah, how is it?” (Makoto)

“Sari and Ema are capable people, so the land and sea are working together perfectly. Even though the numbers have increased quite a lot, the dissatisfaction of the residents in Asora is scarily low to the point of being surprising.” (Tamaki)

“That’s true. Those two are a great help.” (Makoto)

“The people that have been involved with this place from the beginning: Tomoe-san, Mio-san, and Shiki-san, are truly managing it *skillfully*. I am purely impressed.” (Tamaki)

“Hm? Skillfully?” (Makoto)

“...”

I was slightly bothered by how Tamaki said it.

I glanced at the three, but they don’t seem to be saying anything about it.

“They understand well that all the races believe in power supremacy, and as an outlet, they provide the Asora ranking as a place to fight and have amusement. And with that, it dispels the discontent at early stages and also creates a natural hierarchy with Makoto-sama as the summit. There’s also a lot of *government* techniques done here as well. It is splendid.” (Tamaki)

Skillful... government.

Why is it that my emotions are stirring slightly?

“That’s just by chance. It was surprising for me that it turned into a good place for amusement.” (Tomoe)

“It is a good place to kill time, right?” (Mio)

“This domain called Asora has Waka-sama at its centre, so there’s not really any problem in him standing at its summit.” (Shiki)

And for some reason, those three seem to be dodging those words...

Leaving aside Mio.

“That’s why there’s not much I can propose to do. Currently, there would be only one thing.” (Tamaki)

Tamaki didn’t delve deeper into it either, and continues with a different topic.

“Regarding the treatment of the animals, I think they should be dealt with urgently.” (Tamaki)

“Animals? Are you talking about the chickens and cows?” (Makoto)

There’s certainly animals that have been raised as livestock in Asora.

There was a period of time when we had trouble with it, but most of it should have been resolved already.

I didn’t only hear the reports, I have also gone there myself a few times, and that’s how I felt.

“No, I am talking about the animals in the wild. The ones like: wolves, bears, and the Roc bird.” (Tamaki)

“What do you mean by dealing with them? There hasn’t been any friction.” (Makoto)

“Makoto-sama, Asora will surely develop even more in the future. Because here, there’s only powers that are affiliated with Makoto-sama. With how things go, the places where one can live will run out before long. No matter how big the place is, this will definitely happen one day. That’s why we shouldn’t let those animals do whatever they want with such a vast place. Instead, we should eradicate them in the early stages, or take them under your direct control as part of the residents. That way, I think the problems in the future will be lessened.” (Tamaki)

“ ... ”

“If it is left as it is, when the time comes, they will bring out the name of Makoto-sama and will use a vague promise as their backing, which will create disputes in the future with the residents. Makoto-sama is the personage that serves as the heart of this

nation. At the very least, I think that the present vague promises like giving them a forest and desert should be rechecked into something more proper.” (Tamaki)

“I don’t think they would create problems like that though.” (Makoto)

“Makoto-sama, pardon me, but problems concerned with the environment and living beings in it, are definitely not matters that turn into good things by their own. In the case of problems with original residents and new ones, it is easiest to just quickly eradicate them and then look back at history and apologize for it. Makoto-sama doesn’t like complicated problems, and it is also one of the most simplest and clear methods of resolving the matter.” (Tamaki)

Ugh.

But I don’t think this is right.

In the first place, I can’t imagine Asora getting so overflowed with people. And to commit genocide because of this foreseeable future, that’s just... no, there’s a part of it that has a point.

It is true that problems should be dealt with before they sprout, but... even so...

I feel like I am being inquired about my stance here.

In that case, I won’t be developing the mountains and sea completely.

“...Then...” (Makoto)

“...”

“I will clearly establish somewhere that there should be no fights over territory. I will also arrange things on their side as well. It is true that I don’t know about the future, but if I leave word that I don’t wish for that to happen, there’s a high chance that both sides will respect that. Is that okay?” (Makoto)

Also, this is not a nation of humans or hyumans.

There’s a lot of races with long longevity, and are different in nature.

“...Of course, I don’t mind. This is just my personal opinion but, I think that in the

future, it will be necessary for Makoto-sama to show your will clearly. I think it will be good practice to try that even if it's in small matters in Asora." (Tamaki)

"Thanks." (Makoto)

"My honest impression is that Asora is an incredibly ideal land. Yeah... just like an Utopia." (Tamaki)

"You are exaggerating, Tamaki." (Makoto)

Tamaki giggles and bows once.

She is done huh.

Ideal land... Utopia huh.

Tamaki should know about the words denoting *those kind of places*, like: Elysium, Agartha, Eden, Heaven, Shangri-la, Mount Penglai. And yet, why did she choose to call it Utopia?

When she is the one saying it, I feel like there's some sort of meaning behind it.

In the first place, I myself... don't like the word Utopia that much.

Because of the name's origin, and the circumstances of it. <Utopia falls.>

Well, for a Japanese person, the word heaven is probably the better wording for it. To denote an ideal place, that is.

If Asora is thought of as a place similar to heaven, that would make me happy.

Yeah, let's change gears.

"Asora is calm then huh." (Makoto)

It is as if heaven is telling me to go to Lorel.

Heaven, not the Goddess.

Okay, my hesitation has disappeared.

I have also resolved myself.

Let's head to that dark, confined, and unpleasant -no, *extremely* unpleasant dungeon.

Right.

...After this, when I go to the shrine and I see people there, I will properly tell them that it isn't a place to pray at me. On top of that, I will ask them to visit frequently.

Chapter 238

Step Up

A sensation of floating and slight intoxication.

We who had come to attend the class of Raidou-sensei, were surprised by the several tens of new students that were going to participate.

Since the turmoil with the variants, the light in the eyes of the students that attend this academy have changed quite a lot.

...Well, it was the same for us, in a different meaning though.

(This is... a barrier. But for what purpose?)

The moment the class begun, Raidou-sensei and Shiki-san were 'cooperating' to form some kind of magic.

And then, along with that sensation I felt not long ago, everyone was isolated in some sort of barrier.

The figures of Raidou-sensei and Shiki-san are nowhere to be seen.

(Eh? There's no one else aside from me?!)

If it was only Shiki-san, the class would normally advance close to the boundaries of common sense, but in the case of Raidou-sensei, it doesn't work that way.

That person does outrageous things at times.

For example, calling strong mamonos that I don't even know where he brought them out from and have them fight the students.

...But lately, when Shiki-san leaves the class and only Raidou-sensei is left, he makes us do quite the absurd trainings.

Well, that means he is seriously looking at us and doing what he can, so it actually... makes me happy as well.

But in this time's lesson where newcomers are participating, there's no way those two are doing the same lesson for everyone.

Think.

In order to be employed in the Kuzunoha company, I have to get stronger.

And for that sake, the thing that I can't neglect is to think and deal with the situations.

(Illusion magic huh. Isolation and illusion. They are caging us with that, most likely.)

My body can move.

But I am not even sure if I am actually moving it.

From the ground of the outskirt field, black muddy monsters come out and were approaching me.

I could feel clear hostility so I intercept them.

I can use my arrows and spells as normal.

They show effect.

But at this rate, there will be no end to it.

Since I have sensed this situation is illusion magic, the method to break this deadlock is to conquer the spell.

With the intention of confirming how much leeway I have, I purposely receive an attack that I can tell I will be able to recover from.

“!!”

It hurts.

It hurts quite a bit.

My skin was cut as normal and blood came out from it.

I immediately heal the wound with healing magic.

If it were the illusion magic we learn, even if it is magic that's being strengthened with the barrier, I shouldn't be receiving damage since I have already seen through it as an illusion.

But this is something that Raidou-sensei and Shiki-san cooperated to set up.

Common sense doesn't work.

There might be the possibility that the barrier is only for isolation, and the illusion actually doesn't have anything added to it.

And in truth, I can't sense the presence of Jin and Sif, who were right by my side, and the other members. I can't even hear their voices.

Rather than fearing this situation, I could tell that fear of those two teachers was being born slightly inside of me.

Suddenly, the body of the black muddy mamonos had expanded, their bloodthirst had increased even more, and their movements had grown sharper.

I see, so that's how it is.

What a bad natured illusion.

"But this is an illusion. Also, this is a class. That's why... it can be broken. It can definitely be broken!"

There's no way I can't overcome this.

That's one of the things I, Amelia Hopelace, have learned after being trained in Kuzunoha company.

As long as it is not actual combat, Raidou-sensei and Shiki-san rarely do things that are impossible to overcome.

In the days like today where everyone is made to do the same... the lesson's content is

not over with just this!

I parry the muddy mamonos and defeat them while I move around and search for seams in the barrier or any hint that can serve to break the illusion.

Without taking much time, I found it.

That place where the scenery was slightly warping.

I boost my magic power, clad it into my arrow, and shoot it there.

“I did it!” (Amelia)

I could feel that peculiar sensation of a barrier crumbling.

As if a thin skin was being peeled, the world with black muddy mamonos overflowing was disappearing, and I returned to the place that has the same landscape.

I could tell that the upper half of my body had sprung up.

So I was... sleeping.

I look at my surroundings.

Jin and Daena were the same and were looking around restlessly.

...So I wasn't the first.

There was slight regret in my chest.

The words Shiki-san used to warn me a number of times resurfaced: ‘You don't have as much talent as the others’.

Even when I sacrifice my sleep time to train, I don't know if I will be able to surpass my limits.

And in reality, even when I am training like this, there's Jin or someone else that's on par or ahead of me. Really, geniuses are so troublesome.

But... that's fine.

At the very least, I am able to keep their pace.

If I just close the distance bit by bit, I will someday be able to catch up with them... right?

“...Eh?”

As I was thinking this, Raidou-sensei and Shiki-san were looking at me and were showing a surprised face.

What’s wrong?

...Did they think... I was less capable than this?

Uh, if that’s the case, that’s pretty shocking.

At our surroundings, there’s still Sif, Yuno, Izumo, and Misura, who are groaning in their sleep.

The new kids are all wiped out and writhing.

Being in third place is, well, not that bad, I suppose.



“Jin beat them all down and escaped by chance, Daena used strengthening magic on his fist and found the seam by chance.” (Makoto)

“Yeah.” (Shiki)

“They were unintended escapes.” (Makoto)

“Right. It seems like we will need to place restrictions the next time we do something like this.” (Shiki)

“Tomoe, who is specialized in this, would have been able to do better than this though. Well then, I will head to where those two are.” (Makoto)

“Yes. I have prepared your special bow and arrows. Go ahead.” (Shiki)

What Shiki gave me were not arrows with an arrowhead, but arrows that have a suction pad as their head.

The bow is also not the same as the one I use normally, but a special one that I use at the academy with the students.

Moreover, it is quite the crude one.

It is a lot smaller and weaker than the bow and arrows that I first received from the Highland Orcs in this world.

In order to work as a teacher in this school, I learned Feather Touch *EX* to hold back, but Shiki said that even with that, people will be at death's door. *<EX is a term in games suggesting that this is an improved version of original.>*

I could only laugh at that.

When I was sniping my students in the lessons, I obviously didn't aim for their vitals.

But Jin and the others are already at the phase where they are doing a step up, so it seems like Shiki thought of a way I can properly use a bow... and this is the result of it.

Really, how did it turn out this way?

“...Hoh~”

“Hm?”

Shiki let out a voice as if he didn't expect something.

I search for the reason of it, and look around the students that are still sleeping and I see that one other student had woken up.

Heh~, I can understand why Shiki is surprised.

It is Amelia.

It wasn't by chance, she actually broke through the illusion properly.

That's impressive.

Just in case, I made it so that the difficulty of breaking the illusion lowered as time passed on.

Even when taking that into account, the time Amelia took to wake up was fast.

In essence, she is at the top.

“Is Amelia’s resistance against magic strong?” (Makoto)

“Her resistance to magic? That’s not something that increases often, but... this is surprising. No matter how much she has trained, that girl had...” (Shiki)

“That girl is Shiki’s favorite after all. She is giving out an aura of ‘I love Shiki-san’ from her whole body, but well, that’s not bad.” (Makoto)

“Raidou-sama, it is not as if I am teaching Amelia because of a reason like that, I just...” (Shiki)

“Yeah yeah, I understand. If that really were your reason, in your case, it would end up with you teaching practically all the female students and taking care of them.” (Makoto)

It would really turn out that way, no joking.

Well, anyways, it seems like a new talent of Amelia has been discovered, maybe?

That girl is pretty versatile in a lot of things after all.

She has a tendency to only have small grains in each part, but it is impressive that she is able to do so many things.

“...Regarding the part-time jobs, it is certainly true that more than 80% of the female students said that they wanted to take part in it, but... how to say it, it is vexing.” (Shiki)

“Well then, I will be going there as Raidou-sensei and corner those three a little more with my bow and arrow.” (Makoto)

Rather than archery, this reminds me of when I played at the shooting stands in the festivals.

It is now safe to shoot at the vitals I have been avoiding before, so let's aim for them.

Even if it's not a threat, receiving attacks at the places that are directly connected to death is dangerous in itself, and I think they will seriously try to oppose it.

Ah, right.

This bow is like a Youkyuu. *<A small bow shot while sitting. Popular in the Edo period.>*

It gives off that kind of feeling.

It has suction pads though.

I have to try hard in a different meaning so that I don't end up playing around.



"Sen... pai... if you continue taking a class like that, one of these days, you will die."

"Shut up. Also, I won't die, so don't worry. At worst, they will bring us back right as we are about to anyways." (Jin)

"Jin, instead of calling it not dying, it is more like... we are not allowed to." (Misura)

"Stop it... Misura. Jin, Amelia, and I, had to face hell again after we conquered that illusion, you know? Anyone would want to vent some steam." (Daena)

"That was... how to say it, it was practically horror. You three, how many tens of times did you die?"

"After somehow waking up, I was watching together with Onee-chan. I wonder, is it really possible to hit the head, heart, and neck so frequently without any magic? I began thinking that he was holding some sort of incredible instant-kill weapon." (Yuno)

"...Hey." (Amelia)

"What is it, Amelia?" (Izumo)

After safely(?) finishing the class of Raidou-sensei that seems to have stepped up in

difficulty, we were doing the customary contemplation meeting.

A number of *kouhais* still had pale faces, and even with that, they still stuck to us all the way here. They followed us to the library. <kouhai=juniors>

The reason why I immediately rejected the words of the kouhai A that instantly began crying, was because after breaking out from the illusion magic, we faced the bow and arrows of Raidou-sensei and received fatal wounds several times -no exaggeration.

We could tell that he was holding back, but that in itself was frustrating. He hit us repeatedly.

I can't deny that I feel like crying.

Within that group, Amelia who was as equally dejected and silent, had spoken.

Izumo noticed it and asked Amelia, and she laughed weakly and continued her words.

"He said that he didn't aim for the eyes because, even with suction pads, it was still dangerous. It is true that if you are using a bow, shooting at the eyes is pretty effective and we are also taught that it is a place that can bring certain death. But from how it felt, I think that he would have been able to shoot at both of our eyes even when we were moving all around..." (Amelia)

Eyes.

Seriously?

"...Ah right, Sensei spoke about that with father before. He said that using black coated arrows to shoot at the opponent's eyes was really effective in night warfare. He said that if there's moonlight, you can shoot as much as you wanted and the bow would be peerless." (Yuno)

Yuno threw in information of Raidou-sensei.

"It is not that the bow is peerless, but more like, Raidou-sensei himself is though."

"Even with a bow and arrows that are practically toys, when it hits you, it still reverberated in my body. Sensei and Shiki-san said that it doesn't have any power, but I saw my life flash before my eyes several times." (Daena)

Daena said this with eyes as if his soul had left him.

I felt the same way.

Sensei said things like: 'This is no time to be having *revolving lanterns*', so he probably has had those kind of experiences before. *<the moment life flashes before your eyes>*

In other words, there's people out there that are able to make that Raidou-sensei feel the same way as us.

I don't want to think of that.

I feel like I will have to do my best so that I don't enter that state.

How fearsome is the revolving lantern state.

"At any rate... even though my main job is mage, it took me more time to break through the spell compared to Jin and Daena. That's shocking." (Sif)

Sif was feeling down.

Now that she mentions it, in this time's illusion magic, Sif took quite a long time to break through it.

...In my case, I was rampaging around and it went well. That's what I was about to say, but I refrained from.

That doesn't serve as comfort.

"Same here. It made me realize that increasing the amount of elements you can use and the cards in your hand doesn't mean that your field of vision has expanded."

"To think that even you senpais are having it hard..."

All of the candidate kouhais that followed us all the way here are the people that had climbed from the academies at the surrounding towns and reached all the way here to the main academy of Rotsgard.

They are a group that had focused in one talent to begin with, so when coming to the

main academy, it gets difficult to satisfy the level of the other fields that are being requested.

I also don't like the policy of the main academy to demand a minimum level of skill in set areas from all the students though.

In a sense, the lessons of Raidou-sensei have the same policy, so it probably feels even more difficult because of that.

"...The first time we took the class of Raidou-sensei, we were simply showed a mock battle between Raidou-sensei and Shiki-san. At that time, we were probably a lot weaker than you guys here, so they probably didn't do something like breaking through illusion magic so suddenly because of that. That's why... I might be slightly jealous of you guys. I don't have any intentions of having you guys catch up or surpass me, but I can tell you this: as long as you follow the lessons of that sensei, you *definitely* won't get weaker." (Jin)

I don't know the real intentions of those two. But even if for a bit, I certainly did feel this way.

That's why... I don't care if they stay in the class or not, that's their own choice, but I at least encourage them.

"Right. At the very least, I don't regret at all continuing until now. Your career choices will definitely widen. If you try hard, you can even get bonus training, you know? That training is also incredible, so I recommend it." (Misura)

Misura smilingly continues after me.

But at the latter half, I felt like darkness showed slightly.

Well, he is trying to encourage them like I am doing, so let's not touch that topic. Yeah.

"Saying things like: 'I am going to die', is too soon. Continue, there's no problem. This is the class in this academy that can make you the strongest. I can say this with certainty. If you still want to run away after we have said all this... being married as a student is the best, you know? All your escape routes disappear completely. Your wife and child are the strongest." (Daena)

Daena was... I am not sure if he is trying to encourage them or implicitly deny

marriage.

It is true that in the beginning, he was the one who wanted to escape the most.

At those times, he muttered things like: 'I have a family' and 'I have to show results, or else' as he continued climbing.

"If you are a mage, this class here will change your world. You will have to train your body no matter what after all. You will be taught that it is necessary. Your brain and body; you will be able to train both. There's no class that can compare. You can tell that to the other kids that are not here. With more numbers, the difficulty of Sensei's class will increase after all. It is something to be thankful for, but this is a powerful medicine that you are required to take in diluted at first though." (Izumo)

Izumo makes a bitter smile as he shows the muscles in his arm.

Even if slender, it has a number of scars on it, and moreover, there's clearly more muscle in it than before.

His pure white skin was now tanned.

Even as a mage, what serves as your foundation is in the end, your body.

This is also a basic of Raidou-sensei's class.

"Hm... I don't really have anything special to say though. You guys are all people that have climbed up with your own efforts instead of relying on your pedigree, right? Then you must already understand that it will feel easier *eventually*, and that you will use up all your strength *eventually*, right?" (Yuno)

Because Yuno comes from a household with a big company, she is seen as an *Ojou-sama*. <Daughter of a high-class family.>

Or more like, she is actually an Ojou-sama.

Rembrandt company has enough capital to buy a small country.

But from her words, rather than having the eyes of an Ojou-sama, it looked more like the eyes of the hungry workers that work in a company.

“Right. It is assured that you won’t die, but if you didn’t have the resolve of betting your very self, you wouldn’t gone through the trouble of coming all the way here. There’s plenty of easier paths you could have taken after all. This is only a possibility, but there’s the chance that you can get close to Raidou-sensei and the Kuzunoha company, you know?” (Sif)

Sif is more of the utility view huh.

But I concur with the ‘assured that you won’t die’.

If you don’t test yourself now, lay yourself bare and train to your bones, for what reason did you even come to this academy?

If you are only trying to graduate from here to gain status, you wouldn’t even get close to Raidou-sensei.

Because it will only make it hard for you.

“...Your trump cards and your best; show them all here. No matter what you bring out, no matter how much confidence you have in them, they definitely won’t work. Consider it a blessing that you will be able to learn this in class rather than in actual combat. Become stronger and stronger, and find the next stage. Within the lessons of Sensei and Shiki-san, we have learned new skills that we wouldn’t have been able to think of before. If you want to find real trump cards that you can really rely on... there’s no place as better as this to come up with those ideas. I am looking forward to the day when you guys can settle down as our kouhais.” (Amelia)

It seems like Amelia is trying to teach them the importance of showing all of their power.

At first, we also tried to hide our trump cards a lot and tried not to show it to others.

But that was truly pointless.

We should have shown them and quickly aim for higher heights.

If they are going to stay in this class and do this from the very start, the things they can obtain will increase.

The time to breakup the meeting has come, and the kouhais muttered: ‘we will try and

do our best'. Looking at their visage, I made a wry smile.

Now then, I wonder how many people will remain.

Sensei said that he presently didn't have any plans of cancelling classes, and the reconstruction of the town has finished its first stage.

Train and be trained.

My student life will change little by little.

I am looking forward to that.

Chapter 239

And then, opening up...

“Eh?! You are going to Lorel Union?!”

“Yeah, I have a little business there.” (Makoto)

Hah...

How many times does it make it now?

Just in case, I thought about telling my acquaintances in Academy town that I will be heading to Lorel Union, beginning with representative Zara, but...

As I reported to each one of them, I also told them that this won't be affecting my other works. But for some reason, the other people that I haven't met yet are coming to my place only knowing that 'I will be going to Lorel Union(going faraway)'.

I somehow finished my planned round of greetings and returned to my store at Rotsgard, and in there, a dizzying amount of people were intruding in the store.

...Among those, the office personnel of the academy was the worse.

When he noticed me, he pushed his way through to where I am with a ghastly expression.

And then, he suddenly fell to his knees and crawls up to my leg rather than Shiki who is at my side. He clings onto it and wailed: 'You liar!'.

In this academy town where the reconstruction is continuing and a good amount of people have returned, a happening like this occurred at broad daylight. Moreover, it is not a woman, but a man.

It is a situation that only spells trouble.

For a second, I thought that I went too far and a student somewhere had complained

about it, but well, using the word ‘liar’ was bothering me.

After calming him down, I try asking him. He said that he received information from a certain source and a third party stating that: ‘I will be going to Lorel, so I will be absent from the academy for several months’.

...This is just my opinion but... information from a certain source and a third party combined isn’t really trustworthy.

It is on the level of reading jargon from the sports section of the newspaper and jumping to your own conclusions.

Also, he hasn’t received any notification to cancel class from me or Shiki. In the first place, even if they received such a notification, they wouldn’t have accepted it anyways, and as his stress reached astronomic levels, he felt that this would be lots of trouble so he rushed here with an expression of impending doom.

Just as he said, I haven’t given any notification to cancel my class, and there’s no error in that either.

It is true that I am going to Lorel, but that’s a business that has nothing to do with the academy, so I don’t plan on cancelling classes.

After I explained to him that ‘no matter what method of transportation we use, I intend to continue classes as scheduled’, I had him leave.

I have done the same explanation over and over again, and after I thought I finally finished with everyone, this time it was Jin.

Aren’t you here to work part-time?

No well, I don’t have experience in part-time jobs, but you know, since you are working under me, our standings should change a bit, right? I am your boss, you know?

Isn’t that how it works?

“Eh, uhm... what about the class—?!” (Jin)

A light *slap* sound resounded and the head of Jin lowered.

“Jin! You are in the middle of work!” (Amelia)

The paper fan of Amelia hit the back of Jin’s head directly and cut off his words.

When I look at the paper fan she is holding, the word ‘pain’ is written on it.

Ah, it is the one that hurts.

I remember I was told that they made three types of paper fans: one that simply makes a loud sound but doesn’t hurt; one that doesn’t match the sound it makes and increases the pain; and the soundless one that hurts the most.

Of course, they are joke goods.

...The first one, that is.

Doing tsukkomis in the middle of work is questionable as well, but this is the backyard of the store anyways.

The two of them are arranging the inventory here.

That’s why it is barely acceptable.

“!!! Ame... lia! You... that... hurt.” (Jin)

Jin was holding his head with both hands.

He is so pained that his words are not coming out properly.

In the words of Eris, the one that has sound and pain is still ‘too soft’.

...It is because she said something like that that instead of only two, a third one was created.

That girl is actually pretty smart though...

It seems like the soundless and painful one: ‘didn’t produce blood, tears, or pain’, and with those words in mind, it was created.

In the first place, this was created as a punishment tool for Eris.

So there's no point if it's 'too soft'.

By the way, the last version doesn't have 'pain' written on it, it has a skull mark.

"I'm sorry, representative. I will continue right now." (Amelia)

"No well, I did answer him as well. Let me tell you then. Jin, there's no change in the class. That's why, do your best without worrying." (Makoto)

"T-Thank-ssu!" (Jin)

"...Don't get too poisoned by Lime's style of speaking, okay? If you are going to learn from someone, make that person Akua or someone like that. That would be safer." (Makoto)

Safety is best.

Safety is important.

This is a truth that people normally don't realize.

"Yes!" (Jin)

"Waka~, Waka~"

"Especially the small one that's coming now, don't learn from her. Or it will be too late." (Makoto)

Too late is not good, definitely not good.

I notice the owner of the voice that called out: 'Waka', and make a bitter smile.

Maybe Jin and Amelia felt the same, they made a slightly troubled expression.

Well, even when she is like that, she is capable and she is also their senpai.

"What's up, Eris?" (Makoto)

"Ah, Waka~. To think that you are actually looking after the part-time greenhorns yourself, what an admirable representative! A model of merchants!" (Eris)

“It is getting stuffy in here, and I feel like I am being bad mouthed. By the way, aren’t your hobbies slowly getting more similar to Tomoe?” (Makoto)

“At first, it was by force, but... in the end, I got used to it the more it was forced into me~~.” (Eris)

“Hey hey.”

“But lately, she has brought out things like period dramas, PCs, and western stuff. I have now learned about her depth and have opened my eyes~~.” (Eris)

“ ... ”

“Well, the screen is still rustic and instead of calling it a PC, it is more like a word-processor though. It is thriving in a good sense which is something I love.” (Eris)

“...I see.” (Makoto)

“That’s right~~, hehe.” (Eris)

“And, what’s your business?” (Makoto)

Did she watch some sort of big play somewhere?

