

Chapter 2: Future Policy

Before I forget, I start by saying thank you to Veldora and Ramiris.

The gift of thanks to Veldora was clothing.

He's always topless, and I think it's more or less a bit of a bad habit. He didn't seem to care about it himself, but perhaps he just liked this style of dressing, and I took the opportunity to give him some clothes as a gift.

"Oh, oh, Rimuru! Friends of the heart! Allies! Finally, you've noticed how I feel. I've been wanting to wear something so handsome for a long time.”

"No, no, if you really wanted to wear it, tell Shuna and she'll have it ready for you right away, right? In other words, if you go to a garment store and adjust the size by magic, you'll have several pieces.”

"Idiot, the only thing that suits me is a custom model. I trust you to have picked the best style, right?”

Uh, I actually, have pretty bad taste…

It seems that for Veldora, I'm a bit overrated, obviously I wear what I'm told to wear.

Think of it this way, the same is true of previous lives.

I have terrible taste in casual wear, so it's basically a suit.

Then there's the jacket bar.

That's really nice.

You don't have to worry about washing it if it gets dirty, so it's the easiest thing to wear.

The jacket was chosen for that reason, but Veldora was happier than he thought.

I was also surprised.

Veldora gleefully tried on the clothes.



"Uh, well, as long as you're happy. I'm going to ask you to do the same.”

"Hmmm. Leave it to me. Kuahahahaha!”

It's a super cheap payoff in terms of profitability. Well, no, it's not, although it's made of particularly luxurious materials and includes special order items, but what can I say…

Well, next time when you're free, I’ll think about giving something else as a thank you gift.

On the subject of Veldora, let's just take it as a future topic for now.

Next up, Ramiris.

"Ramiris, I had your help this time too. Thank you.”

"What, you're being so cynical! You've taken care of them, so that's what we call mutual help!”

Ramiris replied a little sheepishly.

Although I'm a little embarrassed about it too, it's important to show gratitude.

"Then I'd like to give you a gift of gratitude.”

"What the what? Do you have to make clothes for people like Master?”

"Just say hello to Shuna. I was trying to…"

I really can't help but rely on Shuna for my taste in girls' clothes.

"So, that means you can name the cute little dragon kings?”

"Something like that.”

"Who's going to be the namesake?"

"That's how it is.”

"That's awesome!"

It's okay.

Although I was surprised too, it actually worked so no problem.

"At yesterday's ceremony, I named my subordinate Adalman's pet 'Wenti' and she evolved to become not only human, but also fluent in conversation. So, I thought how about naming your Dragon Kings too.

Although I was surprised to learn that they could turn into a human, but when you think about it, dragons turning into human is not a standard part of storytelling.”

It's not unexpected.

So it should be possible for the four Dragon Kings under Ramiris to be as humanoid as Wenti, in which case there would be more manpower and Beretta would suffer less.

"If that's the case, then it's your turn!”

After saying that, Ramiris nodded happily.

Now that it's agreed, let's get started quickly.

"Do you have any good names?”

"Well, I'll leave it all to you.”

Ramiris doesn't seem to be good at taking names.

If it's handed to me, it could easily turn into a fantasy game with a boss name…no, is that really okay?

But come to think of it, it was originally boss, so there's no need to care.

I asked Ramiris to have the Dragon Kings assemble in the Throne Hall of the Labyrinth.

Looking at the dragon kings standing side by side in front of me, it occurred to me that they had been crushed countless times and had suffered a lot, but they were still working hard to hold down the labyrinth, so I had to give them a handsome name.

After becoming a Dragon King, the amount of mana will exceed that of the upper demon general.

However, it hadn't been much time since Milim had picked up these Dragon Kings, so these Dragon Kings didn't have the corresponding strength yet.

After the evolution of the name, intelligence should also increase in one breath. That way, you should be even more intelligent and powerful than you are now.

Looking at a single Dragon King in front of him, his mind silently began to ponder their respective corresponding names.

With things like names, intuition is most important.

The Dragon King of Fire, named Zephyrus, the “Fire Hell Dragon King.”

The Dragon King of Ice, named Boreas, the "Ice Hell Dragon King.”

The Dragon King of Wind, named Notos, the “Lightning Dragon King.”

The Dragon King of Earth, named Euros, the "Tremor Dragon King."

Borrowing the name of a god from Greek mythology.

It was originally the name of the Four Wind Gods of the East, West, and North, and I thought it was just right to give these Dragon Kings.

I was the one who wanted the name, but it was Ramiris who gave the name, and it went well, so I can rest easy for now.

And just like that, a soul connection was formed between Ramiris and the Dragon Kings. Hopefully, they will continue to do so in the future as official ministers of Ramiris.

Then there's the evolutionary situation about caring more.

The Dragon Kings can really become close to a humanoid gesture.

Not fully humanoid, but with a portion of the dragon's features remaining.

"The Fire Hell Dragon King," Zephyrus turned into a red-haired beauty with reddish-brown skin wrapped in a dragon scale style gown and a tail that seemed to turn into a flaming whip.

"The Ice Hell Dragon King,” Boreas who was a slender, beautiful man. Elegant and gentle looks combined with long emerald green hair can easily be mistaken for a beauty.

"Notos is a tiny little girl, cute from a distance, but up close you will find a mouthful of shark teeth and small tiger teeth, a strange woman who is completely off-shaped.

"Euros, the Dragon King of the Earth, is a big, muscular man. Characteristically, his body is covered with dragon scales and covered with thorns.

All four have the appearance of subordinates of an evil clandestine organization, the so-called "alien beauty", where terror and beauty meet.

But this form, in the end, was just a change of state, not becoming a Dragon Demon Lord like Milim, the race was still the Dragon King as before.

In the end, the Dragon Humanoid is a spiritual being with a physical body, like a mutant of the Dragon Race.

Even a powerful Dragon King, as long as he is still confined to his physical body, is far less powerful than a perfect spiritual being, the Dragon Race.

The races were unchanged, but the evolution succeeded smoothly, and they seemed to gain more powerful magic than I could have imagined.

The amount of mana has also increased several times over pre-Evolution, and feels close to that of an Awakened Clayman.

It's not quite the same as "the true demon lord,” but it's an excellent evolution.

The mere fact that "naming" is so much enhanced, it would be a chill to think about it just by consuming the amount of your own magic to get a name.

If one doesn't get it right, it might cause unrecoverable damage.

Sure enough, "naming" is a horrible system, and with more than 5,000 "souls" consumed, I realized once again that there is no justification for magical creatures.

But seriously, you lose.

And just like that, the evolution of the Dragon Kings went off without a hitch as a thank you gift to Ramiris.

By the way, the amount of magic element between the “Ten Lords of the Labyrinth" can be regarded as basically the same, but there seems to be a big difference in terms of combat power that cannot be reflected by the value.

The leading man, Zegion, goes without saying.

Even compared to the other “Labyrinth Lords", the evolved Dragon Kings are still weak.

The strong flesh of magic, the means of attack to make full use of it, and the various kinds of magic, even these are absolutely vicious and powerful forces. However, these don't work when facing someone who is good at fighting in equivalent specs.

This is because there is too little combat experience and fundamentally too little combat skill.

The Dragon Kings should have been very upset that they were knocked down several times during this defensive battle. Having just evolved to be able to speak fluently, the will to want to practice is presented.

The Dragon Kings were able to learn the combat skills of human form after they acquired it. Through this, they perceived that the refinement technique was stronger compared to the way the magical creatures had fought so far.

Instead of relying on physical attacks like attribute spitting or wielding minions, find a way to understand magic and incorporate it into the battle.

And use this as a basis to learn the human form of combat and think about how it can be applied to real combat.

It's amazing the amount of growth that comes from exploring conclusions through your own thinking.

I approved the application.

"Kuahahaha! Leave it to me!”

Veldora, who was overwhelmed by the experience of cultivating Zegion, took up the task of guiding the Dragon Kings in their cultivation.

With that, the Dragon Kings began their cultivation journey.

—After that.

Among the Dragon Kings, there were even stronger ones who were more human than dragon, and although there was a sense of putting the cart before the horse, it was indeed a reasonable result to learn the spell of changing one's claws and scales into weapon defense.

It was a long time ago when I learned about this, and the feeling that came out was that ‘it's going to be that way.’

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Three days after the resurrection, Calgurio and the others finally calmed down.

It was hard to say how much the resurrection through the hand of the demon lord had impacted them, but they had finally accepted the reality.

The next question is about their position in the future.

To this day they still live in tents, and food is regularly carried by magical creatures, and no one complains even if the bearers are skeletons.

The tents were arranged in a hilly area where the grass and trees had withered away, and although the scenery was poor, the cold and warmth was pleasant and unexpectedly a suitable place to live.

The scent of death wafted through the remnants of the battlefield, and rows and rows of gravestones of the dead stood, such a view would not matter if one was used to seeing it. After all, the guys who were supposed to be lying in the tomb were out and about, and it was even stranger to be afraid now.

That is to say, in terms of life, there is no great discontent felt.

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It was said that this was the sevent levels of the labyrinth, and the one in charge of the narration was the Necromancer who guarded this level, calling himself Adalman.

Some of the generals had actually fought with him, so no one doubted the veracity of this narration.

Adalman was very good at taking care of people, and Calgurio and the others were not slacked off as captives.

"Since we, the god, Lord Rimuru, have raised you, I will do the will of god, and you are not a man who has gone against your will, so take your time and think about how you should spend this second life.”

Adalman said so, leaving them free for Calgurio to roam.

Run away from the class—none of them say so. Because they had come to their senses and entrusted themselves to the gods, they decided to trust in the demon lord, Rimuru.

Calgurio held the same opinion, as he was sure that even if he did run, it would only end in failure.

It was because of this that he decided to accept honestly what Adalman had said and called the subordinates to a meeting.

Nearly a hundred officers were gathered in the large tent used for military meetings.

Among them were senior officers and the Empire's premier heroes.

Only these people, nowadays, have also lost their power…

"So, guys. Let me begin by thanking you. Because of my incompetence, I am sincerely sorry that I have caused you such suffering.”

Calgurio looked around at the group and lowered his head when he finished.

And to his words, there was a unanimous negative opinion.

"What are you talking about. Those of us who did not stop you are also guilty of the same sin.”

The adjutant finished and the staff officers nodded together. Senior officers were also unanimous in saying that it was not the responsibility of Calgurio.

The attitude is most evident in Krishna.

"My opinion is the same as everyone else's. It is because of the folly of us, etc., that has angered the gods. And yet it is through god’s great mercy that the opportunity for atonement is obtained.”

Krishna regarded the matter of imperial aggression as a sin in itself.

Calgurio thought, indeed.

How foolish it was, in retrospect, to believe too much in one's own force, to despise one's enemies too much and not bother to understand them at all, Calgurio sneered to himself. Thinking that his companions were in the same mood, he smiled again as if relieved.

"Thank you. I'm more or less relieved that you can say that. I swear to god, this is a feeling I will never forget for the rest of my life.”

Speaking of the divine moment, the figure of the Demon Lord Rimuru flashed in Calgurio's mind.

Yeah, to me, the god of the moment is His Majesty Rimuru, right?

Even back in the Empire, there would be no place for Calgurio. All that awaits him is the tragic end of being held accountable for his defeat and directly executed before he even goes to court-martial.

Although Calgurio had no intention of avoiding responsibility at all, this second life was given by Rimuru, and Calgurio was not going to waste it casually.

Well, you can take your time about that.

The current Calgurio was no longer the same vulgar person who had acted only for his own status and desires before, so the thoughts in his head rightfully put his own affairs on the back burner.

"Then let's get down to business. I have brought you all together today to seek your views on how we should proceed in this matter. His Excellency Adalman has graciously granted us the freedom to gather together and deliberate, and let us use this time effectively in order not to waste it.”

After Calgurio brought up the topic, the people present looked at each other and after looking at the others, the discussion began.

It is inconceivable that such a state of affairs could have occurred at the original military conference, but for Calgurio, who wants a practical opinion, the present situation is welcome.

The discussion went on for some time.

Then, roughly divided into two opinions.

The one who advocates that they should just be subservient.

There is also a section of people who advocate that they should go back to the Empire.

The two opinions are tit-for-tat with no one in particular.

Both sides are understandable, and it's only natural that people with families would advocate a return to the Empire.

However, the ability to return to the homeland depended on what Demon Lord Rimuru had in mind. It is possible that permission may be given for future dealings, but any disorderly conduct is likely to cause displeasure to the Demon Lord.

"As His Excellency Adalman said, there is no intention of executing us at will, but we should still be prepared, because it does not mean that we are spared.”

Since his life had already been saved by the demon lord, then the fate was already in the demon lord's hands. While a certain amount of freedom is allowed, it is not known how far it has come.

“…no matter what, the only thing that awaits us back home is execution. Even so, I still want to send the soldiers who fought for their country back to their homeland safely. I would like to speak frankly to His Majesty Rimuru and ask for his mercy.”

That said, they’re about on par with hostages, so the question is whether the country will pay the compensation.

At this point, Major General Minute, who had been listening in silence to everyone's talk, slowly opened his mouth to speak.

"It's impossible. After all, we didn't even expect to lose. Because our own attitude towards the enemy has always been ruthless.”

Hearing this, everyone was silent.

The Empire never accepts results other than unconditional surrender, and it is the continued winning that gives rise to imperial arrogance. But now that they are fighting with all their might, they are completely defeated, and if they are not forgiven, they are completely at their own peril.

Everyone is well aware of this fact and knows that even back in the Empire there will never be a bright future.

Even so, they want to do something for those who have families.

"Major General Minute is right, what exactly is the Emperor's holy will…?”

"I didn't want to say it, but this time it was an oversight on the part of the Intelligence Bureau. They don't even want to think about it, how many demon lord level monsters are there here!?”

One of the officers, off the cuff, said the last thing he should have said.

"Hey, you guys! Watch what you say. It doesn't matter what happens to the intelligence services nowadays. You're talking about all kinds of monsters, but you're a big man in this country.”

"I'm sorry, it was my mistake…"

While free speech was welcome, there was no magic in the room. There had been no sign of His Excellency Adalman since yesterday, and Calgurio thought he presumably had gone somewhere for a meeting.

That's why it was decided to hold a military conference today, but not everything can be said.

Still captive in the end, that must not be forgotten.

"Although His Majesty Rimuru is generous and kind, he will not let others insult his subordinates, so please don't forget that before you speak.”

Calgurio gave a warning about the way he spoke, and the officers agreed.

At the very least, it is enough to understand the dangers of the Demon Lord Rimuru, to be able to take those who use the great magic such as Gravity Collapse into his ministry.

Why didn't the Secret Service get a clue about such a dangerous man?

I very much understand your desire to scold them for slacking off, because I want to scold them too…

Calgurio thought silently.

However, someone suddenly threw a cold shower of water on Calgurio and the officers.

"Are you stupid? Listen up, the intelligence services already had a certain amount of information at that time.”

Bonnie, who had been silent until now, said with a sudden smile.

"No way! Why, then, not inform His Majesty of the correct information!”

"Those guys, did they betray you?”

Everyone faltered at Bonnie words, and only Minute and Calgurio remained calm.

The first to speak was Minute.

"Your name is Bonnie, right? As I recall, you were given an infiltration mission that even we weren't told about, right?”

Calgurio said next.

"Well, as a single-digit man, it's not surprising that you have classified information that we don't know.

So, what does the intelligence community think and what exactly does it want us to do?”

As soon as this question was thrown out, everyone looked to Bonnie.

Either one wants to know the answer.

Intelligence Bureau, is absolutely loyal to His Majesty the Emperor. It was inconceivable that they would betray, that is to say, Emperor Rudra could have predicted the current situation.

Bonnie snorted, looked pityingly at the Calgurio, then dropped a bomb with little energy.

"As you may imagine, His Majesty the Emperor knows all, and even your defeat has been foreseen.”

"How, how could…"

"What do you mean? His Majesty sent us when he knew he would lose!?”

"No way! How dare you insult His Majesty like that!”

The officers were in chaos.

However, some of them have also scratched the surface.

"So. In other words, are we abandoned men?”

“That's not quite right, Minute. Your Majesty's purpose, I'm afraid, is—”

"Huh! Shut up, Calgurio. The responsibility for leaking important state secrets rests with me. You're all dead people, including me. So this is not a betrayal of His Majesty."

That is, Bonnie’s awakening.

Now that he has lost his power as a "single digit", even the Emperor's borrowed supreme power has been taken away, but he still wants to be the one to show the way for his subordinates as a superior.

“Bonnie…”

"I'm sorry, Jiu. I, for one, am not so loyal to His Majesty. I followed his command for one reason only, and that was that I could not beat him no matter what.”

That, too, is what Bonnie meant.

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Bonnie, born in the United States of America forty-five years ago, was just an ordinary student who loved freedom. However, somehow karma came into the world and his talent was discovered by Rudra.

He was then taken in by Damrada and taught the methods of fighting.

