

Chapter 4: The Purification of Red Lotus

The eastern metropolis of Dwargon, the armed state, is now being blockaded by 60,000 troops.

But that's just camouflage work.

Both camps have secretly forged alliances. What should be done to prevent mistakes from causing unfortunate accidents is what hurts commanders.

In this case, the atmosphere among the soldiers at the grassroots level was relaxed.

The tents of the camp were pitched and the soldiers chatted feverishly there. Only, everyone was also still moderately nervous.

Every soldier, every pawn, can remain the same, and the quality can be astonishingly high.

It's only natural that their morale is so high.

After all, their superiors were having their final combat meeting.

Down with the empire and a new state, that dream, will be decided by this conference.

All looked in the direction of the Imperial Capital with eager anticipation.

Because of this, many people are noticing at the same time.

"So red, huh?”

"Tidu, is there a fire?”

"What happened? No, is the plan compromised?”

On such an important day, something happened in the Imperial Capital.

No one would think it was just a fluke. The subordinates must have encountered something, and all present were aware of it.

"Shall we send a reconnaissance unit?”

"No, it's better to act as a team.”

"Dumbass! If we do that, won't our betrayal be completely exposed!”

The absence of the person in authority means the absence of the person in charge of command. What was originally derided as a patchwork of hybrid legions would become unmanageable once it broke out.

Someone, who had previously kept his eyes closed, ended the scene with a loud cry.

His name is Zero.

He is the man who was appointed by Yuuki to the position of deputy army Chief and is the highest commander of this place today.

“Silence…! No random actions. I'll wait right here until Lord Yuuki arrives, and there will be no change in this policy.”

Such an assertion by Zero has made people of different views regain their composure. Since one doesn't know what to do for the right solution, one has to follow the orders of one's superiors.

Even so, the uneasiness in people's hearts does not just go away…

Then their unease, in its worst form, became reality.

"Good evening, you fools. Even on a comfortable night like this, it's still not good to be too noisy.”

Leisurely.

It was as casual as a walk.

The woman came down the street.

The beautiful woman with the blue hair was none other than Velgrynd.

"You, who are you?”

The soldiers located on the outer side of the street began to stir, interrogating Velgrynd about her identity. Those who can speak to the troops in position are no slouch.

One who did not detect the extraordinary aura of Velgrynd would not have survived in the Hybrid Legion. As the soldiers confirmed her true identity, the messenger ran toward his superior.

The soldiers sprang into action and rounded up Velgrynd.

At this point, someone who was confident in his or her abilities stepped forward.

“Hey, hey woman, I don't know who you are, but if you want to pick a fight with so many of us, stop it.

Don't look at us like this, it's also the strongest in the Empire known as the Hybrid Legion—”

"It's really funny that the weak claim to be the strongest. I've let you do this for the sake of morale, but I think it's better to forbid it in the face of legionnaires.”

“What?"

The words of Velgrynd came from the Absolute Overlord.

To the army this organization, the existence of orders from distant summits. Whoever it was, it was enough to make even the most base soldiers understand that the other side was a danger.

Of course, Zero, who was the deputy army Chief, noticed this as well.

Hearing that there was only one person on the other side, Zero rushed over in order to confirm with his own eyes the true face of the other side. As soon as it was reported, he arrived on the scene.

Then came the sight of Velgrynd in front of him.

"My Lord Marshal…”

Zero has not seen the "marshal". However, the scent on her body was undoubtedly no different from the overwhelming scent that had been emitted behind that curtain.

"Well, there are people who are a little smarter. Good, since we agreed not to kill all these people, let's have some fun before Kondo and the others come.”

Using that statement as a signal, the tragedy began.

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Gazel lived each day with anxiety.

The war goes on, and it's a headache enough.

But, compared to this.

Upon hearing Jane's report, Gazel felt his stomach perforate.

Surprisingly, even the minions have evolved into true demon lords, what on earth was Rimuru thinking!?

He would have taught him a lesson if he'd been there—Gazel sighed heavily.

The phrase "true demon lord" is loaded with words.

The term "demon lord" is used to refer to the king of monstrous things that dominate a certain territory.

In contrast, the "true demon lord" represents the state of a magical being.

When the “True Demon Lord Seed" awakens and evolves, it will be called the "True Demon Lord". In fact, the correct criterion of strength should be less than catastrophic and at the top of the catastrophic scale.

No, there isn't much of a catastrophe level, so what's the point of talking about the top and not the top?

Calamity Level, the classification used to denote a demon lord. Therefore, only eight people currently meet this criteria.

That is to say, there were plural minions that were equal to the strength of such a high existence and were born under Rimuru.

Just thinking about it gives you a headache.

Anyway, Gazel complained to Elmesia first.

Can't stand to be the only one to worry about it. Thinking so, he decided to have Elmesia share in the anguish.

The conclusion obtained is to continue to keep an eye on Rimuru them until the problem occurs.

It's just pushing the issue back, but because nothing can be done about it, it's helpless. If it comes to the point where Rimuru and the others are really judged as a threat, the battle for the survival of mankind will begin, right?

"I don't want that to happen.”

Gazel sighed alone.

However, to such a Gazel, another piece of bad news came.

"Oh, my gosh. The Hybrid Legion is on the move! It looks like there's a fight going on with someone.”

Although the voice was calm, Gazel felt a panic from it that was disproportionate to the dark side.

Before hearing a more detailed report, he summoned Dorf and others by order.

A few minutes later.

"Can't be wrong. It's a monster. It's an opponent that humans can't help. It's a monster that even a demon lord would be compared to, a monster beyond imagination.”

"Is it a dragon?”

"That's right. It's the first time I've seen it, and it's in human form, so I'm sure that woman is Velgrynd.”

This is a "magic call" with the Supreme Commander of the Military Ministry, who is in the eastern city.

Through the sight that had been transmitted, Gazel they too had grasped the current situation.

The worst state of affairs always happens at unexpected moments. This, Gazel felt bitterly now.

The air was burning.

Coolly dancing beauties, and strongmen who failed to fall to the ground.

The blow was both beautiful and daunting to the eye.

However, the real horror comes later.

Velgrynd, who was reflected in the crystal ball used for surveillance magic, looked over to Gazel and them.

Just when Gazel thought it was just chance the next moment, the crystal ball broke.

"Is that guy looking at us, too?"

"Hard, unbelievable. How could this happen…?”

"Fool, right? It's a long way from here!”

"That's the truth. The other party should have sensed the magic and tracked down the caster, but I didn't think they could even affect the destination of the magic transmission. No, it's impossible to do such a thing with a human body, even for an old man.”

Gazel listened without a word to his companions' remarks.

From what had just happened, it was also enough to conclude that the other party was their enemy.

But this opponent is really…

No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no…

The dragon species, eh? It's a real monster.

Gazel now, understood the true meaning of the word strongest.

He had heard rumors of the Empire's connection to Velgrynd. Although it was impossible to figure out the truth of the rumor, he had repeatedly assumed that he would manage to defend even under his attack.

However—

Gazel now understood that this was nothing more than a fantasy.

The reason for the Empire's outpouring of Velgrynd at this juncture is unknown.

What Emperor Rudra really thought, Gazel couldn't comprehend with any more thought.

Gazel can do only one thing.

"Let's put myself in the fight.”

"Your Majesty, this is too dangerous!"

"Even so, I'll have to go. Even abandoning now will not save Dwargon. Oh Dorf, be aware of this.”

In the face of these words from Jane, Dorf had only silence. He had no intention of saving them from death, and he realized that no amount of persuasion would change the situation now.

"Then I'll get ready to go as soon as possible.”

"It's all yours.”

Gazel nodded solemnly and closed his eyes.

There is as much to do as a mountain.

It is necessary to inform the Allies of the state of affairs and to give corresponding instructions to those nationals who remain.

If Gazel and the others could win, what would they do if they lost…?

The nationals have nowhere to run.

It is estimated that there is no other means of preserving one's life other than submission to the Empire.

That would also mean the collapse of this country of Dwargon—and in order for that not to happen, Gazel they must not fail here either.

"The eastern city can't accommodate the entire army. The follow-on troops were arranged to march on the ground, and command was left to the old men. Jane, it's up to you to convince the job.”

"Got it. So, what are you going to do, King Gazel?”

"I'll be one step ahead. After all, if it's late, it's not my turn.”

Gazel said, a fearless smile on his face.

It was all about playing a powerful king and thus easing the restlessness in the hearts of the multitudes.

And just like that, the army will finish its preparations as fast as it can.

And without waiting for the army to finish, Gazel's party had already set out with the Tenjou Knights, led by Dorf.

As he flew through the sky, Gazel suddenly thought.

Is this the reason why Rimuru gave his men the strength to survive the war? If that's the case, I'd have to say he's always been so naive.

Noticing the truth, he couldn't help but laugh bitterly.

The corners of his mouth couldn't help but smile at the thought of his mentor brother (Rimuru), who had never been able to completely let go of his naïve thoughts from beginning to end.

"What's the matter with you, O King?”

"It's nothing. It's just a bunch of boring ideas.”

"You mean?”

"Hmph, it was in this desperate situation that I thought of that Rimuru. And then, somehow, there's a sense of getting through this crisis.”

Although he himself felt that such thoughts were too optimistic, it was better than pessimistic, Gazel laughed thoughtfully.

"Yeah. Speaking of which, when that Charybdis came in, His Majesty Rimuru was also quite a mess. I was shocked to learn that I could be associated with the Demon Lord Milim.”

Dorf replied with a smile.

"If I had to say that, I would like to mention how hard it is for those of us who have been responsible for surveillance. We're almost fed up with the fact that whatever is reported is being treated as a lie.”

Even Anrietta, who was usually silent and only occasionally sarcastic, said so, which made it difficult for Gazel and Dorf to hide their surprise.

"Hahaha, sorry about that. I'll take care of it later.”

"Lady Anrietta seems to have a lot of grievances, too.”

"Then of course!”

"Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa! That being the case, Anrietta yo, you just go straight to that Rimuru guy and complain. I have a headache on my side, too, and although I trust you guys, the facts of what Rimuru did were too much for common sense. By the time I heard Jane's report, I honestly wondered if she was out of her mind.”

"Haha, after all, that report was outrageous."

"I've always been in the position of reporting, so I'm finally able to enjoy it as a spectator.”

At Anrietta's sarcasm, Gazel and Dorf couldn't help but smile.

Laughter echoed through the air.

"By the way, one more thing. Along with the previous grievances, it has been reported once to His Majesty Rimuru.”

“Yeah?"

Gazel nodded and moved on.

The unease is gone.

Releasing a despotic aura corresponding to the hero, Gazel flew into battle.

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Time goes backwards and forwards.

The next day after drinking with Elmesia, the sun had already risen to its zenith.

"You're up early, Lord Rimuru.”

"I'm sorry.”

The smiling Shuna is so scary.

There is only one option for apology at this point, so I'm going to preempt it.

What's the deal with not only getting drunk but also sleeping lazily—that’s what I've gotten through my efforts—and getting yelled at for it?

Shuna let out a deep sigh, then stared at me with oblique eyes.

"So, have you come to a conclusion?”

"What, what conclusion?"

"You've been having a hard time last night, haven't you? Because I don't know if you're going to do something crazy again, and I—no, not just me—everyone’s worried about you."

Hearing that, I couldn't help but be moved.

It's okay. I wasn't going to mess around.

If it doesn't work, just run away, and by then complain to Guy and let him take care of it.

Just do what you can before it becomes that.

"There's always a way up the hill. This time we'll put safety first, too.”

Although I replied lightly like this, Shuna still had a troubled look on her face.

Or is it that Shuna, who has a unique skill called "resolver", can't be fooled? I guess even this skill has been exposed to me.

Just as well.

Seriously, I wouldn't want to do something so dangerous.