It is Eris we are talking about, so she is probably focusing on weird things like the killer techniques of the actors.

I understand that you are itching to talk about it, but I decided not to touch that topic today.

“Hm, how cold. But that part is what makes you good, is what one of the Gorgons said, you know? Also, you have a guest.” (Eris)

“I didn’t have any appointment though. Who is it?” (Makoto)

Of course, I didn’t retort about the Gorgon.

Jin and Amelia haven’t met the Gorgons yet... probably.

In the future, I plan on having them fight the Gorgons as opponents that can defeat

you the instant you encounter them.

“It is a companion of those younglings here. Gizumo... or was it Rizumo?” (Eris)

“Izumo.” (Makoto)

“Fufufu, how was it, Waka? Just by adding one syllable, I was able to change his name into a *scary and cute monster*, and even a *white and beautiful container*.” (Eris)
<Definitely references to something>

“Don’t play around with people’s names. Izumo huh, that’s unusual. Well, I will see what he has to say.” (Makoto)

“Then I will guide you~.” (Eris)

“Eris, you don’t need to. Help out the two—” (Makoto)

“Since they were so slow, I already finished half of it. The remaining can be done by those two. With their pace, they should be able to finish in around an hour.” (Eris)

“...Nothing escapes you.” (Makoto)

“Without fail. Banana?” (Eris)

“Okay okay. Well then, Jin and Amelia, I am counting on you for what’s left. Go at your own pace.” (Makoto)

“Yay! Hey, do your best, younglings!” (Eris)

Eris moved ahead in high spirits.

She had both of her hands at the back of her head and was in a good mood.

“No way. She really finished everything on that side...” (Amelia)

“Are you telling me that when you are at the level of Eris-san, you can arrange the inventory by simply speaking? That’s a whole different dimension. How scary is the clone law.” (Jin)

“Was it a law? Wasn’t it a skill name?” (Amelia)

I leave the two that were shuddering at the pleasant work of Eris, and head to the store where Izumo is waiting for me.



“And so, what did you want to talk with me about without the presence of Shiki?”
(Makoto)

Izumo had a meek face as he waited.

The words that came out were Lorel Union.

I thought it was going to be that topic again, but with an expression as if brooding over something, he said that he wanted to speak alone with me.

This is really something unusual.

Because Izumo clearly relies on Shiki more than me.

But the home of Izumo is Lorel Union, and he is a student at the academy we have no hostility towards.

Since he went through the trouble of coming here, I decide to listen to what he has to say.

We couldn't just have a conversation in the store, so we went to my room.

“You are going to Lorel Union, right?” (Izumo)

“For a negotiation. Let me clear this first, there's no changes in the class schedule.”
(Makoto)

“Ah, yes. So, what part of Lorel are you heading to?” (Izumo)

...It looks like he is quite agitated.

Izumo is the type that would ask a lot of things like: ‘how are you going to continue class as normal if you are heading to Lorel?’ and ‘How are you going to be returning here?’.

“...We are heading to a city named Kannaoui. From there, well, we will be heading to the dungeon.” (Makoto)

“?!!! Could it be... you are heading to the great dungeon Yaso-Katsui?!” (Izumo)

“As expected of a famous place in Lorel. That’s right. In Rotsgard, there was no one who knew this name aside from the adventurers.” (Makoto)

Without nodding or making any sort of reaction to my words, Izumo maintained his mouth shut.

However... looking at this, does Izumo have some sort circumstances with this dungeon?

Now that I think about it, Shiki said something Izumo’s household before.

“...Is that negotiation going to be with... the Ikusabe or the Osakabe?” (Izumo)

“None, it is with a mercenary group called Picnic Rose Garden.” (Makoto)

“...”

“...What’s wrong?” (Makoto)

The strained face of Izumo had suddenly turned into an emotionless one.

I can’t even tell if he is surprised.

And he said something that bothered me as well.

Ikusabe? Osakabe?

Those are names I haven’t heard from Sairitz-san either.

Now that I think about it, I am going to be receiving a promissory note that can let me go anywhere, but I haven’t really been told about the details of the country itself.

The most I have heard is that there’s no civil wars and it is mostly peaceful.

When I asked if it is slightly stormy there, she told me: ‘In our territory, only a little’, and laughed.

That 'territory' of hers is a real scary one. *<Most likely talking about the political territory>*

But well, every large country must have their own share of political strife, and if it's only that, it can be counted as peaceful.

Hm, right.

Ikusabe is the family name of Izumo.

Ah!

If I remember correctly, Shiki said something about Izumo and the main and branch family at Lorel.

I see.

Are Kannaoui and Yaso-Katsui places that his household possess a strong influence?

That's why Izumo was bothered by that destination of ours.

Wait, places where his household possess a strong influence?

If that's really the case... does that mean that Izumo is from quite a distinguished family?

Could it be... he is an actual *Waka-sama*?! *<young master>*

"Picnic... Rose Garden..." (Izumo)

"Yeah."

"The safeguards of Yaso-Katsui dungeon. That mercenary group?" (Izumo)

"That's right. I'm surprised you know." (Makoto)

"Sensei!!"

"Uo, what's wrong, Izumo?" (Makoto)

“Please don’t bother with me... with someone like me!!” (Izumo)

“Hah?” (Makoto)

“It is fine! No matter if Sensei holds the side of Ikusabe or Osakabe, it just doesn’t matter anymore!! I somewhat understand that Sairitz-sama has finally made her move after all!” (Izumo)

Izumo suddenly stood up and poured some intense words at me who is still sitting.

I can’t understand at all.

I am sorry but, I am not really involved in any of what he is saying.

Not that I think about it, I feel like I am now pretty used to matching my tone when speaking, like in the times when I speak with the other teachers. It might be imprudent of me to be thinking this at this moment though.

“Calm down. I will say this clearly, I don’t understand anything of what you are saying. It is true that Sairitz-sama has spoken to me, but it is a negotiation with the mentioned mercenary group. I have not heard about the Ikusabe or the Osakabe at all.” (Makoto)

Moreover, she didn’t tell me to keep this a secret.

It seems like the mercenary group is quite the big shot in Lorel, so it is not strange for him to know about them. So leaving that aside, she didn’t say a single word about Izumo.

“...”

“I was told that if it is me, I would be able to pull it off. I will bring along some companions and negotiate for a bit with the mercenary group. That’s all.” (Makoto)

“Uhm, Sensei, you said ‘for a bit’ but... do you really know where those people are?” (Izumo)

Izumo was in the middle of a roller coaster of emotions, but it seems like he has entered a lull state and asks me with a serious expression.

“Of course. Inside Yaso-Katsui labyrinth, right?” (Makoto)

“...Is that all?” (Izumo)

“I was told that they are based 20 floors underground.” (Makoto)

“Yeah, that’s correct.” (Izumo)

“I honestly feel it is a complete pain to do this, but we are the ones that want to negotiate with them, so it can’t be helped.” (Makoto)

“...Sensei, how many do you see here?” (Izumo)

He lifts two fingers in front of me.

“Two.” (Makoto)

“Then, this?” (Izumo)

“Five.” (Makoto)

“Then, what about this?” (Izumo)

“Ten. By the way, what are you trying to achieve with this, Izumo-kun? Even I know that the double of that is twenty.” (Makoto)

“The 20th floor underground of that labyrinth!! Is not a place that you can simply go for a bit to have a negotiation, you know?!!” (Izumo)

“I understand. It is dark, confined, and honestly, I don’t feel like doing it.” (Makoto)

“Dark, confined?!!” (Izumo)

“It might take two days; if I count the negotiation, it will probably take around three days.” (Makoto)

“Impossible Impossible Impossible Impossible Impossible!!” (Izumo)

What’s with that shower of words as if using a rush attack?!

His tongue said that really smoothly.

He can become a sales announcer.

“I will say this again and again, calm down.” (Makoto)

“Impossible!! I refuse to! There’s no way I can calm down! Eastern part of Lorel, former capital: Kannaoui! And what has existed since ancient times and brought up Kannaoui, the Yaso-Katsui valley and its labyrinth that extends underground!” (Izumo)

“Oh~.” (Makoto)

“And then, there’s the legendary mercenary group that’s said to have been created by the Wise to protect our ancestors, Picnic Rose Garden!” (Izumo)

That name... really doesn’t fit.

That’s why I am sure there’s no doubt a Wise(japanese person) was involved in the creation of that mercenary group.

Not as legends, but people that actually existed.

“...It seems like Sensei really didn’t know this. Okay then, I will teach you. Ignorance is a sin at times, but there are times when it is easy to atone for those sins. It is okay to just know about it at the time you need to know.” (Izumo)

“No well, I have already received information to a certain extent...” (Makoto)

Actually, I even think that there’s no need to know more aside from the fact that we will be negotiating.

No matter how much you tell me about the place being confined, gloomy, and dark, I will not be happy at all anyways.

I can make the inside bright unlike games, I don’t need to mind about mapping the place, and I can just single mindedly go down without caring about treasures.

First of all, this guy should stop those eyes of his.

Please stop those crazed eyes.

I would like more energetic eyes.

Kugh, did I step in some kind of landmine? I can't pinpoint it.

Was it about his family? Or was it the Picnic mercenary group? Maybe it is because of the 20th floor underground?

Or more like, aren't those mercenaries being really loved?

Is it really okay to bring them to Tsige?

From the way Sairitz-san spoke, they felt like problematic people...

"Please don't be so reserved. Sensei has really taken care of me, so it is only at this kind of moments where I can repay you. Information about Kannaoui, Yaso-Katsui, the labyrinth, Ikusabe and Osakabe household, and about the Wise and the legendary mercenary group. I will have you listen to everything thoroughly, okay?!" (Izumo)

Yeah.

Rather than calling this a repayment, this is more like hearing him complain.

I have been thinking about listening to my students if they open up to me themselves, but... this kind of beginning is not to my taste!

Chapter 240

Raidou and Izumo

And so... with spiralling eyes as if in a trance, Izumo talks infinitely about his homeland, himself, among other things.

He was clearly afflicted by the status ailment 'Confusion'. There was no way he would be able to logically explain things to me in such a state. He was providing me a chaotic situation here.

Putting it bluntly... I have stopped listening since a while ago.

In the middle of his talk about a muddy blind love that was comparable to dramas, he talked about the folklore of Lorel and about the history of the city as an interval, but even if he returned to the drama from before, anyone would have a headache already.

But there have been a few moments when he said some important things as if nothing.

No matter how much of a headache this induces and how much saliva he is spitting out, I wouldn't have grown at all if I were to let the important information slip away.

Now then, I will just listen on the surface and nod at given moments, and at times, I brought tea as I wait for him to finish his talk.

Just saying but, I actually have a rough understanding of what he is talking about.

...

Well, it is that. The discord between Tokyo and Kyoto, and that discord heading into a disastrous direction is something that happens even in parallel worlds, probably.

It seems like Naoi and Kannaoui have a bad relationship similar to that.

Next, about the problem with the family of Izumo: the Osakabe household, whose homeland is in Kannaoui, had divided quite a long way in the past, and as a result, the Ikusabe household was born.

Ikusabe works as the sword and shield of Naoi, and as a branch family, they have been serving under another household somewhere and steadily increasing their influence.

And so, in the present day, the influence of both households has become equal, and when the topic of having a relationship of equal standing was brought out, it didn't go well and became a muddy start.

The branch family that was cut off had gained power in order to be recognized by the main family, but they laughed at their efforts. Well, it is probably something like that.

I am not the type that watches dramas all the time, and honestly, I don't find these kind of things interesting.

...In Japan, there's the classic called Tale of the Genji, so it is probably popular for the general populace though.

In my days in middle school, I got interested in it and read it till the end, but well, I didn't understand what was so good about it.

The most I found enjoyable was how I could understand the atmosphere of the lifestyle the nobles had at those times.

I had read The Pillow Book around that time as well, and I remember that I got engrossed in studying things like the solar calendar, the lunar calendar, and the Tenpo calendar.

Well, I learned things like: until when Japan used the Tenpo calendar <1872>, and that the old lunisolar calendar of Japan is called the Gregorian calendar.

Even if I knew that, it didn't affect my test scores much.

I was simply satisfied learning it and I don't have a single regret about it.

My time is finite, and if I find something that interests me, I think it isn't bad to try and understand it without hesitating.

Whether those things are information about a certain delineated time in Japan, the bow, games and manga at times, and games where beautiful girls appear...

Rather than hesitating without doing anything, this is definitely not a waste.

Since coming to this world, there have been points that have been useful, and looking at Lorel which is the place where the Japanese culture has sprouted, there might be some use to it as well.

Ah, Izumo's breathing is rough.

His face has finally returned to normal. Maybe it is over?

Well well, I have gone and reminisced my past while I waited.

"Fuh... fuh....."

"You have talked a lot. Drink some tea and calm down." (Makoto)

"Thank you... very much." (Izumo)

"Seriously, it really makes me feel pathetic to have a student of mine worrying about me." (Makoto)

No matter what he spoke of, I responded with a safe follow-up.

"That's not it!" (Izumo)

"It is. The fact that you are worrying about me means that the labyrinth looks a lot bigger than I am, right?" (Makoto)

"...No, I didn't say anything like that, and I don't think that way either." (Izumo)

"And about your family as well. If you wish for my help and ask for it, I don't mind lending a hand. But I... don't have any intentions of interfering in problems that you yourself are trying to resolve." (Makoto)

"Yeah." (Izumo)

"I don't plan on changing that stance of mine, and I also think of it as my own way of keeping a line as teacher and student. But... it seems like that ended up cornering you even more. Sorry." (Makoto)

"No! I didn't intend to cause any trouble to Sensei, and even when you didn't ask me to, I went and threw it all onto you like this... It is embarrassing. I heard rumors that

Sensei and Sairitz-sama had met at the Academy festival, and since then, it has been piling up bit by bit.” (Izumo)

“It is true that I got acquainted with her at that time. Right after, that unfortunate event occurred and made our relationship closer though. Regarding that, it doesn’t really have anything to do with you or your family.” (Makoto)

There’s no need to lie.

And in reality, not even the I of Izumo is involved in my relationship with the Lorel Empress.

“Thinking about it normally, that would be the case, but... when I am alone, I end up thinking about a lot of bad directions it might take... I know that’s not a good habit though.” (Izumo)

So Izumo had a habit of being delusional.

In my high school days, I was also the type that would keep my problems to myself and pile them up, so I can’t say much about others.

It is definitely better to consult with someone else, and yet, for some reason, I ended up trying to resolve it myself with my narrow perspective.

Moreover, you get stubborn about that one decision of yours.

I wonder why that happens?

Even when I look back at it, I don’t understand it well.

“From now on, confide with your friends. After one consultation about it, you actually feel more at ease. This time, you managed to do it with me, so it is not something you can’t do.” (Makoto)

“Hahaha, right.” (Izumo)

“I think they will be reliable, you know. Jin, Daena, Misura, Amelia; if it’s related to money: Sif and Yuno are the solution... well, the latter one is probably not a good idea to rely on though.” (Makoto)

“Yeah.” (Izumo)

It looks like Izumo has relaxed. He directed a smile at me and drunk his tea.

His eyes that were going round and round have returned to normal as well.

He probably felt relieved now that he spilled what he had to.

“And so, if a student of mine relies on me, even if it is troublesome, I don’t intend to refuse. I don’t have any intentions of encouraging it either, but if you are troubled and need my help, don’t hesitate and come to me. So that it doesn’t bother you, I will ask for a fitting remuneration and accept it as a job.” (Makoto)

“...The work payment for Sensei... would be on the level of a small country’s budget, right? I won’t be able to pay it.” (Izumo)

“Of course, as long as you have the intentions of paying, I am willing to make it free of interest and no time limit. This is a privilege of my students.” (Makoto)

“First time I have heard of this.” (Izumo)

“Must be. I have created it just now for you.” (Makoto)

“ ... ”

“And so, Izumo, what do you want to do?” (Makoto)

“Eh?”

“I have understood that your family has a lot of issues and that your position is delicate. And that you are worried about me regarding the matter with the labyrinth.” (Makoto)

Or more like, that’s all I could understand.

Because you know, Izumo’s talk was jumping around like a conversation between high school girls.

“ ... ”

“If you want to, I can bring you with me and have you guide me in the labyrinth? Or do you want me to stand at your back as you talk with the Ikusabe household or the Osakabe household?” (Makoto)

“Ah, that’s...” (Izumo)

Izumo’s expression changes into a mix of surprise and agitation.

Why?

I thought I brought out the plan that can resolve things the quickest though.

“My only business there is with the mercenary group, and I have also heard about the dungeon from Sairitz-sama. Knowing that, I judged that there would be no problems. So if even with that you are still uneasy, I don’t mind bringing you with me. I did hear all you had to say after all.” (Makoto)

“...No. If it’s Raidou-sensei, it is probably -no, it will definitely be alright. About my family... if Sensei were at my side, I feel like I would be able to settle as much as I wanted by speaking.” (Izumo)

“I see...” (Makoto)

Hm? Did he change his mind?

I somewhat felt that.

Looking at his state, he most likely won’t be holding it to himself, so it should be fine.

“But I will be doing it myself. One day... at a near future. Definitely.” (Izumo)

“I see. I don’t know how long I will be able to teach you, but you still have plenty time left in the academy. Being troubled can become a step for growth. Be troubled as much as you want, together with your friends.” (Makoto)

“...As I thought, Sensei is really amazing. Even though you look like you are the same age or younger, you really do make me realize the difference of our time.” (Izumo)

“Just so you know, my age is exactly how it looks, okay? If you want to tell someone that you feel that person has lived for several hundred years, you can tell that to Shiki.”

(Makoto)

Because that's exactly the case.

"There you go again. Please don't deceive me with your jokes. What I meant with 'difference of our time' was not the length of it, but the depth. One year, one month, one week, one day, one second; the depthness of that time was most likely different through its very roots. At present, I am trying to do my best to make that time as dense as possible though." (Izumo)

"..."

I feel like I am being quite overestimated once again.

As a teacher, that's not really so bad.

It is not good to be seen as someone that can conveniently help them out, so I let them know beforehand that I will be receiving a recompense for it, but well, they probably won't be relying on me that often.

I am a teacher, not a convenient tool.

"I am truly sorry for today. Well then, I will be taking my leave!!" (Izumo)

Izumo bows his head firmly, and without waiting for me to see him off, he ran off by himself.

"He let it all out and resolved a variety of things with that, huh. This is a lot better than having him return dejected. And so, Shiki, in the end, just what was that boy talking about?" (Makoto)

I call Shiki who was close.

He laughed as he came out.

"I didn't expect him to be so cornered. That was a slight miscalculation of mine. Being that troubled about something so stupid might be a privilege of the young." (Shiki)

"Stupid, you say. You really don't show mercy." (Makoto)

“And in truth, he did fall into his own delusions regarding the labyrinth and Waka-sama’s power, and I don’t think there’s any worth in asking about the background of the labyrinth from the people of Lorel who worship this labyrinth like a divinity.” (Shiki)

“They see it as divine and worship it huh. I haven’t heard that in this world but, it brings back memories.” (Makoto)

“Worshipping something that’s not the Goddess or the Spirits?” (Shiki)

“Yeah. In Japan, there are times when people deified and worshipped things that bring harm in order to appease them. I have heard that it is mostly things like curse Gods or Gods that don’t have good compatibility with people. A custom to appease them. Now that I am in a world where magic exists, I wonder how it works? There probably would have been different viewpoints.” (Makoto)

I stopped using the word ‘wicked God’.

That’s probably the influence of coming to this world.

Because I have begun thinking that just because it is an existence that brings harm to people, it doesn’t mean that they are evil Gods.

“Worship and appease them huh. What a peculiar faith.” (Shiki)

“I don’t know if that’s considered faith. Well, leaving that aside, I now understand the divinity of the labyrinth.” (Makoto)

If even the names of God Naobi and Yaso-Magatsuhi are involved, I can tell that the people of Lorel had this kind of thinking since quite a long time ago.

It seems like they have hot springs as well, and I certainly can understand why Tomoe wants to go.

I feel like the folklore and culture of Japan has sprouted in a strange way, but if even their way of thinking is different, it would be interesting.

“About the matter with Izumo’s household, it isn’t such a dead-end as he thinks it is. In the midst of the main and branch family, it certainly might be stuck in place, but problems regarding households are actually seen weakly from the outside. When you

were looking at it from an outside perspective, it was filled with holes and places to retort, right?” (Shiki)

“Was it?” (Makoto)

I only thought that it was pretty muddy~.

Leaving aside the common sense of Lorel, from my point of view, it felt so far away that it surpassed my understanding.

It seems like in the households of the Edo period, this kind of things happened a lot, but in the common sense of present Japan, this is just...

“The old family of Kannaoui, Osakabe, expelled the Ikusabe family several hundred years in the past, and ended up serving a governing family in Naoi. This is history that is pretty well known in Lorel.” (Shiki)

“That means the Ikusabe household and Izumo-kun are famous people huh.” (Makoto)

“It is true that the Ikusabe have increased in family members, so it isn’t for certain, but at that rate, there would probably be the need for deep blood connection in order to get involved in it. The Ikusabe household works at both the outside and inside as a military family. To explain it in a more understandable way for Waka-sama, it would be like working as samurais and ninjas.” (Shiki)

“Hmph~ Oniwaban huh. They have a front and a back side, but there certainly were people that held the blood of a samurai, like Koga and Iga. Devoting themselves to the country as samurais and ninjas huh.” (Makoto)

That sounds kind of cool.

“Ah, Waka-sama, it is not the country they devote themselves to but an employer’s household. This is something I was surprised as well, but it seems like the Ikusabe household is serving the Kahara household. He didn’t say it directly, but from what he said, I think there’s no doubt.” (Shiki)

“Kahara. Kahara... You know, I have an acquaintance by the name Kahara-san. Moreover, it is someone that’s in the politics world.” (Makoto)

And so, that’s why Izumo had reacted that much.

It seems there's no mistake.

"Yeah, that person is currently the top of the Kahara household. Sairitz Kahara. The world is a small place. When I heard this saying from Tomoe-dono, it didn't click that much, but moments like this, this kind of words are truly adequate." (Shiki)

"Right." (Makoto)

"At any rate... the way you interacted with Izumo was splendid. You were able to loosen his distress even without me. Truly well done." (Shiki)

"I-I see... I actually didn't listen to half of what he said, you know?" (Makoto)

"Fufufu, don't be so humble. I will arrange the details of Izumo's information and submit them at a later time. When you have spare time... maybe when you are advancing in the labyrinth, you can check them out." (Shiki)

"Thanks, I will do that." (Makoto)

The household that Izumo's family is serving is the one of Sairitz-san huh.

I feel like it has become kind of complicated.

Sairitz-san herself hasn't said anything about Izumo or his family, so... for now, that's a saving though.

No, is it truly a saving?

Won't it turn into something even more troublesome?

Actually, this time I am bringing Tomoe and Mio, so I am quite optimistic since we would be able to deal with most problems.

I honestly want the problem to be within the range we can cope with.

"Also, what I was bothered about was the lovely and strongest fairy that protects the labyrinth, Mariko-san, and the existence of the darkness dragon or was it shadow dragon? The Superior Dragon of Lorel should be 'Shadow Clad', Doma. But... from what Izumo said, the one who created the Yaso-Katsui labyrinth is the Shadow Dragon, Futz. It is a name I haven't heard before." (Shiki)

“Now that you mention it... Sairitz-san also said Shadow Dragon, Futz... If I remember correctly, that place should be where the Superior Dragon, Doma, lives. Root also said that.” (Makoto)

Even if it's that pervert, he wouldn't go lying about the Superior Dragons.

I have Tomoe after all.

Futz, huh.

It is a name that has deeper connection to the legends of Japan compared to Doma.

That's how it is, but... in terms of troublesomeness, I feel like Futz is more dangerous.

But Doma should be currently in Root's place as an egg.

There's the chance that it has already been born, and someone has already returned him to his original place.

...Right, let's meet with Root once.

Let's hear about Doma and this guy called Futz.

Izumo didn't say anything about it after all.

“Anyways, Mariko-san huh. That's a person's name.” (Makoto)

“If it is a fairy from a dungeon, I wonder what kind of fairy it will be. Maybe a relative of dwarfs?” (Shiki)

“Mariko-san the dwarf huh. I can only feel bad vibes from it.” (Makoto)

“It would be good if the Eldwas know about it. It hasn't been mentioned before in a conversation, so the expectations are low.” (Shiki)

Futz and Mariko-san huh.

I have gathered a bit more information.



Back from the Kuzunoha company, Izumo had arrived at the park which might be quite the detour for a place to drop by.

This is the biggest and newest park in this town, with two big trees as its symbol.

In order to not forget about the variant incident, an inscribed stone monument has been made and has become the grave-marker for the many lives that were lost, and it is also a place that's treated as a location to comfort the spirits of the dead. It is a location that doesn't lack in people.

A water fountain, a forest, and a lawned plaza.

This place is a favorite of Izumo.

"It is different from the gardens in Lorel, but this place is special."

Sitting down on the bench, he talks to himself.

His expression was calm, and there's already none of that ghastly expression from before.

"After all... this bench, lawn, water fountain, arrangement of stones... are things that I myself made." (Izumo)

As a part of the reconstruction workforce, the students of Raidou had participated actively in the work.

This was a part of it as well.

For Izumo who used up all his magic power and mental strength, and was dried from physical strength as well, this place that serves as an achievement of his had become a special place for him.

He himself isn't self-aware, but for him, this town has already become a special place.

When he notices it in a near future, it will most likely become an important step.

"Sensei had seen completely through someone like me who he doesn't speak with

much. Without using his employees at the store, he himself brought tea. I must have looked pathetic.”

The smiles of the children that survived the incident, their parents that were with them, and the elderly couples, healed the heart of Izumo.

Their joyful figure, for some reason, made Izumo proud.

The place that they themselves had created was being utilized by other people as they smile.

Without caring if they are human or demi-human, he was happy to see them like that.

“I... was troubled by myself, went to Sensei’s place as if venting, and spilled out everything. I was thinking about something incredibly despicable. Thinking that by doing this, Sensei might do something about all of it. That if it’s him, he would be able to achieve all of this in a cinch. Thinking that if that’s the case, he should quickly resolve it for me. I was thinking about something as stupid as that. I definitely thought about this somewhere inside my heart. At that class of his, people from the main and branch family were popping out like undead, so it made my unjustified resentment for Sensei even stronger. And I was told by Sensei in such a direct manner. But I have now noticed the dirty parts of myself.” (Izumo)

In the illusion that Izumo was shown at Raidou’s class, he saw people that he knew of wearing Lorel’s traditional armor and helmet.