I don't know when I started to get confident and felt that I was the number one strongman in this world and became arrogant.

The one who shattered Bonnie’s confidence was the woman who served at the side of Emperor Rudra.

No, it was the draped, gaudy-looking, scary monster.

Even if the heavens and the earth were turned upside down and infinitely reincarnated, it would be an extreme realm that could never be touched. It is impossible to believe that there is such a thing in this world, but it is the bloody truth.

Its name, Velgrynd.

Absolutely non-disclosable, one of the Empire's confidential matters.

One day, Bonnie, led by Damrada, went to the emperor's residence. It was a very honorable thing to do, and at the same time fueled Bonnie's ambitions.

The freedom-loving Bonnie will never allow an emperor to dominate others at will.

So, when you get the chance, you have to do the following—to dream such foolish dreams.

The price of stupidity is horror in the extreme.

It was there that Bonnie met Velgrynd for the first time. Then felt her horror and couldn't help giving in.

And at this point, Emperor Rudra, who was behind the imperial curtain, said to Bonnie.

"You have this qualification, the qualification as a vessel. Let me lend you my strength, and be more diligent in the future.”

Emperor Rudra's icy, ruthless voice, as if it had come from a distant place, had become impossible to resist the Emperor when he awoke again.

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"Your Majesty, even if all the millions of elites are wiped out, you won't care. Let's just say that total annihilation is the plan.”

It is impossible for normal to understand the meaning of the phrase just by hearing it. However, Calgurio understood.

"So that's it. As long as an awakened person like me can appear, it doesn't matter if you sacrifice millions of soldiers?"

Guessing the answer based on these instructions alone surprised Bonnie somewhat. However, upon hearing him say ''an awakened one like me,’’ Bonnie reacted.

"Yeah, so you've awakened too. Then I think you understand. You're right, the Emperor's purpose is to collect the pieces of the Awakening. For that purpose, even if it caused millions of sacrifices, he thought it was worth it.”

That's a fact that even senior officers don't know.

From the very beginning, Emperor Rudra had no expectations of the army. The most important thing is only how to collect talents with Awakening credentials.

"That is, more about quality than quantity? So, then, the failed crusade against Veldora three hundred years ago was too?”

Minute asked with a sharp stare at Bonnie. In response, Bonnie replied lightly.

"I don't know what happened then. But doesn't it make sense just to think about it? If it were me, one person could kill you all—no, it turns out it could be done. The gap in strength is just so obvious.”

"So that's why we say our defeat was planned, is that it? A strategy premised on sacrifice? As much as I want to praise His Majesty, this time it's really been a total loss.”

"That's how it is. To lose so badly after awakening, even His Majesty didn't expect it.”

Minute nodded understandingly.

Hearing this, Calgurio had a bitter face.

"Alas, it's my fault for not being useful."

He whispered to himself. However, Bonnie dismissed him.

"Don't worry. It's not that you're not useful, it's just that the opponent is too strong.”

"Right. That's simply not something we can beat.”

Jiu nodded in agreement.

The duo also lost to Diablo, who knocked out Calgurio. There wasn't even a monster they could beat, so in their opinion, it was not surprising that Calgurio couldn’t win.

"That is to say, the strength of the battle here exceeds the intelligence agency's expectations?"

"It should be. Plans to use this place's demon lord, Rimuru, as a stepping stone to add pawns were thwarted by misjudging the opponent's battle strength.”

Bonnie laughed bitterly.

After paying many sacrifices without any reward, it was impossible to laugh, but in his heart, Bonnie still wanted to say to the Emperor that he deserved it.

"So, Bonnie-kun. Since the plan to use us as bait and have you carry out the surprise attack has also failed, what are your plans for the future?”

"Huh? I told you so. I'll take the responsibility.”

"What do you mean by that?”

Minute asked calmly.

There was silence in the tent as everyone waited for Bonnie's answer.

"One thing I have to make clear, as I said earlier, is that you are dead. This is not a metaphor, but as far as His Majesty the Emperor is concerned, you are dead.”

"Are you suggesting that keeping us alive is more troublesome for His Majesty?”

"It's a bit of a language problem. My point is that His Majesty does not need the kind of general whose power is taken away causing the possibility of awakening to be reduced to zero. To be of no value to His Majesty means that there is no reason to continue protecting you.”

"Well, that's what it's all about.”

"Considering this premise, the possibility of not accepting the return of prisoners is high. No, it's more than that. If the surviving soldiers return home, anti-war sentiment will spread, and do you think this is in line with His Majesty's thoughts?"

"I don't think so.”

After saying that, Minute sighed deeply.

He understood what Bonnie was trying to say.

"That is to say, what is optional for His Majesty is in the way for the Intelligence Service?”

“Right."

"Will he wipe out those who intend to return?”

"For sure.”

Then throw the pot at the Jura Tempest Federation as a way to stir up the anger and vengeance of the nation. Bonnie was convinced that the Intelligence Service would act in this way and explain it to the crowd.

"That's 700,000? How could it be done?”

"Those who have undergone transformative surgery have not lost their strength to that point. But if you fight back, it's a fight against yourself!”

Minute gestured for the restless officers to quiet down.

"Do you have an idea of who can make this happen?”

While many thought it was simply impossible, Minute was calm.

Thinking of his own awakening, Calgurio remained silent. He believes that if one does have that kind of power, it is not impossible to do it.

"If it's in single digits, can you do it?”

It would be possible if we just said we could do it, but that's just paper. Superb individual strength for the offense but not for the defense. If one relies on manned tactics, there will be loopholes that can't be held no matter what. Likewise, it is not appropriate to track escaped enemies. If people spread out and run away, there will always be fish in the net.

And this time, it takes one person to wipe it all out. Bonnie really couldn't think of anyone who could do such a thing.

However, all but one—

"I don't think anyone can do that, from a common sense point of view, can they? But yeah, there really is. In the Empire, there are monsters that can turn this assumption into reality…"

That figure surfaced in front of Bonnie's eyes, his body trembling with fear.

The beauty and horror of that can only be experienced by those who have seen it with their own eyes.

And Bonnie, who knew this well, felt a little unfortunate.

"Is it a single-digit existence that you're also afraid of? It looks like I've got something wrong."

Minute leaned deeply into his chair and sighed with his head back.

"Me too. I joined the army and dreamed of letting the Empire dominate the world. But—"

However, this was all decided long ago in a place that had absolutely nothing to do with the military. In the power game of proliferation by who-knows-who, there is no room for non-awakened people to show up from the start.

"That's silly.”

"Ah. I feel silly as a clown.”

Calgurio and Minute looked at each other sobbingly. It wasn't just the Calgurio, the officers present, all sighed as if they had awakened from a dream.

‘How sad’—Bonnie thought.

I don't know if the truth would be happier, but then they wouldn't accept it, would they? So Bonnie, coldly, said something rather unreasonable.

"Now you understand. Do you understand the situation? Even if you go back, all that awaits you is despair. So just stay here and be a prisoner and wait for the war to be over.”

"What are you going to do about it, Sir Bonnie?”

"I'm going back to the Empire. There shouldn't be a truce like that, I think His Majesty Rimuru would want to deal with the Empire. By then, a guide must be needed, right?”

And the person who acts as a guide, presumably, will be wiped out. Bonnie, who has lost his power now, will no doubt be assassinated.

Sensing Bonnie’s awakening, everyone fell silent.

Then, everyone was deeply aware that their fate had been entrusted to the Demon Lord Rimuru.

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After expressing my gratitude to Veldora and Ramiris, I headed to the seventieth level of the labyrinth.

Adalman is currently in a dormant phase because of yesterday's ritual.

The Harvest Festival had begun, but Adalman's castle was still in a state of destruction.

So it was that he was moved to the guest room on the main floor above ground to continue his slumber, and Albert and Wenti were moved to spare rooms, presumably to be awakened in a while.

More problematic were the imperial captives, who had previously been looked after by Adalman, and it wasn't good to leave them hanging so long now.

Besides, they should have calmed down by now, and I'd like to ask for information about the Empire.

I'll go check them out while I can.

Accompanying me were my two secretaries.

With these two, I can be rest assured even if anything happens.

"You don't have to go, Rimuru-sama himself…”

"Well, why don't you go for me?”

"That's right, you've got to get some information!”

"Kufufufufu we might as well go together!”

Diablo was as unflinching as ever.

Is the same true of Shion?

There is absolutely no active petition to leave.

Well, there's no way that I'm going to let Shion go alone. I thought as I was held to the chest by Shion.

But then again, these two are still so energetic after just having an evolutionary ceremony yesterday.

After a night in the Shion nothing has changed. And Diablo, perfectly back to his usual self.

"So, have you gained new abilities?”

"Kufufufufu! Thanks to Rimuru-sama, I managed to gain the ultimate skill. Finally, I don't have to put up with Guy's show-offs.”

From Guy's point of view, Diablo is the one who is really annoying, right?

For some reason, I'm sure I thought that correctly.

"If you're so reluctant, you should get it yourself. I think Diablo would be able to obtain the ultimate skill himself without my help, right?”

"No, no, you can't say that. Wouldn't it be lame to get it the way Guy said, as if I were to learn from him?”

I don't get it, not talking about parody.

I'll ask for advice if I think I can use it, was I wrong about that?

"Hmph, Diablo is really small-minded. Is that how you say "without shame"? Since being taught in this way by Lord Rimuru, I have often gone to ask others for advice. His Excellency Gobuchi also taught me the essence of cooking, and now they all agree that my craft has been handed down.”

Shion said with a smug expression.

But, I think.

So, it's not like the baggage was dumped by Gobuchi.

Gobuchi is also really, I really hope he doesn't add any strange confidence to Shion.

Now that you've accepted it, teach it well to the end.

"So that's why. Not long ago, Lord Gobuchi was hospitalized because his body would definitely collapse if he had to try the cuisine of Shion every time."

Haha, haha.

Then it would be bad to blame Gobuchi.

In this case, Diablo had already fallen on his face, and Shuna would never taste it.

I knew it, I had to get Benimaru.

Well, Shion's education was supposed to be Benimaru's responsibility, it would be good to stress it to him again.

That's not going to be a problem for the newlyweds. Please, don't get me wrong.

Because the topic of Shion's relationship was a bit off topic, but in the midst of small talk we had reached our destination.

After the "transfer" to the hills of the 70th class, everyone who saw me appear immediately saluted.

I don't think it's right to do such a thing to an enemy demon lord, but Diablo and Shion seem quite content, so I'd better not interject.

"His Majesty Rimuru is here! Immediately, inform Sir Calgurio!”

Everyone quickly began to move, with a tent at the center, neatly lined up on both sides of the road.

It seemed that Calgurio and the rest were having a military meeting in that tent, and Rimuru and the others were led into the tent while listening to the instructions.

Inside the tent, there were probably about a hundred or so people in high places. They all stood straight and saluted me and greeted me.

I'm a little surprised that even they are reacting this way.

I'm the king of an enemy country, and I'm still a Slime. They didn't even slight me, and it seems that Raphael’s scheme was more successful than imagined.

Well, come to think of it, it's a given. Not only did he kill him, but he also brought him back to life, and in the face of such a person, complete submissiveness is the wise thing to do.

If I were you, I wouldn't have the confidence to fight back against such a dangerous person. Rimuru convinced himself and was led to the top seat.

Of course, in order to show majesty on such occasions, to take on human form.

Shion and Diablo stood behind me, respectively.

Because I was out of Shion's embrace, she still had a somewhat regretful expression on her face. If you care about such a place, you lose, so I looked around at everyone and said.

"So, guys. Just in time, the top brass have gathered.”

“Yes!"

Because everyone bowed their heads together, it was troublesome so there was no way to talk properly.

I let them all take their seats and then began to explain the coming.

"All of you relax. I'm here today to talk to you guys."

I said this with a smile to everyone.

It's better for the meeting to be relaxed and gentle.

"Adalman's been up to something lately and may not be here for a while. So, I was wondering if there was anything you guys would like to mention.”

"I dare not. You've treated us well enough, don't bother any more.”

So stiff!

Calgurio spoke back as a representative, completely respectful.

Nope, that's the common attitude right there.

They are the defeated ones, and it's the right thing to do.

"That's good. And then, what about the way forward?”

"Yes! And on that note, we have a request!”

Request?

As long as it's not something that can't be done, let's just listen. Then, Calgurio made a startling claim.

"We would like to live in this country for the time being, and see if you can accommodate us…"

Wait……?

I listened to the content in detail.

According to Calgurio.

It just so happens that right now, they are also discussing the way forward.

And then came to the conclusion that even back in the Empire, they would only be killed all over.

"No, no, no, you're going too far! There is no country that kills soldiers who fight for their country just because they are defeated!”

I couldn't help but gag.

"However, I think there's no doubt it will turn out that way.”

Who did you think it was? It was Bonnie. I can't believe it's the same person who attacked us, he said calmly and clearly.

Nor, according to his account, it can’t be completely denied that there is no such possibility.

Are you kidding me…?

"It's true.”

"No, wait? If that's true, the earlier statement about suspending military aggression for fear of Veldora's seal being lifted now sounds suspicious, too. Maybe that's my mistake too, and he is actually waiting for the storm dragon to come back?”

"What Emperor Rudra was thinking is also hard for me to understand. But, in my humble opinion, His Majesty Rimuru is probably right.”

This guy, is it really Bonnie?

It's like he’s being a different person.

But then again, is that so?

Emperor Rudra's true purpose was not simply to win the war. Instead, the empire's soldiers were to face off against a strong opponent, so that they could select a strong man who could awaken.

It's a big move, beyond the realm of normal human thought.

<<Answer. Very interesting idea.>>

You're an idiot!

It's not funny to think of people as experimental material!

That being said, the King of Wisdom has that side too.

Zegion, for example, is a success story, and it's really kind of scary to think that maybe it's happening to me, too, that I'm being used as a test subject somewhere when I don't know.

<<No. No such instances have been found.>>

Seriously.

Well, there's still credibility in that.

Anyway, we'll talk about this later.

The question is whether or not to accept Calgurio and the others’ request.

"But, ah, your food is not free either. It's an extra 700,000 people's rations, and they'll have to be bought from other countries.”

Hearing that they would be killed back home, it was a bit of a hesitation to let them go. But it is also true that our country has no reason to shelter them.

All I have to answer for is my own nationals. I hope they live strong—as much as I want to say so, I can't just leave it at that.

If 700,000 professional soldiers had been admitted, the Western countries, led by the Kingdom of Blumund, would not have remained silent. One messed up and unnecessary bloodshed ensued.

That being said, it would be too ruthless to let them return. Since I saved their lives, I'll be responsible until the end.

There's no way around it, it's better to take them in.

But it's not free.

"In our country, ‘he who does not work does not gain,’ You can earn your own rations. Is that okay?”

Nervously holding their breath as they waited for me to answer the Calgurio and the others’ faces brightened as they listened.

"That's for sure!”

"At your service!”

We haven't even said what they’re going to do, but they’re all looking very energetic.

That being the case, I gave them permission to stay here.

When all is said and done, it seems to me that capturing captives doesn't mean much to the Empire.

Because there was no wartime agreement done, and nothing prescribed.

And it seems to me, listening to Bonnie, that there is little use for an armistice bargaining condition. In that case, it would be better to use them as labor.

While the stays are undetermined, at least give me some good labor until the war with the Empire is over.

I don't know if it will come in handy if it's too short, but I'm still watching more. Hopefully, they'd play some better role.

And they weren’t about to disobey me either, so just please give them to Geld to let them live for a while.

But then again, Geld is, at the moment, still in evolutionary slumber. It's still a while until he awakens, and they should be allowed to do something before then.

"By the way, are you good at civil engineering?"

Groups like the military, unexpectedly, have a lot of people who are good at technology.

It's still in my past life, but the samurai commanding the building of the castle is still quite famous.

Even in modern times, the Self-Defense Forces are active in various disaster relief scenes, and the news has reported active scenes of relief overseas.

By the same token, the working forces in Dwargon in this world, pride themselves on having a high level of skill. It's plain, but it actually makes a difference.

Then again, it is not too much to say that it is because of the presence of the former head of the Dwarven Work Force, Kaijin, that a solid foundation has been laid for our country.

It was that situation that created the close link between the military and civil engineering technology.

"Of course! I can confidently say that the Empire's skill level is the highest!”

Great.

In that case, let me show you first.

"Well, first job. See this destroyed city now, and restore it in its entirety. The materials will be prepared by me, but they'll be in your hands from the design stage. You can do it, right?”

Since it was broken by them, it is natural for them to fix it.

Listening to my request, Calgurio nodded.

"As you wish.”

Calgurio nodded confidently, and the men who had received the instructions left quickly. That quick and unified feeling is just the kind of man who does his job.

The skeletons will also be able to return to work when Adalman awakens, and it's estimated that the rebuilding will be over shortly after.

And just like that, the Imperial Army was appointed to the job.

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The rest of the purpose, then, is simply to gather intelligence.