Safety comes first, but the enemy's battle strength is still unknown. In particular, the three of them, Lieutenant Kondo, Velgrynd, and Emperor Rudra, were all strong enemies in every way.

Not only is it a matter of not being able to beat them, it's also possible to be killed on the spot. As much as I have pondered how to avoid this possibility, it is the only thing that even the King of Wisdom cannot give a good answer to.

Since you don't know the answer, go ahead and go hard on it.

You can only put in the maximum force and minimize the risk.

So.

"Actually, I was wondering who to take there. This time, only the higher-ups could get past. It's not a good idea to say so, but it's only a hindrance to those who don't have the strength to go along.”

“—Yes. Brother said he must come along, and he's been working hard since the morning.”

It seems my thoughts have really been exposed.

He had been drinking with Elmesia all night last night, so the conversation with Guy hadn't been conveyed to everyone yet, but Shuna was already smiling as if she knew everything.

I smiled bitterly.

To such a me, Shuna began to narrate the report with a natural attitude.

"Last night, the dubiously extreme Laplace came over. Although he said he had a message to pass on to Lord Rimuru, he told him to wait first since he hadn't applied once.”

Despite the sudden change in topic, though, it doesn't seem like it's that important. If it's really an emergency, I'm sure there will be contact from Gedora's side as well.

I guess Yuuki has something to say to me, exactly what it is.

"It's gonna be a pain in the ass, but let's go get some.”

"Yeah, actually I wanted to drive him back, but he's an ally for now. Then I'll take him to the reception room.”

Shuna doesn't have much of a liking to Laplace either.

Barely displaying good and evil, Shuna-chan rarely treats the clowns with a revealing attitude. Sure enough, she couldn't forgive Laplace and them from the bottom of her heart for causing the destruction of the Great Ogre Village ah.

While they are now considered allies, don't forget that.

"During my conversation with Laplace, gather the waking subordinates into the conference room."

I asked Shuna to do so.

Although there are still many things to think about, these are things to be left to worry about after a win against the Empire. I put aside all confusion and decided to focus on the problem at hand first.

A total of twenty people, including me, were gathered in the conference room.

Rigurd, and the four elders under him. Rugurd, Regurd, Rogurd, and Lilina.

Then there was Kaijin and Vesta, and Myourmile.

There are seven people of the Twelve Patrons.

Benimaru, Shion, Diablo, and Gabil, plus the demoness trio of Testarossa, Ultima, and Carrera.

Lastly there was Souei, Hakurou and Gobta, with Gedora by the way.

Regarding Gedora, this time it was to ask him to lead the way within the Empire. Honestly, although I myself feel it's a bit much to do, the hardest thing about what happens is Gedora, it's just the combat setup that gives him credit.

That being said, Bonnie also offered to take responsibility for leading the way in the Empire. However, because the loss of strength would have made him a liability, I dismissed the application.

It's enough to have Gedora around.

So next.

It feels like we're always in meetings, but complaining about that doesn't help. Our country has become too big for us who want to decide everything by our own will alone.

In spite of all this talk, this time it was only to convey what I had already decided.

Jumbo dishes were served with tea as usual. After confirming that she had quietly retired, I spoke slowly.

"This time, I have called you all here to convey the decision on the final battle with the Empire. Ah, one more thing before that. Come on in.”

I've already decided on the person to take over, and there's no need to hurry now.

Before that, let's introduce Laplace who came as a messenger.

What Laplace came over to say, as I expected, was something related to the common fight. They intend for the legions blockading the eastern side of Dwargon to attack the empire and want us to join them.

These were consistent with what I had heard from Guy, and I wasn't about to say no. However, my intention was not to win by army, but to have a final showdown between elites.

I didn't want casualties among civilians, so it was necessary to talk carefully with Yuuki again. Despite the suddenness of the situation, it was necessary to prepare the venue for the negotiations.

The matter has also been discussed with Yuuki through Laplace, and the time has been set for daylight tomorrow.

It is I who will illustrate for all of you who have come together.

I was going to leave it to Laplace to do it, but he was too suspicious and dismissed it.

Credit is important, and I'm realizing that again.

"Hello, everybody, this is Laplace. I'm the vice president of the "Moderate Clown Troupe,” and I'm here as an emissary for our boss Yuuki.”

Woohoo, this guy is super suspicious.



And why it's necessary to dance at a time like this, I can't understand at all. However, since this guy had been sent over as an emissary, it wasn't good to be too cold to him.

I'm not the only one who's annoyed, as Souei is even ready to make a dangerous move, but we'll have to hold back here.

"Lord Souei, put away the bitterness.”

“Yes."

It's too much to be careless about, Souei.

Laplace always sits down honestly, but still can't be careless and hurry to end the introduction.

"This is Mr. Laplace, Yuuki's liaison.”

"It doesn't matter if you just call me Laplace?”

"Oh yeah? Then I'll make myself at home.”

I've said so myself, I'll accept the kindness of others. It has nothing to do with the identity of the messenger, do what I want.

"Yuuki has arranged a meeting place for tomorrow, and although things are urgent, it seems that Laplace will send us there, so there's no need to worry about moving time. The important thing is, who's coming with me.”

Finally getting to the point.

"We can only send up to six people at a time. Our family and His Majesty are definitely going, who are the remaining four people who can tell me?”

Truthfully, it's about wanting to put in the maximum amount of fight.

But now, no matter what you do, you can't talk about the whole group coming together.

Ranga is still sleeping in my shadow.

Geld was also still awake.

The members of the labyrinth, such as Nine-Tailed Kumara, Zegion, and Adalman, remained shrunken in the labyrinth with no sign of waking up.

Evolutionary dormancy varies from person to person, which I understand, so now we have to confirm based on the members who can act.

"Benimaru, I want you to come with me. How's your health?"

"What, do you have a cold?”

Laplace asked with a look that didn't dare to be careless, but I wasn't going to tell him about the awakening. It will be exposed sooner or later anyway, no need to make a deliberate statement.

"No problem. Excellent condition.”

Benimaru smiled fearlessly. Completely ignoring Laplace, the cool attitude didn't fall apart without a hint.

Unlike me, I really admire Benimaru's temperament.

While lamenting, taking a closer look, Benimaru didn't know when his race had changed. It seems to be going well with Momiji and Albis and he’s managed to evolve.

It was only afterwards that I heard about it, and it seemed that Benimaru had spent two nights in succession with his two wives.

Should I say it's really hard work, or rather should I say it's really fucking enviable…

After abandoning the flesh, he receives it again and becomes a full spiritual being.

The racial name is “Flame Spirit Oni", a kind of the Divine Monster Spirit. Like the Dragon Race, it has both holy and magical properties, and can also be called an upper tier divine monster spirit.

The Divine Monster Spirit is a lower being compared to the Dragon Race, and has the same attributes as the Dragon Race, but is higher in the Fire.

Attributes, i.e. the laws that make up the principles of this world, are all made up of eight.

The natural properties of "earth, water, fire, wind" and "space" are known as the five major properties.

The earth is not as strong as fire, fire is not as strong as water, water is not as strong as wind, wind is not as strong as air and air is not as strong as earth.

The earth is consumed by fire, and the fire is annihilated by water, which is dissipated by the wind, which is isolated by space, and space can only rely on the earth for indicators. The five attributes form a mutually exclusive relationship in this role.

In addition to these five attributes, there are two opposite attributes, light and dark, and an unrestricted attribute, time, which is at the top of all attributes.

A spirit in the form of a giant of inflammation, like Ifrit, is bound by such physical laws. It should be said that the laws of this world are manifested in the existence of elves, which seem to have eight properties.

"Light" is more specific to "darkness" in that light sends angels and darkness sends demons. If we trace the origin of the angelic monster clan that we can now identify, it seems that it is not wrong to call them elves.

Just ask Diablo and he should tell me in detail, only even knowing that would be meaningless and not interesting to me.

It is important to note that higher than the spirits is the Divine Spirit, who also has eight kinds. The most powerful of the Divine Spirit is the Dragon Race, and only four Dragon Race can be identified at present.

Veldanava, the “Star Dragon” is, in my opinion, an attribute of space and earth based on the stars.

There may also be more attributes.

"White ice dragon" Velzado, probably watery.

The "Scorch Dragon" Velgrynd, which is also probably a fire attribute.

And our Veldora, who, apart from water and wind, can even dictate space—don’t look at him like that

—is unexpectedly quite a guy.

In short, it is not wrong to think of the “true dragon seed" as the apex of the Divine Spirit. And Benimaru has evolved into something close to a "dragon species".

The "Flame Oni" is not only a spiritual life form, but also a physical body that has an impact on the material world, and its life span has no boundaries, so it is not too much to call him a Oni.

It's a special evolution.

The amount of key magicules is also dramatically increased.

From what I've observed, there are several times as many magicules, and while the max is not as good as Ruminas, it should be a good matchup between them if they fight.

In that case, they should have the upper hand against the "single digits" of the Empire.

"Yes! So the first one is sure to be Benimaru, and the second one is next…"

Gedora has decided and there are two spots left.

Shion and Diablo, I was going to take as well, that's just four people.

"Gedora will be the guide, and the rest of the places are for my secretary, Shion and Diablo.

Letting Laplace take it was, me and Gedora, then Benimaru, Shion, and Diablo.

"Leave it to me, Lord Rimuru! As long as I'm around, it’ll be fine!”

Shion said with a smile on her face.

Shion, what are you talking about?

Despite the uneasiness, Shion was reliable as an escort. In the past, she had even defeated Razul, who was stronger than herself, and there was no shortage of Shion in terms of fighting.

"Kufufufufu, I don't know what Guy is up to, but it's outrageous to bother Lord Rimuru. With me on board, all troubles will be removed by me!”

Still so confident.

However, it was very reassuring to give Diablo a job well done, so let me rely on it.

It's not a good idea to say it's an elite few, but that's a relief, and the remaining people have to follow them to the Empire.

Just as I was about to say it, someone expressed their displeasure first.

"Just a moment, Lord Rimuru. If a guide is needed, I think it would be more appropriate for me to do so, please allow me to accompany you.”

It's Testarossa.

I remember, Testarossa seems to have come from the Imperial side and should be familiar with the geography over there. She was active as a diplomatic marshal and good at negotiation.

And her fighting ability is impeccable—maybe even better than mine.

The good thing about taking Gedora was that he knew Yuuki better than he did, and when you think about it, it should work without him.

Gedora was pretty strong, but nowhere near as strong as Testarossa. What's more, there would be the fear of not knowing when he would defect.

But because of that, even if something happened to Gedora, we wouldn't feel bad about it, but then again, it's too pathetic for him.

I’ll take Testarossa's advice here.

"Well, let's swap Gedora for Testarossa, then."

“I’m grateful."

Testarossa had a beautiful smile on her face.

No, I should say showy.

Gedora didn't seem to have a problem with it either, so it was settled.

"Looks like it's decided, so let's go get ready. Call us when we leave.”

"That's fine. What's in store?”

Not knowing what else to prepare, he asked Laplace, and it turned out that Laplace had a look as if his tail had been stepped on.

"This, this is…”

"It's the hot springs, this guy. He was going back and forth between the cafeteria and the hot springs yesterday, enjoying our maintenance facilities like nobody else.”

Souei's tone sounded very angry.

It's no wonder he's being watched.

"Ha ha ha, exposed? That's not very nice, Mr. Souei.”

How could it not be exposed?

That's a lot of guts, Laplace.

"You paid for it, didn't you?”

"Well, you see, we're guests. We'll work in the future to thank you, so please, let's take credit for this one.”

That's cheeky enough.

"I said you…”

"Well, well, well. Isn't it all the country's fault? Now this is arguably the most advanced place in the world! It's such a blissful place, whoever is here will want a relaxing break!”

Laplace is a strong advocate of the goodness of this country.

No one hates being complimented like that.

Not a bad guy, my impression of Laplace has changed a bit.

"Don't be fooled, Lord Rimuru!”