They were voicing out their own desires as resignation and death approached Izumo.

The reason why he woke up a lot slower than his true capabilities are, was because he was shown something that he didn’t want to see and was distracted.

But Izumo didn’t consult with Jin and the others, and matched the talk of the others about seeing black muddy mamonos like everyone else.

“If it’s Sensei, he can easily conquer something like a dungeon, and it is most likely easy for him to meet Picnic Rose Garden. Even my household, if Sairitz-sama were to cooperate, it would fall tranquil in an instant. What I wish, what I want to do; everything I want can be easily done by that person. But then, it wouldn’t bring a closure for myself. That’s no good.” (Izumo)

On top of that, Raidou told Izumo that he would accept this as a job with no feelings of constraint.

For Raidou -Makoto-, that was a joke.

Because he thought that it was something that didn't require much effort, he probably would have accepted this request of Izumo with a payment comparable to that of a lunch.

Even the suggestion of his.

He simply said this because he really thought it was the most simple and easiest way to resolve it.

"Also, that joke of mine about a budget comparable to a small country... Sensei didn't deny it. If it's split payment, I would be able to pay that amount of money. 'I will use that much amount of power', is what Sensei was thinking huh."

Greatly wrong.

An incredible misunderstanding.

For someone like Makoto, this was a rare fine-play of his.

"Then, the engagement with the princess of Osakabe, place of employment, and the matter of inheriting Ikusabe... I have to show him that I myself can resolve this and make it head in the direction I wish. I have reliable companions, and just as Sensei said, my academy life is still far from over!"

Standing up from the bench, he looks at the sight of the town from between the visible spaces of the trees.

The corners of his mouth silently lift.

Until now, he has only thought about increasing his strength as he lived his life in the academy.

He thought that in time, he would work at Lorel as one of the Ikusabe, and serve under the Kahara household.

In time, he would receive marriage proposals from around 4-5 brides, train his children, and retire.

He didn't doubt or felt dissatisfied by the rails that were set for him.

But everything began to change when he met Raidou and his class.

It wasn't only the class.

His encounter with Jin and the others, who remained in the class, also played a big role for Izumo.

A person that has a clear desire; a person that has a family of his own and changed his desires; People that were on top of settled rails, and yet, confronted it in a completely different way from him; a person that was unbelievably devoted to her own path for someone.

And then, there's a person that was troubled like him.

Moreover, the Kusunoha company that uses kanji in their store name, and the goods and employees.

The amount of fresh powerful medicine had changed Izumo in good and bad ways.

To the point that... he finally discovered a future different from that of his role in the Ikusabe household.

"Jin said that he was going to treat the kouhai candidates in Gotetsu, right? Let's join them."

Remembering his kouhai that were in a wiped out state, Izumo laughs.

But at the same time, he thought of them as cute.

Just like how Raidou had saved him in a way or another, they would also be able to obtain something from continuing the class of Raidou.

This is a thought that his past self would never think since this would mean his rivals

would increase though.

For some reason, Izumo has grown able to think in this way.

Once again, the path of one of Raidou's students is beginning to build.

Chapter 241

East Gate, Mizuha

Lorel Union's east entrance gate, Mizuha.

It seems like more than 80% of the immigration and emigration of Lorel occurs here.

It is about the same size as Naoi and Kannaoui, and the security is also quite strict.

The reason of Root's inclination is because of Lorel's location.

When looking at a map, it can be seen immediately at a glance. Lorel Union has a lot of places with tall mountain ranges at the east side, west side, and south side.

There's some that are even higher than the clouds.

...From what I have heard of Sairitz-san, aside from those, there's a lot of mountains and forests, and there's few places that are open fields in the territory.

At the south side, even if you cross over the tall mountains, you will face the sea; at the west, you would be facing Tsige or the wasteland; and at the north, there's the Golden Highway and the Aion kingdom's area of influence.

The Dragon Knight unit is structured here, and within them, there's the flying dragon unit which serves in the fighting force and the transportation aspects as well.

But the land dragons that have a more calm temperament are utilized the most.

It is that, right? Being a Dragon Knight is like a romance.

This place seems to be the home of the Japanese people's vestiges who are known as Wise.

Honestly speaking, right now, I am pretty nervous.

Since seeing this place called Mizuha, I have been unable to calm down for some

reason.

I have two reliable followers accompanying me, so I don't need to worry about the safety part though.

But the air is kind of... different.

A strange sensation like when you head to the capital of Tokyo and cross the hilly residential parts and arrive at Akihabara for the first time.

Is it the sensation of putting my hands into chaos?

"Waka, the air here is different. Just thinking about how we will finally arrive at Lorel, I am also getting excited." (Tomoe)

"There's also the scent of ingredients I have not smelled before. So that's the place where the Japanese knowledge has taken form. I am looking forward to it." (Mio)

"I'm kind of scared here though. I feel like I will be witnessing what the Japanese people, who have been released from common sense, have perpetrated." (Makoto)

"...Is that something Waka can say?" (Tomoe)

"If we were to line up the achievements of the Wise and Waka-sama's achievements, Waka-sama would probably be first place-desu wa." (Mio)

...First place?

Aren't they placing me too high in the shelves?

I am not aiming to spread my small arms like Tomoki, you know?

It seems like that side isn't doing well, so at present, I am relieved.

But the princess seems to be interested in gunpowder, and that makes me uneasy.

The Empire is... how to say it, pretty dark.

It felt like they were even darker than the demon race.

“By the way, Waka.” (Tomoe)

“What?”

“It will soon be our turn.” (Tomoe)

“Right.”

Maybe because we lined up at early morning to avoid congestion, the length of the line wasn't long and the speed it advanced was pretty good.

We probably have been here for less than 30 minutes.

“You received the promissory note from Sairitz-san, right?” (Tomoe)

“It seems to be quite an incredible one, you know. She said it is a free pass to most places.” (Makoto)

There's no oversight in what Sairitz-san does. She really readied the promissory note quick.

Actually, I thought that a promissory note with strong efficacy would take a long time to issue, like when issuing a transition pass.

That's why, even when Sairitz-san spoke as if it was going to take a few days, I thought it would actually take longer.

I underestimated her.

I have been shown that the Empress has an incredible amount of power in her country.

I bring out the promissory note that's inside a pouch.

It has the shape of a shogi piece, and is made from a dull silver color metal.

Shiki says that it is made from a special alloy.

The craftsmanship at the surface part is probably a counter-measure for forgery.

It has a nostalgic writing on it, assuring the standing of the owner of it, and 'asking' to

provide the maximum amount of accommodations in the various places inside the country.

Even I can tell that it isn't simply 'asking'.

Also, what's at the surface part is a coat of arms, a family crest.

When I asked, they told me that it is the family crest of Sairitz-san, in other words, the Kahara household.

At the reverse side, there's only her name and mark engraved on it.

When I received this from Sairitz-san, I tried asking about Izumo casually, but to my surprise, it seems like there's 3 people in Rotsgard that are named Ikusabe-kun.

She said with a smile that the most connection she has is that she has talked a bit with them.

She easily affirmed the relationship that the Ikusabe household and the Osakabe household have.

It seems like it wasn't something important enough to hide.

Not only that, she laughed when I told her that Izumo had spilled out a variety of things to me.

Just in case, it was I who told her, so I would feel bad if he were to receive a punishment because of that, that's why I asked Sairitz-san to not punish Izumo for it.

If that doesn't work, I am sorry Izumo.

But she is always smiling, so I can't tell if she intends to forgive him or intends to give no mercy.

"What is it you want to say, Tomoe-san?" (Mio)

Mio asks Tomoe who has a pondering expression.

It is certainly strange for her to look like that only because she wants to confirm the effectivity of the promissory note.

In the first place, it isn't something to be troubled about.

"Umu, that's the exaggerated promissory note that was given to Waka?" (Tomoe)

"Yeah."

"I was thinking that maybe there was no need for us to line up here. No well, we followed Waka and lined up as well, and it was fun to wait here though." (Tomoe)

""Ah.""

Mine and Mio's voice overlap.

That's true.

There was no need to line up.

With this, we can go to Yaso-Katsui without any problems.

From how she said it, it seems to be quite the strong promissory note.

The commerce permission I received from the demon race before had an effectiveness that surpassed my expectations after all.

I remember that previous 'event'.

Showing that permission proof to the villages of the demons made them give an intense warm reception for our peddlers.

They cooked the livestock in the village that they have only a few of, and offer it just like that.

Even though we are heading there to sell food and necessities, I really have to question those actions of theirs.

Ah.

While at it, I also remembered the attire of the Forest Onis and the Gorgons that are going around the demon race territory.

If they wore a beard and a winter cap, they would look like the celebrity that goes around giving presents to all the kids in the world at christmas.

That's how much clothes they wear.

Well, it can't be helped. The demon race territory is pretty cold after all.

"...Tomoe, tell me that sooner." (Makoto)

"Speaking leisurely with Waka and trying to imagine how it is inside, was fun in its own way." (Tomoe)

"It is a time of little significance anyways. Having times like this isn't so bad once in awhile." (Mio)

Since there seems to be no problems, we decide to receive the entry inspection in line.

"The next one, show me your permission."

"Kuzunoha company, the representative Raidou and my subordinates: Tomoe and Mio." (Makoto)

From the pouch, I take out the shogi piece -I mean, the promissory note, and show it to the scary-looking government official.

He has black hair.

His skin is slightly yellowish and a bit dark.

The darkish tone seems to be from suntan.

Sairitz-san's skin was pretty white, so... she probably has different kind of occupations in her country.

"Kuzunoha? So you are returning to the country. No wait, you are entering it? Hah?!"

If we hadn't received a promissory note and were able to enter and leave from wherever we wanted, we wouldn't have tried to enter from Mizuha.

Because crossing the mountains would have been easier for us.

Now that I think about it, Sairitz-san would be able to tell where this promissory note has been used, so she would be able to tell our movements in the country.

It is nothing to be troubled about, and in the first place, it guarantees our standing, so this much is a matter of course.

If we wanted to do something in secret, we just have to do it without using the promissory note, and I am also prepared to have a certain amount of people on the look out for us.

Maybe people from the Ikusabe household will be tailing us in secret.

Even if we find people doing that, I intend to just leave them be.

Later, I will have to tell Tomoe and Mio to not mind them.

“As expected, it wasn’t a normal article-ja no. That woman, it seems like she splurged quite a lot-ja.” (Tomoe)

“Of course-desu wa. Because for that person, this is a chance to invite Waka-sama -a new Wise- into her country after all.” (Mio)

“Wise huh. It seems like there’s not a single one at present, but I am quite interested in what they have left behind. Maybe I can find one or two people that have the same hobbies as Waka.” (Tomoe)

“The family crest of the Kahara... and the mark of Sairitz-sama?! On top of that, a W-W-Wise-sama?!”

For some reason, this government official looked at Tomoe, Mio, and me, and has arbitrarily judged that I am a Wise-sama.

If Mio hadn’t said Wise, he wouldn’t have said that last part.

Moreover, those weren’t the pitying eyes or the disappointed eyes that are normally directed at me, but eyes filled with reverence.

This really does get me.

I feel like even a dust-cloth with the name Misumi Makoto written on it could get

framed in an art museum of Lorel.

People are gathering, and gathering, and gathering?!!!

“...Huh?”

“Hahaha, how pleasant. It is quite the reception, Waka!” (Tomoe)

“It is admirable that they have gathered spontaneously-desu wa ne.” (Mio)

The two are laughing.

Not only the officials here, even the people lining at our back are gathering as well.

With this... my face has definitely been remembered.

“Raidou-sama! Please go ahead and pass!”

He lowered his head deeply...

He didn't ask me anything at all.

And yet, I have been allowed entrance.

Moreover, he used -sama.

I am being treated as a Wise little by little here.

Do I easily enter in the common knowledge of how a Wise would look like?

Well, it is certainly true that I don't have the face of people like Senpai or Tomoki who you would question if they are actually Japanese.

I probably would enter into the average looks.

“I will return you your promissory note!”

His head was still deeply lowered.

Just like that, he lifts both his hands and the promissory note was there.

“Thanks.” (Makoto)

“This is the third city of Lorel, Mizuha! We are mostly functioning as the entrance for the country, and we communicate with the central and local areas! Please allow me to guide you to the major establishments of our city, make the arrangements for your lodging, the departure arrangements, and all the other necessary things!!”

No no no!

Don’t joke around.

I don’t want you to do so much.

“I am grateful for your offer, but the guiding and arrangements are not needed. We want to relax ourselves and check things out -I mean, we have come here on the request of Sairitz-sama. There’s some secrecy in it, so we can’t receive your good will-ja.” (Tomoe)

So you want to go around huh.

Your real intentions leaked out for a second there.

“I will tell Sairitz... -sama that the officials were faithful and capable ones-desu wa. That’s why there’s no need for hospitality. Your consideration is plenty enough.” (Mio)

Mio somehow managed to put a -sama there.

Sairitz-san is a lot more important in Lorel than I imagined her to be.

No matter how many times I revise it, it just keeps getting bigger.

Well, in outline, the one that stands at the summit of rituals is the priestess, and the one that works as her assistant in a part of that role is Sairitz-san who is the Empress.

In my personal opinion, I thought that she was a big shot like one of the people in an Imperial Household Agency.

...In other words, uhm... she is not a bureaucrat that comes out often, and I thought she didn’t have that much influence.

I did place her a bit higher than I originally thought, you know.

Even so, she was higher than the higher I thought of her.

At this rate, she is most likely higher than the higher I am already seeing her in. Is she an unbelievable influential figure?

Figures that are specialized in politics and figures that are specialized in rituals should be divided, and yet, that doesn't seem to be the case. Seems like, without knowing the internal affairs of the place, there's a lot of things you just can't simply assume.

"B-But—!"

"Idiot! Shut up!!"

In short, my two followers were telling the officers to not mind us.

And in response to that, one of the younger officers, who had offered to guide us in the sightseeing, was going to object and cling onto it, but... a bearded man that seems to be the person in charge, grabbed his shoulders and dragged him into the crowd of people.

No questions asked.

"Sorry for the inconvenience! If there's anything you want from us, don't hesitate to utilize us!"

"Thanks for the hard work. At that time, we are counting on you guys." (Tomoe)

Tomoe was not overawed by it and responds to the official in charge.

"My gratitude."

I also return some words as usual.

While feeling an unpleasant sensation, we stepped into the city of Mizuha.

With this, we have gone to all four major powers.

I hope that the prudent Wise were able to do proper follow-ups for the Wise that had

their wild ideas running.



“Thanks for your hard work.”

Thanking the informant, Sairitz has him leave.

A well lighted room, decorated colorfully and attentively.

It is the office room she has in Lorel’s capital, Naoi.

(I had made preparations to welcome them in case they suddenly arrived at Naoi, but they entered from Mizuha huh. Raidou has shown reservation in using the promissory note I have given him and has come from the front.)

Depending on how Raidou used the promissory note she gave to him, she would allow him to have an audience with the priestess. In Lorel, there’s no higher honor than this.

On top of that, she has posted people in the major towns to spread rumors about Raidou being a Wise when they see him.

In other words, no matter where Kuzunoha Company planned to do the negotiation, no matter what Raidou and his companions -Tomoe and Mio- were to do, Sairitz had created a state of affair where no one in this country would be able to act thoughtlessly towards them.

With her influence as the empress, something like a promissory note can be easily issued in the same day.

The reason why she wanted time was because she needed to make preparations to welcome them ‘from the shadows’.

(In that case, they probably won’t be stepping into Naoi this time around. Considering that going through Kannaoui to Yaso-Katsui is the shortest distance... the effect of it would be...)

In reality, inviting Kuzunoha company to Lorel Union is quite the chance for her.

But she already understands plenty well that she can’t get impatient.

Limia and Gritonia had called him too, and yet, they didn't form any sort of strengthened relationship.

Even if they were to bring out their all from the country and themselves to entertain Raidou, it would probably end up as the other two.

That was her deduction.

That's why she decided to have the citizens do it instead.

Lorel is the one that best knows how to treat the Wise, and it is not that difficult to induce others into treating Raidou in that way.

When she investigated personally with the local feudal lords about Kusunoha company and Raidou, 9 out of 10 deemed him as a Wise.

Sairitz herself was sure that would happen, so this was also a planned result.

On top of that...

(The ghastly mercenary group that's considered a legendary existence, and yet, has low relations with society, Picnic Rose Garden. This is the ideal chance to bring them to the outside. If they come out, I would be able to gauge their fighting strength accurately, and if matters with the Kusunoha company turn sour, *even they wouldn't be able to come out of it unscathed*.)

Picnic Rose Garden is a mercenary group that the citizens have clear faith in, and are said to have first class fighting prowess.

Sairitz doesn't doubt it.

But even when they possess such a name value, they are not returning allegiance to the country like the Dragon Knights do.

For Sairitz who has strong influence in the domestic affairs of the country, they are not an existence she finds pleasing.

An unknown fighting force that her control can't reach.

They have been docile inside the labyrinth, so she has been leaving them alone, but

Sairitz, who has now obtained the card called Raidou, has decided to put her hands on them and test him while at it.

And there's one other thing.

(Kannaoui's malignant tumor, Osakabe. Their confrontation with the Ikusabe has dragged other families into it, and I would want them to turn into a family that's distinguished around this parts only for its name as an old household. Because you know, the ones that's the *easiest to utilize* is the Ikusabe household after all.)

Putting it bluntly, the relationship between Naoi and Kannaoui is bad.

It is not like this is a result that Sairitz fanned.

In her view, the center of politics lies in Naoi, and the history and traditions lie in Kannaoui.

She considers it okay to have those two divided in that way.

For her, things like which is the center of the country, isn't that big of a problem, and there's no need to establish those things.

But the confrontation that the Ikusabe household, who has gained power in Naoi with time, and the Osakabe household that has maintained their power with their connection to the labyrinth; that stupid problem has created sparks here and there, and worsening with time.

For anyone that stands in the political stage, this is a problem that troubled many.

(Osakabe has protected the country from the labyrinth, and by exploring the labyrinth deeply, they have discovered power and riches. Then... if I have the newcomer Raidou easily make contact with the legends at the 20th floor underground...)

Several possibilities surfaced in the mind of Sairitz.

(This occasion, it seems like he has his followers that will serve as stoppers, but... it probably won't turn into that bad of a situation. If the worst happens, as long as there's an opening for us, we will also be moving to provide assistance. We can also show a cooperative stance as the employer house of Ikusabe. At present, the only miscalculation that has occurred is that Izumo Ikusabe, at most. Three people from

the Ikusabe household were sent to Rotsgard, but to think that the most promising one had gotten involved with Raidou. No matter how great of a person he has been raised into, if we were to harm the mood of Raidou, it wouldn't be worth it. The ability of the other two is not comparable, but I will have to begin thinking about how to use the remaining two huh.)

The Ikusabe household had sent three people to Rotsgard in order to have them expand their views and increase their competency.

Within that group, Sairitz had placed Izumo as number one.

She has been in contact with the three of them equally, and hasn't shown any signs of preferential treatment to any of them.

And that continued even when she learned that Izumo had coincidentally taken the class of Raidou. Even if she were to call him back right this instant and used him as a subordinate under her direct control, there's no doubt that he has the ability to become her number one pawn.

She secretly had an eye on Izumo.

(My plan was to have the Ikusabe eat the weakened Osakabe, make a new grand household, and have Izumo as the head of that family though. The name would be something like Okusobe... the euphony isn't that good though. When that time comes, it would be a good idea to have a priest give it a name.)

Sairitz had already reached the last stage of her plan and had a few candidates for Izumo's betrothal.

There's also a princess that has nothing to do with her plans, but within those candidates, there's an influential princess of the Osakabe slipped in it.

For the male side and female side, it would be quite difficult to reject a marriage proposal that had the famous empress Sairitz as the referral.

In other words, it was basically as if Izumo already had wives settled for him.

(There might be unexpected points with Izumo, but... even so, depending on how I involve myself in this occasion, there shouldn't be any losses for Kusunoha company, Raidou, or me. The only painful part is that it is unknown how much of the good points

they will touch though.)

Sairitz lightly shrugs.

She was tense because she has invited a dangerous medicine to her country, but her face was mostly filled with joy.

While secretly holding a number of schemes, the strange first visit of Raidou, who has gone to seek the mercenary group underground, has lifted its curtain.

Chapter 242

Acting separately is a basic course of action

Northwest of Lorel.

The whole place is filled with mountain ranges, and not many humans enter that area.

Aside from a few settlements where demi-humans live a self-sufficient life, there's many volcanoes and deep ravines in this area.

It is included in the territory of Lorel Union, but it is one of the locations that they have been unable to develop.

"Isn't that Beren! Long time no see. Has it been around 30 years now?"

"I was feeling nostalgic, so I dropped by. This place... hasn't changed much since the last time I came here." (Beren)

At a certain volcano within that area, there was someone that had arrived there.

A short stature, yet, fleshed out with muscle, and a long beard that grew from below his chin.

An ancient dwarf race, the Elder Dwarf Beren.

He visited a dwarf village he had visited in the past.

"What would change in just a few decades? It is the same, this mountain, and us as well. I don't know how it looks to you who has been from journey to journey though."

"Seems that way. That's why it is nostalgic huh." (Beren)

Beren looked at the scenery that had practically not changed from what he remembers in his memories.

For the dwarfs, whether it be the elders, they are a race that considers decades as a short time.

And yet, this familiar visitor said that this place is nostalgic.

The dwarf that had come to greet Beren had a puzzled expression.

“...You, did something happen? Speak, I will listen.”

“Rather than words, there’s something that’s easier for us to understand, right? Catch.”
(Beren)

“Oi, don’t just suddenly—this... is?!!”

What Beren threw was something that was wrapped in cloth.

It was too big for it to be alcohol.

The man that had received it, unwrapped the cloth and checks what it is.

It was a small axe that was around 1 meter in size counting both the handle and the head.

As he checked, he saw that the name of Beren carved in it.

The craftsmanship in his name was slightly reserved which could be said to be a design that fits Beren.

There’s no doubt it was Beren’s creation.

But the reason why the man was surprised was because of the quality of the axe itself.

“It is one of the things I recently made.” (Beren)

“Unbelievable. Yeah, it is unbelievable, but... I can certainly see peculiarities of yours in this. Something as overwhelming as this... was made by you? Impressive. It is truly impressive. But since when...”

“I had what you would call ‘a fateful encounter’. I want to have a talk with the village chief. Talk about the time when I left here, about the place where I had settled down

afterwards, and also... about the encounter I told you a moment ago.” (Beren)

“O-Okay! Well, come with me. Seriously, the first time you came here was sudden, but your return was also so sudden. Moreover, you have appeared as a smither that can make such outrageous creations! I will have you tell me in detail, got it?!”

The man cheerfully and enjoyably guided Beren.

Looking at his back, Beren followed him from behind.

(Well, it is truly an unchanging place. If it were my past self of a few years ago, I would have seen it as normal though. Even I can't believe it myself. Attacked by a spider, meeting Tomoe-sama and Waka-sama; it has only been a few years since then. Can barely be called a few years.)

Those were years that he could clearly tell that his ability was increasing everyday.

Moreover, it continues onto the present day.

The knowledge he has gained by interacting with the many races, Tomoe, Mio, and Shiki. Also, on top of that, the many unknown techniques that their ruler, Makoto, has brought about.

For Beren and for the Eldwas, this is a time for them to absorb everything as they continue their trial and error, and grow with all their ability.

Of course, within their living in Asora, they will one day hit a wall, and once they do, there will be a lot of things that will occupy their minds one after the other.

But that's a thing of the future.

The amount of experience that has been piling up steadily is truly turning into something. This kind of happiness is currently being savored by the dwarfs of Asora.

There's nothing as great as this for a craftsmen race.

(It is not only armour. There's also ceramics, and miniaturized heavy equipment. I wonder what kind of face they will make when I show them those. And what they will wish. Waka-sama has repeatedly asked me not to do invitations that will chip off the national power of Lorel, but... only a small amount of dwarfs get involved with

hyumans, so it should be fine to invite the ones that are not involved with them.)

If they are capable craftsmen, Beren intended to invite them to Asora.

At present, less than half of the dwarves are cooperating with the Lorel Union and the hyumans.

The dwarf race that surpasses the hyumans in knowledge and technique as craftsmen, have not received that much discrimination from the hyumans and are one of the demi-humans that are able to coexist with them. Because of the need to collect raw materials, dwarfs normally make villages in remote places.

For the dwarfs that live in precipitous mountain ranges, it isn't that strange that they lack interaction with other races to begin with.

(Focusing on that, Tomoe-sama said that at first it was best to do this separately. Enter the country separately, and after gathering information, we rendezvous at the lodging. She said that was the ironclad rule or something like that, but... there's probably some sort of deep meaning in it. She said that it was okay to act alone without the need to bring the Forest Onis, so at this moment, I should act as the representative of the Elder Dwarfs!)

Beren had been ordered to act separately by Tomoe, and instead of entering the country from the east entrance like Makoto and the others did, he entered by crossing the mountains.

Of course, it wasn't an entrance that was permitted.

Or more like, the north and western side of Lorel Union was separated by mountain ranges that work as a natural shield, so there's not really anything standing as a national border security.

Aside from having a Dragon Knight unit patrol the area, it is practically in a state where you can enter and leave as much as you want.

However, that's only applicable with the condition that you can cross over the mountain range, are able to be self-sufficient for several days, and on top of that, you are able to fight continuously against all the mamonos as you do this.

The Dragon Knight unit also possesses pretty high reconnaissance ability, so it isn't

really that much of a reliable method to enter the country.

“We are here. Welcome back, Beren! Take your time!”

Beren, who had crossed the precipitous mountains alone and arrived at the volcano he was aiming for, didn't show much exhaustion as he entered the dwarf village.

Maybe because Beren felt comfortable with the sounds of smithing and the presence of fire, his mouth had turned into a smile.

“It seems like you are also doing well, village chief.” (Beren)

The smithing sounds could be heard from various places.

It seems like Beren picked one of the peculiarities from within those sounds, he made a wry smile.

In the Elder Dwarf village that he had settled in, the chief there was also devoted to smithing.

It might be the nature of Dwarfs to get more motivated as they grow older. That's how Beren thought.

And he himself will climb higher as a smith.

His wry smile was half directed at himself.

“By the way Beren, that's quite the big baggage you have there. You must have alcohol there too, right? The Earth Spirits were making a big ruckus saying that someone they have never seen before was coming, but to think it was going to be a dwarf carrying baggage.”