I felt the need to listen to the details, so I picked a few of Calgurio's men who knew the details and went to the conference room together.

The sober subordinates will gather and prepare for a countermeasures meeting.

At this moment, the Imperial side should not have sensed their defeat in Calgurio.

Although Yuuki should have received information from Misha or Laplace, there was no need to worry too much about leaking it from them.

And we, for our part, have mastered the Empire's movements.

Ruminas had been informed that three hundred airships were on the move across the ocean.

"Huh! Let's see how I fight him back!”

She boasted.

Although I don't think Ruminas will do it herself, she and I have an agreement. We made a pact that Ruminas would defend against the Imperials attacking from the north.

The divine kingdom of Ruberios, the home of the religion, has many Paladins and the ability to fight alone.

And with the vampire clan as an undercard, handing it to her would be a relief.

Even if Ruminas was in crisis, there were still a hundred and fifty thousand Western-equipped troops to go out. In order to be able to respond quickly to unexpected situations, we had been keeping Testarossa's men there.

What's more, the fact that Hinata is sending out a counterattack is a foolproof solution.

However, it is far from being careless.

I looked around at the participants and announced the start of the meeting.

The participants are the following seventeen:

Secretaries Shion and Diablo.

Chief Grand Admiral Benimaru

Those in charge of the administration—Rigurd and Kaijin.

Chiefs of Army Gabil and Gobta.

Advisor Hakurou,

Souei of the Intelligence Department.

I also called in the important reference person, Gedora.

The others were Testarossa, Ultima, and Carrera, the three demonesses.

For their part, the Imperial Army was joined by Calgurio and Minute, along with the duo of Bonnie and Jiu.

There were 18 of them, including me.

Starting with introductions, the Imperial side became speechless when they learned that Diablo and the Three Demon Maidens were the "primordials".

That sight is very stark.

I'm sorry, the fault is not with me but with Diablo.

Noticing again that there was someone who wanted to spit, I decided to continue the conversation as if nothing had happened.

Then I got started.

"So, just say what you can, huh?”

After saying that, I began to use physics magic: the Argos, revealing an image of the flying airship troops. As agreed beforehand, Calgurio began to illustrate the current state of the empire.

Looking at the image on the monitor's large screen, the Imperials faltered again. And wherein Calgurio hides his inner emotions, the calm quickly begins to illustrate.

From Gedora, I have been informed in partial detail.

Although the old man looked like he didn't care about his betrayal at all, Calgurio was a soldier. Odds are, there are also things that can't be said that need to be added from the sidelines by us.

He had already been informed of what we knew, so he was asked to add a note on that basis.

"I see. Then, let me begin to illustrate.”

Calgurio was more thoughtful and articulate than I expected.

There was a unit called the "Air Combat Flying Corps" in the "Mecha Corps" led by Calgurio, which had four hundred flying airships that were called the newest air combat power. Three hundred of them were sailed by other legions to the north of the Kingdom of Ingracia.

The maximum carrying capacity of each spacecraft is four hundred people. It takes fifty men to operate an airship, so one can carry three hundred and fifty combatants.

The same as what I heard from Gedora.

The main delivery was the 30,000 'Warcraft Legion' led by the Imperial Grand Admiral named Gladim.

But in fact it seems as if they are two by two with the wizards who can call them partners, so in essence the number of combatants to be transported is 60,000.

The rest, it seems, are the support personnel who carry out rear support.

That aspect of the command was given to a Major General named Samuel, who seemed to be a non-combatant anyway, so it didn't count as combat strength.

"It is a shame to say this, but most of the soldiers sent to Ingracia were new recruits. There's nothing wrong with flying an airship, but it's a little worse in practice. I'm supposed to be a researcher, so I'd like to ask for your mercy.”

Calgurio said.

This time, the full force was devoted to war against our country, so it was only possible to lend some of the combatants to Brigadier General Gladim. There were about 30,000 auxiliaries, but none of them were even at the Magic Instructor level, most of them were at the Spellcaster level.

Then there's the technician who maintains the airship, who wants to keep them alive as long as possible without killing them.

"You bastard, there's a limit to what you can do. You want us to spare other people's countries when you feel you can't beat them?”

Shion shouted emotionally, and Calgurio apologized with an iron face upon hearing it.

I appeased Shion, but I also felt that Shion was not wrong in what she said. And Calgurio understood exactly what he had said that had gone too far and apologized for his outburst…

"It's not our job to deal with that. Depending on the circumstances, you may have to give up.”

"Sure, I understand. All things being in accordance with the will of His Majesty Rimuru…"

It would be possible to consider it if it were possible, but I can't say for sure. My resurrection magic isn't all-powerful either, and depending on the circumstances, it can fail.

And, depending on how Ruminas reacts, there may be no room for me to interject.

I've heard that the ''Warcraft Legion'' led by Gladim is quite threatening, and also has the potential to cause significant damage to Hinata.

If that really were to happen, it wouldn't be my turn to pity them. Although, in my opinion, the defense on Ruminas' side is quite strong and will never lose. But there are no absolutes in battle, and I don't just give promises to people.

That's it, so that's the end of that thread.

Next, it's about the eastern city of Dwargon.

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I switched the Argos display scene.

An army of 60,000 men was revealed. There was no sense of tension, loosely lined up.

Looking at the tense again Imperial group, I began the instructions.

"Now, although it's not my wish, I've made an alliance with Yuuki. To confront each other like this now is really just an act,”

I finished, Minute laughed to himself.

"It's really hard to beat, we've been pried out of the army from the beginning, no wonder we can't win at all.”

Calgurio nodded with a sniff.

"That's right, the moment my Legion of Mechs and Gladim's Legion of Warcraft disappeared, they pointed straight at the Imperial Capital. So, is that the General?”

A bitter look crawled across the two men's faces knowing that they had not only lost in strength, but even in strategy.

However, objections have been raised.

"That's not right. The emperor, still left to protect him. I have also said this many times, but again, the Awakened One is an army. Your Highness must have noticed that Yuuki was trying to commit a rebellion.”

Although this was said by Bonnie, the impression he had as Masayuki's follower was too strong, and he was a completely different person.

"Is this what Bonnie is all about?”

"Ah, no. The time I acted with Masayuki was the time when my character had nothing to say.”

In the face of my off-the-cuff doubts, Bonnie replied in a disciplined manner. He said it was now the attitude of a soldier, and that nature would be more casual…

By the way, also told me that he was originally American. Well, forty-five. What used to be an ordinary student who came to this side and was re-taught became the present Bonnie.

Although it was insignificant information to him, it made me feel more or less close to him.

"Well, that seems like a real possibility. I've also heard that the Empire seems to have characters who can kill me, and generally speaking, there's nothing unbelievable about turning this deadly situation around.”

It's a pain in the ass to think that in this world, quality is more important than quantity. No matter how many battles there are, as long as one can't beat that one, one will be disastrously defeated…

Since that's how we won it too, one also really has to think about what happens when standing in the opposite position.

"Then let me go and eat them all up!”

The big Tai Sword in Shion's hand spoke boldly.

There's no guarantee that anyone will win that way, so of course it's a no.

"Kufufufu, then I will do it.”

“Overruled!"

Although it is impossible to imagine the scenes in which Diablo lost, it was decidedly dismissed.

My approach is to stay on the sidelines until an absolute victory situation is created. Only this, just in case, must be kept in mind again.

In short, intelligence is important.

The number of failures due to inadequate intelligence is truly too great to count. To make sure you don't make the same mistake this time, take a good listen.

"So, you teamed up with Masayuki so as not to arouse suspicion of approaching me? To be honest, I didn't realize it at all, the attack was really dangerous at the time.”

I spoke to Bonnie and Jiu.

It was presumably Damrada's order, but it was a perfect battle even if the King of Wisdom didn't notice.

As enemies, they should also be praised.

It is clear that there have been several chances to strike so far, but to be able to keep the highest battle power hidden until that decisive moment is something I don't think ordinary people can do. Although we were the better team this time, a mistake could have reversed the situation.

If that's the case, you'll be in the Emperor's heart. If the army of the Jura Tempest Federation loses me and Benimaru, it will become a scattered mass of sand to be trampled down by the Empire.

"I was too confident and careless in the matter. Convinced that the maze was safe. I will remember that in wartime, no matter what time of year, danger is always with us.”

"Me too. Anyone who gets close to Lord Rimuru, I'll be more thorough in finding out about him.”

Although Benimaru and Souei seemed to have been indifferent all along, it wasn't just the two of them that were responsible for this if they really wanted to say it.

They were more considerate and alert to the possibilities of the situation than I was. My sense of crisis is so weak, that's something to reflect on.

"Lord Damrada's order is to protect Masayuki. But I wasn't told the reason, so I guess it's to prevent information leakage.”

"Me too. We are not receiving orders at the same time, but through different channels, in order to prevent our identity from being known. When I received the order to assassinate His Majesty Rimuru, I realized that Bonnie was in the single digits, just like me.”

Bonnie and Jiu also joined the conversation, and they had the right to remain silent, so it was really nice to take the initiative to join the conversation.

However, something about what they said made me care.

"Just remembering?”

"No, it was because I had never seen a single digit other than myself that I first learned that she was one when I received the order."

"Me too. I'm afraid only the Chief and deputy Chiefs know the identity of the other single digits.”

I was surprised to hear that answer.

The strongest warriors in the Empire, surprisingly, don't even know each other.

Why do they do this?

<<Answer. The presumed purpose is to prevent betrayal.>> Hmmm.

Since they don't know their identities, they don't have to worry that they will join forces to commit crimes. It's not exactly thorough, but it does illustrate that even to this extent, the Emperor's safety must be guaranteed?

"It's not that I can't understand, but it's too much trouble and inefficient. If it's a companion, how nice to help each other from the beginning.”

As I finished thus, Gedora smiled bitterly and declared his opinion.

"Lord Rimuru, may I have your permission to speak disrespectfully?”

"Of course, I'm glad to hear that,”

That would be rude, Gedora said.

"While Lord Rimuru's idea is wonderful, it can also be said to be lacking in consideration. This old man was well aware of Damrada, a man of great cunning, who never trusted his own men and was extremely cautious in character.”

Sure enough, as the King of Wisdom had expected, it was to prevent betrayal. I heard that he is one of the leaders of the "Big Three", a secret association, and he only believes in money, which is just like the rumors.

And who he really is, is he in the "single digits"?

"I haven't seen it, but he sounds like a dangerous guy, and from the way he's trying to assassinate Gedora, I think there's no doubt he's in the single digits. Moreover, he was able to command Bonnie and Jiu, could Damrada be the captain?”

I asked so, but Gedora denied it.

"No, Damrada must be the deputy Chief. In my opinion, the Chief is definitely, Tatsuya Kondo.”

This man seems to be the Director of Imperial Intelligence, one of the men Gedora is guarding? It was a man who even Gedora himself, said not to know much. Thus, although intelligence was scarce, Gedora had some certainty about Damrada's identity as a result of the determination of his true identity.

The Imperial group had already entered the abandonment mode. Bonnie and Jiu felt that since they were both at this point then there was no hidden meaning and spoke out favorable information.

As Gedora had envisioned, Damrada was the deputy commander of the Imperial Order of the Emperor, second in the sequence. While it's not known if Kondo is the captain or not, there's no doubt that Damrada is a big man.

Good job, Gedora. I thought of it this way, and then listened while I did.

"In fact, the order to attack His Majesty Rimuru this time was not the instruction of Lord Damrada, but a secret order from the Chief.”

"Me too. This order replaces the order to protect Masayuki, so it feels a little strange.”

Listening to Jiu, in order to gain Masayuki's trust, a bridge segment was also deliberately arranged for Masayuki to save a village. To repay Masayuki for saving her life, with such a stance, she finally joined Masayuki's team.

"If you want to reveal your identity at the same time, it's better to help each other from the beginning.”

“—I think so, too. Since it's really a great opportunity, I always thought I took advantage of Masayuki to keep you guys from getting suspicious…”

But now that I think about it there are some doubts, Bonnie concluded.

Assuming the duo didn't lie, taken together, Damrada and the Chief seem to have different intentions.

Since it was Damrada who arranged all this, it is hard to imagine that he would make the order to abandon the layout altogether.

No, it could also be argued that sacrifices were made to increase the success rate, but that alone I think there should be other good ways. It's normal for them to have doubts in Bonnie, and it makes more sense to see the matter as what else is on the inside…

"By the way, have any of you ever seen what the Emperor Rudra looked like?”

Suddenly a little concerned, so I asked.

Gedora was the only one, raising his hand.

"Are you kidding me? You don't even know what the people you serve looks like?”

Benimaru muttered in a low voice in surprise.

"My lord, there's no such thing as a dominant person. I'll be able to buy food on the street and chat easily with anyone.”

"Hey, hey.”

"Don't be so mean. Although he was a bit harsh compared to Lord Gazel, he also had an easygoing side. However, the average prince and aristocrat is a little bit more important. I think there are a lot of people who don't let their subordinates look directly at their faces.”

"Well, that's true.”

"While I also agree with Lord Kaijin, there is something I cannot understand. Isn't it a bit much to hide your face even in front of someone who is serving as an escort?”

"Well. I don't think so, either.”

Hearing Kaijin’s words, Rigurd commented. And Kaijin also readily agreed with what he had said.

"Sure, something weird is going on?”

"It's not so much strange as it is abnormal. Your name is Bonnie, and I have a question for you.”

Hakurou finished answering the hobgoblin first, and then asked Bonnie a question.

"What's the problem?”

"You are in the position of guarding the Emperor, why don't you even know what he looks like? So how exactly is the monarch to be protected?”

Facing the sharp eyes that stabbed at him, Bonnie spoke as if he was once again puffing up his breath.

"Very simple, because only the first six in the sequence can see His Majesty's face. The head and deputy head of the regiment often stayed behind, so the remaining four were often accompanied by His Majesty.”

Those four people seemed to be called the Four Horsemen, and as far as Bonnie and Jiu were concerned, they were strong men who had never been replaced even after years and years.

"That is, you are not trusted to that extent? Even your strength is no match for the Four Horsemen?”

The words that were difficult to ask came straight out.

Bonnie replied somewhat defiantly.

"It's okay if you think so. Indeed, I have a hard time beating those four. Not only that, but there was the man at His Majesty's side. That is the one thing I can never win, His Excellency the dreaded "Marshal". I don't think I can beat that one even if the "single digits" all add up.”

There he is again, a very strong guy.

So far, it's Kondo, Damrada, the Four Horsemen and the Marshal.

Let's say there are nine people in the "single digits", and after removing Bonnie and Jiu, there are seven people left. Consistent numbers—no, not true. It's normal to think of "marshal" as another position if it's down to the top six in the sequence. In that case, it should be possible to think of a "single digit" on another mission.

That is, it's the eight that need to be on guard. If Kondo wasn't the Chief, it would be tricky to add another one to the alert.

Just knowing that counts as a gain, but there's another thing I want to confirm.

"In fact, I heard from Gedora over there that Masayuki and Emperor Rudra seem to look exactly alike.”

Gedora nodded at my words.

Seeing Gedora's movements, the congregation became silent in their thoughts.

“Damrada's order is to protect Masayuki, right? And it also keeps you all out of each other's heads and definitely doesn't draw suspicion. To do so, and then to make an order to completely ignore the laying out of the front. Damrada and the Chief, presumably for different purposes?”

Feeling certainly right, I put my thoughts into words.

Presumably, I think Damrada is sincere in his desire to protect Masayuki. Although the reason was unknown, it must have something to do with the fact that Masayuki looked like the Emperor.

"You just said you used Masayuki, right?”

"Yes. Since it was unclear why he was to be protected, he honestly accepted the captain's orders.”

"Me too. And no note was received from Damrada.”

He took advantage of Masayuki in order to get to me. It would have been understandable if Damrada had ordered Bonnie and Jiu in this way. However, when the captain came out and stabbed a crossbar, there was a doubt that needed to be confirmed anyway.

"About the captain, do you think he knows what Masayuki looks like?”

"Well, that's hard to answer. If Kondo is the leader as I expected, it's better to consider him informed.”

"We don't know the details, but we do know something about that man Kondo. He must not be careless in the face, I heard that he has all the information in the Empire.”

"A weirdo who feeds on information" is the nickname of Lieutenant Kondo, who is the Director of the Intelligence Bureau. Our military and intelligence agencies are inseparable and have suffered a lot on his part. Although several hostilities were also organized, they all ended in failure. Just looking at that, that guy is no slouch.”

Although Calgurio wanted to play dumb and get over it, Minute didn't want to hide the fact that it was all said and done at all. The fact that even the inside story was exposed was enough to show that Kondo was a dangerous man.

With even a man like Minute being at his mercy, it seemed that this Kondo was truly powerful.

"At least, not an opponent I can beat.”

''Old Master Gedora, don't look at him like that, he's actually a pretty powerful man. As far as I'm concerned, one might be able to match the strength of a ‘saint.’”