"Benimaru, don't worry. I will continue to monitor you closely, even if you're careless.”

Ouch.

I tensed my nerves hearing Benimaru's words.

A coughing sound.

"It's okay to stop.”

"Yes, I know! I'll see you later, and we'll be going.”

After saying hello, Laplace left the conference room high and happy.

After witnessing this free guy leave, we moved on to the next topic.

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"Isn't it too dangerous to go to the enemy camp with only five men?”

"We all feel the same way. If anything happens to Lord Rimuru, no matter how victorious the battle is, it won't help.”

"Exactly. I also agree that there is no point in having an army at the top of the battle, but just in case, there needs to be someone who can act as a shield for Lord Rimuru.”

Souei, Gabil, and Hakurou successively expressed their opposition to the course just decided. There was silence in front of Laplace a moment ago, in fact there was no agreement inside.

"The same thing that Hakurou said. Even if it was me, I would have realized that I was to be Lord Rimuru's double at the critical moment.”

"Hey, Gobta.”

“Ah!"

Meat shield?

One can imagine what he was trying to say. This kind of thing seriously, I hope not.

"Hakurou, don't teach Gobta such things.”

"I understand. But it is also important to teach awareness in the face of such situations, and please understand.”

I also understand Hakurou's claim.

It's just that I can't accept it in my heart…

"I'm glad people are worried about me, but I value them just as much. The reason I didn't want to develop a combat plan that presupposes sacrifice is so that it doesn't happen, and that's why I'm working with everyone like this.”

"Indeed, it seems I'm a bit arbitrary.”

Probably, doesn't take my word for it.

On this issue, Benimaru and the others should have been on the side of Hakurou.

If the positions were exchanged, maybe I would be in the same mood.

But ah…

The mood of everyone makes me happy, but I really don't want anyone to sacrifice themselves.

I know it's capricious, but let's prioritize my feelings here.

"In any case, it's not okay to have a sacrificial war plan. With this in mind, enter the final stage of the war against the Empire.”

Hearing what I said, everyone nodded.

Regardless of the mood, it should be possible to calmly formulate an operational plan.

"Lord Rimuru, I have a plan.”

"What is it, Souei?”

"Now, my 'clones' have infiltrated the Empire. Although it hadn't reached the Imperial Capital yet because of the excessive interference, the vigilance net had become looser than before. I think I can rendezvous with it at the destination of Laplace's Shift through Shadow Shift. How about this?”

It turns out that's pretty reassuring.

Souei is excellent as a "secret agent", especially at a time like this.

And his fighting prowess is impeccable.

On closer inspection, the Souei also seemed to evolve without moving a muscle.

Unknowingly, the Souei had ceased to be a fair oni and had evolved into a race called the Dark Spirit Oni. It seemed to be a chain reaction caused by Benimaru’s evolution, and Souei was granted a blessing.

Souei was cultivated to serve as the shadow of Benimaru when he was in the village of the Great Ogre Clan.

Benimaru is the table and the Souei is the chair. They are both up and down and equally close friends.

That being said, it feels like a pair of matching existences with Benimaru.

It was because the two of them were in this relationship that Souei was most strongly influenced by Benimaru's awakening, presumably Souei was being treated as subordinate to Benimaru.

Well, it's not a big deal that the two will get along.

"Dark spirit onis" are also dark spirit demon spirits, and like Benimaru, are spiritual beings with physical bodies.

It can probably be seen as a subordinate demigod to Benimaru.

He’s not as good as the top, but he does have a medium amount of magicules. Though substantially inferior to Benimaru, it was nevertheless more than the semi-awakened state of Clayman.

The intensity is enough. The current Souei could also have a slight advantage when fighting against the original demon lords like Carrion or Frey.

Was it because of this reinforcement that he became able to infiltrate the Empire's vigilance net?

Whether it's actually true or not doesn't matter.

It's pretty reliable if done by Souei, I don't have a problem with that. But there's a problem with this, what to do with Masayuki's guards.

"So reliable. But what about Masayuki?”

"My 'clone' will continue to monitor, and even if something happens, I think it will be enough.

Souei replied confidently.

Diablo also chimed in with the offer.

"In that case, why don't you let Venom mix in with Masayuki's company? In my humble opinion, as long as the brat is kept secret, Venom can take on both the duties of escort and surveillance. It will both reduce the burden on Lord Souei and serve as an insurance policy.”

Well, nice proposal.

Venom's character is less of the usual demon, does things with common sense, and has become quite strong as well. It feels like Masayuki and I can also talk, so maybe the unexpected can get along well.

It seemed like it would be fun to hand him the words.

"In that case, there will be no one to serve as your adjutant.”

"Kufufufu, no problem. Since there are still the demoness girls, my own work will not be affected.”

That would be no problem.

"Does Souei think this is okay?”

"It's more solid and reliable to shoot inside than to watch in the dark. If I can arrange it this way, I will also be able to save the power that is divided among the ‘clones'."

That's settled then.

"Then I'll leave it to you to follow this policy.”

“Understood!"

"Leave it to me."

With that, Venom was dispatched as Masayuki's escort and rendezvoused with Souei when he arrived locally.

All that remains is whether the army is going to act…

"Is it necessary to demonstrate against the Empire at the time of the war with the Dwargon League?"

The First Corps and the Third Corps returned together after recovering the remains. In other words, the whole army is staying in the capital "Rimuru".

The Second Corps leader's Geld is still in evolutionary sleep, so the Second Corps can't move yet, in which case -

"Lord Rimuru, isn't it my turn?”

"Wait a minute. Hiss! We should go!”

Gabil put it aside for the moment, Gobta was rarely very energetic.

However, this time, unlike before, relying on quantity to fight would feel dangerous. When the opponent is a large army, it is unlikely to use a mass attack involving their own side, but this time the opponent is an elite minority and may use nuclear strike magic without any concern, most likely exposing the army to a mass attack of this type.

The magical battle against the army relies heavily on the strength of the legion's magic. Before the legion's magic was breached, elite troops were sent to each other to launch a strong attack, but when the opponent became stronger than a certain level, the soldiers at the bottom only got in the way.

"Hakurou, tell me what you think."

"Ho-ho-ho. I understand what Lord Rimuru is thinking, and there should be nothing wrong with what you think.”

"That is to say, the trainee soldier must not have to think about it, and it's better not to take the subordinate soldier with you, right?”

"If you want to avoid sacrifice as much as possible, you should do it.”

"In that case…”

"We'll have to let the wolves and spirits go to war?”

"Our legions will only send the Flying Dragons to the front!”

It had to be that way.

The Wolf Rider Soldier unit with its partner could reach A level in combined combat power, and it had done a good job of decoying this battle, and should not be taken down easily. Besides, it's first-class in escape, so I don't think it will be a problem.

I don't disagree with the "Flying Dragon" side either, as the Gabil's awakening has brought them all over the A level. There's still some unease about their power control, but it should be fine.

"So, that's how Gobta and Gabil prepare—no, wait?"

As I was about to make a decision, I suddenly remembered something important.

"Gobta, can you call out your partner's star wolf clan now?”

“Eh?"

"I mean, Ranga's awakening isn't over yet, so shouldn't its dependents be in sleep too?”

“Ah!"

He can't seem to call them out.

"You just stay home."

"But, but…"

"Oh Gobta, are you trying to say you can't recognize your own strength?"

"I'm sorry, Hiss.”

Gobta hung his head listlessly, which was the only thing that could not be done.

The superiority of the Wolf Rider Soldier Force was due to the high machine power of the Star Wolf Clan. Even if the riders are A+ each, there's no way to take them.

"It's not your fault, so please help Rigur keep the peace.”

"Got it, Hiss!

Sadly, the green legion will just have to stay here and watch their families.

In this way, the other troops who could go to war have…

"Is the Kurenai congregation all right?”

"No problem. All of them are A-ranked.”

That's great.

With the excellent commander Gobya at the head, there were multiple people who had evolved into the Ogre People clan with this blessing, and it should be trustworthy to let them go to war.

"Where's the Blue Shadow congregation?”

"Scattered throughout the country to gather information and to solicit the enemy. You can call back if you have to…”

"No need, let's get on with the shadowy work.”

“Understood."

There was no need to call them back hard, gathering intelligence was a very important thing, just get on with the mission.

"All that's left is the Yomigaeri…"

"Leave it to me! Be prepared for the opportunity to make a big splash at any time!”

"Well, yeah…”

There has been no noticeable change in the awakening of the Shion. However, the "Yomigaeri" have been greatly improved in their fighting abilities, and even some of them have reached the A level.

With the advantage of not being easy to die, there should be no problem to participate in the battle…

However, the "Yomigaeri" could not be of real value if it did not cooperate with Shion in the battle.

Without someone who can direct them, the action will be casual.

This time it's better to stay here and watch the family, just like the green legion.

"I see. Let's stay here and watch the house.”

"What's the matter?”

"The Yomigaeri are more of an escort group than an army, and I'm more comfortable with Shion being with me.”

"I see!”

Shion simply accepted what I said.

With that, the outgoing troops were settled.

One hundred members of the "Flying Dragon" and three hundred members of the "Kurenai". With four hundred people, it was an excellent combat group with all of its members above A level.

Although it is not numerically superior, its fighting ability is not.

But that's not reassuring.

"Then, Ultima, Carrera, there are tasks for you as well.”

"Yeah, yeah, yeah! Do as you're told!”

"What mission, my lord?”

"Ultima continues to serve as an intelligence officer for the Gabil forces. And Carrera, this time, she's going to assist Gobya instead of Geld.”

“Hey…that lizard again?”

"Leave it to me. I will help them without being conspicuous.”

There's something unspeakably disturbing about these answers.

Ultima seems to have developed a sense of resistance to Gabil, and Carrera says she won't stand out or be believed.

"What, does Lady Ultima have a problem with my generation?”

"Yeah, there's a lot to be upset about! Should I say that your high is disgusting, or that our common sense can't understand your behavior?”

"Ha ha ha, don't worry! I'll take it seriously when I fight!”

"Experimenting with the enemy's attacks in battle, isn't that serious?”

"What are you talking about? In order to steer the fight towards a favorable situation, it is good to try all tactics. Experimentation is part of it, shouldn't it be done seriously?”

"No! That's something that should have been done before the fight started!!! So why do we have to do this explanation?”

This one, no wonder, sprouted a sense of resistance.

Even as I listened, I thought Ultima was right.

"I'm sorry. Can we just bear with him for a while?”

"If it's Lord Rimuru's order, we'll try! After all, some things feel like they can't be taught without him, and this is a good opportunity for me to think about it optimistically.”

With a disdainful but still adorable look on her face, Ultima looked at Gabil with an appraising look as she responded.

Although the two didn't seem to have a good match, it shouldn't be a problem to leave Gabil in Ultima's care.

"And you, Carrera, don't think about being inconspicuous anyway.”

“Wow?"

I don't think it's likely that it'll end up being a big deal anyway, even if you want it to be inconspicuous.

More so than that, I'm hoping that Carrera will get the timing right.

"Try to keep your own side free of casualties and make this your top priority. Then there's the matter of being able to stay in peace until the fight starts.”

"It's good it's so simple!”

Really?

To ask nothing more of her is to repeatedly admonish her to absolutely abide by this and hope it works out.

"Hakurou, can you help look after the green legion too?”

“Understood."

"Take Carrera's reins and I'll leave you to it."

Hakurou smiled bitterly and nodded.

This is a temporary relief.

So the lineup for the strike was decided—just as I thought so, Gedora raised his hand to ask for the floor.

"Lord Rimuru, I'm sorry to intrude, but I have a proposal.”

"What is it?”

"In my humble opinion, can we get the floor guardian colossus statue to participate in this battle?”

I see.

Getting that out of the maze was a bit of a problem, but the damage wouldn't have caused casualties.

Even if the ride is performed on it, Gedora should be able to disengage safely.