“Of course. Leaving aside the amount, you can look forward to its quality.” (Beren)

(It can only be found in Asora after all.)

Beren carried luggage that surpassed his body weight by several times. Seeing it from afar, it would look as if the luggage was walking.

Receiving the report that something unknown was heading to the village, the warriors

of the village had armed themselves and stood out, but they saw that it was their old friend Beren waving his hand.

“I am looking forward to it! This axe is plenty enough for a present, and yet, you are making me have even higher expectations!”

“The name of that creation is: ‘Mountain Cutter’. In time, I will master it and show it to you.” (Beren)

“Mountain Cutter huh. You have learned the Wise writing huh. Can’t underestimate you.”

“I see it habitually, so I simply got used to it. I am bad at using my head as always, you know.” (Beren)

“I’m relieved to hear that. Now then, I will let you meet that hardheaded geezer—I mean, the village chief. Just stay there, okay? When you are done talking with him, I will have returned from telling the others. At that time, let me hear your story!”

“Thanks. Later then.” (Beren)

Beren and the man that was guiding him entered the imposing workshop.

In the past when Beren had entered this place to give his greetings, he was nervous and withered, but now, for some mysterious reason, he was calm.

With a smile, Beren met with the village chief that had turned around.



At that night when Beren had made his revisit, there was a banquet -even if modest- at the dwarf village located halfway up the volcano.

However, the center of it which is Beren was nowhere to be found, along with the village chief.

The reason was because of the many goods Beren displayed to the village chief at their meeting.

“To think that you had gone all the way to the wasteland and settled there.”

“It was a result of drifting and drifting about. After leaving here, I added up journeys and settled down in a town called Tsige. After that, I tried going to the wasteland. Rather than calling it smith training, it was more like searching for the many weapons that were sleeping within that land.” (Beren)

“Umu, there’s people that gather treasures from distant lands, and it is also the gravestone of the strong adventurers. So there’s probably many weapons sleeping there.”

“Yes. And then, after continuing deeper and deeper, I found an Elder Dwarf village and...” (Beren)

“And that’s when you noticed the blood relation within yourself huh. It is true that I felt like you were from a different lineage, but to think that you were actually an Elder Dwarf. Even I am surprised.”

“I was too.” (Beren)

The two of them were in a separate room and drinking alcohol with a lamp as their light and talking about peaceful topics.

There’s no lively drinking like the one at the feasts where they lift the cask and drink from it.

“On top of that, you encountered that black spider alone and managed to return alive. You are the hero of the dwarfs.”

“Well, if I had to choose, I would say I was the princess there. The princess that was saved. If Tomoe-sama and Waka-sama were not there, I would have been devoured, no doubt.” (Beren)

“...That’s it. That’s what I have been bothered with.”

“What is it?” (Beren)

“That Waka-sama. From what I have heard of you, he is without doubt a Wise-sama. Moreover, a very special one. Surpassing the impossible, and bending common sense. He is exactly that archetype.”

“The person himself says he is not though. But the reality might be that it really is the

case.” (Beren)

“There’s no talk about the Wise aside from the territory of Lorel after all. In short, it is how they are called, and just as it states, it is not that they are intelligent people. If I had to put it in words, it would be people that ‘know about unusual stuff’. Also, one of the traits of the Wise-samas is that they don’t really like when you call them in a way too respectful manner.”

The words of the village chief made Beren smile wryly.

It is certainly true that the traits of the Wise that has been passed down in Lorel match Makoto.

It is not like he is a wise man, but at times, he would know some specialized techniques.

Even though he doesn’t know the basics of living, architecture, and smithing, he would at times speak about advanced techniques that would develop them further.

It is true that his master Makoto is that kind of mysterious existence.

‘Knows of unusual things’, Beren thought that it was a pretty accurate way of putting it.

“There were some containers made of earth in the things that you brought. You said that was ceramics, right?”

“Yes.”

“Actually, it seems like in the long past, there was something like that too in our village.”

“What!” (Beren)

“Its name was exactly the same, ceramic. Or was it pottery? Oh well, anyways, I was told that it this was also knowledge brought by one of the Wise-sama.”

“But the first time I came here, there was no such thing.” (Beren)

“By that time, it couldn’t be used anymore. In the olden days, there was a time when

the ground repeatedly trembled and the flow of the river changed heavily. Most of the craftsmen that had devoted to ceramics had died, and as a result, the technique itself turned fuzzy... and in time, it was lost.”

“I didn’t know...” (Beren)

“It was something from a long past after all. It was at a time when Lorel didn’t exist yet. The word Wise didn’t exist either.”

“That long... Then how did you know he was a Wise? Just because of that new technique?” (Beren)

“It was a deduction from the fact that he used the writing of the Wise and... because that person had a truly short lifespan. There’s probably no mistake.”

“Short lifespan... About how much?” (Beren)

This was something Beren was heavily interested.

Makoto is also a Wise, an otherworldler.

Meaning, their lifespan should be almost the same.

Right now he can’t even imagine him dying, but there’s no doubt he has a lifespan.

“Since coming to the village, it took a mere 80 years. The records of it are unclear, but it seems like that person died without even reaching the hundred years. Like a hyuman.”

“...Right.” (Beren)

The face of Beren grew clouded.

It is way too short.

Cold despair was gathering deep in his stomach.

“He was the only Wise-sama that has lived in our village, but... even so, he left a lot of things behind. I can understand the sentiment of Lorel to protect them. That’s most likely the correct action to take.”

“As a result, the Wise can also protect them, and their livelihood will be stabilized. It is a good relationship.” (Beren)

“...It is not only about loss and gains. You are also with someone like that, so you should understand, right? The Wise-samas repay good will to their best, and repudiate bad actions. It seems like there were some who have taken arms and some that walked the path of darkness, but the majority were of calm temperament. They are way too kind. That’s why they are highly esteemed, not only by the humans, but also by demi-humans, and obviously, us as well.”

“Way too kind, huh.” (Beren)

“I have heard that even in war, even if they were faced with an enemy, they would forgive them as best as they can, save their life, and provided them a chance to redo their lives.”

“...I see. A kindness that you have to protect or it will die out huh. Like a lovely flower.” (Beren)

Then... it probably doesn’t apply to Makoto, is what Beren thought.

It is true that the ruler of Asora, Makoto, is kind, and he is also a good person. However, his power is so overwhelming to the point that even a Superior Dragon and the Calamity Spider obey him.

He is definitely not a flower that one can simply pluck out.

“They are not flowers that can be easily plucked out though. The Wise-samas are all stronger than the average. They have an overwhelming latent talent that at times, our weapons can’t reach.”

“Lately, I have heard that the heroes are pretty Wise-like though.” (Beren)

“Yeah, it seems so. I heard that the Limia hero who had visited this country, had revealed herself to the Empress as an otherworlder. She is accompanied by the priestess, so it must be true.”

“So you already knew.” (Beren)

“We have connections with the other dwarf villages, you see. The Wise-sama that was

in this village, by the time his hair had gone white, he was strong to a point that he was able to match a dragon with the dragon slaying sword, Einkarf. The heroes must be relatively strong too.”

“I see. But to do dragon slaying at an old age, this village’s Wise was also an unbelievable person.” (Beren)

“It is not assured that the records are all true, but it seems like he was 96 at that time. In terms of human lifespan, that would mean he defeated a dragon while he was at death’s door. At the time when the village got attacked by flying dragons, he brought out his weapon and fought along with the warriors of the village.”

“...”

Makoto might have done the same thing, is what Beren thought.

If something were to happen in Asora, he would also risk his life.

For some reason, Beren was able to believe this without any doubt.

Makoto probably wouldn’t admit it, but this can be considered the highest type of trust that the residents have towards their lord.

“...And then, until the very end, he soared through the skies and hunted down all the dragons... and after that, died.”

“An heroic story. And he was able to bring out such righteousness even towards a race he was not related with. It is the story of a man that should be sung praises for.” (Beren)

“Even if it was slightly exaggerated, it is impressive, right? After doing as much as that, we also have to repay him. That’s why a number of his words have remained in this village, and still live. This ceramic technique was lost though... But in the first place, even within the dwarfs, we are the type that likes the back regions, a family of eccentrics that have devoted themselves to their lives as blacksmiths. This isn’t something I should be saying myself but, we were stubborn and... kind of shut-ins. In the past, our stance was to turn away outsiders.”

“But, even if I am a brethren, I remember that I was received pretty warmly when I came here.” (Beren)

“Listen till the end. That’s exactly one of the things that changed with his words. When he taught us the technique to knead earth, he brought out a number of examples and left warnings and aphorisms. Within the words that have remained of him, there’s something called foreign soil guests.”

“Foreign soil?” (Beren)

“Umu. From the meaning that remained in the village, it implies that the earth of another land brought by the stream is something that enriches this land and brings about change.”

“I see. Carried earth huh. Change... fumu.” (Beren)

“With that as the turning point, we began seeing the outsiders as foreign soil, and didn’t chase them away just because they are from the outside. Accept them, help each other out, change, and mutually ripening. That’s what he said.”

“That’s why you saw me as foreign soil as well and accepted me.” (Beren)

“I just wanted to say that this trait had remained in the village. Also, Beren, you have... brought us this. Ceramics.”

“It wasn’t a repayment with knowledge of your circumstances though. It is embarrassing to say this, but it was 100% a coincidence.” (Beren)

“It is fine. That in itself is the very soil of his teachings. You have trained into being able to make this level of weapons, learned of ceramics, and has brought this heavy equipment device. All of this is the ripening of our past encounter. I didn’t know I would be able to experience such a happy sensation before I die.”

“Village chief...” (Beren)

The grateful eyes of this old man that is strict and merciless, was, for some reason, unpleasant for Beren.

He was being directed pure gratitude by the village chief.

In his time when he was training, he was punched, kicked, and had his beard and hair burned by the village chief. To think that fiend is the same person as this, he couldn’t believe it at all.

“Let’s hear your conditions, Beren. Not as a past apprentice of mine, but as the envoy of the master you are currently serving for, Makoto-sama. Begin your talk once again. Bringing this many goods here, I don’t think you have crossed the northern mountain range with that heavy baggage just to show them to me.”

“...Thanks.” (Beren)

The old man that was his teacher in the past, has declared that he will be treating Beren as a person of the same standing.

Beren displays equipment for Makoto, Tomoe, and the others in Asora, but he could feel a different kind of happiness than that of being acknowledged by them.

Northern part of Lorel, Beren had begun mobilizing.

Chapter 243

After Rinon

The power of the promissory note Sairitz-san gave me was ridiculous.

For a second, I thought about hanging it on my neck and walk around with it. That way, trouble might avoid me.

But if I do that, something even more troublesome than this promissory note will definitely happen.

Like kicking a pebble on the street and breaking a national treasure accidentally.

Parallel worlds are troublesome because things that happen in gag mangas can easily happen in real life.

“Hohoh~ this is a room that I can actually relax in. We are lucky a good inn was open.”
(Tomoe)

“It is definitely better than the log house we were in before. The owner didn’t try to overcharge us either.” (Mio)

We decided to stay a night in Mizuha, so we began to do things like sightseeing the townscape and tasting the specialties as we looked for an inn.

Narrowing the conditions into: a good atmosphere, cost, and delicious food, as we looked around, is one of the best parts about a journey.

...Well, in the modern world, I could simply search for all of that in the internet though.

I thought we would be doing something similar to when Shiki and I headed to the Academy, but it didn’t turn out that way.

Tomoe casually grabbed the soldiers that were stealthily tailing us and said: “Where is the best inn here?”

With this, it was decided.

About that inn, Mio also said her piece of mind.

“Prepare your best room.”

Yup, that’s all.

Of course it would be a good room if you say that.

With that, it is obviously going to be open.

We went to an expensive inn, and on top of that, we asked for the most expensive room there.

It would be one thing if we had come in a special day for this city, but in this time that’s practically off-season, it will most likely be open.

By the way, the soldiers that had been dazzled by the promissory note were at our backs, so the inn owner was probably troubled...

Sorry for that.

“Fumu fumu. As expected of a foreign country. Their style is pretty different. This is that, right? A ryokan <Japanese style inn>. It has taken that as a reference, right Waka?”
(Tomoe)

“The corridor had wooden floors, but there’s even tatamis in the room. It doesn’t seem to be exactly the same, but... there’s no doubt that they used that as reference.”
(Makoto)

It may be slightly reddish-brown, but the looks are exactly like a tatami.

Is it because the materials that can be obtained here are of this color, or because this is their limit as to how close they can be of the tatami color? I don’t know.

The smell is also similar, but different.

However, I am simply comparing it with the tatamis I know of, and there’s no doubt that in Lorel, this is serving its purpose as tatamis.

The composition of the room is exactly that of a Japanese-style room.

...As I thought, within the Japanese Wise in Lorel that missed their world, there were some that tried to replicate how it was.

In this country that has a good relationship with the dwarfs, they could have used many better materials like stones and bricks, and yet, most of the houses are wooden.

I even found red bean paste that had the same color and taste. But it didn't have sticky rice cake inside, it seems to be mainly consumed as cake.

It seems like depending on the area, there are places that actually use sticky rice cake inside.

Also, there were some that were inside bread.

Red bean paste bread. <ANPAN>

It had exactly the same taste and I felt incredibly nostalgic.

As an otherworlder, the thing that one pursues the most is probably the taste of your homeland.

Or do they simply acknowledge it as something delicious?

At this rate, I might be able to find soy sauce or miso around here.

It might be a good idea to check out the marks... no, the footprints that the Japanese, who spend their whole life in this country, have left.

If the situation in Tsige has a sudden turn, I would have to return immediately, but once the negotiation with the mercenary group is done, maybe for a little while...

"Oh?!"

"Ara!"

?

As I was pensive, Tomoe and Mio, who were looking around the room, raised their

voices.

“You two, what happened?” (Makoto)

“No well, this is a joyful unexpected event. We have found something wonderful.” (Tomoe)

“It has been a while-desu wa ne. Ufufufufu.” (Mio)

“Let’s see... T-This is?!” (Makoto)

As expected of the best room in the city’s number one inn.

At a section of the room, at the other side of the wooden door... there was something nostalgic, and something that I have a recollection of in this world.

“To think there’s an open air bath here, how stylish.” (Makoto)

“Since the time we entered together, I haven’t had a chance to wash your back, but it seems like tonight I will be able to take care of you leisurely-desu wa.” (Mio)

Oh, seriously?

Since the time I showed an unsightly side of me in the Kaleneon mountain, I have been stealthily avoiding mixed baths, and yet, this is...

There’s a limit to sudden trouble.

A stone bath that is compact yet neatly put together. A bath that looks like it has been created with a resemblance to the cypress bath.

It is being poured water even now, and steam is coming out from it.

I remember seeing in tv that there are this kind of rooms in expensive inns, but... to think that I would be able to experience it myself.

Moreover, with two women.

...What a situation.

‘Hahaha, explode’, for some reason, I felt like this is the kind of situation where someone would shout this mortified as they point their finger, and I don’t know why, but mysteriously, I felt like that finger was pointed at me.

“Look for a restaurant to eat in, check out the city’s surroundings, and then at the end, cleanse the fatigue in the hot spring! This is the best first day.” (Tomoe)

“If the end is the best, I don’t care about the other parts being no good.” (Mio)

“...This time I won’t get dizzy. I am going to be careful. You two as well, please restrain yourselves.” (Makoto)

“Don’t worry about what happened last time! Don’t worry, first time’s are always like that. In other words, it is all about getting used to it.” (Tomoe)

“Also, even if it ends up that way again, I will nurse you. Please enjoy the bath without worrying.” (Mio)

...They don’t have a single bit of intentions to restrain.

I can clearly tell that they didn’t listen to the latter half of my words.

So they pretend not to hear the words that are not convenient for them huh. Even though I asked them kindly and all.

At the time in Zenno when I was with both of them... right, at the place we went, we picked up the sister of Toa, Rinon. After that, we faced a variety of things like attacks.

Ah, I see.

I just have to pick up someone this time as well, like the time with Rinon.

Please, let there be someone who is troubled.



“Is it that one?” (Tomoe)

“What is it, Tomoe-san?” (Makoto)

I respond in that way to the amazed mutter of Tomoe.

“Find an inn, go out for the meal. For Waka, these two are supposed to be flags for you to make something happen, right?” (Tomoe)

“What do you take me for? Rather than me making something happen, it is more like, things occur. No matter what it is, it is not like I am the one that did it.” (Makoto)

I was indeed wishing for it though.

“Waka-sama, Waka-sama.” (Mio)

Mio whispers in my ear.

“What, Mio?” (Makoto)

“Why don’t we just pretend we didn’t see this at all? If we just stealthily move at the sides of the street, someone else will definitely do something about it.” (Mio)

“It is rare to see our thoughts match, Mio. Waka, I think that this time, this is a good choice to take. How about it?” (Tomoe)

“...You two... just how fast do you want to return?” (Makoto)

““As soon as possible!””

They synced extraordinarily well.

After finishing our dinner of nabe prepared with miso that seems to be the specialty of this place, we were going back to the inn as we voiced out our impressions, saying things like: ‘it was delicious’.

It seems like Mizuha has pretty good public order. At night, there were a good amount of people on the streets, but once we moved to the next thin street, it still ended up giving a dangerous vibe.

Tomoe and Mio seemed like they wanted to return to the inn fast, so they clearly chose the shortest route as they moved.

It wasn’t me, you know?

Tomoe and Mio were the ones who wanted to go that way, okay?

And then, we immediately got an encounter.

Hahahaha.

At that location, there was a kid with what seemed to be a toy sword, confronting a number of adults.

The sword that the kid was holding, gave out the light of magic power.

I don't know how much effectiveness it provides, but I don't think it is a good idea to give out your location in the darkness.

Because that definitely doesn't work for your advantage.

"If this were a fight between drunks, it would be a different story, but just from looking at it, you can tell that it is giving out the scent of crime, right?" (Makoto)

"Actually, it smells like nothing but trouble though. Ah, why didn't I endure the few extra minutes in the safe path...?" (Tomoe)

"Now that I look closely, that kid might be an elf, or maybe not? Hah... it is true that the open air bath wouldn't have run away anyways. It must be that, right? The impatient beggars don't get much change, was it?" (Mio)

"Something like that. However, the other side is also taking their sweet time. Now then..." (Tomoe)

These two don't have any motivation at all.

Mio is already so despondent that I can't even understand what she is saying.

Tomoe is also giving out an aura of 'what a pain' from all her body.

But I will save that kid.

Actually, that kid there, please save me, in a lot of meanings.

But it is certainly true. Just like Tomoe said, the attackers are taking their sweet time.

It doesn't seem like they have noticed us either.

"Princess-sama, please return! If you have something in your mind, you can just order us and we will soon—"

"Zip your mouths, zip your mouths! I will go myself and supervise the land-desu! I will also bring out my own money to hire people-desu! You don't have to worry-desu!"

She is a girl that says -desu repeatedly and zip your mouths.

Even so... is she saying *supervise*, or *check*? *<both are written differently but sound the same>*

If it were the latter, it would be one thing, but the former is not something that a child can do.

Also... princess-sama?

I thought she was a broke kid like Rinon. But it seems like the situation is a bit... no, a lot different.

"If something were to happen to Princess-sama, I, Shougetsu, wouldn't know what to say to Danna-sama<master>" (Shougetsu)

"If it is father, you can just give him his favorite steamed buns and he won't care about someone like me-desu!!!"

"...That's saying too much! Princess-sama!" (Shougetsu)

...I retract my words.

Now that I look properly, the adult side is mixed with men and women.

There are indeed some that have their swords unsheathed, but they are making sure not to point the edged part towards the kid.

And the child was swinging around the magic powered sword, but the adults were restraining themselves.

Yeah, this is the type of trouble I don't want to get involved with.

“...”

“It seems like the dangerous scent is gone, so let’s just consider it as watching an amusing show and leave now.” (Makoto)

My instincts were telling me that it would be better to get caught in the mixed bath rather than this.

“...”

However, the silent Tomoe was different from Mio who wanted to return as soon as possible. She wasn’t moving from the place.

Or more like... she had a complacent smile.

Ah, she read their memories.

“In any case, even if you swing around something like that, we can’t step back! Akashi, Yuduki, we are bringing back the princess even if by force. Don’t injure her!” (Shougetsu)

“As you will!”

“Got it!”

Those two are like Tomoe and Mio.

Akashi and Yuduki; the two women run towards the kid.

It seems like even if they are going to incapacitate her, they are not going to injure her, so it clearly doesn’t seem to be a crime.

Ignore it. Ignoring is the best.

“Stop right there, scoundrels!”

Hah?!

Uo, Tomoe is not here!

Once I look at my side, Tomoe was not there anymore.

Just now, they said something about Kannaoui, the place where we will most likely be staying the longest time in this country, so it would have been better if we had just ignored it.

“Gah?!”

“Gufu!”

Nooooo!

Akashi-san and Yuduki-san have fallen right before the kid!

That’s To.mo.e!!!!

A tender warmth reaches my legs.

How to say it, it is just as expected.

In front of the absent-minded princess that’s holding the glowing sword, Tomoe appears with one of her two katanas unsheathed, the long one.

Until I pointed it out, Tomoe had been using the short lengthed one, Shirafuji, pretty often.

But after explaining her the meaning of the short one, she has begun unsheathing the long one, Yae Kuro Ryu <*multilayered black dragon*>, more often.

Well, she can manage most people with her bare hands, so she rarely unsheathes it though.

And yet, she went through the trouble of unsheathing it this time around.

It seems like that katana was made by the dwarfs out of some sort of mysterious tree that was able to face a mountain fire head on.

Wood that is harder than metal, and it is so tempered that it wouldn’t lose to a mountain fire. I didn’t understand a thing about that material.

Whatever the case, it is a fire element katana that is opposite to Shirafuji.

“Doing something like surrounding a small child with numbers, is that something adults do?! Learn shame!” (Tomoe)

...You were listening to the situation, and yet, those are quite the words.

“Are you okay, little child? It is alright now-ja. I will protect you.” (Tomoe)

“Wait wait wait! We have our circumstances. We can’t reveal the details, but we do have our circumstances! By no means did we intend to injure that personage.” (Shougetsu)

“There’s no need to hear the words of people that have taken their weapons and threatened a kid with numbers!” (Tomoe)

...That man named Shougetsu-san, was he born under a star that doesn’t let him finish what he wants to say?

So saddening.

Ah, no good.

I feel like rolling my eyes.

The katana of Tomoe makes a flash.

The heat wave that was produced by this had blown Shougetsu-san and the others till the building at their back.

It was so sudden that they couldn’t scream once.

Ah, so she narrowly managed to not dye her hands in evil huh.

Because if she wanted to, she would be able to turn everything into ashes all the way to the inn we are staying.

It seems like she didn’t go that far.

“Are you hurt?” (Tomoe)

“...”

“Now then, little child, let’s find a safe place to—” (Tomoe)

“Amazing... Amazing-desu! You were like the legendary master swordsman, Iori-na no desu!!”

“Oh, master swordsman. What a nice sounding title-ja no.” (Tomoe)

“Ah, but the old ma—No no! I mean, those hoodlums there, are they okay?”

“Of course. I used the blunt side-ja.” (Tomoe)

“Uwaa~~~!”

Uwaaa, she made an ‘uwaa’ that was not from drawing back, but one that was from admiration.

Even from here, I could tell that the kid’s eyes were glittering.

But Tomoe, I think crashing onto a hard surface and getting burns are quite the big deal though. Is it okay to call that ‘blunt side’?

Akashi-san and Yudoku-san look like they are pretty injured, you know?

...Well, we are talking about Tomoe here.

She would simply say that the blunt side is used for when she fights outside.

Swinging her sword and calling it ‘blunt side’ sounds quite war-like though.

Well, they are alive, so she definitely did hold back there.

“Waka-sama...” (Mio)

“Right, let’s return to the inn.” (Makoto)

Mio tugged my clothes.

Reading those eyes of hers that were as if appealing to something, I answer her.

We will probably be going back with that kid though.

“That’s great. I thought we wouldn’t be able to bath. Wash his back~~ Wash his back~~♪” (Mio)

...Eh?

Weren’t those eyes saying that you wanted to go back because it was getting cold?

Chapter 244

Blindfolds are for fashion

“What’s with that appearance you have there, little girl?”

We did a light self-introduction with the princess-sama that we brought back.

Tomoe explained to her that we are a company from a foreign country who has gotten the permission from Lorel Union to do some business inside the country, which is all true but doesn’t touch anything about our real objective. And after that, we confirmed our standings.

Since then, there hasn’t been a single word about Yaso-Katsui or Kannaoui.

We simply told her that Sairitz-san has given us her approval by telling us that she would cooperate with her best if we were to make a store inside the country, and that we have obtained information from her and are currently in the country with the objective of heading to the labyrinth.

...Words have a lot of depth huh.

The princess-sama said that she is the daughter of a relatively big town’s landlord, and her name is Ousaka Iroha. Because of Tomoe’s first impression, she is pretty attached to her.

Iroha is probably her real name, but her family name is probably not Ousaka but Osakabe.

The person herself said: ‘Osaka— Ousaka’, and restated it after all.

However, different from other countries, the names given to the people in Lorel are not names that define their nature, their nature is what defines their name. A name like Iroha-chan finally clicked in my mind. *<Iroha is the traditional ordering of Japanese syllabary>*

Their naming sense is Japanese-like, so I was finally able to confirm that the Wise-

sama in this country are definitely Japanese. I have also understood that this country has been influenced in a slightly strange manner.

The legendary master swordsman Iori is also a totally Japanese-style name after all.

When I asked, I was told that this person was from such a long past that it is even questionable if he actually existed, but in this country, it is a pretty well known fairytale, or more like, the main protagonist of a hero tale.

I do think the person existed, and there's the chance he was the husband of Root.

There's also the chance that he was a Japanese person.

It seems like he is loved, so well, if he really is Japanese, that in itself is something that makes me kind of proud.

And it seems like Iroha-chan is a big fan of Muramatsu Iori.

Yeah, how charming.

But at any rate, the attire this girl has which you can tell by a glance that it is expensive, her speech and conduct that you can tell she is ignorant to the outside world, moreover, even if it is the story of a hero which children would seem to like, her knowledge was pretty detailed.

She even retorted about the name of Kuzunoha company, saying that: 'You are named Kuzunoha, and yet, you are a foreign company?'

The two possibilities point to rich people, but rather than the daughter of a landlord, she looks more like a princess for me.

In other words, she gives me the impression that there's no doubt she is the daughter of the Osakabe household.