Although the amount of mana was not high, the magic technique was extremely high.

It seems that Kondo can be considered a "saint" if even such a Gedora asserts that he will never win.

That is to say, a strongman equal to Hinata and King Gazel.

By the way, Bonnie and Jiu had also been saints before, and Calgurio had also awakened.

Then Gedora who can't use their ultimate skills can't beat them.

Anyway, it was better to figure out that Kondo was very strong, and since he was known as the

"information eater", it was better to think that he already knew about Masayuki.

"If Kondo knew about Masayuki, then he would have had other intentions than Damrada. At that time, Bonnie’s attack had no regard for Masayuki's life and death. It's contradictory to Damrada's orders.”

Hearing me out, Bonnie said with some difficulty.

“…In fact, I received an order from the Chief that Masayuki was useless in getting rid of him.”

From the point of view of Bonnie and Jiu, a friendship had been formed during the journey with Masayuki, and they were still hesitant to kill him. So, they scheduled to talk about Masayuki's treatment after settling me.

Just hide him. If not, use magic to erase his memory.

Anyway, it's decided for now.

"It's just that it's not safe. Though a little sorry for him, let's match him with an escort in recent times.

Souei, is it okay to leave it to you?”

"Yes, sir.”

Well, that's how the shadow can be trusted.

"It can be seen that the intentions of the Damrada and the Chief are different. Wanting to protect Masayuki's people and those who want to kill him. Although the reason for this is unknown, it is indeed opposed to each other.”

"Yeah. If it's organic in here, it's earned.”

"It's not that optimistic. But it is good news to know that the enemy is not of one mind.”

I'd say it's good news, right?

Since it is difficult to identify the enemy and me, we can only see them all as enemies. To get a better sense of that, just hear the details again.

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Already clear about Bonnie and them, next wanted to understand the factions within the Empire. That being said, it's not about the army, but at least the movement of those who are in the upper echelons, those who have extreme powers.

"So, tell me about the single digits."

When I finished, Bonnie nodded.

"Yes. We are in the "single digits", which is only nine at any given time. Something like brushing off acquaintances is also possible in order to be able to ensure that the stronger ones get into the sequence.”

That is, there isn't a big difference in the strength at the end?

"So it's not unusual for the 9th and 10th places to be interchangeable?”

Hearing my question, Bonnie shook his head in denial.

"The sequence eleven is the auxiliary to the single digits, while the sequence ten is called the reserve, but this is only temporary and they take over when the single digits fall off."

There seems to be an insurmountable wall between the Nine and the Ten, presumably because of the relationship between the Infinite Power.

In other words, it is only after awakening and acquiring the ultimate skill that they are first recognized as "single digits".

Incidentally, the Bonnie sequence has seven digits and the Jiu sequence has nine. The men to be alerted are a sequence of one to six, and a sequence of eight, plus the "marshal", at least eight more.

Concerning the Damrada faction, it seems that they are not clear to Bonnie. They don't even know who the other "single digits" are, so I don't think any of this is a lie.

I'd like to know the information outside of the members, so look forward to hearing something useful.

The ten members of the sequence, who are in reserve, basically stay in their home countries and stand by in case of any emergency. Then, the sequence of knights of the near-guard under eleven is usually a trio of three in common form, responsible for solving some large events.

According to Bonnie's instructions, the tenth place in the sequence was quite strong, just that they hadn't acquired an ultimate skill, which might be able to match the Awakened demon lord.

The difference in strength between the remaining ninety near-guard knights, up to the twentieth position, and below the thirtieth position, was equally as high as a wall.

Even so, those who were able to enter the Imperial Emperor's Order of the Near Guard had at least reached the Immortal Rank. Some of them are close to the strength of the "saints", and if the Empire of the East is out in force, they are strong enough to wage a war against the plural demons at the same time.

"What are you talking about? With us as opponents, we won't win without a single injury.”

Spit from Minute.

"That's right, it's more threatening than a million troops, or a hundred men from the Imperial Order of the Imperial Near Guard, that's the problem.”

"No way. The so-called Imperial Army is nothing more than a show of strength for outsiders to see, and for those who can't understand the foolishness of what is truly powerful, there must be some violent device that can be seen with the eyes.”

Bonnie finished with a sigh.

These words were presumably spoken not only to the western nations, but also to their own—and also to the subjects of the Empire.

The subjects pay taxes for their own security, and to say that the army has only a hundred men would be a source of consternation to everyone. Even knowing it would be of little use, it still made sense to put together such a large number of troops.

One more thing, you can care less about the numbers on offense, but the numbers are necessary when you play defense. The more points there are, the more people are needed.

In this respect, the imperial approach can also be said to be justified.

"In the old days, the army existed primarily for defense, relying solely on the elite to attack other nations and eliminate their will to resist from the roots, and then sending troops to bring them under the Emperor. However, I don't know when I started sending the army first, and I still have my doubts about it…I guess it was for the birth of the Awakened One…"

With a look of emotion from Gedora, it seemed that this was a rather important secret.

In this way, one could see Emperor Rudra's purpose.

"This expedition is not about winning, is it? In fact, Lord Calgurio has awakened, and there are several others that are about to awaken, and using this war to increase the number of pawns in his hands is the real purpose of Emperor Rudra.”

Benimaru and I agreed, stating our opinions.

Bonnie nodded, spilling out the situation.

"This expedition, there are several with signs of awakening. It was not only Major General Calgurio, Major General Minute, Colonel Kansas, and Krishna that I received instructions to assist the Awakened in waiting for an escape. It's the first time I've seen a leader's plan deviate so drastically.”

Bonnie said with a bitter laugh, but I couldn't laugh it off. If so many people had awakened, it wouldn't have been so easy to get into a hard fight.

And, now that it has been made clear that the purpose of the Empire is to create the Awakened, it means that we have been wrong in our judgments so far.

I also thought that the Empire started this war because they were sure they could defeat both us and the Western States. This included the King of Wisdom who had the same prediction as I was, and I thought I hadn't been wrong in my thinking…

<<The…The definition failed due to insufficient intelligence. To ensure completeness, adopting a redefinition.>>

I was slightly feeling the King of Wisdom seem a little ashamed. Oops, it's too much to ask to decipher to that extent, and I wouldn't mention such an outrageous request.

Don't mind this time, just learn from the experience and improve next time

<<Understood. Reassessment of intelligence to avoid omissions.>> It's up to you, really.

For future actions of the Empire, the predictions of the King of Wisdom can be used as a reference.

Now, let's get the information we have together.

"Rudra is collecting Awakened strengths, and although he doesn't want to admit it, I think that something like Bonnie and Jiu, whom he conferred ultimate abilities, should be doable. The Eight Star Demon Lords, including me, and the famous heroes of the Western States, must gather enough people to defeat them all at the same time, so that they can control the world.”

What I said, Benimaru and Diablo and others agreed.

"I agree, it's really tricky. That's why there's this idea that it doesn't matter to anyone other than the Awakened, isn't it?”

"Hmm, indeed. Human beings are fragile, but with the ultimate skills, they can fight with us in pairs.”

"What can I do?”

"We don't think it's funny either.”

"Well, that's good. If it works, let's just do it.”

"But then, fighting will become boring?”

"Kufufufu, what an ancient way of thinking, Testarossa. For those who do not have a corresponding ability, we just don't use the ability either. With this thought, I've acquired the ultimate skill.”

"What did you say?”

"Isn't that a bit of a trick?”

"You can't run away.”

"The jealousy of those who have not acquired power is delicious! I ignored him because I didn't want Guy to feel that way.”

Diablo is really capricious.

I thought he was agreeing with me, but as a result, the topic got more and more off-kilter, and I had to hurry to stop Diablo's rampage, and the aura around Testarossa and the girls started to get restless.

"Back to the point, according to Lord Rimuru, the Empire's purpose is to select the strong, right?”

"I also agree with His Lordship. There were also strong men like King Gazel, Hinata, and Her Majesty Elmesia. It was because of the guardianship of these overlords that the world was able to maintain the balance of war power. Waiting to collect enough to break the balance before starting a formal attack is something I can understand.”

Rigurd and Kaijin understood my thinking very well.

"I see…to use the strong to deal with the strong, and let those who can help gather around. In this way of thinking, the weak are completely in the way.”

"It sounds like a lot, but the weak are relaxed.”

"Yes, well, if the strong alone can solve the war, it will be a kind of happiness for the weak. But it is against my aesthetics to need so many sacrifices for the birth of the strong.”

Seeing the reactions of Gabil and the others, Calgurio and Minute also had a bitter look on their faces.

As a party, one can better understand how cruel and inhumane this practice is.

In my opinion, Hakurou's opinion is important.

War leaves those who want to fight to fight and involves the weak in it, an act that is abhorrent to the core.

But reality isn't as simple as talking and the world is hard to predict.

"By the way, Yuuki-chan has said that the Demon Lord Guy seems to be unhappy with the increase in the Imperial battle power as well. Why is the strongest Guy so vigilant? It makes one wonder”…

Gedora suddenly remembered what it was like, to say that.

Indeed, as long as you have the ability to investigate, it's only natural that your attack will be effective against Guy, and that you will be alert.

"Guy's goal is to unify the world with the power of the Demon Lord. Positively confronting empires, the stakes can be said to be completely stacked against each other. It's just…"

"It's weird. Why, arrogant Guy, would you allow the Empire to exist?”

"Gathering the strong to fight might be more fun, but Guy was unexpectedly serious. It gives the impression that if one can act, one will immediately go out personally to wipe out the foolish ones…”

Diablo, Ultima, and Carrera spoke the doubts in their hearts.

It was Testarossa who answered these questions.

"Quite simply, there is Lord Velgrynd in that place. To strike out against the Empire would most likely provoke Lord Velgrynd. That's why I'm so honest in the Empire.”

Upon hearing this, Calgurio gave a surprised look, while Minute whispered, "Is that called honesty?”

Although I don't know what Testarossa is doing with the Empire, it is none of my business after all. To avoid even blaming me for the past, these things are ignored.

What concerns me more is the name "Velgrynd".

The name is Velgrynd. Does it mean—

"What a surprise, Primordial White…" "No, Lady Testarossa, so much respect for the Scorch Dragon that dwells on the Burning Mountain of the Gods.”

Testarossa was like, ‘What did you say?’ The smile on her face looked at Minute, and Minute hastened to change his words to say so.

This convinced me of what Velgrynd is really all about.

She’s one of only four dragon races in the world, the sister of Veldora, who is in charge of the Scorch.

This is the real trump card of the Empire…

"It's not quite right to say respectfully, our relationship with the Dragon Race is a little more complicated. However, our lord Rimuru is an ally with Lord Veldora, so isn't it only natural that I should pay my respects to Veldora's sister?”

That is to say, without my relationship with Veldora, then Testarossa wouldn't have any respect for the Dragon Race?

"So that means that Testarossa was so honest because she couldn't win against Velgrynd? Even so, can't you beat Guy?”

"To say if you can win, you can't win. Not mentioning Guy, I at least can't beat the Dragon Race. It's not a question of strength or weakness, but the fact that it's an indestructible existence like the True Dragon Race.”

Being spoken of as incomprehensible by the incomprehensible incarnation-like Testarossa, "the true dragon race" really…

If Veldora hears this, he will probably laugh out loud again, but never say such things in front of him.

"Yes, the True Dragon Race is not even a threat to Guy, but it's impossible to eliminate them, right?"

"Whoo-hoo, don't know? At least with magic, I don't think so.”

It's not a victory as long as you can't kill completely—that seems to be common sense among demons.

If you say so, you really can't beat the Dragon Race.

Remember what Veldora said.

The "dragon seed" will come back to life even if it dies. Demons usually destroy their cores when they are destroyed, but the Dragon Race can still be resurrected, except that part of their memory and personality seems to be reset at that time…It is also possible that there are Dragon Race that keep their memories alive like the Demon Race.

As the word goes, it is the feeling of being “indestructible."

"Well, with a guy like that in the Empire, we can't attack at will.”

Whatever that guy is to Guy first, she's a threat to us. I repeatedly said "tricky, tricky, tricky," and Calgurio and others looked at each other with a confused face. It was then opened by Calgurio, with Minute, Jiu and Bonnie beginning their statements.

"I'm sorry to be rude, but I have something to tell you. As far as I know, the Empire worships Lord Velgrynd as a guardian dragon, and through history, there are accounts of guarding the Empire from angelic attacks, but…"

"In the end, it was only because the Empire presented Lord Velgrynd with a tribute, begging her to grant it on a whim.”

"That noble and beautiful true red dragon is the symbol of imperial prosperity. We, "single digits", with the approval of His Majesty Rudra, are bound to visit that symbolic dragon and make it remember its name and face on the spot, saying that we will never be hostile to it.”

"Indeed, I was in that ceremony, too. Hostility is impossible. It's not an existence that can be earned.”

There was a connection between the Empire and Velgrynd, but the Empire side couldn't seem to ask her to do anything. Also, Bonnie's reaction makes one wonder a bit.

Ah, not somewhat, being super very concerned.

"Well, you can keep quiet if you don't want to talk. Which side do you think would win if you fought Velgrynd, the marshal you were talking about?”"

“Hey?"

"To put it another way, it's still a guess, but there's always a similarity between the two, have you ever felt that way?"

"How can…?”

Bonnie understood what I was saying and was about to joke, but immediately turned into a serious expression.

Beside Bonnie, Jiu paled in thought.

It doesn't feel wrong.

"The true face of the Marshal is Velgrynd, the Scorch Dragon.”

It can't be wrong that's the reason why Demon Lord Guy didn't attack the Empire was because of Velgrynd's existence.

And I'm afraid that there were threats within the Empire that could rival Velgrynd's, and if that wasn't the case, there would be no reason for Guy to not act.

I turned my gaze to the big screen and sighed.

"Alas, a rash attack would irritate Velgrynd, and sending an army would most likely be annihilated in one breath. It's an extremely reckless strategy to attack together with Yuuki.”

Sure enough, intelligence is really important.

Fortunately, the first to notice the presence of Velgrynd, collected his feet before stepping on a landmine, and as much as it was tempting to win the peace with the Empire, it would have been foolish to launch a counterattack by us.

"With Lord Veldora's sister as an opponent, none of us could have won. Shall we ask Lord Veldora to come?”

From Benimaru's presentation.

As weak as it sounds, this is the result of calm judgment.

The so-called “true dragon" is beyond the existence of the gods, and it would be a failure to see the reality if it was won by the delusion.

"Well, how shall I put it? We don't want to involve Veldora in our affairs.”

And I don't want to have Veldora fighting his own sister, so it's better not to ask him for help. In that case, it is very difficult to know what to do in the future.

"I'm going to pass this information on to Yuuki as well. The legions sent out can't just stay put.”

"Yeah. It's necessary to completely rework the strategy, and it's not okay to not contact Yuuki.”

Hmmm…my mind is racing with thoughts.

At this point, Diablo, the child in question, dropped a bomb.

"It looks like this has something to do with Guy too, so I called him in. He’ll be here soon, so let's ask the guy together when the time comes!”

…Huh?

I couldn't help but have a serious expression on my face as I repeatedly stared at Diablo. Seeing his shy expression, I couldn't help but sprout some killing intent.

At a time when it is so distressing, this idiot is doing something so redundant…

“Already?"

“Yes!"

Yes……!?!?

I’m angry, but it can't be ignored.

Anyway, I broke up the meeting to prepare for Guy's visit.

\*\*\* Guy arrived with a look of displeasure.

"Yo, here I come. But then again, it was a big deal to call me over.”

You're right.

But alas, the words are still hopefully spoken not to me, but to Diablo.

Guy sat down roughly in his chair.

To keep Guy's mood from getting any worse, it might have been a bit reckless to take him to the lavish reception room in the VIP room. The reception depends on the guest, this was originally a noble hotel only used to receive princes and nobles.

It's a lot to lose if you mess around.

The furnishings in this room were selected and decorated by Myourmile, whose aesthetic abilities are recognized. There are also artworks of considerable value that have been brought in from various countries.

Most of them catered to my taste, not so much for luxury, but more for elegant furnishings, and you can tell that Myourmile has good taste in making people feel quiet and empty.

It's still a long way to go for Rigurd to reach this realm. There's very little access to art, and I don't think it's that easy to understand the good and bad of things. However, there is a saying of Rigurd that "this is a place where one can feel inner peace.” In that case, it's possible that we are unexpectedly like-minded.

Let's leave it at that for now, and let's talk about it if Guy goes on a rampage.

Since there were no other suitable reception rooms, we had to hold back even a certain amount of damage. In any case, something as desperate as bringing the strongest Demon Lord Guy to an ordinary reception room is beyond my ability to do.

The chair made a small, creaking sound.

It's made of incense wood, the highest grade of wood.

Although the soft sofa is nice, it seems as if the wooden chair that withstands everything is quite comfortable to sit on.

There is a feeling of being surrounded by the forest and being at one with nature.