Gedora has the magic of the "resurrection bracelet" for emergency return. Being able to observe with peace of mind is a huge advantage, no matter what kind of intense battle zone one enters.

But exposing the fighting ability of that thing is a problem, right?

"Vesta, what do you think?”

Wanting to hear what Vesta had to say, then a fearless smile appeared on Vesta's face.

Pushing the glasses up, Vesta opened her mouth.

"This is arguably the best showcase stage. Although a detailed report was presented to King Gazel, applications have been received from time immemorial saying that they wanted to see it in kind. I also want to collect data on various conditions, and I'm interested in how it will perform on the actual battlefield.”

Beretta is really a researcher.

The size of the power determines the value of the weapon, even for the purpose of demonstration, it is meaningless to show its power without first using it once.

Judging by that thought, the battlefield was indeed a good showcase stage, and presumably Vesta thought the same thing.

Indeed, the Floor Guardian Colossus Statue is more suited for localized warfare than for weapons of mass destruction. It can both create a sense of intimidation and strike the opponent's weakness.

Now that I've allowed the demoness trio to go out, it would be inconsistent to reject the offer again on moral grounds.

"Would it cause a technology drain if taken by the enemy?"

"I swear I'll never make such a mistake!”

Even if this happens, there is no end to the technology if you develop a better performance magic doll next time. However, in order to avoid such a problem, the Guardian Statue is equipped with a self-detonating device, so there is no need to worry about the leakage of technology.

And so on and so forth.

It was like he was saying something beautiful, but there was a word that I couldn't ignore.

"Self-detonating device?"

"Yes, it is Lord Veldora's proposal to mount it anyway. I thought it was some kind of joke at the time, it's true that Veldora-sama came up with the design in anticipation of this state of affairs!”

No, absolutely not.

I'm guessing it was Veldora, who made such a silly proposal.

The only people who can think of something like a self-exploding device are Ramiris or Veldora who read the manga.

I wish they didn't keep clinging to such meaningless things.

But it's true, it's still better to have a self-detonating device than not.

"I know, it doesn't matter if it's broken or in the hands of the enemy, just don't push yourself.”

“So?"

"Yes, permission to strike. There may be no chance of Gedora you making an appearance, but be prepared to enter the game if circumstances change.”

"I see. After all, I don't want to take a hard line on my past colleagues either. If a new type of weapon emerges that even I don't know about, it will be time for the Floor Guardian Colossus to appear!”

In that case, it can be handed over to him with confidence.

Gedora, who has no roots under his feet, may betray once it appears that we are about to be defeated. It was possible that the reason he wanted to come outside the labyrinth now was to be able to move easily in case our side might lose the battle. These are my thoughts, but it's a little unintelligent to pursue this issue now.

Let's be optimistic here that Gedora has no second thoughts, that is, just a landslide victory in the war against the Empire.

So Gedora joined the battle, and the men who were to go out were thus determined.

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It was dusk by the time the meeting ended.

After the dissolution, each began to prepare for tomorrow.

As for me, I plan to spend my leisure time in the cafeteria.

Tomorrow's schedule is to start the morning with a morale boost for the attacking members, followed by a "teleportation" to send them all away.

The meeting with Yuuki began at noon. Since it was Laplace who did the transmission, there was plenty of time.

It doesn't take any special preparation to go back that day. Of course, with no intention of preparing any meet and greet gift for Yuuki, one can welcome tomorrow with a light heart.

"Is it really okay to be so laid back?”

"It's okay. How about you? Is it really good not to spend time with Momiji and Albis?”

Benimaru and I came to the cafeteria together, but for obviously still newlyweds, is it not good to spend at home leisurely?

Benimaru grinned at my words.

"Today, the two of them went to learn how to cook with Shuna. They seem to have made a mutual no-running pact, so I got kicked out…”

Hey, hey, there's no such thing as a newlywed couple like that.

'Isn't that a bad idea?’—it’s just that I can't get involved in other people's family matters.

"Yeah, that's right.”

I responded with an exaggerated nod.

Diablo happily delivered the food.

The pose was like a real butler.

Well, I've thought about whether it's really good to let the primordial demon do such a thing, but since he's happy, I have no reason to stop him, and I'm almost used to it by now.

“Thank you very much.”

"No, no, no. It's my job.”

Is that right?

Never mind, if he can accept that personally, then that’s fine.

"Rimuru-sama, please use this side too.”

Saying so, Shion poured wine into her glass.

Of course, this wine isn't made by the Shion and can be safely drunk, it's just that the atmosphere is a little breathtaking right now.

Today's dish is just the common fried pork chops, which can be easily eaten casually without serving.

However, Diablo and Shion stood behind me, instead it was mentally exhausting.

"Why don't we sit down and eat together?”

"Thank you for this gentle advice."

"No! I'm so full, don't worry about me!”

"After all, Shion has already eaten in the kitchen.”

"Diablo! You guys!”

It's a fight at the seams.

It felt a little silly to worry about them again, and the two of us, Benimaru and I, just ignored them and started enjoying our food.

"So you're going to trust Yuuki?”

"It's hard to believe from the bottom of my heart, but I guess I'll just have to believe. And, I want to believe him, too.”

"Then I'll follow Rimuru-sama's idea and set up a plan on the premise of trusting Yuuki on the battlefield.”

"What if it's betrayed?”

"It might be bad, but there's always a way.”

"Yeah, I'm going to trouble you.”

"Just what I want."

Benimaru's smile is so reliable.

Since it is in war, one can only trust the Allies. If even this is in doubt, then there is no way to be sure of success in any kind of combat operation.

If betrayed one suffers a great loss and is arguably faced with a difficult choice.

However, I chose to trust Yuuki.

Now that the decision has been made to do so, there is no point in continuing to fret.

"I've always cared. Do you have to eat?”

I asked as I looked at Benimaru, who was eating the same fried pork chops in front of me.

"If there is no need for it, there is no need for it.”

"Ah, yes.”

"But isn't Rimuru-sama the same? I'm relieved that my taste hasn't disappeared.”

"I understand. I felt like my life was over when I couldn't even get my three major desires met. By working hard to resurrect the appetite for food and sleep, I'm now happy every day.”

"Yeah. I was worried before, but now I'm just as relieved as before.”

We ‘hmmmm’d’ and nodded.

Suddenly, I felt something was wrong.

"What? You say the same as before, but have all three desires been preserved?”

"Yes. Very fortunately, all were preserved.”

"Sleep too?"

"Sleep is not necessary, but it is possible to get into a state of sleep by just meditating, and also to recover from fatigue.”

What's this? I’ve obviously mastered sleep through effort, and this person can do it directly. And it's even better than my results?

No, what I care more about than that is…

"Sexuality too?”

I asked Benimaru in a small whisper.

Then Benimaru nodded slightly in affirmation, somewhat shyly.

"What the hell, aren't you unable to evolve because you can't have children…?"

"That's right. Momiji and Albis are also both pregnant.”

"That's a congratulation—no, in that case the sex drive should be gone!”

"I also think it will disappear, but even if I can't have children now, I still have my sex drive. That way it won't break the two’s hearts.”

It's so enviable.

It's a perfect evolution to have a function that I don't even have.

Damn, why can't I…

"That's great."

“Well…why are you taking my food?”

"Shut up! You traitor!”

My jealousy flared up and I snatched Benimaru's fried pork chops.

It's all I've got left to eat this one for fun—and I'll take that for granted.

All in all, we had a great and lively evening.

It's daily as always.

However—

This daily routine came to an abrupt end.

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"No, it's not good! Something terrible has happened. We have to get back!"

Laplace shouted like this and ran into the canteen.

Right behind him were others.

"Something's wrong, Lord Rimuru! We have just received a communication in the name of King Gazel.

Velgrynd appeared in front of the Hybrid Legion formation, and they’re requesting emergency support!!!”

Vesta exclaimed with bloodshot eyes.

The shocking content of this made me jerk to my feet.

"Call the members scheduled to attack at once!”

“Understood."

Hearing my order, Benimaru immediately acted.

This should bring people together quickly.

"Laplace, you wait a moment before you go back, and we'll come with you.”

"But, but…”

The panicked look on Laplace's face made me suspect acting at first, wondering in my mind if he was up to something else, trying to trick us into a trap.

But listening to Vesta's follow-up debriefing, I learned that this is not a trap.

It was information that even Laplace could not have, that something significant was happening in the Empire.

The more you have to stay calm at times like this.

"I know something big is going on, but don't panic. We are now allies. Wouldn't it be more convenient in every way for us to go there together than for you to go back alone?”

"What's so convenient? I don't think so.”

Since there were the enemy's strongest fighting force in front of the hybrid legionnaires, one could instead consider this an opportunity. Yuuki and the others seem to have been attacked by someone, and taking those guys down would make the subsequent dealings more favorable.

I asked Laplace for more detailed information.

"So, what happened?”

After a slight hesitation, Laplace answered my question.

"I've been contacted by Tear and told that the Chairman and Lady Kagali have asked us to return, and it seems Kondo has attacked us.”

Lt. Kondo? That's one of the tricky ones.

It's only right to join forces with Laplace and launch an attack.

But what was worrying was that with Yuuki's battle strength, there was nothing they could do.

"What's Yuuki doing? Did he lose too?”

"This, the boss's opponent seems to be Damrada”.

"Damrada? One of the "three giants" is really the deputy commander of the Imperial Emperor's Knights of the Near Guard, right? Did he really betray Yuuki?”

I thought he was Yuuki's companion, but isn't he?

After all, having not seen him in person, it was impossible to guess what he was thinking.

"I don't know, Tear and Footman go back and forth. Anyway, Damrada is fighting boss for sure.”

Well, I don't get it.

What is certain, however, is that the tricky enemies are scattered.

In a nutshell, the first thing is to confirm the status. Because of time constraints I unleashed physics magic: the Argos.

The coordinates had long since been grasped clearly, directly designating where the hybrid regiment was stationed, and the walls of the canteen reflected the local situation.

"This, this is…”

I wonder who didn't hold back a whisper.

A beautiful woman with a voluptuous smile could be seen, her most notable feature being the bun of her blue hair that was coiled up above her.

The woman was dressed in a luxurious Chinese-style costume with a military uniform draped over her shoulders.

It was like walking in the no-man's-land and coming to the 60,000-strong army formation.

Nope—that’s not the army, should say the people who were.

Flying overhead were presumably corpses.

The bright red pillar that connects heaven and earth, that is, the supergravity force field.

The drifting rain of blood stained the entire force field bright red.

"Gravity collapses? It's a pain in the ass to use my best play.”

Carrera said as if in jest, with a very serious expression on her face.

It's no wonder this page, presumably this one from Velgrynd used this magic with even better precision than Carrera.

Perfectly specified the range, while controlling to keep it from storming off.

From the fact that there were no traces of destruction around, one can infer that there was only an effect on gravity.

"Controlling the gravity and blowing the army into the sky without affecting the ground?”

"Yes, my lord. And what's even more hateful is that not even a grain of sand was rolled in. Only the humans identified as enemies were blown up into the sky.”

Can such a thing really be done?

No, it should be doable.

After all, the results were on display, and it was no use doubting them.

"Want to fight that?”

"Kufufufufu, what a sister of Lord Veldora. Funny, I want to fight her seriously for once.”

Diablo was pretty tough, but to be honest it felt like an unbeatable opponent.

<<No. Challenge with all your might, and there is a chance of winning.>> It was reassuring to hear, but using your full battle strength was difficult, and there were definitely going to be sacrifices, so you could still hope to avoid the fight if you could.

In that case, it would be better to aim for Emperor Rudra.

It was supposed to be a showdown between Guy and Rudra to end the war, as there would be no needless sacrifice in doing so.

"But I don't understand. Why not finish this magic?”

"Maybe it's because they don't like destroying the natural environment like we do?"

"Shouldn't be that reason. Look, the bodies that have been drained of blood are piled up.”