I will confirm this with Tomoe later.

It seems like the interest of Iroha-chan finally shifted to something else.

By the way, even when I said that I am the master of Tomoe and am the representative of the company, not only did she hold her stomach in laughter, she was told by Tomoe

that it was the truth and got shocked.

Leaving aside how much a kid can understand, we explained it to her, and received the impression: 'how mysterious'.

Those are the details from just a few moments ago.

Right now, the other thing that Iroha-chan is interested in -no, it is not me- that's right, she was interested in the talk about entering the open air bath.

Going to the bath with a girl I met just moments ago.

The development of the situation is so bad that it sounds like a bad eroge, and I can also clearly tell that it will go straight to a Bad End right after.

I am going straight to jail.

I don't know about this world, but ethically speaking, this would put me straight in jail.

No matter if I have the promissory note of Sairitz-san.

But I threw that line of thought immediately into the far horizon, and well, she is a guest that we brought ourselves, so I told Iroha-chan to go take a bath first instead.

It is not a bath that has water filled up, it is a luxurious hot spring that has water constantly flowing in it.

It is obviously smaller than the super bath-house that came out from a big hole at a winter mountain and had its construction rushed, but in the eyes of a plebeian like me, it is an open air bath of pretty big size.

...Now that I think about it, we are staying in a pretty luxurious inn where there's a time limit of a one hour stay and any more than that we have to pay extra charges, and yet, we are able to stay in this kind of room as much as we want.

And we are able to utilize the guest room in the inn without any sort of time limitation.

I... have a lot of money huh.

The gold in the warehouse at Asora gradually increases.

Even if we were to continue building warehouses, the insides wouldn't change, and more importantly, it doesn't look good for the scenery, so we are trying to exchange the gold coins in Asora's warehouses.

If I remember correctly, there's the magic silver coin and the yellow gold coin (which is also called magic gold coin), so it is possible to exchange it, but leaving aside the fact that there's two that are higher than the gold coin, they are not easy to use.

That's why I didn't want to exchange it much.

But there's a lot of things I want to place inside the warehouses, so it can't be helped.

Frankly speaking, the yellow gold coin is difficult to obtain, and it is half treated as an artistic good. If I had to illustrate it with something in Earth, it would be like an expensive commemoration coin, so I have changed them all into magic silver coins.

I remember that even with that, Shiki said that it would still take the space of several warehouses.

It is impossible to know the exact amount of money we have, and there's no way to have a good grasp of it, but... let's try asking about the amount of money we have in our possession.

Oh right.

At any rate, I offered Iroha-chan to take a bath, but she said that she can't go on her own, so someone should enter with her.

And after that, she slowly went to the front of Mio and lifted both her arms.

She stretched both arms and legs while standing.

Mio had a dubious expression as she asked the reason why to Iroha-chan. Well, that's normal.

I also don't understand what she is aiming for.

But I will tell Mio later to stop calling her little girl.

“You said your name was Mio, right? Quickly take my clothes off-desu.” (Iroha)

“...Hah?” (Mio)

“What’s with that ‘hah’? You are the maid that serves under Tomoe-sama and Raidou-sama, right? It doesn’t seem like there’s any other servant here, so I will leave you under my care-desu.” (Iroha)

“Pfft.” (Tomoe)

Tomoe laughed.

The pure words of Iroha-chan held no malice.

I see, what a misunderstanding.

In terms of our standings, the correct answer would be that below me, Tomoe and Mio stand in the same height, but because of the processing of Iroha-chan, even with our explanation, Mio had become the one with the lowest standing among us.

...Ah, I see.

On top of that, she was accompanied by that old man and those people that looked like bodyguards, and it seemed like there were servants too, so she probably thought our relationship was similar to how theirs is.

“...Listen well. I serve *Waka-sama*! By no means do I serve someone like Tomoe-san. Tomoe-san and I have the same standing. No, I, who has been gradually gaining the favor of Waka-sama’s stomach, am standing higher. Do you understand?” (Mio)

“If you are the cook, that means your standing is lower than that of Tomoe-sama who is a close aide. In the first place, having katanas and serving her master is the proof that she is a close aide. That’s why...” (Iroha)

“Do.you.un.der.stand?” (Mio)

“?!!! Iph huphs!! Iph huphs-esu!<it hurts!>” (Iroha)

“Are.you.lis.te.ning?” (Mio)

Mio immediately abandons any thoughts of conversation and goes straight to force.

The cheeks of Iroha-chan... that looks painful.

Since the meat has not been teared off, it seems like she properly understands how much strength to use on a child.

Hm, for someone like Mio, this is quite the soft and Mio-like way of dealing with things.

After a while of lifting her up and doing the dance of 'un.der.stand?', Iroha-chan tearfully nodded her head up and down.

The convincing was successful.

Or more like, con.vin.cing.

"Uwuuu, if Mio-san is no good, it can't be helped. Raidou-sama, I ask of you-desu."
(Iroha)

Eh?

"What is this little girl saying? Does she have a loose screw?" (Makoto)

"Eh?" (Iroha)

Crap, I messed up.

My words and thoughts come out in reverse order.

"Ah no well, I haven't assisted a girl in her bathing you see. I am sorry but, I can't."
(Makoto)

In a variety of meanings, that is.

I have no such tastes.

It doesn't excite me at all.

Today is a day where I have experienced a lot of unexpected findings.

Or more like, why is it that when Mio is no good, she asks me rather than Tomoe?

“You litt—lass. Your name was Iroha, right? It seems like my words were not enough.”
(Mio)

Mio spins both hands and looks at Iroha-chan.

Iroha-chan is definitely not saying this to seduce me, so don't just turn the little girl into lass and call her by her name, Mio.

It seems like spinning both her hands had great effect on Iroha-chan, she hid behind my back.

“Now now Mio, can't you see that Iroha is getting scared? From what we have heard, this girl's family is that of a pretty influential landlord. She grew in an environment where her necessities were all taken care by others. Don't get so angry.” (Tomoe)

“Tomoe-san, are you telling me to let this girl have Waka-sama take off her clothes, and assist her in her bathing? Have Waka-sama wash her body and hair, and soak in the bath together? Is that what you are saying? I see. Can't let that happen, definitely can't. There's no way I would let something so envious— Anyways, I won't accept it! No way! Because I will be the one who will be doing it later!” (Mio)

“Ah, if it's soaking in the bath, I can do it on my own. But taking off my clothes and washing my body and hair, that's the job of the servants that are in the bath-na no desu. It is the same with my mom as well-desu.” (Iroha)

Oi.

You intended to make me wash your body and hair?

How scary.

The words that Iroha-chan says, steadily increase the level of how much unawareness this girl has, and how she has been raised in her rich family.

That's what they have been doing? Seriously?

Also Mio, I will end up collapsing again if you do that.

Didn't I tell you to restrain yourselves not that long ago?

"When you say it, it sounds strangely erotic, Mio. But don't worry, I wouldn't let Waka do something like that. He hasn't done that for me either after all. I was the first one that thought about bringing her here-ja. And so, how about I help Iroha in her bathing?" (Tomoe)

Aside from the funny words Tomoe muttered around the middle, her words were unexpectedly admirable.

There's no way I am going to wash the body of Tomoe who is a lot older and surpasses me in height by much.

Well, let's have Tomoe bath with Iroha-chan then.

The person herself is okay with it, and Mio doesn't want to do it.

"With T-T-Tomoe-sama-desu ka?! Impossible! It is absolutely impossible-na no desu!!"
(Iroha)

cling

Iroha-chan's face goes bright red and clings onto me.

Firmly.

The expression of Mio went one level up.

I don't understand how that works, but that's how I felt.

But what does this mean, little girl?

If I had to say something about this, isn't your attitude reversed in regards to me and Tomoe?

...Could it be?!

This girl, has she already reached the age where she has perverted sexual preferences?!

Impossible, Lorel.

That is a side of the Japanese that you shouldn't imitate.

?!!!

When I heard about the legendary swordsman Iori, I thought that there was a pupil or an adopted child of Miyamoto Musashi that had a name like that.

I totally thought that this person was a man, but could it be... it was a woman?!

N-Now that I think about it, the bodyguards just now were both women.

In other words... I am correct?

"What's with that reaction-ja? If you are fine with Waka, you should be fine with me as well, right? It seems like you don't have hesitation in showing your skin at bath after all." (Tomoe)

"T-T-T-That's not the problem here!" (Iroha)

How could it be.

People of Lorel Union, I don't know which Japanese did these, but I am truly sorry.

The solution of this has not yet been found even with state-of-the-art techniques in the modern world.

To forcefully fix this, you would need to do things like brainwashing, and that doesn't feel like it is a solution.

(Ah, Waka, just saying but, this girl likes boys, you know. It seems like she hasn't met him yet, but she has a fiancée that she herself has accepted.) (Tomoe)

Receiving a shocking revelation, I was filled with apologetic feelings towards Lorel. I don't know how Tomoe knew what I was thinking, but she send me a lukewarm thought transmission.

Iroha-chan's speech and conduct are clearly telling me otherwise though.

Is it really the case?

It is Tomoe, so it shouldn't be a mistake, but... you know...

"Fumu, then what's the problem-ja." (Tomoe)

"Ha... ha ha ha." (Iroha)

She looked like a dog with rough breathing.

It seems like she is trying to say the reason, so we just wait.

"It is embarrassing-desu!" (Iroha)

"No well, we will be bathing together anyways, right?" (Tomoe)

"Please give up!" (Iroha)

"...Isn't it please give in?" (Makoto)

Ah, I retorted by reflex.

"Aw, please give in!-na no desu."

She is really agitated.

Let just have her say everything she has to say for now.

Don't retort, don't retort.

"Umu." (Tomoe)

Looks like Tomoe is doing that too.

"At least wait until I am 17-18, and get a woman-like body like that of my mom. At that time... I will happily take a bath together. Right now it is no good-na no desu! I can't show you this petite body of mine!! It can't match Tomoe-sama's incredible body at all!!" (Iroha)

...

I don't know how old this girl is but, is it that? The talk about taking a bath together

after several years later.

Even if Mio were to take off Iroha-chan's clothes, it would still end up in them taking a bath together after all.

So should they take baths separately?

But even so, her naked body would still be seen already anyways.

"I don't really care about the naked body of a child. Also, if your goal is to have a body like that of your mother, you will in time look similar to her. Don't mind it. Well, if Iroha says that she definitely doesn't want me to see, then I don't mind going in the bath with a blindfold." (Tomoe)

...I wouldn't like that.

A bath is something more free, willful, and fun.

In my land, it is called a necessary article to cleanse your heart after all.

I am one of the people that say: Bath is life.

But I still haven't mastered the bath road enough to say these words though.

"Something like a blindfold is just...!" (Iroha)

Even Iroha-chan is not so lacking in common sense.

It looks like she understands the importance of bathing.

"Then what should we do? Even if it is slightly embarrassing, it is best to obediently let me wash you, you know. It is my first time cleaning the body of someone else after all. Be proud, I am giving you the honor of being my first." (Tomoe)

This Tomoe.

She must have read something in the memories of Iroha-chan and her group.

She seems to be in a pretty good mood, and she is even saying this much, so... it must be quite the thing.

Could it be, this girl has something special?

I feel like that 'special' something is directed at me and not at Tomoe.

"I ask that T-Tomoe-sama goes in first, or that you go in later-desu!" (Iroha)

"...What?" (Tomoe)

"...Pfft." (Mio)

It has curved.

Now Mio is the one who leaks a laugh.

In other words, there were two patterns in the head of Iroha-chan that could be taken after being rejected by Mio and asked me to look after her.

The first is for Mio and Iroha-chan to go together; Tomoe baths alone.

The other one is me going together with Iroha-chan; Tomoe and Mio go in together.

"...In short, Iroha, you are telling me to go in alone?" (Tomoe)

"No! I am just saying that you can happily enter together with Mio-san-no desu!" (Iroha)

Maybe she was pushed by the strange vigour of Tomoe, Iroha-chan began speaking formally with her -desus.

-Desus really are unrivalled.

Maybe it is restricted to little girls, but strangely, I feel like forgiving it.

But it seems like I am the only one that's forgiving here.

Looks like the other two didn't agree at all with what she said.

Even I could tell that the time for questions and answers was over.

Tomoe and Mio silently nod.

Well, I may not be fit to say it, but I think it is the proper decision.

Don't let the little girl enter alone, and don't let me bath together with a girl that I have just met.

Then tonight, I will restrain from bathing, and have Mio or Tomoe enter the bath with Iroha-chan.

That's the best choice.

"Iroha, if you had just accepted the blindfold, there would have still been room for negotiation. Now that I think about it, we might have been spoiling you by considering standings." (Tomoe)

Hm?

"The very thought of showing consideration towards this lass was a mistake. Because, from the beginning, this was what we have been looking forward to the most in all the day!" (Mio)

Hm? This...

"Hiiih?!" (Iroha)

"There we go." (Mio)

Iroha-chan was pried away from my thigh by Mio.

It happened in an instant.

"This is a good opportunity-ja. I will teach you how to enter the bath. That's right, the etiquette of mixed bathing, that is!" (Tomoe)

There's nothing like that!

Of course, there's no good opportunity for that either!

That's the first time I have heard of something like this!

"Hey Tomoe, why are you grabbing my back collar?" (Makoto)

“Of course, because this is the thing we have been looking forward to the most all day after all! Here we go Waka, prepare yourself!” (Tomoe)

“Wait, you!” (Makoto)

“I won’t let you say that today you are not going to bath! We won’t allow that. That’s right, we won’t!” (Tomoe)

“You read it! You have read my mind again!” (Makoto)

“Didn’t even need to read it. There’s a limit to how transparent you are!” (Tomoe)

I was dragged into the dressing room that’s right before the open air bath.

B-Baths are more about freedom and willfulness. Uuuh.

“And so, Iroha, I will be peeling you off right now, but do you want me to wear a blindfold? Hm?” (Tomoe)

“Even if you do something like that, if it us, we would still be able to see if we wanted to anyways so, isn’t that pointless? It seems like this lass is wearing something troublesome to take off, so I will just help her take it off quickly-desu wa.” (Mio)

The bath will end as fast as taking off our clothes, right?

...No wait, you still can see?

What’s with that?

Are blindfolds only fashion for you guys?

“Ah, Mio! You idiot! If you didn’t say anything, we could have just told Waka that we would be wearing blindfolds, and we would have been able to wash him twice or thrice, you know!!” (Tomoe)

“?!!! What?!! What’s with that reward?! Blindfold, where is the blindfold?! Ah, there’s none! Wait for a bit, I will borrow one from the Gorgons!” (Mio)

“...No well, I have already heard it. Or more like, I thought it was only to the extent that you are able to tell by the presence, but you two are actually able to see huh. I don’t

know if this information will be useful, but... I will keep it in mind.” (Makoto)

“You have crushed one important card. Later, I will tell you a number of secret plans I have thought over carefully, so use them as reference, you idiot.” (Tomoe)

“But you know, I didn’t think we would get the permission by doing something like that... Uuuuh, sorry.” (Mio)

Mio honestly apologizes to Tomoe.

Such a precious scene.

“Uhm, I-If it is only one day, I can endure not bathing.” (Iroha)

“Is that so?” (Tomoe)

“Yes!” (Iroha)

Tomoe was undressing as she grins at the smiling Iroha.

“Too bad, you are out of time-ja. You are 30 minutes too late. Now then, I will give you three seconds. Who do you want to be peeled by?” (Tomoe)

H-How harsh.

Even if Iroha-chan wanted to escape, she is currently being lifted up by Tomoe.

It is impossible to escape.

“Three...” (Tomoe)

“Fuee?! E-Ehm.” (Iroha)

“Two...” (Tomoe)

“Ah, aaah, ehh...” (Iroha)

“O~ne...” (Tomoe)

“U-Understood. T-Then!!” (Iroha)

Being forced into an unreasonable choice, Iroha-chan finally...

“Hohoh~” (Tomoe)

Tomoe makes a nice smile.

Well, there’s no need to go through the trouble of saying who Iroha-chan has chosen.

Learning more about girl’s clothes... is not that big of a deal.

That’s right.

There’s things in this world... that are best forgotten.

Just one thing. Tonight’s events, I will definitely issue a gag order on it.

That’s what I have decided.

Chapter 245

The princess of Osakabe

Conclusion.

With a child added to the group, the seductiveness of the bath is blown away.

It seems like a child has far more destructive power than mixed bathing.

Thanks to it, I didn't end up getting dizzy, and was able to safely finish bathing.

...Just that, even if I was only able to maintain a bit more composure, because of it, I ended up seeing a lot more things.

As I thought, they do float.

Yeah, the two are incredible.

I simply thought that it was pretty impressive, but that's not the reason why I am lying down this late at night without being able to sleep.

Normally, this would be a time when I would be sleeping already, and yet, I still have my eyes open. There's two reasons for this, but in essence, there's only one.

First, because of the identity of Iroha-chan that Tomoe told us after Iroha-chan had gone to sleep.

And the second, the follow-up of her bodyguards.

"That girl is the princess of the influential military family, Osakabe from Kannaoui."
(Tomoe)

I did expect it, but it was exactly as I thought.

The aged man, his name was Shougetsu, right?

He also said something about Kannaoui, and I got cold sweat just thinking about how we may have done something incorrigible the very first day we entered Mizuha.

“But she isn’t a princess with that much power. The Osakabe is a big household, so it seems like there’s a lot of princesses and princes.” (Tomoe)

But it seems like we are somewhat safe in that part.

If there’s a lot of them and it isn’t as if she has much power, there’s still plenty room to redeem it.

And so, for the sake of that, we will have to keep Iroha-chan’s mood from being harmed, and we also have to properly talk with her bodyguards.

It looks like she is attached to Tomoe, so the former one seems to be okay, that’s why, what’s next is to have a talk with Shougetsu-san and the others.

The promissory note of Sairitz-san can serve as proof for our identities.

Leaving aside the relationship between families, I think I can expect some effectivity.

It is fine as long as it serves as the impetus for a conversation.

Also, it seems like Iroha-chan herself doesn’t know, but Sairitz-san has probably told the influential families about the Kuzunoha company and about Raidou as well.

Based on her personality, she wouldn’t let me inside the country without doing at least this much.

I am sorry for Tomoe, but it would be a bit hard for me to play as Koumon-sama while carrying a bomb.

Maybe we should quickly find those guys and finish the talk with them.

“...As expected, you will be going?” (Tomoe)

“You were awake huh.” (Makoto)

“I am paying attention to the surroundings. If they attack this place, I was thinking about playing around with them.” (Tomoe)

“There’s some in our vicinity huh.” (Makoto)

“She is their princess after all. They most likely investigated desperately. Hm?” (Tomoe)

“Eh?” (Makoto)

Seems like Tomoe noticed something, her gaze turns to the side.

Geh, are they attacking?

We were one step too late huh.

“Waka, that.” (Tomoe)

“...The katana of Iroha-chan? For a sword that a child has in her possession, it even has magic power clad in it though.” (Makoto)

It is glowing.

Well even if I say so, it is only a bit that’s leaking out from the scabbard.

That hue was gentle, it reminded me of the light of fireflies.

When she was swinging it around, it was also glowing, but for what purpose?

“It doesn’t seem like it is doing anything bad, but want to try unsheathing it?” (Tomoe)

“Don’t wake up Mio and Iroha-chan, okay?” (Makoto)

“I know.” (Tomoe)

Tomoe unsheathes the katana without any restraint.

It seems like it is not the type that can’t be unsheathed unless it is the owner.

Hmph~.

The edge part is letting out a faint light from here and there as it coils around it.

It doesn’t seem like the katana itself is glowing.

It is as if a lot of small grains of light were overlapping together...?!!!

“What could this be? The magic power it is letting off is so feeble that I just can’t grasp it... I can understand that this is not a katana that’s oriented for battle, but... it is well-made for an artistic good.” (Tomoe)

“Tomoe, about the place where the light is strong...” (Makoto)

“Yes?”

“Isn’t the edge chipped?” (Makoto)

“Edge chipped? Oh, now that you mention it, there’s a small chip.” (Tomoe)

...

I think it is different from what I am thinking.

Someone who knew about the original one, made a replica of it.

That’s definitely the case.

In the first place, there’s no way it would exist in this world, and it wouldn’t be the size of a short sword and used as a katana to protect a kid.

It was my misunderstanding.

“I see. Well... put it away.” (Makoto)

“As you will.” (Tomoe)

Seeing my state, Tomoe tilts her head and nods.

“Anyways, I will be going.” (Makoto)

“In my opinion, I would prefer to stay like this until Beren and the others join us though...” (Tomoe)

“Nope. I will be going.” (Makoto)

“If Waka says so, it can’t be helped. Do your best in filling that crack.” (Tomoe)

“We don’t know what might occur from now on, you know. It is best to not increase the trouble pointlessly.” (Makoto)

“Is that so. As you will. Lorel seems to be a country that’s more fun than I thought it would be, so I will step back from this one.” (Tomoe)

“Yeah yeah.” (Makoto)

We still have the labyrinth waiting for us.

Also *Futsu*. *<Many suggest that this might be a Futsu-no-Mitama reference, so I will leave it there until identity is clarified(which might never happen)>*

In Lorel, there’s quite a lot of people that know about it.

Even though it was a dragon that I didn’t hear at all of in Rotsgard.

I can’t tell at all what kind of existence it is.

I haven’t even heard that name from Root before.

But well, I don’t want to go through the trouble of going back to ask him.

There’s plenty enough time in the moments I have classes at the Academy.

Right now, what’s most important is Shougetsu-san.

From what Tomoe said, they are close to the inn, so everyone should be alright.

If I leave the inn alone, it is almost certain that they will make contact with me.

At this occasion, it can’t be helped if I end up being attacked.

It is the usual.



For example; if in a fishing game, there's a bait called 'Misumi Makoto', its rarity would be the highest.

They would all bite and the bait would be worn out.

If there was an accessory in RPGs with the name 'Misumi Makoto', only the encounter rate of the troublesome enemies would increase massively.

The rarity... would be trash level.

In other words, when I left the inn so that Shougetsu-san and the others would attack me, I received attacks that surpassed the two digits.

Even in a big city, no, it is exactly because it is a big city that walking alone is dangerous though.

On top of that, I staggeringly walked out from Mizuha's number one inn.

Hahahaha, I understand that this is my just desserts.

Even so! Attack me sooner, you guys!

Is what I thought for a slight instant.

"What household are you from?!"

"Misumi household." (Makoto)

I tested saying this.

It would be troublesome if I introduce myself and there's a Misumi family in this country after all.

No matter if Sairitz-san's influence is strong, she wouldn't be able to change the name of an entire household just because of me.

"Misumi? Uhm..."

“...I haven’t heard of it.”

“It is not a name I know of.”

The bodyguards, old man, and the servant-looking people shake their heads sideways.

Then there’s no problem in introducing myself normally then.

I was dragged into a building that doesn’t seem to be in use, was tied to a chair, and was left in the middle of the room.

It is a room with no windows.

“Why did you kidnap Iroha-sama?”

The one in charge of my interrogation seems to be a woman named Akashi-san.

Yuduki-san was also right by her side, and Shougetsu-san and the other women were slightly further at the back.

“That’s... one of my companions mistook you all for bad guys that wanted to kidnap a child.” (Makoto)

“That scene had circumstances involved, and we did say that it was a misunderstanding, you know.” (Akashi)

“Yeah, you are right. Ah, are your burns alright?” (Makoto)

“!! It is not something you bastard should be concerned abo—” (Akashi)

“...We are fine. We have finished the treatment.”

Akashi-san seemed to be angered, but Yuduki-san had a calm face all around as she answered me.

They are mostly women, so I was secretly worried.

“That’s great. I was worried it would leave scars.” (Makoto)

“...And so, you are going to return Iroha-sama, right?” (Akashi)

“Of course. We don’t have any intentions of hurting that princess-sama.” (Makoto)

“?!”

“Now then, I think doing this will make us return to the first question all over again, that question about ‘who are you?’. Ah, Akashi-san, can you please check the left pocket of my coat?” (Makoto)

“...’Check out the place you couldn’t check before’, is that what you are saying?!” (Akashi)

Before being tied, I was thoroughly searched all over my body by Akashi-san and Yudoku-san.

My coat is a special article that you can’t take off the buttons unless it is me, so it must have made them pass an unpleasant time.

“I am a merchant, so there are some things I wouldn’t want others to see. You two were groping my whole body a while ago, so in that situation... I couldn’t do much, you know.” (Makoto)

“Who would want to touch your body because they want to?!” (Akashi)

“...Akashi, change. Your left pocket, right? This is... a promissory note?” (Yudoku)

“Yes, I think this will serve as proof of my identity.” (Makoto)

“Wait, this is...” (Yudoku)

Yudoku-san lightens her hand with magic, and looks carefully at the promissory note.

Yudoku-san is intellectual and can be reasoned with.

Akashi-san is impulsive, and when hostile, it makes it hard to make a conversation with her.

For this situation, Yudoku-san is the most suited one, but... in my opinion, Akashi-san is the one that gives me the better impression.

She doesn’t look like she is two-faced, so that’s what I think with that one point.

I might be a serious case of two-facedness though.

“Shougetsu-sama.” (Yuduki)

“Umu. What is it? The family crest of Kahara?! Also, this shape... the highest of accommodations?” (Shougetsu)

As I thought, it had extraordinary effect.

This is a promissory note that an influential person of Lorel has given to an outside guest, so I can expect diplomatic-like effects as well.

The feudal lords, nobles, and military families are weak against this kind of things.

Well, rather than weak, it is more like, it can properly deal with them.

“The name at the back is... Sairitz herself. Could it be...” (Shougetsu)

“Shougetsu-sama?”

“Akashi, Yuduki, untie the rope.” (Shougetsu)

“W-Why?!” (Akashi)

“That promissory note alone doesn’t warrant untying the rope. They have kidnapped Iroha-sama here!” (Yuduki)

“That person, Raidou-dono... is a Wise.” (Shougetsu)

?

He asserted it?

Now that I think about it, that soldier also did that, but... is that something that can be asserted by only the outward appearance.

Akashi-san and Yuduki-san have been treating me fairly roughly here though.

In other words, my appearance is terrible, but even so, with only a few similar traits, you can’t just pinpoint a person as a Wise.

The similar points of that soldier and Shougetsu-san...

They saw the promissory note.

But Yudoku-san did as well.

No, if it's only looking, Tomoe, Mio, and I have done so too.

We three didn't read or see anything that pointed me as a Wise in that promissory note.

In that case...