It would be nice to let Diablo make amends if it's bad, and to have the others dismissed in advance, I thought with relief.

Getting the Imperial forces back to the seventieth floor, Gabil took on the role of guide, with the plan being for Adalman to do the job of looking after them during his absence.

Souei was preparing for Masayuki's escort matter.

Rigurd is in charge of contacting various departments in order to make the urban part of the labyrinth where the shelter is located run more smoothly.

After consulting with Vesta, Kaijin will convey the contents of the previous meeting to King Gazel.

Since there is no intention to hide it, I will also be in contact with King Gazel afterwards.

After that, Gedora was exchanging information with Yuuki, and I felt that it was necessary to inform each other of the current situation even for the purpose of formulating a future policy.

Gobta and Hakurou, I told them to stay in the other room. Just in case, the trio of demon women stood by together.

Because there was no telling what these three would do, it was better to keep them out of Guy’s presence. Keeping them elsewhere is also an insurance measure based on this consideration.

With that, there were four people heading to the reception room.

Me, the culprit Diablo, and then Benimaru and Shion.

Guy, on the other hand, led the way with three women on the stage.

Sitting next to Guy was a female with similar looks to Milim.

The lustrous, soft white hair refracted the light, like a sparkling lake. The deep blue of those eyes is as if they are going to take one's breath away, a stunning beauty, but from a different point of view it feels a bit childish, a woman who is incredible.

Judging by the way she didn't care that Guy sat down naturally, there was no up and down relationship between the two.

That is, the two are on the same level of existence, and such existence is extremely limited, right?

I'm afraid she is…

"This is the first time you've seen each other. I'll introduce you, Rimuru, this is Veldora's sister, Velzado. She’s been called "White Ice Dragon" more often than not, so let's remember them both.”

"Greetings, Demon Lord Rimuru, my name is Velzado. Do you know anything about Velzado, the white ice dragon? My brother seems to have been under your care, so I thought I'd stop by and say hello.”

No mistake.

She is the sister of Veldora, one of the strongest of the Dragon Race.

Velzado "The White Ice Dragon".

The graceful greeting was beautiful.

Elegantly seated in a chair with a picturesque figure.

She seems to be very satisfied with the woody aroma.

But…

Although she showed a civilized smile, my back seemed to be sweating coldly.

I look at Veldora every day and think I have a deep knowledge of the Dragon Race, but this guy is not good. It's better to say it's as if the existence of the otherworld is so dangerous for women.

I think his control of demon qi is perfect, but seeing Velzado in front of him, I have to admit that he is still too naive.

The one in front of him was extremely natural, controlling her demonic Qi. From not feeling any aura at all, it was enough to glimpse her extremely high level of control.

If she hadn't made the introduction, I would never have realized that she was a “dragon." I'm afraid I'll treat her like a human being without any doubt.

However, her beauty and dominance cannot be hidden, and she will not be underestimated.

"Ah, greetings, my name is Rimuru, and I'm a monster for now. I'm the one, always being helped by your brother.”

Why I, can only say such words.

And then why, is the King of Wisdom also silent this time?

One side felt irrational and the other was careful to remain conciliatory in its response.

"Geez, that's modest. Don't be so defensive of the kid.”

As if pleased, Velzado giggled. As soon as she began to laugh, her calm and collected aura suddenly dissipated, turning into the image of a cute girl.

Honestly, she looks like an all-girls high school student.

Once again there is a strong recognition of her blood relationship with Milim. The heaviness eased, thanks to this smile.

The pleasantries continued, introducing each other to their respective members.

The other two, one was the Green Primordial Mizari, whom I had met, and the other was the Blue Primordial Rhein, whom I was first meeting.

Dressed as usual in a dark red maiden's outfit, she waited unmoving behind Guy.

I had heard that Diablo and her belonged to the same level of existence, but that gesture of taking a step back made it impossible to see that it was so.

Even so, there was no mistaking the fact that she was a primordial, the strongest being in the demon race, a being beyond the reach of ordinary demon masters. In order not to make a bad response, it's better to greet them carefully.

With such determination, the presentation was concluded with caution.

Benimaru, who was sitting next to me, was okay and still a bit nervous when introducing Shion. By the time we get to Diablo, it's practically the same mood as handling a bomb.

Why did I choose these few? Even now it's a hindrance to reflect on it.

\*\*\*

As everyone was almost seated, I asked for a guide to prepare the tea.

Shuna understood what I meant and finished her job without faltering.

No, it wasn't just Shuna, all the waiters didn't care what status the person they were serving was in, going about their business as usual.

It's all become professional.

It's all the result of Vesta’s rigorous workouts.

Drinking the tea brought up by them, I took a break and began to move to the main topic.

"I didn't ask you to come here today for anything else. I have something I want to ask Guy.”

“Oh?"

"It's true, we managed to repel the Imperial invasion. Then, I thought we'd take it this time, but I heard that there's Velgrynd on the Empire side—ah, your sister is there too. And, putting a lot of information together and judging by it, I don't think there's a karma or something between you and the Empire…"

"Oh, well, I'm glad you could see that.”

After listening to my instructions, Guy seemed to have a happy sly smile.

There's only a bad feeling about it already.

While sincerely not wanting to go on asking, it's not possible to do so…

"You're just trying to get in the way of the empire's war power, aren't you? That's what keeping Yuuki alive is all about, right? I'm sure you mean it when you say you don't want to destroy the western countries, but it's more than that, right? You said "game" and all that. Who are you playing against?”

Although he cares, he acts like he doesn't care.

However, if there was a Velgrynd on the Imperial side, or even a hidden threat on its equal, then one could not help but ask.

If I attacked without figuring it out, there was a good chance that my companions would show up fallen.

I looked Guy straight in the eyes and asked out the words.

“Kukkukkuk, well, that's a good move, so let me tell you.”

Guy didn't put on any pretense and answered very candidly.

I felt that instead it was scary and listened honestly to his explanation.

"Actually, I made a bet with some asshole. The guy hangs onto ideals that are too outrageous to be true, so I told him what's realistic. We did not choose to fight outright, but to use the pieces in our respective hands to decide the winner.”

In other words, is it the same thing to let someone other than yourself fight and win by knocking out all of the opponent's pieces?

"The pawn in your hand refers to…?"

Even without asking, it was vaguely noticeable.

"Well, it's you people.”

That's right.

I feel the same way.

As much as it was tempting to ask Guy to stop casually using people as pawns, there was no point in ranting here. Then I'll just ask for some useful information.

"So, the man you're competing with is the emperor of the empire, right?”

Shouldn't get it wrong, but just make sure.

Since it's Velzado sitting next to Guy, then it's definitely the game's opponent sitting next to Velgrynd.

But that person wasn't necessarily the emperor either, so the right answer had to come from Guy's mouth.

"Exactly. The Emperor of the Empire, Rudra, is a rival with whom I identify.”

No point in hiding it, Guy told me happily.

Since it could be said to be his own opponent, this Rudra couldn't be a strongman who could rival Guy, right?

You can't win, this one.

Few things can be more annoying than participating in a game where you can't see the winning side.

"May I speak?”

While I was hurting my brain, Benimaru, who was sitting next to me, spoke without fear.

And squarely in the presence of Guy.

“Yeah."

"Then allow me to ask, what are the winning conditions for this game? Was it necessary to defeat Emperor Rudra? Or is it just a matter of suppressing all his pieces? I hope you can help me with this.”

Hmmm…that’s really important.

I've always thought that the condition of victory was that one had to defeat Rudra, and if one took the pawns—that is to say, one could win by disintegrating the Empire's side of the battle.

There are a lot of tricky guys out there, but it's better to be a rival than a guy on the same level as Guy.

Kufufufufufufufufufufufufufu…

“Idiot!” “You are—!”

I couldn't help but reprimand loudly, even overlapping with Guy's rant.

It's exhausting, really.

Guy and I were in the same mood, and we both nodded at each other involuntarily.

Didn't expect to be able to relate to Guy's heart in this matter, and only thanked Diablo on this point.

But this kind of statement that is likely to piss off Guy is also a big demerit item to drop the score significantly.

Anyway, I’ll tell Diablo to shut up for now.

"Then, Guy. How about answering Benimaru's question?"

Although I asked Guy so, Guy didn't answer just looked at me.

The moment a smile flicked at the corner of his mouth, my sense of danger pulled the alarm full force at me.

“Rimuru-kun?"

Woohoo, super unsettling forebodings.

This is already, not a premonition grade anymore.

I seem to understand the reason for the instantly subtle expressions on the faces of Myourmile and Veldora when they added the word "kun" to their names when I called them. Because I definitely have the same look on my face now.

"Actually, I'd like to ask you something.”

"I refuse."

"Oh, listen to this.”

I'm just saying, you listen to me.

As much as it was tempting to say it, the other person was Guy. It's not a good idea to anger this brutal opponent, and from my standpoint, I can only listen honestly.

You see that Myourmile, despite his subtle expression, is still happy to respond to me. And it's my turn to say no with all my might.

"I want you to stop that bastard Rudra. I wouldn't say it's as hard as letting you take him down, you just have to figure out a way to deal with the pawns and make sure I win.”

Guy's expression couldn't have been more evil.

He got up from his chair and went around to my back, giving me a shoulder squeeze as he talked.

"You'll do it, won't you?”



The hand that rubbed my shoulder increased in strength.

A threat, right?

"What would I gain by accepting this offer?”

Since you can't say no, you have to get more out of it.

It may have been reckless to target Guy, but I did my best to negotiate anyway.

"I say, it's because of you that the balance of the world I'm running is falling apart. What do you think about that?”

"I'm sorry."

It was over in a flash.

It's true that I'm the one who took away most of the battle power from Guy’s side, even though it's to build a new balance, and I'm working on it.

To put it more bluntly, it would be inappropriate to send the demon girl trio to our camp. If Guy is rejected here, even I might be treated as an enemy.

There's no way around it.

I gave up resistance and accepted Guy's offer.

\*\*\*

Guy returned to his seat just in time for the sound of a knock on the door.

The door to the room opened and Shuna entered.

The aroma of black tea filled the room, and the tension thinned. The tray was also topped with a cake, so I decided to go into break time.

Since you can't get away with it, then be aware that this is definitely not putting off the problem.

As if tea had been prepared for the next room as well, two secretaries and two maids went over there.

Expecting them to be reluctant, they went straight through it more honestly than expected.

I took a sip of the black tea made with care.

Soft texture.

The tea made by Testarossa was perfectly finished, but the black tea made by Shuna was very relaxing and had a different flavor.

"Ho-ho, isn't that pretty good?”

Guy looks content, that's better than anything.

"Ah, really. This cake is not just sweet, but the layers all have different flavors fused together for a rich and layered texture. The aroma is great, but the bitterness adds to the sweetness.”

I'm relieved if Velzado-san also makes a positive comment.

"Also, the room is furnished in a style that is to my liking.”

Unexpectedly, Guy also made a compliment.

Because this guy is a tyrant, I took the liberty of thinking he had nothing to do with idle elegance. It seems that one cannot make judgments about people based on preconceived notions, and this requires introspection.

Come to think of it, the likes of Oda Nobunaga and others have such interests. Since you prefer a tea room where you don't have to worry about your status, you probably value time for introspection.

Then again, although I took the liberty of misinterpreting Guy's interest, it seemed right to bring him here.

I am slightly reassured to speak in order to see the reaction that follows.

"Ah, is that so? It's great that you're the first guest to visit here to your taste. This room is a top-of-the-line parlor and only brings people here when they need to fill the doorway.”

“Ahhhh? Are you trying to make a fool out of me?”

"Yeah, right. If they didn't do that, where would the Demon Lord be. If you want to give up your glory, why don't you just hide in the shadows and live happily in secret from the beginning?”

First use the jab to draw the opponent.

Demonstrate a will not to take him at his word before Guy says the commission.

Based on the response, it was necessary to change the response to Guy.

But Guy smiled at my overreaction.

"Ah ha ha. And me, prying into each other's minds? You're so funny!”

It wasn't fun at all, and I felt toyed with by Guy.

"That's very kind of you.”

"Never mind, I'll let the trouble go. While this is my request, it is not unrelated to you. I want to continue the war and destroy the Empire just like that.”

Speaking of which, Guy gracefully sipped the black tea.

Modestly, like a king who doesn't know where.

No, because it's a demon lord, let's call it a king.

But Guy, this guy, threw a straight ball over.

"That is, make Rudra's pawns zero without killing Rudra? I had that feeling when you stammered to answer Benimaru's question.”

"That's it. There is no strict definition of victory conditions for the game, although they are. The only thing that was decided was the rule that 'players can't shoot each other directly’."

"An opponent admits defeat or death, and the inability to continue the game can be considered victory conditions, right?”

"Yeah, that's it.”

With the black tea still in his mouth, Guy nodded.

That is, the emperor Rudra and Guy seem to have fought for over two thousand years.

There was a struggle, but no direct showdown. There had been several fights before that, but since the birth of Milim and the disappearance of Veldanava, the Star King Dragon, the two had become more restrained. The battle between the two had an excessive impact on the world and then unconsciously turned into not taking out full strength to fight, which was part of the reason.

The topic went a bit far, but looking at the ki in front of me I knew it wasn't scary.

The struggle continues to this day.

Guy keeps the world in balance while increasing the number of pawns in his hand. It seemed like there were a lot of long-lived magical creatures among them, and Guy was slowly waiting for them to evolve.

However, there was no one among the "Eight Star Demon Lords" who knew Guy’s true heart. Even Milim had no idea about the game that Guy and Rudra were playing.

"Well, why talk to me!?”

“Ahhhh? Of course I would. You're the first one to push Rudra to this point.”

Needless to say, Guy was aware of the fact that the Imperial Army was annihilated. Of course, so spectacularly big was the continuous unleashing of magic that it would be strange for Guy not to notice…

"But you, all kills are right, that Rudra boy's pieces didn't increase.”

Sure enough, did Guy also know Rudra's purpose for this operation?

Heard the right facts from Guy's mouth.

Rudra's aim was fruitful, to use defeat as a trial to allow the survivors to evolve.

Making the case for making it acceptable to the subjects, training the army and then having them face the threat head on, identifying the evolved from the survivors, is that Rudra's basic tactic?

The proof is that although the last Imperial Expeditionary Force was swept away by Veldora, some of them evolved into Immortals.

Guy has adopted the same strategy.

The unawakened had no value as a pawn, and it was precisely because Guy was of that mindset that he acquiesced to the feud between the monsters.

The more people who awaken as True Demon Lords, the more beneficial they will be in the game. With this as a premise, the remaining question is the point at which the showdown will be initiated.

‘This side is more powerful than the other’—that moment of certainty is the moment of victory and defeat. It's unexpectedly hard to do that, and there are times when people get in the way, and so far there's been an ongoing fight without a winner being drawn.

Because this is the long term plan for growth, both Rudra and Guy are patient.

Causing a lot of trouble for the people who live in this world, but just passing the time for these two…

"This time too, if dozens of people had survived with Veldora as their opponent, there should be an Awakening among them.”

That is, Rudra doesn't hold me in his eyes, and Guy treats me as an excellent pawn.

It's a bit disheartening, but it's the truth.

"So, I'm going to use this gap to attack the Empire?”

"Do what you want. I don't need to say it, but you know there's no point in fighting in vain.”

Indeed, it goes without saying.

If a show of force to an adversary fails to pose a threat to them, it only adds to the number of victims and makes no strategic sense, and the option of sending troops should be rejected.

"If you know, I'd like to know if there are any of Rudra's men of whom we must be on guard?”

"Who knows, I just focus on my hand exercise. If I'm the strongest, then it doesn't matter how strong or weak the other hand is.”

What an arrogant statement befitting a strongman's identity.

This guy, that's the type.

In a game like mahjong, do not look at the type of opponent how to round the cards themselves. Then, when it feels like you can win easily, you just blithely and a servant full.

However, if it's just luck, it's heaven and peace by luck, so you don't want to be an opponent either way.

The topic of the game made me start making strange associations, but let's get to the point.

"Either way, we and the Empire must distinguish between right and wrong. Not because of your commission, I will act on my convictions.”

Since the issue could not be put aside as it went on, it was necessary to have a conversation with Emperor Rudra. Then it would be wise to wait until this side is in a favorable position before raising the conversation with the other side.

"Lord Rimuru, are you going to go there yourself?”

Benimaru seemed a little surprised, but there was no giving in here.

"It can't be helped. We should also not be able to kill Yuuki, but we should meet with him and aim for harmony under favorable conditions.”

"Isn't it dangerous?"

"It's dangerous no matter what. Suppose, even if someone had made a treaty of peace in the past, would you believe it?”

I won't.

It was definitely a ploy to get me careless. When I was out for a leisurely walk, assassins would take this opportunity to assassinate me.

If that happens, I'll have to be on guard all the time, and I won't be able to achieve my goal of a leisurely life.

I don't want to be like that and have to be done with it.

"Yeah, me too. What about the guards?”