Testarossa points to a corner of the image.

There were indeed a lot of bodies piled up there.

I split the image, zoomed in on the part she was referring to, and then saw a male in military uniform and a female who had met.

"That's Yuuki's secretary, Kagali, right?”

"That's the man who created our house and the president of the Moderate Clown Troupe. Damn it!

Although I don't want to believe it, it actually happened. It was clear to our family when Footman and Tear delivered the 'readings', and it seems that Kondo has manipulated Kagali-sama.”

“Manipulated?”

"Right. And to top it all off, neither Tear nor Footman were able to resist Lord Kagali. The fact that there has been no more 'chanting' since just now is probably due to a prohibition order.”

What a worst-case scenario.

Spiritual domination, I think taking away someone else's free will is the lowest of acts.

—Compared to this.

The status quo is terrible.

"So, to what extent has Miss Kagali's domination affected her? Are you okay?”

Laplace couldn't see his expression with the mask on, but seemed to be in genuine discomfort. If Laplace, like Tear and Footman, couldn't resist Kagali's orders then that was a big problem.

"Our family is fine. Although the same was all created by Lord Kagali, only our family can disobey Lord Kagali's orders. The problem now is that most of the companions Yuuki has gathered have been carved with "spells". Of course, it's only the subordinates we're worried about, and since everyone else is in this state, there's no point in thinking about anything else now.”

Indeed, Yuuki's army was no longer viable, and even if someone survived, there was no way to escape that magic.

There seemed to be people among them who had not been affected by magic, but had also lost the will to fight after witnessing a tragedy like that. Without a “spell," you've lost the battle.

It's good news that Laplace won't be affected because the situation is so bad.

"Even if you're the only one who's okay, you're okay.”

"Don't worry, our family is finished.”

Laplace said finally keeping a flat tone.

The words were flat and sounded like they didn't feel anything, but I didn't think so.

There was great remorse for the manipulation of his companions, and there was no doubt that it was from his heart.

I didn't say anything and patted Laplace on the shoulder.

Laplace looked at me in surprise.

I said to Laplace, as naturally as possible, in a cheerful tone.

"Isn't it too early to give up? It's not like Miss Kagali is dead. If she was manipulated by that bastard Kondo, then beating down the culprit would have restored it. Isn't Yuuki still fighting too, so hurry up and help them fight back.”

It was better to comfort him a little than to confront him negatively.

In short, it is possible to despair afterwards.

What can be done now?

It's more important to consider this.

"What a strange person to say the same thing as boss. It's human beings who persecute and exile us, and it's human beings who come to our rescue…It's a match made in heaven.”

Laplace whispered thus. The expression under the mask seemed to be smiling bitterly.

But don't look at me like this, I'm actually a magical creature…

But then again, even though I’m now a Slime, it turns out I’m really a human too. Isn't it a bit inappropriate to spout off the words here?

"Is it okay to ask you a question?”

"Ask what?"

"What is it that you want to do?”

That kind of thing?

Nothing I've done since the beginning has changed.

Since being reincarnated into this world, I have had only one ambition.

"Live happily ever after with everyone. To this end, they built cities and nations and established diplomatic relations with other countries. After that, it's all about getting along with people who share the same interests and hobbies, while emphasizing diversity.”

"Wouldn't you like to have the world in your pocket?”

"Hey, what's that? It's too much trouble."

"Huh? Conquer the world, and everything will be as you wish!”

"So that would definitely get boring. Only when there are different kinds of thoughts can there be a wider range of possibilities, and all kinds of unexpected and powerful works can be born!”

I argued my point desperately, and Laplace listened with some bewilderment. Then a little panicked, shaking his hand and shouting "blah blah blah.”

"It's strange, isn't it? What is the work saying? We're talking about what happens after we conquer the world, right?”

What an unintelligent guy.

"So you say, 'Everything is according to your own mind, and you say you want to control the mind of everyone else? Or is it mental domination like it was for Miss Kagali?”

"No, that one doesn't really want it…”

"Thought, speech, expression. I think the freedom of these three acts is to be guaranteed. That is the respect for basic human rights that inspires diversity and is the driving force for cultural development.

"Huh? That will only increase the number of people who are good at what they say, and the problems that can be solved will become unsolvable. How can you run a country like this!?”

There's some truth to that.

The greatest weakness of democracy lies in how it divides national interests and personal feelings.

But it is also a kind of diversity development.

"That's good. Those are the problems to be overcome in the future, and we all consider solutions together. I'm inherently capricious, and no amount of talking will get the country going in a direction it doesn't want.”

I'll just be the long one who only speaks in a big way.

"King's Landing and not ruling.”

Just take that to heart and do it as you always do.

Fortunately there are plenty of people who can serve as references.

A system of domination disguised as a religion like with Ruminas, or a system of domination at the apex of the state like with Elmesia, can serve as a reference.

But there is a long way to go and no need to make a decision now.

"So the question of national policy is put to one side. What's more important is the development of culture, ah entertainment, entertainment. Without this, the development of the country would be meaningless.”

Here are the highlights of the exam to be taken.

In order to be able to have a fun and happy life, more entertainment must be born. In order to achieve this, there can be no restrictions on thoughts and actions.

Laplace looked confusedly at me who was carrying out the instructions.

"I can't understand. Our family can't understand what you're saying. That man…boss, he promised us, to conquer the world and then create the world that we could live in happily. So we took the boss, Lord Yuuki's word for it. But what's wrong with you?”

"What is it?”

"Fooling our ambition with this half-baked awareness."

"Who's fooling you? I just think conquering the world isn't as much fun as you think, and it's a lot harder than you think.”

Hearing my answer, Laplace fell into a brief silence.

And muttered.

“…I've known for a long time, this kind of thing.”

Then sat powerlessly on the floor.

He turned his face to the image that had been projected with magic and presented before his eyes were the piles of corpses and the Kagali that stood beside those bodies.

"You just asked what's going on there, right? Our family is here to tell you that this is the secret of secrets. You should know that we are the Undead Elf Clan, but how that clan has increased in number, our family will tell you now.”

Hmmm?

Blah blah blah, this seems like a really important thing.

"You calm down. That's not something that should be said in the cafeteria, is it?”

"It doesn't matter, now is not the time to say such things. Listen, we were all created by the hand of Lady Kagali, and that's what the "Spell King" is really good at, gathering the grievances left over from the corpses to create the forbidden spell of the powerful demons, the forbidden spell: ‘Monster Death and Abyss.’”

It's a canteen, but it's also a private room for subordinates. There were no ordinary people around, but Laplace was really dry and decisive.

I can't believe I'm telling the most secret things in such a place.

The only ones who remained were the group of Benimaru, Souei, Diablo, Shion, Hakurou and Demoness trio who had come over according to my instructions, and Vesta who had watched the image together after finishing the debriefing.

I don't know when Gabil returned even after giving the order to everyone.

The content is important and thankfully it's okay for people here to hear it.

"That's a really, really nostalgic spell.”

"Do you know about this? Diablo.”

Diablo was passionate about magic and came in handy at times like these, and he was a big help if he knew.

"This flesh, which Lord Rimuru has given me, is also the product of the monster death product. At that time, my flesh was no longer "soul," but it was just right for receiving flesh. The original purpose of this spell was to unify the power of tens of thousands of corpses and take it for himself.

It's true that inhumane evil spells can be described as taboo spells. But I can't say anything about the one who took my soul, so let's not talk about it.

"To take power for oneself means to be able to board the will of a particular being into the flesh?”

"It depends, but there's nothing wrong with that view.”

"Diablo is right. Footman, Tear, and Clayman are all surviving kinsmen of Lord Kazaream. He lost his homeland, and in order to remember the humiliation of the past, he fell prey to this forbidden art.”

Laplace affirmed Diablo's words.

My speculation seems to be correct.

That being the case, it would feel bad to let that spell be done.

"There are about 60,000 people in that mixed corps. With that much material, we should be able to create about ten Undead Elves that can rival Clayman.”

"Oi oi…”

“And the trouble is, there are a lot of soulful guys in that legion. Unlike Footman and Tear, those guys might be able to control a more powerful force.”

Asking him specifically what that meant, Laplace looked reluctant as he replied.

One of the reasons for this is this.

The devouring of Footman and Tear by powerful forces resulted in immature spirits, as the distribution of spirits and power was immature when Kazaream first created the Undead Elf Race, thus giving them too much power.

Clayman is an example of success after lessons learned.

It would be wrong to say that Footman and Tear are cases of failure. It's just that mental immaturity that causes IQ growth to be slow, but the power is strong.

In fact, the pre-evolution Clayman was no match for Footman. It can also be seen that, in terms of fighting ability alone, it can be argued that the success story of Clayman is surpassed.

In other words, if one intended to use 60,000 corpses to create the Power Specialized Undead Elf, it would probably be condensed into six or seven of them.

Those guys sacrificed millions of troops for the birth of the Awakened One. It's only 60,000 corpses, and it's estimated that it won't even bother to put it into practice directly.

"We were all just kids back then. Tear is even more childish than she is now, not to mention Footman, and the only mature ones are Clayman, who has also taken his own life for his stupid mobbing, but our family doesn't think it's your fault either. In the end, the weak are the strongest in this world, and it's only natural to try out an untrustworthy opponent, so what's the point of sacrificing others in order to expand your own power? That's what our family really means."

Clearly there was no need to say it, Laplace said it stiffly.

It makes no sense to provoke us here; it's a bad move.

Even then the reason Laplace has to say so is that—

"Don't underestimate people. I will never forgive you for instigating the destruction of the village of the Great Ogre Clan because of you. But now that Lord Rimuru has decided to join forces, there will be no opposition from us.”

"Benimaru is right. The remorse of everyone in the village tears at the mere thought of it. However, even if we do it now, it won't relieve this feeling. I can only let go of this remorse if I achieve the world that Lord Rimuru hopes for that would make everyone laugh and live.”

"Hmph, you think you can cut off the root of the scourge by turning everyone's hatred against you.

How naive, our anger, is not so easily erased. It's not just a matter of torturing you to get rid of our anger.”

"Well, that's right. Like you said, the weak and strong are everything. It was because of the immaturity of this old man and others at that time. Don't you also look like you're crying because of your immaturity?

Well, then you should understand our feelings.”

Benimaru, Shion, Souei, and Hakurou. Bury your hatred of Laplace in your heart and face that hatred squarely while determined to fight together.

They certainly couldn't forgive Laplace and others for what they had done, but they were also determined to defeat that abomination. I thought to myself at the time I accepted Geld, what a measure of strength they are.

"Look, I don't forgive you, and I don't believe you completely, but we're allies now, and we should put aside our troubles and get on the same page.”

"It's our family, please. Please, our family wants to save the boss and the chairman, help us.”

Laplace bowed his head deeply. This man, who is usually so transcendent, has gone out of his way to be sincere.

If even that was acting, I wouldn't be able to trust anyone else.

Only now, I want to believe this guy.

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Faced with Laplace's request, Benimaru and the others nodded in agreement.

This act of determination is kinda handsome and makes you see God.

"Okay. Then, let's follow the original plan, all six of us sneak in and save Yuuki.”

"Yeah. Even if it's so that he can apologize properly afterwards, he has to get that bastard out.”

Benimaru is very much on the go.

It was Yuuki, after all, and it felt like he'd take down Damrada, and then be calm as usual.

The question is, what to do about Velgrynd. Just as I was about to give my instructions, Shion burst into a startling speech.

"That Kondo guy is shady, right? If he can manipulate Kagali, maybe Clayman was being manipulated too.”

“……”

The crowd could not help but fall into silence.

"What did you say?” Laplace muttered, and Benimaru petrified in surprise.

"Kufufufu. The First Secretary really has a way with funny things.”

Diablo wanted to laugh it off, but seemed to recall all the previous situations and noticed that none of the elements could negate Shion's statement.