"You can guess the person is a Wise by the promissory note, or there's some inner information that can be used to pinpoint it?" (Makoto)

A part that only people with an official position can understand.

That's the most probable possibility.

"Just as you have guessed. Also, to think you were the Raidou-dono of Kuzunoha company. It is certainly true that just having the name of that fox woman is not enough but, it looks like I have no choice but to see this as a misunderstanding from both sides." (Shougetsu)

Shougetsu-san makes a big sigh and shows me a smile.

A gentle smile.

It seems like the first compromise has been reached, maybe.

Damn it, that promissory note.

For what reason was it made to treat me as Wise?

Is this also a setup from Sairitz-san directed at the mercenary group?

Rather than a demi-human looking person, they would treat me better if I am seen as a Wise. It doesn't have much demerits for me, which makes it even more unpleasant.

“I haven’t consented yet though!” (Akashi)

“Me neither. I understand that Iroha-sama has not gathered enough attention from the world to the point of appointing a Wise-sama as an assassin, but...” (Yuduki)

Akashi-san and Yuduki-san are still heavily on guard.

If I had to place a stance on the servants, I would say they don’t agree either.

It is only Shougetsu-san who understands a variety of things and has given up on doing anything to me.

“It is only on a limited amount of people, but the notification has reached me as well. There will be a company that will be going to the Yaso-Katsui labyrinth, so if that group has the Kahara household’s promissory note, we should cooperate.” (Shougetsu)

“That’s exactly who we are.” (Makoto)

“Right. Akashi, Yuduki!” (Shougetsu)

“Understood!” (Akashi)

“...Understood.” (Yuduki)

Because of the strict tone of Shougetsu-san, I was finally freed.

But the dissatisfaction of the two is strong.

They don’t seem to like it at all.

For now, they have returned me my promissory note.

Well, it is that huh. It is okay to be treated as a Wise in the time I am in this country.

It would be a pain to try and negate it—ah!

Could it be that this is all within Sairitz-san’s plan?

No, let’s stop it.

If I end up overthinking it, I will only be digging deeper.

“We are in a season that’s troublesome in a lot of meanings, you see. Please forgive us for our excessive behaviour.” (Shougetsu)

“Same here. Iroha-sama is resting at ease, so don’t worry.” (Makoto)

“Then tomorrow... fumu, no...” (Shougetsu)

Okay, the problem has been resolved.

This is how it should be.

Nothing good comes from carrying the problem until it becomes bigger.

It must be severed while it is still budding.

This is what you call growing.

“Yeah, in the morning, I will tell Iroha-sama as well that there was a misunderstanding—” (Makoto)

“Raidou-dono.” (Shougetsu)

“Yes?” (Makoto)

What is it?

“There’s something I want to talk to you about. Since you left at such late hours, it must mean that you were intending on providing us your time, is that right?” (Shougetsu)

“Well, of course. Uhm, I thought our talk was wrapped up a few moments ago though.” (Makoto)

“To tell you the truth, there’s some circumstances involving why Iroha-sama is currently in Mizuha.” (Shougetsu)

“Shougetsu-sama?!”

The old man talks, and the other four look at him with expressions of surprise.

I remember the cursed words of Tomoe.

No, I won't remember them.

I don't want to.

My growth, my growth is...!

"Don't worry, it is not like Raidou-dono and Iroha-sama are completely unrelated to it. Izumo-sama is your student, right?" (Shougetsu)

"?!"

"..."

So we are pulling this now huh.

It would be a different story if this were to spare me from diving into the labyrinth!!
But this just one-sidedly increase my job!!

T-This is not funny.

At this rate, my other students might bring me more trouble too. Jin... I currently can't find anything; Amelia, well, if it is related to Shiki, I won't need to do anything; Misura's problem has to do with the church, the number one place I don't like; in Daena's case, married problems, I ask that they don't trouble me with those; the matter with the Rembrandt sisters has already been resolved.

Even so, I feel like Jin and Amelia might still be holding some kind of bomb.

Even Izumo who didn't cause trouble until now is like this, you know.

I see.

Iroha-chan is his...

They really don't think at all about the difference in age huh.

It feels like the scenario where two old men were drinking tea while deciding if to marry each other's next born child.

Okay, I will listen to what you have to say.

It is related with me.

Because it is not assured that... it will be resolved smoothly after all!!

Chapter 246

Now that I think about it, that did happen

The things I know of Lorel Union, are actually not that much.

I only know that even when it is a continent, it is slightly isolated by mountain ranges, and that they adore Japanese Wise, and because of it, the country possesses a peculiar culture.

I only roughly know the structure of it.

Also, the fact that they are actually using kanji as Wise writing, which tells me that the influence of Japanese people is relatively big.

But this is the world of the Goddess.

The people I know from Lorel are my student Izumo, and the distinguished Sairitz-san. The features of those two are pretty different from those of Japanese.

If we to put together all the people, it is true that they look a bit more yellowish than white and black people, but they look more like they have a variety of features mixed from Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Japanese.

There's a lot of people with strong Japanese factors in them, which have an outward appearance that are pretty much to my liking, making the number of times I look at them again increase.

Since coming to this world, I have seen so many beautiful people, and yet, I feel like the time when I first arrived at Zenno and Tsige.

"And so, there's those kind of circumstances involved. It was a time that had a tense atmosphere going around, even within us." (Shougetsu)

But, from the outside, you can't tell how much they have taken reference of Japan.

This country Lorel, is in a strange situation where the Edo period -that Tomoe loves-

and the modern era have been fused.

It can't be called the latter periods of Edo, but even so, it is not in their initial stages either. It felt as if an outside culture in the Meiji era<1868-1912> has begun to receive the Japanese culture in massive amounts.

What I can say for sure is that, in the past, it was a country that had Japanese factors by a lot.

It seems like Hibiki-senpai had come to Lorel recently, and she probably had a time when she felt nostalgic as well.

The city of Mizuha, the cityscape, the food; it has a feel as if a foreigner had gone to Japan once, and tried making a theme park out of that experience.

I think Mizuha is interesting.

I am looking forward to Kannaoui and the other places too.

And yet, the old man in front of me was speaking of something that was withering my motivation.

“Raidou-dono? The Raidou-dono that is working as the teacher of Izumo-sama. The fiance of Iroha-sama, Izumo-sama.” (Shougetsu)

“I can hear you. I am listening.” (Makoto)

...

The talk of Shougetsu-san not only had the faint smell of trouble, it smelled completely like trouble.

To the point that just listening to it made my ears hurt.

Putting it shortly, it is a conflict between households.

Literally a strife of heirs.

The favorite dish of Tomoe.

That's most likely why she poked her head into it in an instant.

The destination is Kannaoui, the type that had Yaso-Katsui involved, which is like the specialty product of that land. The kind of problem that has whatever-its-name magistrates, and the whatever-that-name-was big shots involved in it.

The local feudal lord in this case, would be the current head of the Osakabe family, maybe?

From what the Shougetsu-san said, it doesn't seem like the current feudal lord is suffering from any illness or weakened, so that should be the case.

Factions that wants to make the princess or prince of the family into their leader, and the princes and princesses that were not allowed to enter one, or have been judged as as an hindrance, are targeted.

The special 10% of the group.

'You have understood their standing, and you are already involved in it', is what the eyes of Shougetsu-san were saying.

There's still the 'escape' command, but in this case, Tomoe will be coming from behind anyways.

She will be making infinite petitions to me.

In essence, I have no choice but to get involved.

I don't know if our visit to Kannaoui in the middle of a household strife was a coincidence or the plan of someone, but if I wait till it ends, by the time that happens, the revolution in Tsige would be over too.

"Iroha-sama has the role of inviting the blood of the Ikusabe household into ours, and deepening our relationship." (Shougetsu)

...Isn't it more accurate to call it 'shouldering'?

She is just being one-sidedly made to shoulder this burden, by deciding the person they are going to be marrying before being born.

Using marriage as a political tool is something that happens not only in Japan but in every country. Thinking about it rationally, it isn't something to condemn.

In history, there's most likely a lot of situations where that happened, and it most likely happens in the modern era as well.

This kind of things probably still continue.

Becoming a family should be a simple act where the two trust each other, and are joined into the same house, but it does hold a strong significance.

Thinking about it in a plebeian mindset would be a mistake.

'A mutual-love marriage is best', this thought is in a part of my head, so I just can't help but feel weird about it.

"She is the fiancée of Izumo after all. Moreover, it is not the wife entering the family, but the husband." (Makoto)

When you hear about the fiancée of a princess, you also think that it is the wife that is the one entering the family. But of course, there's also the possibility of the contrary.

"In other words, it is one of the methods to peacefully settle the long dispute between households. It is literally the sentiments of the people that wish for peace." (Shougetsu)

"Calming down a dispute with marriage. Rather than bringing harmony between families, it is more like, assimilating a family huh." (Makoto)

How long-winded.

In the first place, the Ikusabe are in Naoi, and the Osakabe are in Kannaoui, and both of them hold territories in their respective lands, so I don't think a single marriage will change anything drastically.

"Aside from Iroha-sama, he also has a lot of other fiancées promised to him, and yet, the moment their backing fell, there were a number of people that didn't think favorably of this betrothal and stepped in to interfere." (Shougetsu)

"That's why Iroha-sama's life is being targeted." (Makoto)

Are they really going as far as aiming for her life?

Mizuha is pretty far away from Kannaoui.

If she has become the target of assassination, I think it would be quite careless to walk all the way to a place like this.

“In reality, the actions of the princess-sama this time has made us hold our heads in pain. Even though the seventh princess has already fallen into the hands of a ruffian, she decided to do something like land survey at this kind of time.” (Shougetsu)

“ ... ”

Right now, Shougetsu-san absent-mindedly said something incredible.

She went through the trouble of escaping from her room and running away from home, to secretly go and do land survey.

That princess is really quite decisive.

She is a girl that swims in an open air bath so, in other words, she is a little different from the princesses and high-class girls out there.

“But maybe this is a fortune within the misfortune. We have coincidentally had the chance to meet Raidou-dono who is heading to Kannaoui. This must be the guidance of the Spirit-samas and Wise-samas.” (Shougetsu)

Shougetsu-san is the only one who is denoting us as allies while looking joyful.

The eyes of Akashi-san and Yudoku-san are telling me that they don't trust me yet.

The servants aren't showing much emotions and just staying at the back. Doesn't seem like they will be taking part in the conversation either.

“I don't really have much of a problem in having you accompany us on the way to Kannaoui, but... we are heading to the labyrinth with a business in our hands, so I don't think we will be able to cooperate as much as you wish us to.” (Makoto)

Let's properly delineate a line.

If it is in an extent that can coexist with my job, I don't mind a certain degree of trouble, but I can't prioritize this and put the labyrinth for later.

The number one reason for coming to Lorel was because we were doing this for Tsige.

I can't forget that part.

"No problem. It is fine with having Raidou-dono bring along Iroha-sama to Kannaoui. We will bring the double of Iroha-sama and serve as decoys. In that time, become the cover of Iroha-sama without making her stand out and—" (Shougetsu)

"Who's there?!" (Yuduki)

Yuduki-san shouts and takes her stance.

There's no windows here.

There's also no presence of an exit and entrance.

Then... above huh.

At the other side of the ceiling.

Three people.

The moment I thought about doing something, a part of the ceiling had crumbled, and instead of escaping the instant they were exposed, they rushed in to attack.

How bold.

The rope has already been untied, so I am a free person.

I check the opponents.

Because of the crumbled ceiling, dust is fluttering about, and armed shadows were keenly moving within it.

Each of the three attacked Shougetsu-san's group.

Instead of black clothing to slip into the night, they are armed huh.

It seems like this group was aiming for a bloodshed from the very beginning.

“Akashi!!” (Yuduki)

“I know, I leave the old man and the women to you!!” (Akashi)

The two bodyguards here also begin their movements well.

It seems like Akashi-san is carrying two while Yuduki-san is tasked to protect Shougetsu-san and the others.

A small confined space. Even if they have already noticed their presence, there's no agitation even when it was a surprise attack.

I couldn't tell at the time with Tomoe, but it seems like these two are good in their coordination.

Yeah.

This might end without the need for me to help.

These people aren't using thought transmission.

If thought transmission was used, I would be able to intercept it, so I can say this for certainty.

If it's intercepting thought transmissions, leave it to me.

I can take care of all the thought transmissions within a 3km radius.

...I definitely won't tell that to anyone though.

Being seen as a walking wiretap would be troublesome in a lot of meanings.

Wait.

If they aren't using thought transmission, in this situation, it should be a moment they would want to escape no matter what, right?

Then, why did they go for an attack rather than escaping?

If their aim is Iroha-chan, information about there being a decoy should be pretty important to have their companions know about.

“Oraa! If you have trained arms, come to me! If you don’t come, I will be the one... wait, what?!” (Yuduki)

“Low-lives that aim for people that don’t have weapons are going to face my wrath... what?” (Akashi)

Right after their thoughts had taken in the situation, they noticed another possibility.

The movements as if aiming Shougetsu-san and the others was a faint!

The three, who I was following with my eyes while sitting, were heading towards my direction.

Why?

No matter how you think about it, I am still an outsider.

Shouldn’t I be the last one you aim for?

The three come to me from three different directions. With no hesitation, and with advanced coordination, they took an attack stance at the same time.

Pretty high level.

Even so, I haven’t heard about the spies of Lorel’s being high level.

That description applies to Aion Kingdom.

Even I who have fought against the spies of Aion, was surprised by the proficient movements of these three.

These are not movements of a spy... they are the moves of an assassin.

“Sharp Step.”

“Enhance – Death’s touch.”

“Largo Tempo.”

The three activated their skills at the same time.

Speed up, increase in attack power plus added effect for chance of instant death, pain numbing.

All of them had effect in the whole party.

This is one of the higher jobs of Shadow Thieves, the skills of the Shadowless.

I have an acquaintance in Tsige that was a Shadow Thief, so I could tell the effects of the skills.

Thief, assassin; whichever it is, the three that have the same advanced-class jobs are coming towards me with the intent to kill me.

Pain numbing will be troublesome when trying to make them spill the beans, so I will dispel that one first.

Just by having a bit of buffs placed on themselves won't make them pass through my Magic Armor.

It is said that even a master will have difficulties dealing with attacks from three different directions at the same time, but this is a fantasy world with magic.

None of the daggers reach me and were stopped by the Magic Armor.

...

“You went through the trouble of buffing yourselves, but I will have to cancel th—”
(Makoto)

Ah, there's no need to make them talk.

The eyes of this girl... so that's what this is.

“W-What?!” (Akashi)

Akashi-san was surprised that the assassins' attacks were redirected at me, and that

the attacks didn't manage to work and had stopped; she made a shout with both of those emotions.

Ah, as I thought, from within the people here, she might be the one I like the most.

"How pitiful, a puppet." (Makoto)

I mutter these words.

The three assassins, young girls.

Those eyes of theirs were muddy with thick magic power.

There's no need to check thoroughly. Their whole bodies are being invaded by it.

I know of this. This is the ability of 'that person'.

"...For the sake of the hero."

"You are the enemy of Tomoki-sama."

"Raidou, definitely kill."

Just how much of it was actually the order of Tomoki, and just how much was it the rampaging of these girls? I can't tell that.

At this point, that doesn't matter.

If they wanted to, they would be able to show suitable strength, and yet, they were like machines. An accurate, coldhearted, and *distasteful* attack.

That Tomoki, it seems like he hasn't changed.

"Can't be helped huh." (Makoto)

"...Eh?"

Yuduki-san probably noticed the change in my emotions, or maybe she reacted to something that was unexpected, she made a voice that reflected those kind of feelings from her.

Judging from her timing, it might be because she saw my actions. It is harder to distinct exactly because she is a person that seems to be pretty perceptive.

At the same time as I muttered this, I change gears and grab the neck of the assassin at the right with the hand of the Magic Armor, and... break it.

I did the same with the one at the left, grab her head and crush it onto the wall.

Luckily, there's no one close to the one at the front, so I continuously shot Brids at her chest and pierced through three points of her.

From the three holes that formed a triangle, the one at the top was the biggest. You could clearly see the other side through those holes.

It is nice that there was no annoying screaming.

If that guy is doing something bad in Lorel, it might not be such a bad idea to moderately crush what he is doing.

Having a conversation with him... at this point, no way.

If he comes to make a stupid negotiation with me again, even if I am to make the Empire my enemy, I wouldn't mind.

I thought that Izumo got me involved with Iroha-chan, but now there's the possibility that this was a plot from Tomoki.

Seriously, good grief.

"Aah..."

Shougetsu-san and the others were stiffened.

Crap, was it bad for me to clean this up?

"Ah, sorry. Was it bad for me to clean it up? It seemed like they were assassins though."
(Makoto)

Just in case, I don't mention that this is related to Tomoki and the Empire.

I want some positive proof of how much relation he has.

It is fine to just bring this information back and have Tomoe make a different team to leak the information.

“They seemed like... quite the proficient fighters though...”

“Ah, well, to a certain extent, yeah. But we have also gone through our share of struggles, so something of this level, no matter how many there are, it won’t be a problem. I’m on active duty after all.” (Makoto)

I crushed the head of one of them, but since I have the chance, let’s try checking the faces of the remaining two.

I take off the cloth from the face of the first and third one.

Hm?

Could it be... I feel like I have seen their faces before...

Ah!

The girls that Tomoki was going to exchange with me for Tomoe!

That means, the other one was also one of them.

Hah... to think that these girls were dispatched to Lorel after that.

How pitiful.

Let’s pray for them.

Pray that they don’t get involved with me and Tomoki in their next life.

“You have seen them before?” (Akashi)

Maybe Akashi-san still hasn’t gone out from fighting mode yet, her tone was rough as she asked me who had my hands joined together.

“Nope. Death is something that accompanies battles, but isn’t it fine to pray after it is

over?" (Makoto)

It is a bit of a lie.

It is because I somewhat know them that I am now praying for them.

That's the truth.

"Well, that's your freedom. Uhm, sorry. I just can't like merchants. But I have now understood that you are not a simple merchant. That's why, it might be for a short time but, I-I look forward to working with you." (Akashi)

"Same here. Look forward to working with you." (Makoto)

"...Without a single change in temperament, and without a single change in the color of your face, you finished the assassins with polished movements. Whatever your job may be, you have shown me something incredibly terrifying. From now on, I will be careful with my behavior." (Yuduki)

"It is not that much. I am simply a merchant that is used to a certain extent of trouble." (Makoto)

It seems like Akashi-san and Yuduki-san have a better evaluation of me.

Better?

Leaving aside Akashi-san, Yuduki-san has a pale face. I wonder if that can be considered a better evaluation.

She did say that she will be careful with her behavior, so there's no need to care about the details. Yeah.

I simply eliminated the enemies that we had no point in conversing with.

Seriously, how exaggerated.

Shougetsu-san has his eyes wide open.

The servant-san had fainted at some point in time.

Well, with this, it seems like the matter with Shougetsu-san and Iroha-chan will be wrapped up.

Then, let's go for the exchange of information.

If I remember correctly, Beren-san said that he will be visiting his former homes, and after that, headed to the mountains. The rare composition of Arkes and Forest Onis have gone to investigate the valley of Yaso-Katsui and the vicinities of Kannaoi, but... I wonder how they are doing.

Chapter 247

The strength of the assassins

“Uff, that really got me. That man was outrageously skilled.”

Directing her gaze at the three corpses, Akashi had sheathed her sword and was now scratching her head.

“Umu, rather than us, Iroha-sama would be safer with Raidou-dono. In that time, we will find the assassins and eliminate them. And by the time we return to Kannaoui, the situation should have been resolved.” (Shougetsu)

“After babysitting, we are now fishing. We have been way too busy lately, seriously.” (Akashi)

“Don’t say that.” (Shougetsu)

““Kay ‘kay.” (Akashi)

Akashi was talking with someone who is most likely her superior, Shougetsu, with words that were not really polite.

But there was no intention of going against him from her words, and it seems like she is properly accepting his orders and objectives. Leaving aside her speech and conduct, it can be seen that their relationship is good.

“Nei, sorry but, I leave the double of Iroha-sama to you.” (Shougetsu)

“Understood.”

After Shougetsu ordered this to the servant, one of the servants that was at the leftmost side responded and turns around.

In an instant, her appearance turned into that of Iroha with her princess clothes.

It was a splendid transformation.

Looking at that skillful display, it can be seen that this wasn't the first time the girl called Nei has done this kind of job.

“...”

“What's wrong, Yudoku? Since the time we saw him off, or more like, since the time he finished the assassins, you have been kind of strange, you know?” (Akashi)

Akashi asked this to her partner that has had a hand on her mouth and been completely silent since the time Raidou left.

Yudoku is not a person of many words to begin with, but Akashi felt that this time's silence was strange.

“Your manner of speech was slightly bothering too. We at least made clear what was his standing but, was it not enough?” (Shougetsu)

Shougetsu also asked Yudoku after Akashi.

At the very least, in the current stage, Raidou is a beneficial person for them, and it is important to create a favourable relationship.

And yet, the attitude of Yudoku towards Raidou was not that gentle, and for her that normally adapts faster to situations than Akashi, this was a strange attitude.

Being pressured by the two, Yudoku finally opened her mouth.

“You two, after looking at these assassins and Raidou-dono... you didn't feel anything?” (Yudoku)

“Anything, you say. I did say this just a few moments ago: ‘he is not your average person’. The assassins were also hiding their strength when they fought us, so honestly, if they were to fight us seriously, I did think it would have been bad.” (Akashi)

“Akashi, can you really call yourself the bodyguard of Iroha-sama with that kind of thinking?! That level of assassins, even if they are three, you alone can do something about it! In the first place, the young uns these days are lacking in training. Every single one of them just runs for the flashy skills.” (Shougetsu)

Since the moment Akashi heard the words: ‘the young uns these days’, she knew that

Shougetsu had begun again with his blabber and sighed once.

Yuduki still maintained that meek expression, but had a small smile showing in her face.

“Shougetsu-sama, we will of course not neglect our training in the future either, but this time, Akashi has a point.” (Yuduki)

“Yuduki! You are saying something like that as well?!” (Shougetsu)

“These three, they were quite skilled. They had stealth techniques to erase their presence and real strength, and it is because it was Raidou-dono that he was able to deal with it in that kind of way, but... I don’t know if we would be able to hold them back even if we were in a one-on-one.” (Yuduki)

As Yuduki finished speaking, she closed her mouth and once again fell into pondering.

“What are you saying? Then, even if we were to add one more of you in your team, you wouldn’t be able to hold back Raidou-dono for even five seconds? Is that what you saying? You two are the bodyguards of a Kannaoui princess, don’t say something so pathetic.” (Shougetsu)

“ ... ”

“ ... ”

“Akashi, Yuduki?” (Shougetsu)

“...It is exactly as you say, Shougetsu-jisan. Even if we were to make a party, even if we were to face him with an army, we probably wouldn’t be able to stop him. Just saying but, we are on the level that we have been assigned as the bodyguards of the tenth princess with inheritance rights. But that wasn’t a level like that, it was on a completely different plane. Even if we were to gather all the power of Kannaoui -no, of all Lorel, we wouldn’t be able to defeat... that.” (Akashi)

“Shougetsu-sama, that person’s strength was not on the level of a Rotsgard teacher. The words of Akashi had no falsehood, they are her true feelings. I am also of the same opinion.” (Yuduki)

Akashi and Yuduki had answered Shougetsu as they shook their heads to the sides.

It is something they can't do anything about, that's the kind of face they were making.

"It is certainly true that his skills were splendid, but... I didn't feel that much force in him though. I have seen my share of strong people too. Hm..." (Shougetsu)

"That's something that you can only feel after getting actual experience, and can only feel when you are about to die. That feeling when you think: 'ah, he was someone that I shouldn't have fought with.'" (Akashi)

"These assassins, they should have been remarkable people that surpassed level 300." (Yuduki)

"?!!! Three hu—what kind of stupidity are you spouting?" (Shougetsu)

"Here it is, her adventurer card. Geh, it seems like they were a lot higher than that, Yuduki. This is the first time I have seen the job 'Shadowless.'" (Akashi)

Akashi searches for the card at the chest of one of the three and gives it to Shougetsu.

There, the numbers 420 were engraved on it.

At the job field, there's 'Shadowless' written.

It was just as Makoto had guessed.

"420... isn't that on the level of a country's strongest? Why are such strong people aiming for Iroha-sama...?" (Akashi)

"They have the ability to assassinate any prince or princess if they wanted to. No, putting it straight, they are not people that would fall to being assassins." (Yuduki)

"Not only that, they properly have a family name and a family crest engraved... Could this be... someone from Gritonia?" (Shougetsu)

"I can't tell that much, but honestly, if two or more assassins of the same level were to appear, I don't think that the two of us alone would be able to do anything about it." (Yuduki)

"This degree of internal problems, could it be that there's a plot from foreign countries involved in this as well?" (Shougetsu)

The Osakabe princess, Iroha, is certainly being targeted by assassins.

It is something that can be sufficiently possible.

But assassins also have targets they aim for that have a suitable status for their level.

A level 420 is without doubt among the highest in terms of assassins.

This is the kind of people that the Limia kingdom and the Gritonia empire would send when they want to eliminate their targets with certainty.

These are not assassins someone would send, even if by mistake, to kill an influential noble of Lorel, and on top of that, a young princess that has low chances of succeeding the family.

“Ah, so that’s why Yudoku had fallen silent. It was because maybe Iroha-sama -no, not only her, us as well, have been involved in an unexpected conspiracy, right?” (Akashi)

Pon

Akashi hits her clenched right fist onto her left palm.

“That’s not it.” (Yudoku)

“Eh? It is not?” (Akashi)

“Not only 300, they were monsters on the level of over 400, and they had a job like ‘Shadowless’ which might even be able to assassinate dragons; I certainly was surprised by that, but that’s a small thing... compared to what we currently have on our hands.” (Yudoku)

“Is it small? I think that’s pretty important though. Assassinating dragons, if publicized well, military officers would be all over the place, you know?” (Akashi)

“What I mean is that compared to that man, Raidou, this is something small.” (Yudoku)

“Raidou huh. I don’t think he is that much of a problem, you know. He seemed like a guy that could be spoken with, and he is strong, as an ally, he is reliable. In the first place, he crushed those Shadowless. Isn’t that impressive? But well, he did defeat them so easily that thanks to that, Shougetsu-jisan ended up getting angry at us though.”

(Akashi)

“Mugh...” (Shougetsu)

Receiving the gaze of Akashi, Shougetsu shuts his mouth.

Now that he has seen the adventurer card, he couldn't scold Akashi.