"Of course, it's you."

Benimaru smiled innocently in response to my words.

"Then I'm okay with that.”

I could tell from his attitude that there was a confidence inside that he could protect me.

Sure enough, Benimaru is reliable.

Guy looked at my conversation with Benimaru and thought it was funny and laughed.

"Ah ha ha. You're fun to watch and the ministry is delightful, too. There's also an air of wonder that feels like there's room for evolution.”

"That's it. Benimaru is the right-hand whom I rely on the most.”

"Oh, so it wasn't Diablo?”

"Ahhh, that guy is strong, but what can I say, he's a problematic person…”

"I get it.”

I felt like I was being pitied by Guy.

And there's a sense of being treated as a companion.

Watching his reaction, I understood that Guy was having a hard time too.

"So, I have one thing I want to confirm.”

"What is it?”

"That Rudra, can you give ultimate skills to others?”

I asked, and then Guy narrowed his eyes in admiration.

"I'm glad you found out. As you say, Rudra has an interesting stunt of being able to lend his power to others."

Really?

"So, do you know the terms of the loan?”

This is a very important thing.

If only Guy knew what the conditions were, he could narrow down the range of characters on the Imperial side that needed to be guarded. It is now judged to be less than ten, but it's not good to be completely convinced that this is it.

"Don't worry. The guy's powers are not all-powerful. What can be borrowed is degraded and limited power. As for the receiver of the lending, by the way, they must at least be awakened and able to serve as a vessel of power. It seems there are conditions I don't know about that aren't that threatening.”

Just by chance, I tried to ask, and Guy responded crisply. That way, all the information I want to know is gathered.

That's how it is.

There's no threat to holding ultimate skills—you’re the only one who can say that! I really wanted to shout it out like that.

Milim could be one of Guy's kind too…

That difference in feeling might complicate matters.

Looking at Guy's delicious tasting cake, I feel a little angry just thinking about it. I was irritated by the lack of content and expressions, and even more irritated by the fact that I was handed the assignment as if it was none of my business.

Give me a minute yo, it's supposed to be talking about something pretty important right now. However, it seems that the house is already filled with the atmosphere of the end of close talks.

I was so upset that I stabbed a fork at my own cake as well.

When thinking about things, it's important to supplement with sugar.

I decided not to get carried away by Guy and calm down to compile the information.

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A time of silence.

Soft atmosphere.

But…

Things should have been over, but Guy had no intention of going back.

Shuna briefly filled Guy’s empty cup with tea. This seems to be a spare teapot to prevent the remaining tea leaves from brewing.

"You're good at what you do! The nerds in my family can't do that!”

"I'm honored to receive your compliment.”

Benimaru looked a little worried, but Shuna was blunt. Not being overwhelmed by Guy’s aura, calmly making a counterpart.

"Can my Mizari and Rhein come to you for a while?”

“Practice?"

"Right. I want you to teach them how to make this cake.”

They had eaten their dishes at the Demon Lords' banquets, and they were of a decent standard, but it was Shuna that was superior in dessert. After all, she and Yoshida had been competing for the development of new works, and the craft was getting better and better.

I thought it was commonplace, but only now do I remember that it is quite extravagant. That being said, I now have a good sense that I have been doing whatever I want so far in this world.

Things like recreating favorite things, tasting delicious food, etc.

Sometimes, even with enthusiasm and skill, you can't reproduce a recipe if you can't get the ingredients together. Even someone as talented as Yoshida succeeded in reproducing this kind of cake only after having the quality liquor produced in our country.

In this case, do not forget to have gratitude.

Put this aside beforehand, how do I reply to Guy.

At first, I thought I'd buy it if I wanted to, but there's no need to be so petty about it.

With that thought in mind, I decided to hide the part that Yoshida-san taught and just teach him the recipes we developed.

"Shuna-chan, can you teach the two next door how to make it?”

"Yes, with pleasure!”

"You have to use good ingredients to make food, so let's make a deal on that in the future.”

Granulated sugar, for example, also has to be refined to reduce impurities and thus increase purity. My preoccupation with delicious food, coupled with the technical abilities of Kaijin and the others have managed to achieve a quality not inferior to that of my previous life.

Although the production is not high enough to circulate in the market, the amount left for your own enjoyment is sufficient. Just add a little more production and distribute it to Guy.

"Is that really possible?”

"Of course.”

This is true. Technology aside, I don't skimp on the finished product.

I'm worried that even Guy will be in and out of the country, and the trouble will increase…But if Mizari is able to use the "transfer door,” she will be fine. Our side should not have to think about handling as long as we have the materials ready.

Then, I had other intentions.

If Guy thinks we are useful, the security of our country can be assured. The deeper the dealings with foreign countries, the more security will be assured.

If there is a mutual need, there will be no indiscriminate use of force to hinder development.

The economic circle is tantamount to a strong military alliance. That's been my consistent view.

I don't want to get into a dispute with Guy, so it's better to have more cards in hand.

After all, this was my first opponent who put his heart into it.

No, the second time since I met Veldora, right?

It doesn't matter if you can win or not, if you do fight it will create problems that can't be solved. There will undoubtedly be actual damage, so I intend to respect Guy's opinion as long as nothing major happens.

There is such a thing as a rather messy move like this one, one can only accept it in silence.

Only, there are limits to this…

Judging by the few conversations so far, Guy isn't the uncommunicative tyrant that one might think he is. He was unexpectedly a rational, reasonable man.

His manipulative side is also evident in his counterpart Diablo. I believe he has recognized our usefulness and will not make unreasonable demands.

So, it's almost time to go back, right?

My little wish, as Guy's words dissolved into nothingness.

"Wait a minute. I have one thing I want to ask you before I go back.”

What? What else is going on?

"What is it?”

"Why has Diablo evolved?”

Surprise!!!

Was it still too naive to think it wasn't discovered?

That's why I hate observant guys.

"Well, this one is…”

What to do?

What's the answer to Guy to accept!?

"It's not just Diablo right? Since those people were inside Ramiris's labyrinth, it took a bit of work to scent, but why are there so many people here who have awakened as the true demon lord?"

Guy asked me with a smirk, but there was absolutely no smirk in his eyes.

This probably can't just be stonewalled…

<<Answer. This is the result of the master's experiments with the power of Beelzebub the "King of Gluttony.” No problem in asserting this.>> Here comes the Voice of Heaven…!

Okay, that's it.

Not bad for a king of wisdom, and at such a reliable time.

"Actually. I made many attempts on my own strength as I wondered if I could strengthen my battle strength to battle the Empire. And then it became clear that my powers had an interesting effect.”

"Ooh-oh. What is the effect?”

What is the effect?

I don't know.

Tell me about it, Teacher King of Wisdom!!!

<<Answer. If the "soul" is reduced to energy and given to a person who has the qualifications for awakening, and if this is the case, then the person named, Guy Crimson, is acceptable.>> That's just the way it is.

Indeed, the ritual of evolution is not the power of the 'King of Wisdom', but the use of the power of the

'King of Gluttony'. Thus, this account does not hide anything, but merely states the facts.

Indeed that may be the right response.

"My power of the King of Gluttony is able to restore the soul of man to energy. Then, there is also the ability to give energy to others. Just giving energy to someone who is not qualified is a pointless act…

"Hmm. Does it mean that the person who becomes a demon lord will be able to awaken? That's awesome.”

Because there was no lie, Guy accepted it before he had heard it all.

This is all due to the King of Wisdom.

"It's okay. The war in this world is more about quality than quantity, right? Improving one's abilities is par for the course.”

"That's right. You've cared a lot about it since the old days, but you're not ordinary, are you?”

“Huh? I'm very ordinary.”

"No, no, no, ordinary Slimes don't talk. Even if it doesn't matter, the means of Veldora or the state of the city's development, whatever it is, it's not ordinary. You're a reincarnationist, aren't you?”

“Hmm? Huh, didn’t you know? I died in a world different from this one, and I was reborn as a Slime with my consciousness.”

“Really?"

“Really."

Guy and I looked at each other.

It turns out he didn’t know.

I thought this was already known.

I didn't make it a secret, it's well known in the West, and I thought Guy had the situation under control.

The idea that the other party knows all the information seems to be a bit of a problem too.

While that's not exactly an understatement, it's something to be aware of in the future.

It's important to be careful not to give away information in a rambling situation.

“Really?"

"Yeah, the real thing.”

"Lord Rimuru doesn't lie.”

Hey, hey, why are you so suspicious?

In person, and confirming something to Benimaru and Shuna…

“Ahahahahahahaha! That's awesome! I thought it was clearly a magical creature but it was so strange, so it was. It's rare to be reborn across the world, but you're unlucky to be reborn as a magical creature.”

Guy giggled.

You don't have to talk so laughingly.

"But in that case I can accept it. The nucleus of the heart, of course, is tempered by the fact that the

"soul" alone "passes through the world" and retains its ego and memory. I also understand why you're obsessed with human looks, and it's possible to evolve at an abnormal rate to gain ultimate abilities.”

To sum it up, is my heart strong?

Also, I consider myself rather cheeky.

Don't give up, don't get discouraged, Keep moving forward is my credo.

"Now you can take it, can't you?”

"Ah, I used to think you were a strange guy, but I think I can trust you now.”

How rude.

But I forgive you, because I can't beat you.

Besides, it is much better than being constantly suspected of hostility.

This is the model for looking forward.

"Now that my suspicions are cleared, and I've asked what I wanted to ask, I should probably go back…"

"I'll have another one of these.”

"Okay, go ahead.”

Trying to get him to hurry back, just as I was about to open my mouth, Guy interrupted and cheekily asked for a second cake.

Shuna blandly responded.

Couldn't help it, I followed suit and asked for one.

I want to be healed from the sweetness of the cake. Though I thought so, Guy wasn't about to leave me alone.

"Say, Rimuru. Let's get back to what we just talked about.”

I know, it's definitely a bad thing.

“Hmm? What topic?”

"You've awakened your men. Based on the instructions I just gave, If I asked if you could give my subordinates points with your power, how about that? Is it actually feasible?

This guy…

Do I look like me?

For example, use what you can, and use what you can.

I thought I'd been careless when I'd finished, so I was followed up with a straightforward question.

No, no, no, I'm not as outspoken as he is—like I can't assert that?

Alas, I care about that and lose.

More than that, Guy's question must be answered.

Right now…

<<Answer. It's possible.>>

Ah, without waiting for me to ask a question in my mind, the answer was given.

Always felt a little lonely.

I feel like the King of Wisdom has the intention of dealing with my troubles.

<<Answer. No such intention.>>

It seems to be slightly angry.

It's not good to keep pissing off the King of Wisdom.

I can only rely on the King of Wisdom, and it would be bad to be abandoned by the King of Wisdom.

So, seriously ask.

I don't have any contact with Guy’s subordinates in the Soul Corridors, is that okay?

<Answer. Yes. Even if it is not a magical creature connected to the "genealogy of the soul", forced intervention is possible. The prerequisite is that the creature give up resistance, and that it has the qualifications for awakening to give energy that will enable it to evolve.>> Got it.

That, then, leaves the question.

I hold the number of "souls".

I don't know how many of his men he wanted to awaken, but it would be impossible to talk without the key part.

"Should be fine. I just don't know without trying it, though probably, it’s no problem. However, I no longer have the energy I can part with.

To deny him in a noble manner without angering Guy.

I actually had a hundred thousand left, but Guy didn't seem to be able to confirm the amount I was holding, which he would have given up by now.

"Oh. So you can do it by giving you souls, right?”

“That…”

No sense in giving up?

"In fact, I've given Mizari about 10,000 of them. But there was no reaction, no sign of awakening, and I thought it would be useless.

Giving a "soul" directly, that's something the demon race would do.

But can't this be awakening?

<<Answer. What drives evolution is the need to transform the "soul" into a form that fits the object.

Simply by giving, the "souls" cannot be used effectively. Moreover, the efficiency of energy given by others is so low that the effective value is only about 10%.>> I see.

To get the “Demon Lord Seed" to germinate, water it in the right way. But even knowing the right way to do it, whether it can be done or not is another matter.

Would it be better, then, for the ministers to awaken autonomously?

<<Answer. No. The nature of a magical creature "named" by a higher being will change. Even if one gains a soul by himself, one cannot awaken.>> That is, the evolutionary path is severed from the moment it is named, is that what it is?

Just trying to qualify is hard, and there's an unexpected catch.

However, most magical creatures don't qualify and basically evolve by naming, so it's hard to say whether it's good or bad.

In short, the nature of the named magical creature will change, so you can't draw the energy that suits you from the acquired "soul". Guy didn't know that either, and the King of Wisdom's erudition was truly admirable.

The name of the teacher is true to its name.

<<“……”>>

Oops, no no no.

I was praising it from the bottom of my heart, but it seemed like I was being hailed as a hoot. Since we already know how to answer Guy's question, let the conversation continue.

"Miss Mizari is…Have you tried anyone else, that is to say, Miss Rhein?

"I told you to call them whatever you want.”

It's not a permit, it's an order.

"I'll call her that next time. So, you're the one who "named" those two, right?”

"I can't believe you know that. Yes, I did.”

"That's why.”

“Ahhhhhh?"

"If you are named by a higher being, your nature seems to change.

“…Hmm, that's what happened. So, it means that no matter how many "souls" are given it's useless.

Then, can you match the nature of your opponent and give them the right energy?

While it was clear that I had to struggle to understand all these instructions, Guy understood them very quickly. And, it's all correct without error.

"That's about it.”

"Well, I have something I want to ask you.”

I just knew it would turn out this way.

Gradually, I came to understand Guy's character.

Although Guy's words sounded like a plea to me, they definitely didn't think about the possibility of my refusal......

As much as I wanted to say no outright, it was too scary for me to do. At this point in time, I'm very fond of myself, so I have no choice but to listen to Guy's wishes.

"Let me be clear, even if you have enough “souls,” you can't evolve without qualification."

"No problem, both meet the conditions for awakening. So, you, come and awaken them.”

Guy made this assessment of both of them—too much scum to be of much use if that's all it is.

There seems to be something odd about Guy's standard of judgment.

As far as I know, Mizari and Rhein are supposed to be on the same level of "primordial" as the Testarossa and girls. Is it a lack of consideration to say that such a person would be useless…?

The more I think about it, the more uncomfortable it is to think that there is a fool next to me who will incite Guy.

Hey, forget it.

All that remains is the question of whether there are enough “souls."

"The only two people to be awakened are Mizari and Rhein, right?

"Right. So, how many "souls" does it take?”

If one were to awaken oneself, it would be only ten thousand, but the number of subordinates contacted through the “soul corridor" would be ten times greater, one hundred thousand. This time it was an unrelated third party and could only be considered even less efficient.

In that case, the necessary quantity is—

<<Answer. Five Hundred Thousand.>>

Half a million? One person needs two hundred and fifty thousand of them!?!?

This is the usual times twenty-five, and the comparison with the magic creatures in the soul corridor is also two and a half times. This…

A very large number, and since the King of Wisdom said so, it must be so much.

"I think if there are half a million more, that's enough.”

“Huh? Is that all right? Then I don't have to kill anymore, the amount that exists is enough.”

Surprisingly.

So, what do you want if that's not enough?

''Ah, really? That's really, really good.”

I could only laugh dryly.

If it's going to come to that, I’m going to have to scramble to stop Guy. Thankfully things didn't turn out that way, but the thought of so many casualties so far makes me feel very mixed.

If the values are different then I have nothing to say…

I silently pray that no conflict of interest will arise in the future.

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Benimaru and Shuna listened very nervously to my conversation with Guy.

I don't think there is any need to hide the conversation with Guy from these two.

"That's the way it is, get the guests.”

And by the way, there's Shion and Diablo.

Guy was in a happy mood, eating his cake.

This is the third one.

Seems very much in his heart.

After giving me half a million “souls,” he took on the attitude as if his work was over.

Although the King of Wisdom confirmed that the conditions were in place, I felt unable to release it because I was narrow-minded?

Just as I was thinking about it, Shuna brought Mizari and Rhein back.

"It's not bad, Lord Rimuru, it's a very good cake.”

"I'm very grateful for your unstinting efforts to give us the recipe.”

Mizari’s gushing praise and Rhein's acknowledgement.

It seemed that they had communicated well, and they kept their manners to Shuna.

Just so you can be happy, then you can not play the boring game of betting on the world.

I think the world is really full of amazing things.

These two were perfect as maids.

They don’t have the devastating taste that Shion does, and they seems to learn new techniques quickly.

But until then, the ritual of evolution must be performed.

"I received your words of thanks. I hope we can work together in the future.”

Work with each other, that's what's important.

I wish there was a good understanding that a one-sided act is not okay.

"Hey, it looks like Rimuru will grant you guys the power to give me a little more thanks.”

You too.

I swallowed the words and flashed a smile at the two girls.

"One thing to watch out for in evolution is that it is expected to induce a kind of slumber called a harvest festival. It's hard to go back in that state, so you can stay here for a few days.”