"It's possible…”

Hakurou said the same thing.

No, it's only natural to think so.

According to Laplace, Yuuki seems to have ordered Clayman to make peace.

Regardless of the pig-headed upheaval first, Clayman's storming away after that would get him nowhere.

<<Answer. Yes. The situation was redefined based on newly arrived intelligence. A part of Clayman's actions can be seen to be incomprehensible, which would be reasonable if it interfered with Kondo's will.

The conclusion can be drawn that it is the empire that gains the most.>> Well, it does.

"So that's what? Is it because of that Kondo's attempts that we've gotten into so much trouble?”

“Shit."

"Talk too much, Benimaru. If you don't change it, you'll have to report it to Lady Shuna."

"Don't do that. Can't I change it yet?”

Ignoring Benimaru and Shion's duo spins first.

''Although I'm not happy about it, it seems that I can only agree with Shion's opinion. I also attempted a criminal psychoanalysis, and there were incomprehensible behaviors in Clayman's actions. At a time when more caution should have been exercised, somehow traces of his anxious use of the army could be found. I thought it was Clayman's stupidity and just let it go, and if a third party had intervened, it would have made sense.”

Wow, Diablo's opinion is in line with the King of Wisdom.

In that case, there is no longer any reason to doubt.

"Although we don't know the truth, let's act on the premise that Kondo has manipulated Clayman now.

In other words, when confronting Kondo, be sure to guard yourself against the possibility of being manipulated!”

“Yes!"

It's also possible that even more care won't help, but it's better than not being on guard.

Anyway, keep an eye out for this man named Kondo. Probably even more trouble than Velgrynd.

Let everyone remember what Kondo looks like as a consensus.

Well, to recap the battle.

"Gabil and others went in response to King Gazel's request for help. But don't go head-to-head with Velgrynd. Even the subordinates would be in danger, and letting the soldiers on would be a waste of time.”

"Of course that's clear. Even for my generation, I would never think of challenging the great ‘true dragon race.’”

That's not a match for the other side.

Gabil and Hakurou, too, were very understanding.

The purpose of the reinforcements was to buy time.

After we rescue Yuuki, then come back as Velgrynd's opponent.

"But is the ceremony to be left alone?”

Ultima asked.

The ritual refers to the monster death plague that Kagali is performing.

"That's a relief. That spell, takes a certain amount of time to unleash, and the birth of one takes at least two hours. If the energy is to be concentrated, it's estimated to take more time.”

Diablo helped tell her.

It hasn't been an hour since the ceremony began.

If we rendezvous with Yuuki, defeat Emperor Rudra, and then rush back…

"Well, that's not right. It would be just as Diablo said, but Lord Kagali can do secret magic.”

"The secret art…? Is that so, and that's why Velgrynd the Grand Marshal has stepped in to assist.”

Diablo seemed to understand, but we were still at a loss, except that we didn't have time to listen to him in detail.

"That is, how much time is left?”

"Kufufufufu. Worst case scenario, we can have a few undead elves in two hours.”

Two hours?

With this amount of time alone, could Emperor Rudra be defeated?

No, there's no need to worry, just do it.

I looked at Laplace.

"You're the strongest, right? At least he’s stronger than Clayman, and it looks like he’s stronger than those two Power Specialized types.”

"Well, sort of, after all, our house is special.”

"In that case, let's ignore the spell that Kagali is performing.”

"Hey, is this okay?”

Gabil marveled.

"Mmm. Think about it, Gabil. Laplace is also quite strong, but not against an untouchable opponent. As for the other two, you guys can win now, too, right?”

That's my judgment.

Although Laplace hides strength, it can't fool my eyes. In other words, I can sense that he has not awakened to the ultimate skill. Gabil will be hard to win, but Souei should be able to hit a tie.

In other words, if an Undead Elf is born to rival Laplace, it will be tricky, but if it can't match Laplace, there's always a way. It would be troublesome to let those undead elves grow up, so they couldn't be left unattended. But, to judge, not a threat that must be stopped immediately.

"It's good to have Velgrynd assisting with the spell. If possible, hinder her as much as possible so that she can't concentrate on the spell. If it can't be done, then leave it at that and leave Velgrynd alone. Rather, we don't have to actively step on the tiger's tail.”

Listening to what I said, Gabil nodded after exchanging a glance with Hakurou, and seemed to agree.

Then, just in case.

"If she points the finger at you or King Gazel, let Ultima and Carrera deal with it."

They are also in the strongest class among my men, so they can buy some time even against a strong opponent like Velgrynd.

No matter how Kagali's rituals turned out to be, they could be ignored, but the army was about to suffer a devastating blow once Velgrynd was out in force. The only point to be absolutely avoided, I gave the relentless order.

"Thank you for relying on us! Even to Veldora's sister, we will show no mercy!”

"Yeah, we'll see if we can win. I'm updating my undefeated record, so let me have some fun.”

Ultima and Carrera responded reliably, and the defeat to Zegion was a bit of an unheard of thing.

Just when I thought the course could be decided on that.

"One moment, please. I'm sure it's not enough for Ultima and Carrera to take on Lord Velgrynd. I know it's rude of me to ask to lead the way again, but allow me to volunteer to take on Lord Velgrynd together.”

This is Testarossa's proposal.

Hearing her say that made me tangle. It's true that the proposal is charming, but if you're going to break into the heart of the empire, it's only safe to challenge it with maximum combat power.

Not only are there strong enemies that Guy identifies with, but also four or more "single-digit" guards.

To deal with so many strongmen, one really didn't want to be missing Testarossa in terms of battle power.

However, it would be feasible to do so if one could buy time on the matter of dealing with Velgrynd.

In that case, I'll take Gedora…

"I'll go instead. It'll shorten the time and increase the success rate of the battle.”

Souei offered his own idea, perhaps a proper proposal.

At least, it's better than taking Gedora with you.

Benimaru, Shion, Souei, and Diablo. With those four in place, no matter what the opponent feels like, they can't lose.

"Let's go with this lineup. Please, Souei.”

"Yes, sir!"

Gabil and the others’ main goal was to buy time. Exclude hostile forces, including Kondo, if you can.

In case anything goes wrong, let the demoness trio play, which is the best option that can be taken at this stage.

"Then it's decided. Gabil you too, don't force yourselves until we return.”

“Yes!"

In this way, even though it was a bit rushed, the policy was set.

At this point, Vesta, who had been looking at the screen, shouted loudly.

"Oooh-ooh! King Gazel has arrived on the scene!”

Hearing him say so, turning his gaze to the screen, it was the figure of the Knights of the Sky in the sky.

"Come on, rendezvous before Gazel's casualties and communicate the battle plan!”

"Leave it to me, please! I, Gabil, will take on this great responsibility!”

"So, let's get moving!”

I gave the order.

Then, the very long night began.

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After sending Gabil and the others away by "diversion", we were transported with Laplace to the Imperial Capital.

In order to be ready for any situation, I became a human form at first.

"Here we go. This is our secret home base…Hey, where is this?"

Despite shifting over with magic, Laplace didn't look right.

At this point, there was an extremely nasty feeling of foreboding.

Looking around, it was a spacious hall that I don't have in the country.

Carved pillars lined the sides, and the ground was covered with fine fleece blankets.

It seems to be thought that which emperor's courtesy hall, but there is a distorted sense of space that does not wear off.

“Hello."

"No, it's not! Usually they only teleport to fixed locations, so this is the first time this has happened!”

Laplace replied anxiously, while I squinted at him. Doesn't look like a lie, but here's what's going on.

Looking around while contemplating, there was a place a few steps higher in front of fifty meters.

There's a chair that looks like a jade seat above, giving the impression of an audience hall.

There was a large, impressive-looking figure sitting in a chair, and next to it stood a pale blue-haired beauty with prominent features in a bun on her head, and it could not be mistaken for Velgrynd.

"Velgrynd! No, I was in the battlefield a while ago, I don't think it's here.”

"It would be time to move, but it doesn't look like it.”

Benimaru answered my query.

Souei and Shion also shared Benimaru's face with a puzzled look.

"Surrounded? Looks like a trap.”

Diablo said calmly.

I sensed it too, and there were dozens of people in this hall.

And, quite a strong one at that.

"Laplace, you bastard. Is the goal really to set us up…"

Despite Benimaru's sharp geological question, Laplace's mind wasn't on it.

"How could this happen? Is that interference with our technique? It's a lie, no way…”

As the saying goes, confused as hell.

This also seems to be an unanticipated state of affairs for Laplace.

In my opinion, this is not a trap set by Laplace.

There was a man who came up to us who were reinforcing our guard.

"Yeah, well done, Laplace. I'm also very happy that I was able to fool the Demon Lord Rimuru and his party.”

It's Yuuki.

Dressed in the uniform of the Empire, with a smile on his face.

“B-Boss! Wait, wait, wait. What's going on?”

"Ahahaha, no more acting. We'll win if we finish off the Demon Lord Rimuru here.”

Listening to Yuuki's speech, the killing aura of the Shion and Souei rose. But, unexpectedly, Benimaru and Diablo calmly listened to Yuuki and Laplace's conversation.

Watching them, I am truly impressed.

"You believe in Laplace, too.”

"Ah, no. I want to kill them when the two of them get careless," he said.

“Hey!"

"Kufufufufu, you're really worthy of your title Benimaru. Do it before you expose the killing aura.

That's the fundamentals.”

Idiots, where are you mafiosos from?

No such fundamentals exists in our country!

I'm so impressed, I convinced them both to wait and see. By the way, I would also like to talk to Shion and Souei, who were letting their killing aura out.

This will, Yuuki and Laplace's arguments go into white-hot water. Laplace is desperately trying to prove his innocence to us.

"Trust us! This time it's true, we didn't do anything bad!”

The more Laplace tried desperately, the more suspicious Yuuki's methods became.

I feel a little pathetic for Laplace, let's put an end to this farce.

Tapped Laplace twice on the shoulder, said.

"Calm down. That guy can be called Yuuki, but he's not Yuuki either.”

“Hey?"

"I'm sorry, but I guess Kondo was in control.”

He could have been defeated and then manipulated by Damrada, or there could have been a sneak attack during a two-man showdown. Anyway, it's troublesome that the enemy has guys who can dominate hearts and minds.

If they didn't believe in each other from the bottom of their hearts, they would have immediately turned into a fratricidal situation.

"Ah, that's what's going on! It's not a good idea to cheat someone else, but it's a good idea to get cheated yourself.”

Laplace's character is also really canny.

Knowing that I believed him, I got my spirits up.

However, the situation has not improved either. We are still surrounded and in crisis.

"I didn't think it would be so easy to find out. I want to make you more suspicious and kill each other.”

Yuuki too, even when manipulated, has a bad personality.

That's his nature, and this is the time to show my tolerance as an adult for ignoring him.

"Your Majesty, I regret my defeat in battle.”

"Boring show, but forget it. Before the battle began, I also wanted to say something.”

After Yuuki had finished reporting to the figure sitting on the stage, he stood up and started walking around.

Yuuki honestly stepped aside to make way. From this, it can be judged that Yuuki is subservient to Emperor Rudra. Although the possibility of acting cannot be completely ruled out, it seems better not to have optimistic thoughts.

Velgrynd followed him like a virtuous wife of Rudra. Other than the fact that she was a beauty and appeared to be just an ordinary person, it was clear that this was hidden information.

And I can see.

Velgrynd opened a thin layer of 'barriers' and surrounded itself and the man walking ahead. By the action of the 'barrier boundary', all aura is cut off.

"An amazing sense of power. I don't think the Velgrynd in front of me is fake."

"I agree. It's amazing to have reached this level.”

Benimaru echoed my words. However, there are those who react differently.

"Yeah? As it is often pulled by Lord Veldora to train, the feeling is the same in my opinion. Of course, you can't win.”

Shion…still training with Veldora?

After all, by training, they mean actual combat in a maze. It's all a fight to the death, and the results are not to be underestimated.