No matter how easy of a danger it was to wipe them out, in normal circumstances, it wouldn't have been strange if they were all dead by now. This is something that he could understand.

“The problem is that very misunderstanding of Shougetsu-sama.” (Yuduki)

“What do you mean by that?” (Shougetsu)

As if escaping from the gaze of Akashi, Shougetsu questions Yuduki.

“Raidou dealt with those three way too easily. With only that, you should be able to understand that a strong person has shown their power, and yet...” (Yuduki)

“Fumu.” (Shougetsu)

“Shougetsu-sama didn't feel that much power from him. That was the same for me though.” (Yuduki)

“That's true. The peculiar presence that strong people give out... I didn't feel anything like that from him. He is working as a merchant, so I thought it was because of that, but is it a type of stealth technique?” (Shougetsu)

“Yeah. He is most likely using some special method to conceal his ability. And in reality, I saw him fighting with magic, but I didn't feel any spells or the preparation of them at all.” (Yuduki)

“That's true. Now that you mention it, I wasn't able to feel at all how much magic power he had.” (Shougetsu)

“That's why, in our eyes, we ended up seeing the merchant Raidou-dono as a reasonably strong teacher of Rotsgard Academy that was able to deal with three assassins. Being able to conceal such high strength with a concealment technique, is

one of my fears.” (Yuduki)

“Fear huh.” (Shougetsu)

A complicated expression appears on Shougetsu.

Even though they have made a cooperative relationship with Raidou just a few moments ago, they already have people in their camp that have minus emotions.

“And the other one, it leads to what I unconsciously said to him but... that heart...” (Yuduki)

“Heart?” (Akashi)

Akashi repeated what Yuduki said.

That’s because Akashi couldn’t understand the meaning of Yuduki fearing his heart.

“Killing three people without a single change from his usual self. Don’t you think that’s impossible, Akashi?” (Yuduki)

“Hey hey, they were enemies, you know? Of course that depends on the experience, but he was most likely used to being attacked. It is certainly true that, for a merchant, he was a bit too calm but...” (Akashi)

Reprimanding someone for killing enemies without any conflicting feelings, that’s what shouldn’t be done.

It is a fight with people that are aiming for your life.

First time, second, third; it may be slowly, but people get used to being attacked and fighting back.

Akashi was pointing out exactly that.

“It was different from being accustomed. You and I, if they are enemies, we will of course cut down our enemies without hesitation. But at those moments, our bodies and hearts become that of someone that kills others.” (Yuduki)

“ ... ”

“...Fuh... You see, killing someone as naturally as breathing, as doing casual talk, as going to bed; that’s not something that someone would normally be able to do, right?” (Yuduki)

“Yeah, I probably wouldn’t be able to relax to that extent. I do still have that nature in me.” (Akashi)

“That’s right. That’s how it normally should be. That’s why, when Raidou was attacked, he was supposed to stand up, prepare to fight, and should have let out killing intent from his eyes and whole body, right?” (Yuduki)

“Well, that should be the case..... Eh?” (Akashi)

“I was observing him, but he didn’t show any signs of that. He was sitting and was exactly in the same state as he was when talking with Shougetsu-sama and us. Without showing a bit of fighting spirit and killing intent, he confirmed the attackers, and killed them. He looked at the assassins, and decided to fight them -no, to kill them, and that’s how he did it.” (Yuduki)

She didn’t feel the normal reactions a person should have when faced with a fight from Raidou.

Yuduki had seen a nature that she has never seen in the past.

“ ... ”

“Within the super first rate adventurers, I have heard that there are people that are always on their top gear level of concentration. This probably can also be applied to people that are always in the battlefield. Being in your top gear of concentration, for a normal person, they would only be able to maintain that state for several minutes at most, so in order to do this, you would have to face quite the training.” (Yuduki)

Whether it is in battle or in a match, it is obviously difficult to maintain your highest level of concentration.

If replicated in your everyday life, it would make it even more difficult.

“ ... ”

“But it was also different from that. He did it so smoothly -no, he probably finished the

fight before he even entered a battle state of mind. That's why we were unable to properly grasp what had happened a few moments ago. Sorry, I am also unable to properly express what's in my mind." (Yuduki)

Yuduki not only fulfills the role of a warrior, she also has the job of seeing through people, appraise them, and evaluate them.

That's exactly why she is able to observe many people and evaluate their characteristics.

This is something that Shougetsu, Akashi, and Iroha trust.

But right now, a person that even her eyes are unable to understand has appeared.

A strong person that was able to wipe out three remarkable assassins while still sitting and as if it was nothing. And yet, he is a merchant that they couldn't feel any traces of being a combatant.

Yuduki herself was still unable to grasp the person called Raidou.

"A fight that's not a fight... as if breathing. Hm, I don't get it." (Akashi)

On the other hand, Akashi who had heard the words of Yuduki seemed like she didn't understand it much.

Her impression of Raidou was that as long as they don't cause any problem, he wouldn't be hostile towards them. It wasn't such a complicated matter.

"Right. Once I finish sorting it out, I will speak of it again. And so, Shougetsu-sama, just as you said, it is certainly true that having Iroha-sama in the care of Raidou-dono is the number one safest choice." (Yuduki)

"Un, yeah." (Shougetsu)

Shougetsu was also thinking about the origin of this conspiracy.

The words of Yuduki returned him to his senses, and he pays attention to what she has to say.

"Is that really okay?" (Yuduki)

“What do you mean by that?” (Shougetsu)

“Something about Raidou-dono is... different. Is it really fine to leave Iroha-sama at his side?” (Yuduki)

“Are you saying that he will be a bad influence?” (Shougetsu)

“Honestly speaking, it is an anxiety that maybe Iroha-sama will end up changing.” (Yuduki)

“It can’t be helped if she were to change to a certain extent. In the first place, if we are talking about that, then her fiancé, Izumo Ikusabe, has already been influenced quite a lot by him after all. Whatever the case, in the future, he is a factor that we won’t be able to avoid anyways.” (Shougetsu)

“Izumo-sama... that’s true. Then, are you saying that she already has resistance towards his influence while in their travel to Kannaoui?” (Yuduki)

“Yeah. Also, Iroha-sama is a sagacious princess. Even if she were to have an interest in someone she doesn’t know, she won’t idolize them. More the case if they are only going to be together for a short amount of time. Believing in the princess in this kind of moments, isn’t that how loyalty works?” (Shougetsu)

“...Understood.” (Yuduki)

“I will be expecting things from your trained eyes in the future as well, but the situation seems to be a bit different from what we expected. Currently, we have no choice but to rely on him. With that into consideration, I am counting on you.” (Shougetsu)

“Yes.”

“Akashi as well, the journey from tomorrow on, I expect much from you. Even if they are skilled individuals, if it is you guys, I believe that you can manage.” (Shougetsu)

Shougetsu looked at the two bodyguards with a wide smile as if looking at his own granddaughters.

“Well, we will try to manage with our lives on the line.” (Akashi)

“I will do my best.” (Yuduki)

“Good grief, not only inside our country, to think we would be involved in a conspiracy from a foreign country as well. I can’t even get a comfortable retirement after reaching this age. The world is not kind to old people anymore.” (Shougetsu)

Contrary to his words, the old man’s spine was straightened which was seldom seen nowadays, and was brimming with vitality.

The girls that were looking at him had a troubled smile, and obeying Shougetsu who was walking at the front, they left the place.

Raidou is aiming for the labyrinth.

And as if welcoming him, a blood-stench strife had both arms wide open.

The moment Lorel learns of Kuzunoha Company... was close to coming.

Chapter 248

Wise gone wild

Outskirts of Kannaoi.

The surroundings of this land that is prominent in Lorel has a number of settlements that are enjoying the benefits of being in that place.

They are only situated close to a big city, but its significance is not something that can be called stupid.

There's a lot of paths that people can go through and the circulation of goods is more active than in other areas.

The number of adventurers and mercenaries is many, and the requests are easy to do.

Of course, it is not like there's no fitting demerit with it, but unless you are hard pressed for a method to protect yourself, this is simply a trivial problem.

That's why there are times when places fall and others emerge.

Repeating this cycle, Kannaoi is already surrounded by a large amount of villages.

"This place really is peaceful."

"The flow of people in the other villages was terrible and felt like they were on the verge of falling after all~. In terms of location, these villages are a bit more blessed so it is natural."

"I don't understand. Why do they decide to live in such a menial manner? Do they not think about proving their strength in Kannaoi? Being satisfied by simply gaining a bit of safety and circulation of goods is just..."

"...In order to make it in Kannaoi, you would have to be either an adventurer or a merchant. A craftsman has to create a stable standing after all. That's something difficult to ask from people like peasants or hunters."

“Based on Waka-sama’s knowledge, whether they are peasants or hunters, there have been people within those that have the diligence and skillfulness to create historical quality goods. I feel like craftsmen can do plenty well though.”

“That applies for the peasants in Japan. Even if in this place there’s that kind of knowledge going around, it is still Lorel Union.”

Crossing the mountains, there were fields spreading in their vision and livestock here and there.

Gazing at the villages that were more prosperous than average, two people were conversing.

The one with a slightly stiff tone and a reproaching view of the village’s way of living was a big man that surpasses 2 meters tall.

A monk’s stole, belled necklace, and gaiters. His attire was as if it was modeled after a mountain priest or a tengu.

In his right hand, he held a metal rod that seemed like the ones the Onis of hell from fantasy stories would use.

No matter who looked at him, it is not a substitute for a travelling stick, and it is not a khakkhara used for self-protection.

This metal rod was a clear blunt weapon.

At the shoulder of this big man, there’s a person sitting there.

A small brown skin girl.

Showing a childish behavior, she makes a fearless smile. Moreover, from her way of talking with the man, one can tell that the big man and her were of the same standing and that she is not a simple young girl.

Dressed in clothes that are similar to a hakama, strong spirited eyes, and a good-looking face, but contrary to that florid appearance, her clothes were brown and black, something plain and simple.

“The Wise-sama huh. Hearing the talk from Waka-sama, I actually had hopes though.

But as expected, there's not many people that have such interesting memories as him."

"Our Waka is probably quite the special type. Also, we have found a lot of things to report back to Tomoe-sama and the others, like: the crops, food preparation, and their culture on festivals."

"...The weapons and martial arts that are said to have come from the Wise-sama, and their special types of magics, it seems like they were not circulated much. Hah... when will I be able to use ninjutsu?"

"...This is only my intuition, but this time, with you being paired with me and Beren's travel, I think you should give up on that line of thought."

"Tch. Are you saying I can't use ninjutsu?"

"Most likely. Tomoe-sama is training you in body techniques and thread techniques. If we are talking about shinobis, it would be more fitting for us Forest Onis and the Winged-kin after all~."

The girl called Shii shrugged her shoulders and explains.

It is certainly true that the man admires shinobis and is aiming to be one, but 9 out of 10 that see him, would definitely say that he is a hand-to-hand fighter.

Even if he knows of the existence of ninjas, he is currently more of a wrestler.

It would be difficult to become a ninja.

"...Mugh."

"Ah, Hokuto-cchi, we got guests~." (Shii)

The name of the big man is Hokuto.

This name is the one that he has received from the person he has recognized as his master, Makoto.

One's an Arke and the other a Forest Oni, and they are also the people that have been allowed in this trip by the Kuzunoha company.

They were ordered by Makoto's close aide, Tomoe, to gather information before grouping up with them, and have entered Lorel from a different direction.

The two were travelling in the surroundings of Kannaoui as they endeavoured in gathering information.

"Again huh. It seems like it is from the labyrinth but they are quite the lively bunch huh." (Hokuto)

"Yeah. How many times is it now since coming to Lorel?" (Shii)

"I stopped counting by the twenties. The villages that have turned into ruins as well, I stopped counting around that number as well." (Hokuto)

"Incredible. I stopped caring by the time it reached 3." (Shii)

"In terms of result, it is the same anyways. We don't have any obligations with this village, but well, this can be considered a spark that was brought by us." (Hokuto)

"If that Picnic mercenary-san group were here with us, we would be able to take it easy though~." (Shii)

"They can't always be with us. Ah, the way of fighting of those people was remarkable. It was on a level that's worthy of reporting." (Hokuto)

Hokuto reminisces about the mercenary group that they met before.

They have been attacked by the mamonos of the labyrinth an innumerable number of times, but in one of those instances, they witnessed a mercenary group by the name Picnic Rose Garden fighting against mamonos.

"There's also those mysterious adventurers." (Shii)

"That huh. True. It was sublime." (Hokuto)

"They most likely reside in different locations, but both of those groups live in the labyrinth. As expected, your environment is important~." (Shii)

"That's something we have experienced with our own bodies as well." (Hokuto)

“...Yeah, that’s true.” (Shii)

On top of that, there was a time when they witnessed two adventurers defeating a mass of mamonos.

They only conversed with them in the place, but it seems like those two were also using the labyrinth as their headquarters.

In regards to the labyrinth, the two have a decent amount of things to report to Makoto and the others.

Shii and Hokuto had obtained a decent harvest.

Hokuto thought that he would definitely see the ancient martial arts and ninjutsus of Japan and was excited, that’s why he is now depressed.

In the middle of that tensionless conversation, just as the two had perceived, mamonos were coming from the mountain foothills and heading towards the village.

And in between the mountain foothill and the village, Shii and Hokuto were there.

“Now then, Mio-sama ordered us to enter Kannaoui first and decide on the lodging. We can’t take our time, Shii.” (Hokuto)

“Okay, I will help out~.” (Shii)

Shii gets down from the shoulder of Hokuto.

At the front of the two, there were wild boars with their bodies covered in spines like a porcupine, and ugly big monkeys holding clubs and spears which were fitting of being called baboons; all of them letting out bloodlust.

Without any hesitation, Shii headed directly to the mass of mamonos.

“You forgot something, Shii.” (Hokuto)

Hokuto tells her this promptly and throws her the metal rod that was in his hand.

That’s right. Shii had analyzed Hokuto’s battle style as body and thread techniques, it wasn’t physical combat with a metal rod.

As if natural, Shii grabs the metal rod that was thrown at her with one hand and with her back facing him.

That was the weapon of a small Forest Oni girl.

“Hngh~it really does feel comfortable. The Elder Dwarfs are the best!” (Shii)

“Rush to your heart’s content and rampage. Any that leak, I will cut them all down.” (Hokuto)

“Undeesterstood~~” (Shii)

It wasn’t an action that they were ordered to do nor was it for the sake of the village.

A single village was saved by them after a few minutes.



In one night, I heard a suspicious story.

After I separated from Shougetsu-san, Akashi-san, Yudoku-san, and the three servants, I returned to the inn.

Because I moved my body without a feeling of closure, I was training for a bit. Properly tiring my body.

Since we got a room with an open air bath, I enjoy a long bath by myself.

I enter my bed and tasted a pleasant sleep.

In the morning, we all enjoyed the breakfast of the costly inn.

Iroha-chan happily praised it, so it is most likely pretty good.

It was interesting to see vegetables similar to those I have seen in Japan with the seasoning style of Lorel, and Mio nodded several times while checking my reactions and the taste.

Tomoe was also greatly delighted, saying that it is nice.

Until this point, it was like the first act of a normal fun journey.

After that, we went shopping in Mizuha.

This was the seed of my headache.

I don't really mind buying souvenirs. We can bring them to Asora after buying them, and it won't turn into baggage.

There's also no problem in walking while eating.

There's a lot of places that we couldn't finish checking out yesterday, and in Lorel, there's a lot of delicious food that has stylized the Japanese taste and is interesting.

In one of the food carts, I saw something that looked like mitarashi dango, and when it had the taste that I was expecting, I was moved.

Then, what's the bad part?

Clothes, and accessories, or should I say miscellaneous goods. Well, those kind of things.

You could clearly tell that the Wise-sama -the Japanese- went full throttle in their messing around.

They are in a position that has strong influence in the society and have seriously done something stupid, so that's pretty ill-natured.

When I was introduced to a store that had many sorts of uniforms and entered, this is the first thing I thought: 'Ah, this is a cosplay shop'.

The clothes had a vibrant color that's different from the ones seen in the city.

Even though only the small details were different, there were many maid clothes that properly had different names for every variety and were officially approved by the public.

Sailor uniform, gym clothes; a variety of uniforms.

There's also underwears for the enthusiasts and accessories that were beautifully

displayed.

The combination of clothings was also detailedly explained.

Must be something that's directed at sightseeing customers.

Of course, there are customers that come to buy uniforms, but it is probably also one of the famous tourist spots of this city.

Iroha-chan was also incredibly excited and was admiring some of the clothes that she yearned for.

It seems like the combination of white shirt and black corset is the number one most popular.

...Doesn't that look like the clothes of a casino dealer? That's what I thought.

I tried asking indirectly about the connection it has with gambling, and it seems like it is related to quite the formal business, so in order to wear it, you have to pass an exam first.

I thought that was way too much of a joke, period.

It seems like the nurse clothes are the uniforms of some shrines.

Sailor uniform and blazers, and there's even school swimsuits...

The Wise really did whatever they wanted.

Where are the prudent Wise?

Every one of them were gentlemen that officially placed their favorite cosplay and enjoyed themselves -no, they were perverts under the guise of gentlemen.

"By the way, what look is more to your taste, Waka?" (Tomoe)

"..."

Of course, Tomoe asked me something like that.

Mio continued making gestures as if confirming the fabric of a black nurse uniform, and was putting her all to listen to our conversation.

Black.

Even though it is a nurse uniform, it is black.

Is that also the uniform of a temple somewhere?

Are the males wearing black clothes instead of white clothes too?

Or could it be... they all wear nurse clothes no matter the gender...

That's impossible.

No, wait. The men of this world have high enough specs that even if they were to wear female clothes, they would without doubt look like beautiful girls.

If there's a special kind of person that has an interest in this peculiar genre, then there's plenty possibility that this could be used as the uniform for both genders...

"Even if you ask me about my tastes... I didn't have much interest in cosplay." (Makoto)

This is the truth.

I do think that moderate amounts of exposure is likeable, but in my case, I don't really have any specific taste in this type of clothes.

If it is something that's closely related to me, then school uniforms. In our school, they wore blazers, but I also like sailor uniforms too.

But I like mannish clothes like the office lady uniforms too.

Of course, whether it is normal, casual, or formal clothing, as long as it suits the person, I don't really mind.

There's no clothes here that I am unable to handle the level of exposure anyways.

In that sense, I would be mostly the type that's more interested in what's inside.

“What a shame. If you had one, I would definitely try it out though. I see. I think this one is pretty interesting. What do you think?” (Tomoe)

“Pfft!!” (Makoto)

Without any sort of embarrassment, what Tomoe took from the hung clothes was a bunny suit.

It is not the funny looking one that’s like a stuffed toy, it is the erotic one.

There’s even ears.

Seriously Tomoe?

Right now, your character inside my head is beginning to crumble.

“Oops, I got it wrong, it was this one.” (Tomoe)

Did she really make a mistake?

Or did she just corrected herself because of how shocked I was?

That will remain a mystery.

Tomoe takes the clothes that were next to the bunny suit.

A black suit.

It is the type that is pretty tight and shows quite a lot of the person’s figure.

It looks like it is aimed for female.

From what I see, it is exactly a suit, so I feel like it can be used by either gender though.

They said the uniform comes with the complete set, so... the necktie is probably also counted in the uniform.

And so, it is for female use huh.

Yeah, it is okay.

“A suit huh. If it’s Tomoe, it will most likely match you.” (Makoto)

But the color is black.

And it is the black that can be called pitch black.

At this level of black, I honestly think it would only be used for weddings or funerals.

I want to hear about its use, but I also don’t feel like asking and just let it go.

“...Fumu.” (Tomoe)

“Tomoe?”

“Clerk, I will be buying this. I will also be buying a number of others, so I ask you to take my measurements.” (Tomoe)

“Are you an impulsive buyer?” (Makoto)

You didn’t check the price.

However, it was an enviable prompt decision.

Tomoe then said: ‘Well then, see you later’, and went with the clerk.

By the way, the price is... uwaaa, it is quite the good price.

...Ah, but different from Japan where they are mass produced by sizes like S and M, and mostly only resize the hems, in this place, they put samples of the clothes and make clothes matching the measurements of the specific customer.

They cut the cloth and literally make the clothes.

When thinking like that, this is actually a reasonable price.

As expected, they won’t have all the sizes here and cost several thousands.

It is not like it is armor, but even if it is not that much of a big deal, it is still an uniform that takes money to make.

Tomoe dressed in a suit would be a fresh sight, and it seems like she took a liking to it, so oh well, that's fine.

"Seriously, that Tomoe. Ah, Mio." (Makoto)

"Yes, Waka-sama?" (Mio)

"If you have any clothes you want, you can buy them, ok? The one's here are not for protection, so it will be for Asora use, but if there's any you like, tell me." (Makoto)

"Then... this. I am interested in it, but..." (Mio)

I thought she would ask me what I thought about the black nurse outfit, but it seems like Mio had taken different clothes.

So it wasn't what I thought.

It is red.

Rather than calling it a vivid red, it is more of a deep red. Is this what they call rouge color?

A kimono huh.

Hm?

Ah!!

What Mio has in her hands is an outfit that's really similar to a kimono.

It feels like Japanese clothes.

But on top of it, there's an apron included as well.

In other words, the clothes of a housewife.

We are talking of Mio, so she was probably attracted by the apron.

Or maybe she thought those were Japanese clothes that came in a set.

Red housewife outfit huh.

Not bad.

There's also blue, indigo, and green that seem to be good too.

Leaving aside a way too vivid red and a pure white one, there's definitely a lot of hues here that calm me down just by looking at them.

There's also patterned ones, like: polkadots, feathers, paint brushes, checked, and many others.

The apron itself is bright white, but there's a lot of varieties in their size and the frills.

Yeah, I don't get tired even when looking at them.

"That's the outfit of a housewife. Won't it be nice to wear them when you are cooking? Patterned kimonos would also look good on Mio after all." (Makoto)

"Housewife? But here it says that this is an uniform for judges that verdict sins?" (Mio)

"Eh? Judge?" (Makoto)

Seriously?

"No, it must be my imagination. Ah, clerk. This, give me the ones from here until there. Where should I take the measurements?" (Mio)

"She casually acts like a celebrity?!" (Makoto)

Mio leaves the judging matter as her imagination and promptly purchases all the housewife outfit series.

She left in the same direction as Tomoe.

"..."

"Geh, it seriously is the uniform for judges, oi." (Makoto)

"..."

The headache these Wise are giving me isn't stopping.

"What Iroha-chan, is there any clothes you want? That dealer outfit, maybe?" (Makoto)

I can have Shougetsu-san return me the money later anyways, so I don't mind buying her one at least, but it will probably take time before it is finished.

I am planning on getting the clothes of Tomoe and Mio in our way back, so what I should do about this?

Should I get her clothes as well at that time, and send them to her later? Or contact Shougetsu-san and leave it in his hands?

But, a child-sized dealer outfit... what an incredibly immoral feeling it gives.

"Raidou-sama is really rich-desu ne." (Iroha)

"Thankfully, my business is doing well, but it is not like I am rich, my company is the one that's rich." (Makoto)

"The money of the company is the money of Raidou-sama who is the representative, isn't it?" (Iroha)

"I wonder about that. There's definitely my share in it, but there's also the share of Tomoe, Mio, and all the employees that earned the money, so it isn't all mine. About what happened a moment ago, those two are doing their best, so I was simply telling them that it was okay to buy it if they wanted." (Makoto)

"...I feel like you are saying something outrageous as if it were natural." (Iroha)

"Eh? What part?" (Makoto)

I don't think I have said anything strange though.

"I don't understand it well either." (Iroha)

What's with that?

This one matter with the store has already taken away quite a lot of my vitality, so please don't go saying enigmatic things.

I was planning on leaving Mizuha in the afternoon and head towards Kannaoui, but Tomoe and Mio said they wanted to buy one more set of clothes, so that would be hard to achieve.

I would like to avoid that at all costs.

To think that shopping would be prolonged even with these two (and the additional member).

I have never taken more than 30 minutes in my shopping.

As expected, Tomoe and Mio are still women.

Good grief.

Chapter 249

Deepening mystery of the sprites

“Even though this is our long awaited chance in Lorel, I didn’t expect we would be finding traces of the empire’s hero. It is really unpleasant.” (Tomoe)

“It is a Japanese-like place, but I don’t think there’s anything he would want in this country though. The top priestess, Chiya-chan, is already in Hibiki-senpai’s group after all, and he doesn’t seem like a person that had any lingering attachment to Japan to begin with.” (Makoto)

“On top of that, Sairitz already knew of his charm ability. If all the spies return with their eyes as hearts, not understanding it until now would be stupid.” (Tomoe)

“Such a mystery. He can’t directly charm the core members of Lorel, so maybe they are planning an insurrection and doing stealth work?” (Makoto)

“In this time when they don’t even know what direction the war of the demon race will take, would they do something like this? Not being able to completely rule out that possibility is the unpleasant part of that man.” (Tomoe)

“...I don’t think he is that much of an idiot though.” (Makoto)

In the end, after buying around ⅓ of the cosplay shop -no wait, that wasn’t the name- the Lorel’s traditional clothes store, and throwing it in Asora, we learned that Shougetsu-san and company had already left Mizuha, and headed to Kannaoui.

Now that I think about it, we didn’t decide who would be leaving first.

But well, they left first and us after, so no problem in that I suppose.

When I asked the soldier¹, who is completely treating me as a Wise, at the gates of the city, he said that they were accompanied by a princess that looked like Iroha-chan.

So they really had a double huh. I was secretly impressed.

We were currently riding a high class carriage that we were recommended so that we would be able to relax, and am currently chatting with Tomoe.

Mio and Iroha-chan went to the coachman side.

But well, it is not like they are driving the horse, they are simply enjoying the view.

We have already told the horse that our destination is Kannaoui, so there should be no problems.

“At present, we have notified Beren and the Forest Onis of the charm of the hero. With that in mind, they should be gathering information in Kannaoui, and if he turns into an obstacle, we will have no choice but to deal with it at that time.” (Tomoe)

“Right. Our objective is only the labyrinth. If we don’t finish that matter first, we won’t be able to take our time with Tomoki.” (Makoto)

From what I have heard of Tsige’s situation, it seems like time is currently our ally.

The kingdom side and the revolutionary side are unable to forcefully restrain Tsige, and the conditions are slowly turning to Tsige’s favor.

It would be way too optimistic to think that Tsige will be able to continue the push like this, but it isn’t a dangerous state where they will bring an all-out attack by today or tomorrow.