Guy and them used Mizari’s "transfer door" to get outside the labyrinth. Then got permission from Ramiris to be entertained inside the maze.

After the ritual of evolution begins, it will be difficult to go back. I don't think Guy will take the two back gently, so I plan to prepare the room well.

And…

"Is this good?”

"No problem. So, you guys send Guy and Miss Velzado back first.”

That's what I'm all about.

The bargaining has gone off without a hitch, and I think it's almost time for Guy to retire.

“Ahn? I'll take those two back, don't worry about giving them strength quickly.”

''Hee!?'

Guy's unexpected reaction made me involuntarily let out a sound.

And it wasn't just me; Mizari and Rhein, who were the parties involved, also showed shocked expressions. This look on their faces told the history of what Guy had never done for them.

That being said, Guy had his own considerations.

Honestly, it's a pain in the ass.

I didn't want Guy to see my power and wanted him to hurry back.

Then…at this point, something occurred to me.

I used to think I had similarities to Guy, but maybe it's actually the exact same.

If it were me, I would also observe what the other person is doing and let the King of Wisdom see if a reenactment is possible. Even if it cannot be reproduced, information must be obtained to formulate countermeasures.

From this point of view, it's possible that Guy was thinking the same thing. All the more reason then for me to avoid exposing the undercard to Guy.

That said, isn't it already exposed?

<<Answer. There is no problem, only the "King of Gluttony" is revealed as ordered, the rest is hidden.>>

Truly the king of wisdom.

That is, even Guy can fool the King of Wisdom if it's handed to him.

The estimate is that there is no exposure, but it's not to be careless either.

Therefore, I hope no more information will be leaked.

"No, no, no, you're welcome. There are many more rooms, so don't worry, just stay!”

There's no backing down here.

Guy's purpose was no doubt to observe my abilities.

Can't stand to have only me expose hand cards and get Guy out of here no matter what…

Guy and I laughed and faced each other, while darkly engaging in an intense psychological battle. Just at this time, the door to the room was slammed open.

"I found you, Rimuru! I want you to come out again.”

"Yeah, yeah, yeah! People are also helping to monitor what's going on in the world!"

Veldora and Ramiris looked pleased. However, there are very important conversations going on right now, and hopefully they can see the atmosphere.

Besides, that's a room used for war, not your playground, is it?

It's still during the war, but you guys are just using the big screen to investigate where to play.

There are as many things to say as there are mountains.

But, the reason is on me, and I can't complain.

‘Go play when the war is over’—I’ve said that glibly before.

After that, the two started discussing where to play.

The two had lived a long life, but unexpectedly had not traveled the world. I don't know if that's why I'm so longing to travel, being more active than I am.

So these two used my physical magic: the Argos, to happily view the sights of the world every day when they could.

Surveillance mana consumption was low, so it was kept up to power. Anyone can simply do it with a change of perspective.

It doesn't reflect all the places in the world, but it's a very wide range.

But it's certainly true that overuse of magic will make the effect disappear.

"I'll come along later, give me some quiet until then."

Seems like a good lesson to teach them not to make a scene when they have guests.

This is the responsibility of being a protector.

After all, I wanted to go along with the investigation - no, that's not true, and it's important to reprimand them for the sake of the future.

Let's leave it at that.

Now I'm busy dealing with Guy, anyway, to get Veldora out of here first, but at the moment…

"Hey, isn't this Guy? What can I do for Rimuru?”

Ramiris found Guy.

Then came Veldora.

"Looking happy, Veldora-chan.”

“Yah-ah!?!? Why, why, why, why is the sister here…?"

"I thought you'd grown, but I didn't think you'd be as noisy as ever. Still, it's an amazing gesture to become human. I'm relieved that I've just unsealed myself.

"Sister, I'm very happy too…”

The previously joyous atmosphere suddenly shifted and Veldora stiffened and tensed.

Velzado looked gentle, but seemed to feel differently to Veldora.

"I haven't seen you for years. I want to talk to you slowly.”

"No, don’t…Sis is busy too, and I have a job too, so I don't have time so…”

"Don't mind. Guy and Lord Rimuru seem to have a long talk ahead of them, so let's, slowly, talk.”

Miss Velzado deliberately emphasized "slowly," completely ignoring the part where Veldora said "there is work.

Veldora looked to me and asked for help.

So I, with a hard nod, told him.

Go on.

"Lord Rimuru, can I borrow the room next to you?”

Being requested by Miss Velzado with a bright smile, could I refuse?

No, I can't!

"Of course you can. There must be a lot to say, please take your time!”

That's all I can answer.

Farewell, Veldora.

We won't forget your bravery!

Veldora looked sad after knowing he couldn't expect my help. But his hand tightened on Ramiris with a swift grip.

"Wait, wait, Master! This has nothing to do with other people, right!?”

“Please! Don't leave me alone!”

Looking at that pitiful figure, I was convinced—Veldora and sister Velzado don't get along. It looks more like fear than it does about not getting along…

Speaking of not getting along with their sister, my former life friends seem to be too.

"That guy, he's a tyrant…”

He grumbled with the kind of eyes that looked through the red dust.

Even though they're the "dragon race", they're similar to humans.

By the way, someone took to not getting along with their sister, and the situation was fiercely fought over who was more unfortunate than me, but that was something that had nothing to do with only the brother. It feels like those of them are just half-assed.

The same aura was felt from Veldora as from them.

I suddenly remembered.

From a time when I used to talk to Veldora as if it were nothing.

While arguing over travel destinations, Veldora stubbornly opposed the option of going north.

He was talking about how it was too cold or something in there, clearly not feeling the cold, and it felt unnatural to me.

Come to think of it now, was it the knowledge that Miss Velzado was there?

Watching Veldora, who was now grasping the doorframe with a deadly expression, squirming and desperately not wanting to leave, felt more and more pathetic.

This may also be my illusion, although I was going to die to avoid getting caught in the crossfire, so I'll help him a little. If not, so be it, so I spoke up.

"Guy, you guys live further north than the kingdom of Ingracia, don't you?"

“Hmm? Ah, we live in the coldest place in the world called ‘The Land of Ice.’”

"I did not inhibit my magic there and so it became uninhabitable for the creatures. Since Guy hates the weak, he doesn't want to be near them.”

It wasn't just Guy, but Velzado, who stood up and put her hand on Veldora’s shoulder, also turned back to me and replied.

I thought it was a good opportunity, and asked again.

"Could it be said that Miss Velzado's power is cold?”

"Cold air, that's not true, but just looking at the results makes you think that's what it is.”

I see, then you can't go wrong.

It's surprising that Veldora, who is so confident and unafraid of the world, would be able to cope with something he can't.

"Veldora, you don't get along with Miss Velzado, do you?”

“S-saying something stupid! There is no such thing as something I'm not good at!”

Don't be so strong at a time like this.

It's because of you that the damage gets bigger.

“Right? After all, I've been taking care of him.”

Velzado said with a smile that didn't have a hint of gloom in it.

This way, there was no question that Veldora didn't get along with her.

"When Veldora-chan made a fuss after he was born, I quickly destroyed and regenerated him. When even after the reincarnation he fooled around, I sealed his movements so that he would be honest, and then gently preached to him. Because he's a child who doesn't humanize, who disturbs, who causes too much damage. What if there's no punishment and it becomes more difficult to handle afterwards?"

Velzado spoke of past deeds with a feeling like she had done something good.

It's so hard to listen without tears.

There's no doubt that's why.

"Veldora, you have worked hard…"

"You got it, Rimuru. Do you finally understand me!?”

This, it will become impossible to get along as a matter of course.

No offense, but the substance is awful.

This misunderstanding, without discouraging Velzado's self-righteousness, would have kept Veldora alive in fear.

Also, Veldora.

It became impossible to resist Velzado because of his overweening bravado. If this pretense of strength does not stop, relationships will not develop well.

This kind of occasion is supposed to be a dragon relationship, right?

Alas, that's irrelevant.

"Miss Velzado, perhaps I'm being a little nosy, but let me just say that Veldora has an uncomfortable sense of you.”

"Huh, why?”

"In a nutshell, you're overdoing it. Instead of indiscriminately forcing him to listen to you, he should be taught how it is better to do so and let him learn the relationship between good and evil on his own. Even if it's Veldora, it can be listened to if it's said well. So can we stop using violence and just say what we mean?”

‘Stay here today if you want’—I propose this to Miss Velzado.

After a brief silence, Miss Velzado sighed and nodded in affirmation.

Great, she seems to have listened carefully to my proposal.

"Ahh, Rimuru…”

"That's great, Master! So hurry up and let go.”

"I see. In retrospect, I don't think I've ever heard the idea of Veldora-chan. Let's take this opportunity to talk slowly, shall we?”

Take your time and talk about that and it still hasn't changed.

“I-I get it. Please be merciful.”

Veldora also took back his composure, dead set.

If only the divide between siblings could disappear like this…

This time Veldora did not resist and also went to the next room. But he still had Ramiris in his hands, so let's take that as a no-look.

"Wait, wait, wait! This really doesn't have anything to do with other people, does it!?"

It was as if such a sound had been heard, but with the door of the room closed it was no longer audible.

I took it as an illusion and turned to face the Guy who had stayed.

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After the noisy Veldora pulled them away, the room suddenly became silent.

“So."

Guy muttered.

I cooed and gulped, waiting for his next words.

"That guy from Velzado seems to be taking his time too, so let's stay here today.”

"Got it. In that case, I'll prepare a room for three, don't worry.”

“Ahn? Why three?”

"Uh, no, aren't you going back?”

I asked this with the hope that he would go back.

However, he easily betrayed my expectations.

"Don't say anything stupid. What do I have to do with you? I'll take care of you today.”

So hurry up and let Mizari and Rhein evolve—said the eyes forcefully.

Damn it, it's going to go on like this.

"No, no, no, it's a rare opportunity, so take your time next time and enjoy the best service I have for you. So today…"

"You said there was room, right? The conditions of service are minor and I can tolerate them, as long as the room is empty anywhere. I would also like to eat the tempura mentioned before, please prepare it for me.”

Lose.

Since it's all been said and done, there's no excuse for rejection.

It's better to expose a very important undercard, but it's better than rejecting it and then generating displeasure.

"Got it. Then, I'll prepare the rest of the room for you at the highest level. Dinner also answers your expectation to prepare tempura for you.”

I nodded my head in affirmation, then waved a wink at Shuna.

"Got it. So, I'll go get ready.”

After answering with a faint smile, Shuna left the room with a polite curtsy. In lieu, Haruna walked in and stood in the corner of the room without saying anything, waiting for instructions.

The movement of feeling her aura like air showed that she was a skilled maid. Mizari and Rhein also showed expressions of admiration, and it seemed that there was no problem with rating it first-class.

Guy looks very content with the victory against my offense and defense.

It's hard to resist, but here's where it has to give up—the moment I thought so, Diablo, who had been silent, opened his mouth.

"Kufufufu, is that so? You’re gonna stay here today, Guy?”

“Ahn? That's right…”

"So it is. Well, then, time is plenty."

"You, what are you talking about…?”

"It's nothing. I just thought it would be nice.”

“Right? What just happened?”

"I also have a lot of previous topics I'd like to continue to talk about, and you've been very proud of your extreme powers since a long time ago, haven't you? So today, I'd like to hear about it in detail.”

Ooooh!!!

Well done, Diablo.

Instantly reversing the situation, Guy was pinned down.

This opportunity must not be missed.

"In that case, Diablo, you will take Guy to the inner parlor. Let's just take your time and talk there today!”

"Thank you very much, Lord Rimuru. I can only express my gratitude for your kindness."

Diablo put a hand on Guy's shoulder while saying so.

"Uh, wait, wait!!”

"No more waiting, let's go.”

Guy is unexpectedly bad at being attacked.

He was then inexplicably taken away by Diablo.

Diablo came in handy in unexpected places.

Now that Guy is away, I can use the power with confidence.

I don't know when they'll be back, so let's get the ceremony over with.

I quickly injected my soul into Misari and Rhein, prompting them to evolve.

<<Notice. The number of [100,000 souls] that have reached the required amount, the name of the individual: "Mizari Begins to Evolve>> Huh?

Oooh oooh oooh so weird.

I got half a million of them from Guy…

<<Notice. The Individual Named ‘Rhein’s' Evolution…Success>> The total number of reduced souls is 200,000.

Huh?

Can a soul evolve even if it has no connection, as long as it qualifies?

No, no, no. Hey!

There were questions before this one.

Did you, with 300,000 left, say—?

<<Answer. Because mastering the trick requires less than intended.>> Yeah, well, it's not like that, is it?

There's no way to excuse the past when you've got so many "souls"!

<<Answer. Counting the amount of individual named: Testarossa, Ultima, and Carrera.>> What have you done!?

The King of Wisdom is too messy too.

It's really heaven and earth.

Wasn't that a strong-armed prank on the demon lord, Guy Crimson!?

No, wait a minute?

In that case, isn't it me who is resented when exposed!?

<<Answer. No problem.>>

No, I’m full of questions.

Now I think you're a little too scary.

Because of this, it is too scary to be afraid of heaven and earth.

<<Answer. No. It is just that the techniques for manipulating the "intelligence subs" have increased more than expected, and the rest is paid for.>> No, is that okay?

I just feel a little out of place…

That's a lot scarier than cheating a gutter hoodlum.

There's nothing to be said for being wiped out if exposed.

Although I don't sweat and the shaking doesn't show on my face, I'm cold and sweaty inside.

It's been a long time since I've felt that being a Slime is so good.

A banquet was held that evening.

Guy, though somewhat disgruntled, didn't look for me to complain.

More than that, there was even a thank you to me.

"There are various things I want to say, but I'm already tired today. Evolution also seems to have succeeded, so let me be grateful for that.”

Guy really showed a very tired expression.

Why is that?

Diablo is the opposite of Guy, vibrantly alive.

It's incredible.

"Where, where, where…"

The smart thing to do is to leave it alone.

I pretended not to notice anything and didn't touch on the subject.

He seemed satisfied with his dinner and seemed to be in a better mood after the hot spring. Velzado also seemed to be in a very good mood after chatting with Veldora, and this provisionally prepared reception I think should pass.

"I'll come back.”

"I'll give you my best.”

"I'm looking forward to it. Because our country is very cold, this thing called hot springs really heals the mind and body.”

"I'm glad you liked it and look forward to your next visit.”

"Geez, what a talker. I'd love to meet Veldora-chan again too, so let me bother slowly next time.”

The mentioned Veldora was now invisible.

To say why, it seems that he and Velzado fought in the labyrinth and became unable to move with his body scaly.

"Kuhaha, kuahahahahaha! Tell her I let it go a little this time, and I won't show mercy next time!”

"Are you sure you want to tell her this?”

“…I’m sorry.”

It was as if I heard a very small apology, but I was gentle, so let's just pretend I didn't.

But then again, it didn't seem that Miss Velzado was serious. An injury of that magnitude would heal in a few days. On the flip side, it was the first time I had ever seen Veldora injured, and it made me realize once again how powerful the True Dragon Race is.

There is also another sister of Veldora in the Empire.

In order to think about countermeasures, the King of Wisdom will have to analyze the battle information between the dragon races later.

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Guy and the others left behind favorable intelligence and set out on the road home.

Let's include this information as a reference and discuss the way forward.

Just as I was about to do so, someone came running in a panic.

It's Myourmile.

"Oh, oh, Lord Rimuru! You're here, so I can find you."

"What's going on? What's all the panic?”

"I'll come over if I panic. The big sister is here, let me call Lord Rimuru.”

"Big sister's here!”

I was taken aback and rushed to it.

The destination was a certain hotel in the first class area, where the big sister always went every time she came.

Big Sister is a code word that only me and Myourmile can understand. That's right, it was only because the person's direct name calling would create problems that she was called Big Sister.

That person is the Heavenly Emperor, Elmesia Elule Sarion, of the Sorcery Dynasty of Sarion.

Her alias is El from our "conspiracy trio.”

I'm Liam.

Myourmile is Judd.

Miss Elmesia is El.

In terms of status, El was first and I was second and Judd was third, and we were all excitedly involved.

Since it was El who issued the summons, it was impossible not to rush to participate.

However, she should have known that it was now war…

"Should've told Miss El we're at war, shouldn't we?”

"Of course I've told her. I also heard from she herself that she would come back when the war was over.”

In fact, Myourmile-kun spent more time with Miss Elmesia than I did. In place of me, who was very busy, he maintained various negotiating relationships with Miss Elmesia.

Both the light and the dark keep coming and going.

Obviously, it's formal diplomatic relations with the Sorcery Dynasty Sarion. In this respect I left it all to Myourmile and Rigurd.

The construction progress, logistic agreements, customs duties, and other rights relations are summarized, as well as the mutual guarantee of the safety of business travelers staying in the other country. The miscellany was repeatedly confirmed to the point of annoyance, before a mutually acceptable condition was finally reached.