However, there's no point in winning if you can't. There is neither arrogance nor defiance.

"It's really a great 'frontier'. But as Shion said, there isn't much of a difference compared to Lord Veldora."

Diablo's views are similar to those of Shion.

Not sure if it's a low opinion of Velgrynd or a high opinion of Veldora. I can't judge at once.

However, even the confident Diablo didn't assert that he could win.

This is important.

Diablo actually doesn't lie or say things he can't do himself. According to my own understanding, that's about it.

"I don't suppose it was in your plans. It'd be fun not to come to a summit."

Rudra said with a smirk on her face. Indeed, it's exactly like Masayuki.

The hair color is brilliant blonde and the hair is a little different. In terms of pupil color, Rudra’s is blue and Masayuki's is teal. There are quite a few differences if you look closely, but the scent that both men exude somehow makes the same impression.

That being said, Masayuki also said some strange things.

"Lately, my hair seems…"

"Are you going bald?”

"Yes, yes, there's been a lot of stress lately—well, how can that be!? My hair's faded a bit. It was black, but now it seems to be teal?

"Hoo-huh. Could it be melanin loss or something?”

"Maybe? That's what I think…"

Like that, irrelevant teenage angst. It was originally thought so, but somehow now it all comes to mind.

Some care, but now is not the time for deep thought.

Rudra stepped forward to heel.

"Indeed, not in my plans. However, I do have something to say.”

"That would be great. Anyway, sit down first.”

Rudra waved her hand as she finished, and two chairs appeared in situ.

Magic?

I don't understand the principle at all, but I don't think I'm going to get some kind of trap or anything.

This is the kind of time to focus on atmosphere, and I sat down nonchalantly.

Benimaru stood to my right, and Diablo couldn't help but stand by to his left. Shion, on the other hand, quickly stepped up behind me, with Souei to her right.

Bewildered, Laplace rolled his eyes and slipped to the left of Shion.

After we decided on our positions, Velgrynd said something like a prank.

"Well, sit down for yourself. You've got no manners.”

Etiquette?

I don't care.

I'll sit if you let me.

"Come on, Velgrynd, they didn't do anything wrong. Since this person was also in the position of a demon lord, it was the same position as the one who ruled the country. I believe in the existence of reciprocity.”

It seems to be true that the emperor is speaking from the heart and has great measure.

"If you think it's okay, then I'm fine with it.”

Velgrynd seemed to simply agree.

As if it really doesn't matter, then stop threatening us.

Rudra was seated squarely in the chair opposite.

Velgrynd naturally waited on his right.

A step behind, standing side by side, were four knights armed with mythical rank. It seems that these four people, are the four horsemen that Bonnie was talking about.

Finally, the man in the clear monochrome black uniform stood to Rudra's left. He doesn't look Japanese, this man should be Damrada.

Yuuki, on the other hand, stood witty next to Damrada, very clear about his position. Then, simply, treat Yuuki as an enemy.

That said, all of the high ranking people of the Empire were present except Kondo. Although our side also brought in senior subordinates, it was still overwhelmingly disadvantageous in terms of numbers.

On the Imperial side, the Order of the Imperial Emperor's Near Guard has dozens of sequential superiors, and the top "single digit" has five in it.

Add to that Velgrynd, honestly I’m doubting it can be won.

By the way, Yuuki is also in.

It is not too much to say that it is an unprecedented crisis.

Presumably from Rudra's words, it wasn't Laplace's fault for becoming this state, but rather it was set up in the first place. Is it so disturbing to let the other party's schemes succeed…

In order not to let the other person read my mind, I put on a fearless attitude and said.

"You're the one who's been killed this time, aren't you? While considering that our actions might be guessed at, I didn't expect it to turn out that way.”

That's a lie.

The original purpose was to attack with a few elites, always thinking that the domination was in our hands.

"Hahaha, no need to be humble, it's unexpected for me too. I already knew that the mecha legions sent out would be defeated, but I didn't expect that not only were there zero survivors, but even the Awakened ones weren't born, which is really beyond my calculations.”

It was born, but then beaten down by Diablo.

There's no need to tell each other everything, but the people who made the plan are really good. That being said, from a human perspective it is heresy.

"So, who's making this plan?”

Won't tell me anyway, just try to ask around.

But unexpectedly, Rudra was happy to tell us himself.

According to him.

It was Lt. Kondo who made the plan.

I was going to say this was expected, but the plan was even worse than I thought it would be.

-Awareness of the number of the attacking army. Afterwards, the army feigned defeat.

-Facing the pursuing army, meet it with hybrid legions. However, this legion has the potential for betrayal and can be treated as a hostile force.

-Exclude all together when betrayal is clear. The task was entrusted to the "marshal".

As a result, in the second phase, the plan went awry.

As a result, Kondo seems to have drastically changed his plans.

-To envelop the original indulgence of Yuuki and the others. Even based on the information obtained from Demon Lord Clayman alone, it was possible to judge Yuuki that they had undoubtedly betrayed.

-Beat Yuuki and the others. Confirm their attempts and then adjust the final plan.

-The assembled hybrid army is estimated at 60,000. Produce wizards in quantity by making them living sacrifices.

-When the time comes, the "marshal" will come out and put on a show to attract the attention of Guy and others.

-Gather the troublemakers together and smash them down in one breath. For this, the battle strength needs to be focused to a point.

-One of the benefits of the action is that the enemy can be misled into thinking that the imperial capital is unprepared. There are bound to be assailants, and no doubt elite ones. The Empire then crushed it with maximum force.

-Most importantly, it can be assumed that at this time, the war power of the Jura Tempest Federation will also be thin, and the "marshal" with the maximum war power to launch a challenge. When Guy's eyes are drawn elsewhere, he’ll take the strongest pawn, the Storm Dragon, into his bag.

The above is the full picture of the plan.

With the information he received from the Demon Lord Clayman, it was certain that Clayman had been dominated by Kondo before. Originally it was just suspicious, now that can be made clear.

But that's not what's important.

I didn't expect the information to be made public to such an extent, so let's not worry about that.

There is a more important focus in the plan just now.

A chill ran down my back.

Hey hey, wait a minute.

There are several "marshals" in the plan—Velgrynd is on more than one scene at the same time.

Right.

It was strange just now, now that the battlefield in the eastern metropolis of the Dwarven Realm, Velgrynd should also be making a scene.

So, what exactly is this guy in front of me…?

<<The—! In the power of inquisitive abilities, and existence can create the ability to be one with itself.

That’s…>>

"Parallel existence…?"

Praying in my heart not to guess, I spat out the inspection of the teacher of the King of Wisdom. But the reality is harsh.

"Wow, you know that. That's smart.”

Velgrynd's smile was beautiful and terrifying at the same time. The more the heart prays, the more the bad premonitions will be fulfilled.

You can't win unless you can win. This shit!

That is, my current state of mind that I cannot hide.

No wonder, then, that Testarossa would assert that she couldn't win.

I was able to keep my composure because, according to my judgment, by calling out Veldora, the disadvantage could be turned back into an evenly matched situation. But now I understand that I am no longer allowed to say such things.

According to the King of Wisdom, 'parallel existence' seems a terrible power.

Thinking about it alone, it didn't look much different from the 'split body' that Souei was good at. The Souei could manipulate multiple Split Bodies at the same time, and it was impossible to tell which one was the main body, no matter how many Split Bodies were defeated, as long as the main body was okay, there was no problem.

As long as magic doesn't use light, it's foul to create 'split bodies' infinitely. After all, there was no difference in the physical abilities of the main body and the 'split body', which was equivalent to the simultaneous existence of several Soueis.

But, reveal it here.

The manipulation of this 'split body' requires skill. It's not a splitting of consciousness, it's just a manipulation of the time difference through 'thought transmission'. The speed of reaction is also adjusted through 'thinking acceleration', so that it seems possible to act simultaneously without any sense of disobedience.

The reason why I don't use 'body splitting' much is because it's quite a difficult technique.

In other words, the Souei is the master of the game, with extraordinary senses. But I'm a little white and can't play that well.

One more point.

Although there was no difference in physical abilities, the magic was naturally more ontological. For this reason, there is a downside to not being able to use all your skills. Souei's ''Split Body'' could only use those skills that consumed less magic, and that was also the reason.

So, by mastering this condition, one can discern which one is the proprioception. When the main body is knocked down, the 'split body' also disappears, and the inability to be called invincible is the characteristic of this skill.

However—

The 'parallel existence' displayed by Velgrynd can completely split the consciousness.

Think of it this way—multiple ontologies existing simultaneously.

That is to say, what is in front of us now is the Other Body, and even if it is defeated, as long as there is still an Other Body left, that Other Body can become the main body.

And, there is no need for split magic.

Because all the 'sub-bodies' are connected to the main body, they seem to be able to complement each other's magic at will.

Only, there is a limit to the maximum. How much magic is divided, how much is the maximum magic of the other 'divided bodies', including the main body, reduced.

This is the key to the strategy, but the other party is the Dragon Race, which is known for its huge amount of mana. It's faster to recover than to consume, and it doesn't make sense not to consume to a certain degree.

Honestly, I don't know what it would take to beat it.

Although I am not a Testarossa, I am now becoming tempted to assert that 'victory is impossible' and that there is nothing that can be done.

I turned my gaze towards Velgrynd and smiled arrogantly.

"Well, that's very kind of you, I have a great partner. In terms of intelligence, I don't lose. It seems that you think you have succeeded in pulling us into a trap, so let me hear what your purpose is, shall I?”

There is only bluffing at times like this.

Show that I see through your attempts. Make the other side waver and be able to be wary of us and earn it.

But it won't actually go that well.

"How arrogant. The fact that they are not honestly admitting defeat is very similar to my brother.”

I think I'm referring to Veldora.

With a sister like that, it must not be easy for Veldora.

It's as if I heard someone say, "Can you understand, Rimuru!?" But Rudra spoke up and turned his attention to her.

"Purpose. Since you're confident in your intelligence, there's no need to say anything else, is there?”

Even if you say that, it hurts my brain.

If the intention was to annihilate us, the battle would have already been waged. Since there is a venue for talks like this, it means there is room for negotiation.

Isn't the answer derived from this an attempt to bribe us?

<<Answer. Yes. Thinking in that direction is right. However, it is also possible that time was being stalled, in which case the presumption was that the intention was to defeat the individual named Veldora Tempest, and adopt it as a companion.>> I'm pretty good, too. Half the answers are right.

Indeed, it was mentioned in Kondo's plan that "Marshal" Velgrynd would take Veldora into her possession. I had thought that such a thing was impossible, so I ignored it, but since there was a 'parallel existence', could it be that Velgrynd was heading to the Labyrinth now?

I couldn't let go and tried to talk to Veldora through the “soul corridor".

"Hello, how are you?”

"Idiot, this is not the time to talk about it! Something's wrong. Sister…sister she came staring at me. It's still outside the labyrinth, but it's going to be attacked at this rate!

Seems to be busy as hell.

"Can you handle it?”

"I'm the only one who can make an appearance. It's better than just taking the labyrinth down like this.”

If it's Veldora, I don't think he'll lose even with Parallel Existence as his opponent. With that in mind, I gave permission for Veldora to fight at full strength.

"I'll take full responsibility. I hope you can deal with Velgrynd. Can you please?”

"Ho-ho-ho-ho? If that's the case, just leave it to me! Kuahahaha!”

"You're in charge!"

I put my mind down and ended the call.

Handing it over to Veldora would be reassuring. Then, too, grasped Rudra's attempt.

Restart negotiations.

"Your purpose is to draw us in. One more point. Stall us by talking, so that we don't get involved in the fight with Veldora, right?”

I had a smug look on my face as if to say, “Well?"

Velgrynd showed a slightly surprised expression.

Then, Rudra smiled happily.