Rembrandt also said this, the number one worst situation would be that the two powers decide to take hands and beat up Tsige once. Sweep clean Rembrandt-san who is currently raising for independence, us, and the adventurers, and after that, both powers will return to fighting each other.

That’s why, in order to stop them from doing this union, Tsige tries not to gather up their forces and is mainly moving the adventurers to do raids.

The benefits that Tsige and the borders of the world give is enormous.

To the point that there’s plenty possibility the Aion kingdom and the revolutionary force would temporarily stop their fight and make Tsige stop thinking about getting independence.

If that situation arrives faster than expected, Tsige's surroundings, and maybe worse, the town itself will become a battlefield.

The reason I came to Lorel is exactly in order to prepare for this situation.

That's why, as long as Rembrandt-san is able to advance with the negotiation well, there's the chance that there won't be any need for the mercenaries in the near future.

Looking at it for a future, they will be a necessary force for the protection of the town that has gained independence, and to nurture defensive forces, also it is true that there's nothing pointless about achieving our objective.

If possible, I want to only concentrate on that objective without any sort of obstruction.

Being involved with Tomoki is a lot more bothersome than Senpai.

If he sees Mio, he might even want Mio as well.

Even if he is a teenager, his sexual desire is abnormal.

Leaving it as a delusion would be charming, but would someone really want to create a harem in real life?

That's just an incredible pain.

Hold the political power of the Empire, make a harem, have a lot of babies; and he is a human, so even if he does his best with magic, he won't be able to live long.

Yeah, I can clearly tell that the future would be real muddy.

Tomoki, just what does that guy even want to do?

I don't understand him at all.

"Kuku, it is true that I also don't want to get involved with that guy either. Ah, now that I think about it, I have received a number of reports from Beren." (Tomoe)

"From Beren? What is it?" (Makoto)

"He said there's a number dwarfs living in the settlements at the mountain recesses

that want to migrate to Asora. Also, extra information about that sprite called Marikosan.” (Tomoe)

“Migration huh. If they are acquaintances of Beren, there’s no problem with simply leaving them under the care of the Elder Dwarfs, and if they are people that are not deeply involved with the country, I don’t really mind. Should we have Shiki do the interview?” (Makoto)

“Right. Then I will ask Shiki of it.” (Tomoe)

“And so, what’s this information about Marikosan.” (Makoto)

The mysterious sprite, Marikosan.

For now, my brain pictures them as female Elder Dwarfs, but it seems like they are a different race from dwarfs.

We will most likely meet in person when we go to the labyrinth, but having information beforehand would be appreciated.

In Mizuha, the only information we could get was that they are rare characters that are in the labyrinth.

“They are earth affiliated sprites like the dwarfs, but in terms of race, it seems like they are completely different. This is my first time hearing about them, but looks like they’re sprites that are related to dungeons.” (Tomoe) *<Apparently Marikosan is the name of a race, not an individual. How misleading.>*

“Related to dungeons?” (Makoto)

Are they specialized in digging?

No good, the mystery is just deepening.

“Yeah. That Doma, it seems like he has taken in a good amount of them in the dungeon. But... I have never heard of him having any dependents. A size that’s smaller than dwarfs and spirits, closer to that of fairies.” (Tomoe)

“That’s small.” (Makoto)

Tomoe had begun talking about the information regarding their outward appearance, and I suddenly ended up retorting.

Fairies are about 10cm to 20cm.

Are they like mascots?

The loveable characters?

“Inside the dungeon, no matter the amount of adventurers, they possess enough battle power to grab you by the balls...” (Tomoe)

Eh?

“A manly yet charming beard...” (Tomoe)

“Beard?!” (Makoto)

“Is their trademark, or so I have been told.” (Tomoe)

Their body stature is that of a fairy, have unparalleled strength inside a dungeon, and their beard is their trademark?

No good, the established information is not arranging inside my head.

I feel like a notification is telling me: ‘it doesn’t mix, please stop trying to’, as I line up the ingredients.

Right now, Marikosan is a pile of contradictions.

Is it safe to consider them dungeon spirits?

Lorel has strong religious faith in the Spirit religion which stemmed from the Goddess religion, so in that sense, this mysterious sprite called Marikosan that is common knowledge for the people of Lorel, could be considered the spirits of the labyrinth..... beard.

“Beard huh.” (Makoto)

“Beard, it seems.” (Tomoe)

“ .. ”

“ ”

Both of us were at a loss of words and silence came naturally.

“Ah, by the way, has Doma finished his reincarnation inside the labyrinth?” (Makoto)

“I wonder. Maybe he is still inside his egg. Similar to me, he is the type that doesn’t move proactively.” (Tomoe)

“In the past, you were quite the shut-in as well.” (Makoto)

“Getting involved with humans would only be a pain after all. Repeating a cycle of sleeping, dying, and reincarnating, would be a lot better than that.” (Tomoe)

Sleep, die, and reincarnate? Hey hey.

“Root said that he has already returned him to the labyrinth, so if he has already been born, we gotta greet him at least once.” (Makoto)

Yaso-Katsui seems to be his house after all.

“He is probably not the kind of dragon you imagine him to be. Not only is he gloomy, he is also a shut-in. The most useless dragon among useless dragons.” (Tomoe)

That’s quite the way of describing him.

If he were merry and social, he wouldn’t be lurking deep inside a dungeon, but that doesn’t make him useless.

“Useless dragon huh.” (Makoto)

If that’s the standard of being useless, then I wonder what would make the dragon in front of me.

I am beginning to look forward to seeing this Doma guy.

“Waka-sama! There’s a brook that looks good for a break! We are advancing as scheduled, so how about having a meal in this short rest?” (Mio)

Mio pokes her head on our side and proposes a break.

As scheduled huh.

Then it might be fine to rest for a bit.

I'm getting hungry just in time, and just in case, I had Tomoe and Mio be alert for any attacks, while I also pay a bit of attention to the surroundings, so I am slightly fatigued mentally.

The Forest Oni and the Arke that entered Kannaoui first should have decided on an inn already, but if we were to increase our speed to an unnatural level and hurry to Kannaoui, the only thing we will be gaining is unnecessary attention.

Just as we planned at first, going at normal pace brings good fortune.

I do want to bring Iroha-chan safely to Kannaoui, and I don't want to trouble Sairitz-san with her strange cautiousness and consideration by arriving faster than she expects.

I don't know from where she is watching, but Sairitz-san, after seeing the power of the Kuzunoha Company and evaluating us relatively high, she wouldn't simply leave us be.

Even if it doesn't go to the point of calling it surveillance, it is probably safe to assume that she is watching us and has a rough understanding of our actions from reports.

On the surface, we are being allowed to move pretty freely, so free that there's the need to be grateful for it.

It would be a bit embarrassing to have them know about our shopping spree in Mizuha though.

"Okay then, let's rest for a bit. If there's water, the horse can also take a rest after all."
(Makoto)

"Yes! Then I will be preparing the bento at once-desu wa." (Mio)

"Hm? What's wrong, Iroha-chan?" (Makoto)

At the side of Mio, there's Iroha-chan with a face as if she wanted to say something.

“...I heard a bit about you guys talking of things like Doma and Marikosan.” (Iroha)

Thinking for a bit, Iroha-chan speaks out.

“Ah, yeah. We were indeed talking about those topics.” (Makoto)

“Is it talk about Yaso-Katsui?” (Iroha)

“Yeah.” (Makoto)

“This is something that everyone of Kannaoui knows. It seems like not that long ago, the Dragon Slayer Sofia went to the deep parts of the labyrinth and slayed Doma.” (Iroha)

I know.

I heard it from Sofia herself after all.

“It seems that’s the case. I did hear about that as well.” (Makoto)

“That’s why Doma shouldn’t be at the labyrinth now. And I have heard that since that day, the labyrinth has been unstable.” (Iroha)

“Unstable? As in dangerous?” (Makoto)

This is information I didn’t hear in Mizuha.

“Many openings have appeared in the labyrinth, and the mamonos inside have begun to come out from them..... that’s what I think I heard the people outside my home say.” (Iroha)

“Dangers of the labyrinth causing damage outside huh. It certainly does sound unstable.” (Makoto)

Doma’s absence, are they going wild because their head figure has disappeared?

But if that’s the case, he is currently existing as an egg.

Are they not simply in a relationship of a dwelling and its master?

...Ah, so that's why Iroha-chan said that thing about land survey, it was to investigate the anomaly, maybe?

If that's really the case, she would be like a riotous Edo feudal lord.

Even though she is still so young...

"There's also rumours that the number of Marikosans have decreased-desu. I have not seen them myself, but it seems like the adventurers that gone to the deep parts have encountered them." (Iroha)

Deep parts huh.

They don't appear in the shallow floors?

Then there's the chance that they really are diggers...

Who knows, maybe their weapons are pickaxes.

"Their numbers have decreased huh. The mysteries are many with those Marikosans." (Makoto)

"Everyone knows about them, but no one knows them in detail." (Iroha)

"I see." (Makoto)

"Things like Marikosan steam buns, and Marikosan goods are found anywhere, but if the real thing were to appear in the city, it would definitely become a big uproar-desu. That's the kind of illusory existence those Marikosan are." (Iroha)

"...I see. Thanks for telling me, Iroha-chan." (Makoto)

"This much is a given-na no desu. I can see that Tomoe-sama is an incredible lady of character, but just now, I was told by Mio-sama that she is also incredible. And she said Raidou-sama is even more incredible. Anyways, she said you are an incredibly great man." (Iroha)

"Mio, that girl again." (Makoto)

Planting weird things inside a kid's head.

“She said that even if there’s something unbelievable happening, I can just say: ‘It is Raidou-sama after all’, and most things will make sense. An incredible person-na no desu.” (Iroha)

“Umu, Iroha learns quick. That way of thinking is completely correct.” (Tomoe)

“Yes-desu, Tomoe-sama!” (Iroha)

“...I do think that she is an intelligent girl, but I also think that what you are teaching her is really mistaken.” (Makoto)

Being only pure and intelligent will invite misunderstandings.

“Is that so?” (Iroha)

“This is what you call humbleness, Iroha. Don’t worry, in this journey, you can just look at Waka and understand what you have perceived. You won’t be bored, I promise you that.” (Tomoe)

“I am looking forward to it-na no desu! And if possible, Tomoe-sama, please show me your sword techniques as well!” (Iroha)

“Of course-ja.” (Tomoe)

‘Of course-ja’, you say?

I don’t know if it is okay to have Iroha-chan accompany you in the times when you have unsheathed your sword and are swinging it.

It can’t be helped if we were attacked on our way to Kannaoi though...

...

Ah, this is not related to attacks, but there’s Iroha-chan, so we can’t return to Asora at nights.

In that case, we will be camping outside?

Even when we have such a small girl with us?

If there's a village on our way, maybe we should stay a night.

No matter how high-class the carriage is, it is a girl that has been entrusted to us, so it would be pitiful to have her sleeping inside the carriage.

We have the promissory note, so there should be no problems.

“Ah, Mio, can you do this after the rest...” (Makoto)

Since Iroha-chan's here, let's find a random village beforehand and stay there.

We arrived at the brook, and I speak to Mio who is endeavouring in preparing the boxed lunches.

I also tell the same thing to Tomoe.

We let the horse rest while passing a relaxing break time.

A rare relaxing time of doing nothing.

Ah~, this kind of moments are good once in awhile~.

I was thinking like an old man.

Chapter 250

Makoto and titles

At the time Makoto's group was riding a carriage heading to the city Kannaoui that's at the vicinity of Lorel's grand labyrinth, in a far away place, at Academy Town Rotsgard, a certain pervert and genius dragon was groaning.

He -who is also a she- is the guild master, Root.

This is the deepest part of the Adventurer Guild headquarters.

A room that rather than calling it a fantasy-like alchemist workshop, it is more like a research room of a scientist.

In content, the organization called the Adventurer Guild is a place that gives numerous benefits to the people that are considered 'adventurers'.

In other words, it is a place with highly classified information.

The Adventurer Guild system that Root has constructed, right now, he himself is giving maintenance to it.

"As I thought, everything is working normally huh."

There's no problems at all.

Even though that kind of result is something to be happy about, Root's expression was not that of cheer.

"The system error that appeared when registering Makoto-kun has not affected the system as a whole... but Makoto-kun's level being 1, no matter how I think about it, this is where the problem should be..."

That's what's bothering Root.

The system error that occurred when Misumi Makoto registered as an adventurer, and

the unbelievable level that came out -that is, level 1.

In the first place, the level that Root had established for the adventurers: the lowest is 1 and the strongest is 65535.

The highest value that is 65535, Root himself had set it to the same highest level as a certain old 16 bit TV game, so that's why it is like this, and there was no other meaning in it aside from his own taste.

And since the time the Adventurer Guild was established, there hasn't been a single person who has reached this level. It is also that kind of number.

In a sense, seeing a person reaching this number or surpassing it one day has become a big objective of Root.

By the way, even if a person surpasses level 65535, the level of that adventurer will display OVER.

It doesn't return to 1 as an error.

Root had changed it that way not too long ago.

That time was the time when Root learned of Makoto, and he had doubted that maybe the level 1 was because of an error caused by surpassing the highest level.

And in reality, the power of Misumi Makoto is definitely not that of a level 1.

This guess of Root is certainly not without basis.

"Level 1 is a level that even children can surpass easily. As long as you have a bit of fighting capability, it should increase. Then why is Makoto-kun..."

There's a problem, no doubt about that.

Root has been coming to this place every now and then, and repeating trial and error as he tried to solve this mystery.

Even so, the answer has not appeared yet.

"The skills he owns are appearing as normal. He is hiding his power value, so I can't

tell that part though.”

Every time Root moves his gaze and moves his fingers in the air, the board shaped thing that is floating around him and letting off a faint light was changing at a bewildering speed.

Like when continuously closing the window of a PC, opening them, and changing their size.

Numerous plates were moving busily with Root at its centre.

“His titles are also increasing well.”

The card of the adventurer guild has several functions in it that can be considered overtechnology, those functions surpass even the boundaries of the modern era.

As they increase in level and rank, these functions are unlocked one after the other, and the assistance of the guild is also proportional to the level and rank.

At first, the eyes of Makoto also sparkled when he heard of these functions, but to his regret, his level is unmovable.

Even if he wanted to increase his rank, the high-ranked requests have other conditions other than achievements, like a level condition, so he is unable to increase it.

Root immediately took this part away for the sake of Makoto, and changed the condition of strength into another one, but by the time Root had told Makoto this, he had already lost interest in things like level and rank.

With the current system, Makoto would be able to reach the highest rank while still being level 1.

Being the highest rank at level 1 would certainly stand out in a bad way.

Makoto most likely didn't do this exactly because of that.

These titles that Root spoke are set in a way so that the adventurer receives it depending on a specific achievement and can be browsed in the card, and depending on the titles, there are also benefits.

From rookie to veteran, there are titles that are easy to obtain but takes years, special genres that require the person to repeat an action several times, and there are also some that can be obtained by defeating specific races.

Of course, there's few benefits that can be obtained easily, and the harder it is to obtain the better the benefits.

For example, the grand labyrinth that Makoto's group is heading to, if one has a title specialized in dungeons, depending on the title, they can show several times more efficiency than in normal circumstances.

Titles can be obtained no matter the level, so Makoto's actions have allowed him to obtain titles as well.

But well, the person himself isn't aware of it though.

"Aside from this one, all the others are outrageous. The first titles he obtained were [Friend of the Moon God] and [Religious disaffiliation] after all. [Miniature Archer], [Pact (Superior Dragon)], [Pact (Calamity)]... Eh?"

After that, there's [Pact (Undead King)], [Pact ()] and Root's eyes stopped at those parts.

"Undead king? It was only Undead before... Must be talking about Shiki-kun though. Hm? And there's also a blank space? I haven't heard anything about him having a pact with a new follower. Just what in the world..."

It seems like Root was bothered by a part of the title changing and that there was a new title of a newly added pact and that it is blank.

"Uwa, but the effects of both of them are incredible. It makes the [Dragon Hunter] and the [Super Wealthy] titles look weak. If an adventurer or a merchant were to obtain those high-ranked titles, they would jump in joy though."

A wry smile appeared in Root.

There's plenty of titles Makoto has that are outrageous.

Of course, their effects are extraordinary.

There's not a single one that wouldn't stand out if shown to the public, but thinking about the merits, there's a lot of them that people would set without caring about standing out.

"Well, it is Makoto-kun after all. In the first place, he even has a title like [Friend of Moon God] which I have never set up. It was probably picked up by the system when the God from that side brought Makoto-kun here. It must be a Moon God, but it really got me there. Well, Makoto-kun himself hasn't noticed this title either which makes him out of the ordinary though."

For some reason, the effect is plain, but the ascending degree is as expected of a title involving a God.

It isn't flashy, but it is definitely strong.

The unseen parts like the increase in power and favorability of chances was incredible. That's the kind of title it is.

It is not an imaginable situation, but if Makoto were to face a tough fight without knowing of the existence of this title, Root thought that maybe he would tell him of this and gain his gratitude.

"And the one that makes me laugh no matter how many times I see it is [Owner of unconventional luck (BAD)]."

It not that he is blessed with unfortunate encounters; he is blessed with unfortunate BAD encounters.

It is specifically denoting that part, so that must be the case.

Root once again remembers Makoto.

He made a 'kukuku' laugh from the bottom of his throat, but for some reason, he suddenly stopped it.

"...Lorel. The palace of Yaso-Magatsuhi huh. Doma has not finished his reincarnation, and he has no dependents. Makoto-kun's objective is the mercenary group that was created by a gamer cripple but it is merely a shadow of its former self now, so their destination is most likely at the 20th floor underground. Yeah, even if there's the chance, I don't think *that* will happen. That's how it is supposed to be, but... the owner

of bad unconventional luck huh. We are talking about Makoto-kun after all. But I can't go there..."

Not that long ago, Makoto had surpassed the impossible and encountered Root.

Because it was definitely impossible, Root hadn't thought of a countermeasure.

It was like a possibility inside a possibility.

If a variety of situations are taken into consideration, the chances would easily surpass the hundred millions, or even the billions, so it was a chance that was impossible to arrive with one chance.

And the owner of such a super rare title like unconventional luck, managed to draw out the card Root had set up himself. So easily.

There's no title that shows its effects just by possessing it.

But if the person possessed the [Owner of Unconventional Luck] to begin with, there's most likely strange occurrences happening around that person's surroundings no matter the title.

The fact that he has obtained a title for it, means that everything is already too late.

A thrill-filled life is assured.

This is awful.

The Yaso-Katsui grand labyrinth, Root, who certainly called it the shrine of Yaso-Magatsuhi, silently closed his eyes.

"I don't think it is possible that you will meet the phantom of Futsu... impossible, just what am I thinking? There's no way that can happen. Now then, I gotta do something about Makoto-kun's level 1, that's why I am here after all."

The simple thought of it was stupid, so Root stopped thinking about it.

Even so... surrounded by information of Makoto, Root's expression was still clouded with no signs of clearing up.



“Oooh, the other side of the outer wall is on the level of Tsige. Part of it is because there are times when the mamonos of the labyrinth attack them, but this sight is pretty nostalgic.” (Tomoe)

“As expected of a big city-desu wa ne.” (Mio)

When we looked at the distance from a slightly elevated hill, a big city spread in our vision.

Just like how Mio described it, it is big.

As expected of a prominent land in a major power.

Tsige can’t compare.

Tsige is limited in their terrain, so comparing wouldn’t be fair though.

But it really is big, you know.

The capital of Limia and Gritonia, the old metropolis of the demon race, no matter where I compare with, it isn’t as much as this one.

It might also be because it is in an open field, but it is incredible.

A magnificent view.

In my eyes, the outer walls look normal, but the inner walls are pretty tall and tough.

There’s also a number of agricultural lands on the way to the city.

I can also tell from here that the water from the rivers is being drawn into the inside of the city in a systematic manner.

Ah, I see.

The Wise’s knowledge in Kannaoui is most likely being utilized in those kind of parts.

It was probably because it was easier to implement compared to Mizuha because of

the topography.

In Mizuha, it gave the feeling of being a parallel world city with a Japanese-like atmosphere; Kannaoui gives more of a feeling like the Japanese have placed their ideas in it, their livelihood.

Well, it doesn't change the fact that it is a mix of Japanese and Western features in a fantasy world though.

"Hoh~, I can see a lot of ideas in a variety of places that most likely stemmed from playing around and from a flexible perspective. As a whole, the affectation in Tsige as a town is still lacking, but in this town, I can feel grace in it." (Tomoe)

Grace, huh.

I see.

I am used to seeing those kind of places, so places like this feel nostalgic.

There's a tall and sturdy inner wall, but from the impression that the city gives as a whole, I can't feel any sort of enclosure.

Hah... this is a pleasant surprise.

The style of this city, or more like, the systemization of this land can serve as good reference for Tsige.

After finishing settling down with the independence, we can have Rembrandt-san and the others observe the place. It might create a pretty good reaction.

The wasteland and the labyrinth; the sensation of distance between them. There's a bit of a difference between both places regarding that, but there's no doubt that the development of both places were brought by the wasteland and the labyrinth respectively.

I changed my mind.

I won't be concentrating only on the labyrinth, I will also properly check out the city itself.

“Kannaoi looks good.” (Makoto)

“Yes.” (Mio)

“Right.” (Tomoe)

Mio and Tomoe nodded.

It seems like the two have taken a liking to the city with their first look.

For now, there hasn't been any interference of Tomoki, and he hasn't attacked us either.

This is going really smoothly.

“...Even though we are looking at it from afar, why is it that you can understand it with such detail? That's so mysterious-na no desu. I'm dumbfounded-na no desu.” (Iroha)

Iroha-chan, who has been silent until now, muttered this.

Oops, we were talking with our eyesight as the standard.

Since coming here, not only were my glasses unnecessary, my eyesight is better than that of the Maasai people and can see far away clearly, so it had turned into something natural for me.

Just as she said, Kannaoi is still far.

It is definitely not a distance where we would just go down and arrive at the city.

If we walk for a while, a lot of agricultural lands will be here and there, so there will be a lot of people on the road as well, but it seems like it was a bit too fast to talk fervently about the city.

I can smell food that has a scent similar to that of miso, and I am also interested in it, but... it would be better to pretend I don't notice until I am actually close to the food huh.

“I can also smell miso-desu wa. I am looking forward to seeing what kind of way they make it, right Waka-sama?” (Mio)

Mio instantly notices and is all smiles.

“...Kannaoi is certainly in possession of miso, but I can say for sure that right now the only scent here is that of trees-desu. There’s no way that’s possible.” (Iroha)

“Well, it is Mio after all. Don’t get so bothered by it, Iroha-chan. Now then, just a bit more to go, let’s go.” (Makoto)

I urge Iroha-chan, who is making a complicated expression and an uneasy expression at the same time, to depart.

The carriage had stopped for a bit.

Even so, the sun is still high and we will probably arrive by today.

It would be better to increase the pace a bit more so that we can spend the night at an inn in the city, and that would be more comfortable.

Okay, let’s go with that.

“That’s right. It is the Kuzunoha Company, so this can’t be helped-na no desu. I can agree to that.” (Iroha)

Iroha-chan is desperately trying to agree with what’s happening in front of her.

No, it is not the Kuzunoha Company but Mio...

Well, that’s fine.

Anyways, from what we have checked of Shougetsu-san’s group that went ahead of us, they have been attacked a number of times, but it seems like they haven’t lost a single one.

They are also at a pace that won’t have any problems in arriving at Kannaoi while the sun is still up.

Leaving aside mamonos, our side has been able to arrive here comfortably without being attacked by people.

Everything okay.

The first thing to do once we arrive...

“Hm?”

I stop.

My breast pocket was warm like the Cairo.

But I haven't placed anything that should be warm.

What is it then?

“The adventurer card?” (Makoto)

From the leather case I use to place my business cards, I take out the origin of the heat.

The O-parts high-spec card terminal that I received when I registered in the Adventurer Guild.

My level has not increased at all, so its functions have been sealed all this time.

Now that I think about it, I have not been using it lately.

Did it get lonely?

“It is somewhat warm.” (Makoto)

I can feel a vibration as if something inside of it is revolving.

Ah, it is that. It feels like when an outdated hard-disk is working.

It isn't as noisy, and the heat isn't that much of a deal, so there's no harm in it. It doesn't turn violent, and it is simply emitting a red phosphorescence.

But this is a first, so I am a bit uneasy.

“It doesn't seem like it is sending out magic power or transmitting anything.” (Tomoe)

Tomoe promptly analyzes and tells me that there's nothing dangerous with it.

“It is definitely Root doing something strange again. Seriously, that pervert never does anything good.” (Mio)

Root huh.

Just like Mio said, there’s the possibility.

He said that he wanted to investigate the reason of the level 1 and has been tinkering with it.

The card suddenly made high-pitched sounds like when scratching a blackboard, so I stormed his place yelling and he confessed.

It is plenty possible that this is part of his tinkering.

That guy, he said that he wouldn’t lie to me with a serious face, but he simply doesn’t lie and has a lot of things he hides.

When I complain to him, he nonchalantly tells me that I didn’t ask.

There was a time when he said in a loving manner: ‘Want me to tell you all the things in this world that I know of? Are you letting me do that?’ as if threatening me.

His male self is out of question, but now, even his female side is a no.

“It calmed down. That Root, what did he do?” (Makoto)

“Level... 1...” (Iroha)

“Ah.”

Iroha-chan saw my level.

It is written pretty big so she saw it huh.

“It is fine, it is fine. If we add Kusunoha Company + Raidou-sama, it is still understandable. Yes, I am fine-na no desu.” (Iroha)

Yeah, she doesn’t make a ruckus, but Iroha-chan has piled up stress.

‘Fine’ is not an almighty word.

Iroha-chan, you are worn out.

Let’s just pray for her inside my heart.

If we were to tell her that Root is the guild master of the Adventurer Guild, I feel like she will be on the verge of peeing, so this is the boundary where we should be prudent.

She hasn’t asked me anyways.

...Ah, I ended up saying the same excuse as Root.

I see...

I was thinking about going tonight to enquire with that pervert about today, but let’s ask him with a calm heart.

Because I have now understood a little bit the meaning behind that excuse.

“Fumu... Oi, Iroha, I will show you my card as we—” (Tomoe)

“Stop it!” (Makoto)

I stop the pointless messing around of Tomoe before it happens, and the calm and merry journey begins once again.

Almost at the same time as the curtains of the night come down, we managed to arrive at the city of Kannaoui.



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