They struggled to engage in the kind of engagement that would be disorienting.

In contrast, we, the "scheming trio", were secretly doing something bad that could be described as the best we could do. As bad as bad as it sounds, it's definitely not something that can be complimented on the content is also true.

What's that bad thing?

That is, to take control of the newly born giant economic circle.

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We started out as just three drinking buddies. But I don't know when we started talking about business matters, and in retrospect we were already talking about important things about state operations.

There is also my fault for being lax-mouthed, but the Myourmile-kun who didn't stop me is equally guilty. And, it wasn't just me who was ranting, Miss Elmesia had also leaked quite a few secrets.

I would have been careless and forgivable.

It's all because three people get together and drink, and drunkenness is terrible.

The relationship is, of course, top secret.

This is a secret that only three people know.

Absolutely.

No doubt people would be very angry if such a conversation was exposed.

I would then be under the pressure of everyone being speechless, and then Myourmile would presumably be blamed for the stomach perforation.

Miss Elmesia will no doubt be trolled by Elalude as well.

As a result, the unity of the three is very strong.

This is a friendship that transcends status as a "conspiracy trio.”

To say when we began to build such a relationship in earnest goes back to the time when the battle with the Rosso I triumphed.

At the time of the decline of the Rosso, the underground organizations in the Western countries amounted to a state of destruction. The dragon has no head, presenting a scene of a group of masters.

Thinking this would not do, I gave the order to Testarossa to keep the peace. While there was no major disruption, the reality of the situation could not be left unattended either.

When the police, or should I say, the army, of any country is out of reach, they secretly come to the aid of others.

The question then arises as to the disposition of the offender.

By saying that the military power of countries is beyond their reach, it means that criminal organizations will retaliate. If not handled properly, it becomes a case of local lords becoming crime bosses and committing crimes in plain sight.

Of course, crimes cannot be allowed to go unchecked, but there is a risk of civil unrest if they are forced. Fear of this has led to the inability of the State to intervene and, in most cases, to acquiesce.

I was so troubled by this state of affairs that when I met Miss Elmesia, a frequent hotel guest, I finally could not resist complaining to her.

"I wish you'd say something happier to me.”

Miss Elmesia was like this at first and didn't want to talk with me. However, while listening to my narrative, I gradually became preoccupied and reached out to ask me to elaborate.

What I have stated is not only to my advantage, but to Miss Elmesia's as well. In fact, to get her interested, I said a lot of dream-like things.

The economy and crime are inextricably linked.

Too much disparity between the rich and the poor creates contradictions and can even have an impact on governing the country. Criminal organizations that absorb the poor become stronger and are likely to become the cause of national unrest.

Myourmile-kun turned out to be a member of the underworld as well. Having experienced it first hand, he understood my instructions.

It is important to prepare institutions that take in the poor.

In order for them to stay out of crime, no matter how down on their luck, the key is to be prepared for a job that anyone can do.

Usually it's the military or something.

The jobs in the army are varied and there is often a demand for talent - but even this cannot be met if the country is poor.

So, we began to back it up in secret.

"First, create a criminal organization. By absorbing the nations' defeated organizations, the embryonic form is now complete. The organizations that haven't been absorbed yet, I'll have them all in the net by then.”

I tell the story of my one-liner with a bit of booze. But this success attracted the interest of Miss Elmesia.

"So it is. There is no organization in the Western countries that can counter the secret association of the

"Big Three". I guess as long as one can secure clothing, food and shelter, there will be a lot of people loyal to the organization.”

To Elmesia, who had so far been uninterested, the next statement became a key hand in attracting interest.

“Right? In this way, the poor are taken care of while the rich are being taken care of.”

“Oh…?"

"Now that Granbell is dead, the Rosso are bound to decline. Organizations that have strength left now will also eventually weaken. My plan is to make a move to take his place.”

“Plan? Let me hear it.”

"That's the thing. As previously mentioned, the Kingdom of Blumund has a program to make the function of an industrial agglomeration city. And the Lord Fitz is also making preparations, and the work of collecting people is also in progress.”

I have also discussed this general idea with Myourmile, and it is important to reconcile the interests of the surrounding countries in order to develop together.

For example, industry in the Dwarven Kingdom, agriculture in the Kingdom of Farmenas, and the Sarion Dynasty is also industry, right? It was necessary to adjust for the great controversy, and then to allow industry to flow into the Kingdom of Blumund, with Blumund as the window to spread to the Western nations.

"Ahhhh, Elalude-chan reported that too. Are you really going to implement that plan?”

"Of course, right?"

"So, where does his interest in you come from?"

"Benefits and whatnot are secondary.”

“Oh…?”

"I'm kidding! We are what we are. Master the core technology and then disseminate it. For example, to build a university campus city to see if it can absorb the best students from different countries. Ostensibly centered on the founding of the country by tourism, it's sneaking around behind the scenes”!

"Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa! Patents, patents! Money floats in without working, fantastic system!

Although the concept itself is understood, it is still difficult to make it known.”

"So it is. Develop products that can't be made without using that technology and ensure intellectual property rights!”

"El, that's very perceptive! It's good to understand so quickly, but don't imitate?

"First come, first served, right? That's a lie! I'm not imitating, but let me have a piece of it.”

"Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa! If Big Sister comes to help, it will be a success!”

"Geez, Judd-chan really. While that's true, the compliment is overblown!”

The reception was thus lively.

Then the next day.

The three reflected on how much they had said and met again.

"That, about yesterday's words…”

"Well, remember. You've told me everything you can't say, haven't you?"

“Well…”

"Also, please, please keep it a secret. The words that are planned to be destroyed here…"

"Geez, don't worry about that Judd-chan. I'll keep my promise even though I'm speaking in the spirit of alcohol.”

And just like that, we were united by the failure of drunken talk.

From there we began to move the program forward gradually.

It went very well because there were two heads of superpowers.

We used the amazing momentum of the Western domination under the water.

After only a few months, the criminal organization was unified, and this was the birth of the secret association the “Three Drunk Sages".

The members of the group are very worried about the origin of the name “Three Drunk Sages", but we don't care that much. It's also a bit off the mark, so let's leave it at that.

More than that, the gist is the status of how the plan is going.

The oppressed poor people of all countries joined the mysterious secret society of "Three Drunk Sages", which was established as a new force. Then, after a month-long acclimatization check, people do their best to sort.

If one is judged to be very good, one is recruited to our country for formal study.

I put this troublesome task hard on Glenda Atori. She was one of the original "Three Martial Sages"

and now works for Souei. Since she says she'll do whatever dirty work it takes, let's give me a decent role as the boss of the synagogue.

Gerard, who had been the head of the "Green Apostles" of the mercenary regiment, and Aine, an elven warlock under him, served under Glenda.

These two had been active in all Western countries and were very good at leading a group of reckless men. The popularity is high among those who are active in the shadows, so give me a hand in supporting Glenda.

Everyone seems to think that “three drunk sages" refers to these three.

It actually refers to three drunks, but they misunderstood that drunken life and death is handsome, so let the truth be buried in the heart.

That's the underground part.

Next, it's about the organizations that are active on the surface.

If given to just one organization, sooner or later it will become a hotbed of corruption. To avoid this, it is better to build confrontational organizations.

Based on this idea, two organizations were created.

The first was the fledgling organization led by Lord Myourmile.

This organization has as its axis practitioners educated in the Kingdom of Blumund, with links to the Council and commercial activities.

The official name is the "Four Nations Business Alliance".

With the Jura Tempest Federation as the head, the Kingdom of Blumund, the Kingdom of Farmenas, and the Kingdom of the Dwarves as the affiliated countries. Because the representative is Myourmile-kun, one look and you knew I was involved.

The second one was the Western Chambers of Commerce union in which Miss Elmesia had secretly intervened.

The Doran King of the kingdom financed it and carried the banner to absorb the survivors of the Rosso clan. Mainly concentrated on those who were very hostile to us, a greater force than could be imagined was born.

This organization is called "Western General Chamber of Commerce".

The representative was the son of King Doran, and seemed to be an excellent person who had inherited the blood of Rosso.

Only King Doran and his son, Prince Figaro Rosso Doran, knew of the involvement of Miss Elmesia.

Participation in our program in exchange for accepting Elmesia's asylum.

"The Rosso cannot survive without converting to a flexible way of thinking. Since the Demon Lord, who will become the world's overlord, has joined forces with the Heavenly Emperor, who has great influence in the world, it would mean our demise if we did not participate.”

Upon hearing this plan, the first thing King Doran said seemed to be this.

The Rosso clan valued the covenant and could be trusted to maintain the relationship for as long as it took to fulfill it mutually.

By the way, Ms. Elmesia's and my holdings add up to 61% of the Western General Chamber of Commerce. Since the majority shareholder is Miss Elmesia, when Figaro betrays, it means the destruction of the merchant society.

I think a good man like Figaro would not have made that stupid choice—Miss Elmesia said so. I also agree with this opinion, and so currently choose to trust Figaro and appoint him as chairman.

With that, both organizations began their activities simultaneously.

On a clear level, the two organizations are hostile.

Price competition, competition in circulation, is sound competition conducted within a legal framework without the intervention of force.

Some of them are also despicable people who try to compete using the underground, but for some reason they have been hit hard. I received such a report from the “Three Drunk Sages" that something unbelievable had happened.

We don't deliberately try to stop it, but hopefully they understand that overdoing it will cause misfortune.

As sad as it is for people who use excessive tactics, both organizations are very energetic and growing beyond my expectations.

After only a few months, the structure of the organization seems to have settled down. The division of posts was refined in the various departments, and the classes settled down.

I heard that just now, when we were attacked by the Empire, they also became rich by sending war money.

Even if the merchant spirits are flourishing, there must be a degree, but the profits they make will also return to me, which can only be described as a necessary evil.

I think the idea that just obeying regulation on everything is fine, no matter what, is wrong.

I'll think even more so this time when I can profit from it too.

Presumably, this is the feeling that control of the economic circle is gradually moving towards completion.

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The fact that Miss Elmesia had come first without a reservation undoubtedly meant that an emergency had occurred.

Is it imaginable that Prince Figaro's betrayal unfolded in this way?

Countermeasures for this situation have been discussed, but the shares that I hold need to be taken out.

If so, one can understand why Miss Elmesia came over.

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Upon arrival at the hotel, Myourmile took me directly to the other house where Miss Elmesia was.

"Long time no see. What's the matter today, Miss El?"

In short, superfluous speculation is not necessary.

Better to hear what's going on from me.

Miss Elmesia didn't seem too happy about it.

She made no secret of her melancholy and looked at me with contemptuous eyes.

"Huh, huh? Feeling bad?”

"Of course not! You—do you really understand what you've done?"

Oops, oops!?

She seems pretty pissed off, huh?

And it seems that it has nothing to do with "Three Drunk Sages”…

"How, how?”

"Sit down."

"Ah, yes.”

It was not a good idea to annoy Miss Elmesia, who was staring at me, so I sat honestly on the tatami mat.

Myourmile-kun is also sitting next to me. Unlike me, he seemed to have a hard time.

"Is it true, Rimuru, that you let a few of your men evolve?”

‘’Why—why do you know this!?”

I immediately squinted at Myourmile-kun, taking eye contact, but he desperately shook his head to indicate he didn't know.

In that case, where did this leak come from?

"I received an urgent message from Gazel. He was troubled to say or not to say it, but in the end thought it should be communicated, what a rule that boy has.”

In Miss Elmesia's opinion, Gazel the old man was just a kid too.

But so? Actually, I didn't plan to hide it, so it wasn't something that should have surprised me, but the speed with which the information was conveyed still surprised me.

"Since the Eastern Empire is more difficult than I thought, I wanted to give everyone a reinforcement.

Then, I thought it was bad to hide it, so I entertained Granny Jane.”

"Really? So it's true…”

Miss Elmesia stood up and looked out the window with her back to me.

Her back drifted sadly, somehow a little bleak.

"Hey, why are you nodding like it's none of your business?”

Miss Elmesia took out a fan and slapped me on the head with lightning speed.

"No, no, no, no, I didn't mean it that way…”

I was clearly just trying to make the heavy atmosphere cheerful.

"What are you trying to do with all that power?”

"Hey, it's no big deal. Just trying to build a country where we can live happily.”

"That's what I heard from Gazel. You're taking in the other primordials, too, besides Diablo?"

"Ahhh, didn't I say that? I was also shocked when I found out recently. El knows about Testarossa too, doesn't she? I think she's very good, and it turns out she's also a primordial. The other two, named Carrera and Ultima, serve as the head of the country's highest tribunal and the attorney general.”

Miss Elmesia's body began to tremble as she listened to my instructions.

"Is that also true……?”

After muttering like this, Elmesia sat down squarely in front of me and stared at me. Then, bluntly ask the question.

"Do you want to destroy the world?”

"How, how?”

"That's all people around here can think when they see this!”

Reprimanded.

I panicked and started making excuses.

Myourmile-kun also came to support, and then engaged in a thirty-minute discourse.

"That is to say, Guy and Rudra are playing a game of pawns with their own pieces in order to have a showdown?”

"That's how it is!”

"Is that right, Judd?"

"No, I'm very sorry I don't know the details, but until then, in any case, isn't that something I shouldn't be hearing?”

"It shouldn't be, but it can't be helped, can it?”

"I really want to complain if I can't finish the show without a word, it will be very hard for me…”

Yeah.

Totally caught up in it.

Really, I'm sorry?

But I am sure that with my relationship with Lord Myourmile, I will be forgiven.

"Ha, things I already understand. If you're threatened by Guy, you can't refuse…”

Yeah, that's it!

Me, threatened by Guy—let’s call it what it is.

“Right? I'm having a hard time because of these reasons, too.”

The tone of my speech is all affected by Lord Myourmile, but here it's muddled through no matter what.

Miss Elmesia let out a sigh.

As if to quell the anger and retrieve the calm.

"So, what are you going to do?”

"What do you mean?”

"You're not the kind of guy who'd be willing to be a pawn of Guy, are you?”

"No, I'm willing.”

“Why?"

"Geez, I've thought about that…”

Miss Elmesia couldn't seem to understand what I was thinking. So, I spoke frankly to her about what I thought.

The Empire does have a lot of strongmen of unknown strength, and choosing to avoid combat at this point is one way to do it, but I think it's just putting the issue on the back burner.

In doing so, I would have to be on constant alert for assassins from the Empire, living in hiding.

Skirmishes with assassins will also occur, and even if one is careful not to make mistakes, there will likely be casualties.

To keep things from going the way they are, this side has to take the initiative.

Originally, war was a rite of passage for the Empire to give birth to the Awakened One. Under this approach, we will always face threats from the other side. So I think that to choose to ignore it now is to give the other person time to think.

"That's my judgment. It was precisely because the numbers were meaningless that I was going to just barge in with the main force and make peace face to face. Just take care of Rudra's pawns there, and after that Guy should do something about it.”

Guy is not to be relied upon, in fact I didn't expect much from him. So, the next question is who to take over.

"Lord Rimuru, is that all right?”

"Hey, hey, Mr. Myourmile. Who do you think I am? Don't look at me like that. I'm part of the Eight Star Demon Lords, too, right? Neither the Emperor nor his near guards are my match!”

“Yes! You are a goddess to me…”

“Hmm? Goddess?”

This guy…still sees me in that light?

He caught me staring at him and scrambled to change his story.

"No, it's the reliable demon lord!”

"Oh, oh, oh, oh. Well, leave it to me! Ha, ha, ha!”

"Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa!"

We laughed out loud.

As nice as it is to say, if things get bad, run back. It is useless to be too complicated now.

“Ho… Are you trying to disintegrate Emperor Rudra's men, or are you trying to kill them, can you tell me how you feel about that?”

Asking questions premised on my victory kinda bothers me too, but about that for sure.

"Trying not to kill. Judging by the game's winning conditions, the moment that makes someone other than Rudra incapacitated is the moment that Guy wins. After that, I guess, it's not something I can interfere with.”

Hearing me reply like this, Miss Elmesia nodded contentedly.

"Got it. Then don't let me down, give it your all. If there's a silver lining, I'll take care of your country, just rest assured.”

Stop it! Don't say such unlucky things!

"Don't worry! I hate self-sacrifice! My motto is to live happily together, so I have no intention of dying.”

Miss Elmesia smiled with great pleasure when she heard me reply like this.

"That's good. Remember, if you die, the world will come to an end. You're the only one who can tame the primordial demons, led by Diablo. The demons you prompted to be born don't always agree either. If confrontation occurs, war will inevitably arise. Got it? Don't give up on what you want to do, and don't forget it.”

This is advice from the heart of Miss Elmesia.

"I know, really.”

So I also swore with a serious look on my face.

The game goes to the endgame.

One more count and our victory will be determined.

But at this point, if you make one wrong move, you could lose it all.

One must be calm and deliberate.

First get in touch with Yuuki to discuss how to deal with Emperor Rudra.

So, the next day.

We embarked on a journey to the Empire.