"What a delightful guy. It's fun to have you compare wits with me, but there's no time to enjoy the aftermath right now. Now that you understand that, words are good. Becoming my servant will guarantee your territory will remain untouched and give you the status of Archduke again.”

"Rudra! If you give the title of Grand Duke to someone who is not related to you by blood, it will cause other nobles to resent it.”

"It's okay. If he’s willing to assist me, he would be of such value.”

Higher than the Duke, is the Archduke.

Generally speaking, blood relatives within a generation of the emperor do not know if they can become grand princes. And Rudra made sure to give me that status.

This is an unprecedentedly generous treatment from an imperial perspective. It has even been heard that the Empire does not accept the surrender of defeated nations and forcibly annexes in order to expand its territory.

The long years of empire that expanded its territory through wars of aggression prepared me for supremacy. Honestly, it seems the Empire thinks more highly of me than I thought.

However, however.

Sadly, my answer has long since been determined.

"I can understand that it's a very good proposal, but the answer is 'no'. Instead, I have a proposal. Why don't we shake hands and make peace here? I will not ask for compensation and hope to conclude a non-aggression treaty."

It didn't matter how many sacrifices there were among those who served themselves—Rudra was the one who would think like that and would not defect to him unless he wanted to kill himself. Don't think of yourself as the only exception, and hold such naive thoughts that there is only one big road to destruction.

So, I firmly reject Rudra's proposal.

Compare that to this.

It's a rare opportunity to make this side's claim first.

From my personal point of view, after all, there were no casualties, and no intention of making the other person apologize. If we can be assured that we will not be interfered with again, then this invasion can be left alone.

Odds are some people will have an opinion, but if it can end perfectly without further bloodshed, that's the best way to go.

I know I'm naive and understand that treaties are unreliable. Since the other party is not trustworthy, they will break the contract someday.

But the important thing is to buy time.

If reconciled here, each would have time to get to know the other. As long as there is time for further mutual understanding, there is hope for avoiding war in the future.

If the war continues in this way, there will be only one step to take. In that case, think about taking a gamble on that one possibility.

However, Rudra's reply was a sneer.

"Surely, you're not the type to dominate. I don't understand my compassion, but I'm joking.”

"How arrogant. Rudra has already made the biggest concessions and doesn't appreciate them.”

Clearly having lost millions of troops, they still have the tone of overwhelming high rollers. They really didn't think about defeat in their heart of hearts. The loss of a soldier due to his own orders was no loss to him.

Because of this, Rudra made me feel terrible.

“I believes that humans are creatures that can understand each other. Ultimately, they will unite into a single will to create a better world. To that end, world unity by overwhelming force is indispensable.”

Rudra's words sound similar to the ideals I portray. However, there is a huge gap between the two that cannot be filled.

It made one anxious to lecture him.

The evidence lies in coming to the exact opposite conclusion from me when it is clear that the starting point is the same.

I was expecting more of an idealist, but not so. Rudra argued that only his own dictatorship was absolute justice, with a dictatorial mindset that would not allow anyone to think.

Sure enough, he and I were incompatible.

There's so much disagreement on the proposition that it's no longer possible to find compromise points through conversation.

"Man is a creature of free will. There is no eternal justice in the world, and everyone thinks differently, right? Not wanting to agree with that will only sow the seeds of strife.”

"Stupid. Only the remaining thoughts are supreme and righteous. You must know that even if you cater to the whims of fools, you will not reach the ideal world.”

"No matter who it is, there will be times to make mistakes!"

"I don’t deny it. Even I would listen to the input of my ministers. What's more, it's impossible to want to respond to all the voices of the gullible people. If you do something like that, you'll bring turmoil to the world.”

Gobbledygook, indeed perhaps as he said…

The quarrel didn't feel like it could bother him either. As much as I hate to admit it, Rudra has been a dominant for far longer than I have.

"Well, there's no point in arguing here. What is expected is your loyalty. Rimuru the demon lord, give up Guy and be our companion.”

Once again, persuasion.

It looks like he's going to have a showdown with Guy.

If I defected to Rudra at this point, the scales would indeed tip. It is safe to say that it is because of this that he keeps us alive.

That being said, my answer is the same as just now.

Now that the negotiations have broken down, fighting is inevitable.

As if reading my thoughts, a cold smile emerged on Velgrynd's face and she crossed her index finger gracefully.

Gently, twice.

Then, an image emerged from the sky.

The same principle as my Argos. In the image, the current battlefield is reflected.

What's on the screen is…

Pouring out in front of Velgrynd, Testarossa, Ultima, and Carrera were the three. Surprisingly light.

The trio, also known as the highest fighting force in our country, lost to just one person.

"That's a lie!”

I couldn't help but mutter.

In the image, the demoness trio stood up again. They don’t seem to have lost the will to fight, but in the face of an irreversible power gap, they are forced into a bitter battle.

I had to realize that they didn't last long.

"Even the primordial ones you were counting on are in such a state before me. Think carefully about it.

You're smart enough to understand that I'm being lenient.”

Needless to say, it's a threat.

If Velgrynd had that intention, his companions, other than the demoness trio, would not be safe.

It was not known whose intention this was, but Rudra they gave the biggest concession.

After all, Gabil and the others, too, couldn't spare a hand to help the demoness trio. At some point, airships appeared over the battlefield, from which Imperial forces emerged one after another to join the battle.

On the ground, there were also Kondo's men.

In addition to Kagali, who was performing the ritual, originally Yuuki's companions were also fighting the dwarven army.

“Tear! And Footman too!”

Along with Laplace's shouts, I sensed that those tricky masked majins were among the enemy forces.

The battlefield is like a melee, and the format is not optimistic.

It's in bad shape.

I also sensed that Benimaru was worried about me.

However, I cannot give in here.

"I know your purpose. It's easy to pull in Veldora as a companion, just pull in me first and then it's easy.

That guy does as he pleases and will never obey the orders of his superiors.”

However, Veldora did listen to me a lot.

It's just that I'm always angry, and maybe they're starting to get a hard-on for me too.

Anyway, that should be the reason for pulling my strings. According to this idea, in a nutshell, he rejected Rudra's persuasions severely. On that basis, look for other compromises— "You don't have to expect negotiations. Take it or leave it. Be clear.”

Suddenly the option is thrown.

A refusal would have plunged you straight into a fight with a low success rate.

But if one agrees, one must throw oneself into the battle against one's heart.

In time, following the will of others rather than acting on one's own will will likely result in greater sacrifice.

"Unite into one will for a better world. That's what you said. Is that a world where anyone can live with a smile on their face?”

“What?"

"Even if there is no war, no hunger, but if free will is taken away, doesn't the meaning of living cease?

What you are trying to do is an act that deprives humanity of possibilities! Have you thought about this properly?”

"You mean the possibility? This kind of stuff isn't needed. Acknowledging the freedom of mankind, it is likely to go straight to the path of destruction. This act not only detracted from my thoughts, it also went against Guy's expectations. In that case, isn't it only natural to need a manager in order to keep the world from derailing from the right path?”

"To a certain extent I can understand, and do not deny. But is that a world with laughter?"

What I want to do, in the grand scheme of things, is also to try to manage humanity. But to a certain extent, to be entrusted to the will of man.

Overprotection takes away the opportunity to grow.

People are tougher than they think and there is no need to manage from beginning to end.

"Laughter? Saying something naive and stupid. No matter how much sacrifice is made, there is nothing that can be done for lasting peace. There's no need to ask permission one by one in order to guide people who can't understand this. It takes some patience for the great happiness of the future.”

It's not that he doesn't understand, but that he’s not compatible with me.

Rudra was going to do something that did not focus on the individual. That, no matter how you think about it, will go against my righteousness.

"Indeed, obedience is impossible. You want to do something that I think will only spread more misfortune and I will never agree with it.”

"It's stupid to refuse my offer of help.”

"Stupid is stupid. I mean, why did you become king? Because it looks amazing? Or do you want to enjoy the luxury?”

"Saying something stupid, of course, it’s for the people."

"Don't lie to me! I also consider myself a demon lord for everyone, and wish more people could live with a smile on their faces. Of course, sacrifice is inevitable, but I'm taking pains to reduce it. How can you think like that and be so dry!”

Trying to create a good world without sacrifice, that is not possible. That being said, there were also numerous sacrifices that appeared when I became a demon lord.

It seems to me to be the other side's own doing and not regretting it, but as far as the loved ones of the victims are concerned, they can't accept it even if I say so.

It is, I bear the sin.

Likewise, Rudra should be guilty of a sin that cannot be ignored.

Hearing my words, for only a moment, Rudra's burning gaze turned toward me. However, it seemed to regain its composure immediately, looking at me and muttering to himself, "Young and naive."

“Rudra?"

"Don't worry, Velgrynd. I really, it's been a long time since I've been so excited. I didn't succeed in convincing him, but it's a shame to eliminate him.”

"It's a bad habit, Rudra. Standing there with Yuuki too, I just can't understand your collecting addiction.”

‘Don't talk to us like we're toys’—I want to complain, but forget it.

Now that the negotiations have broken down, it's time to get ready to fight.

I made a wink and the entire company went into pro forma. It was also well in preparation while I was talking to Rudra.

Defeat Rudra here.

Having made up my mind so much, I was about to ask.

However.

"However, it's a shame we didn't succeed in convincing Demon Lord Rimuru. And the boy, unexpectedly strong. For not listening to me, I wanted to give him a little punishment. But if you want to maintain the 'parallel existence', you will not be able to feel the power, so let's give it our all.”

"Ho? Can't be convinced?”

"Don't even listen. But it's also like his character.”

I couldn't help but turn my attention to Velgrynd.

Don't worry about Veldora.

I didn't expect the invincible "Storm Dragon" to lose, but the opponent was also a monster beyond imagination. Now that nothing is incredible no matter what happens, I suddenly start to worry.

"What, are you worried about the kid? Then I hope you promise Rudra. In that case, I won't have to hurt my cute little brother.”

Velgrynd, again, floated the image into the air.

The screen shows a battle with a wounded Veldora, transformed into a dragon pose.

"One thing I've been meaning to ask is, how did you tame that boy?”

“Hmm?"

"I'm asking you, how did you get Veldora to submit to you?”

No, he didn’t obey me.

"I'm friends with Veldora. That's all.”

"Yeah, I don't think so. It's a shame.”

Seemingly genuinely sorry, Velgrynd sighed.

"In that case, I'll show no mercy. That boy, the only thing he has above me is the amount of mana.”

After saying that, Velgrynd disappeared.

I was taken aback and shaken.

I have come to understand that the purpose of Rudra and the others is to stall for time in order to defeat Veldora and tame him. After knowing this, we still accompany them because we are also buying time.

Velgrynd's 'parallel existence', while close to invincible, has a drawback. That is, the depletion of the amount of magicules.

By eliminating "Parallel Existence" one by one, you can consume the split mana. Magicules don’t recover right away and in general can weaken an opponent.

Splitting out the amount of mana is too little to use a big move. It is for this reason that it is considered beneficial for Veldora…

But judging from the image, facing a Velgrynd's 'parallel existence', Veldora didn't quite beat it either.

Not only that, but through the Soul Corridor, one can also feel the anxiety of Veldora.

The image floating in the air, as Testarossa their rival Velgrynd also disappeared. The Demoness trio also fought so hard for time that it ended up being for naught.

I feel that this is not good.

The power of Velgrynd exceeded my expectations.

Seeing through our thoughts and using them as if to mock us…

"Do you care? Then, after this battle is over, another chance will be given. Realize how stupid you are, and your heart will change.”

Rudra's voice seemed to be far away.

I'm not willing, but I can't do anything about it now.

Velgrynd had disappeared and perhaps it was time to take down Rudra, but for some reason there was a bad feeling about it.

So, I decided to witness the battle of Veldora to the end.

In the second screen left by Velgrynd, the crimson dragon roars.

The battle of the century between the "dragon races", which intensified…