

 Chapter 1: Time of Despair

Just as Rimuru was preparing to infiltrate the Imperial Capital, the Dwarven King Gazel Dwargo was in the middle of a desperate battlefield at the moment.

He watched intently as the beautiful incarnation of death scattered in the distance.

"Gravity Collapse is theoretically infinitely more powerful. Do you think it can be defended with Legion magic?"

"To put it mildly, it's not possible to have a magical strike force to defend with a magical support force.

The Dragon Race is not something that can be summed up in danger."

Answering Gazel's question was the Supreme Commandant's class at the Military Ministry.

He had set up a formation here to await the arrival of Gazel, and was thus able to witness the final end of the Imperial Hybrid Legion.

The soldiers were speechless in the face of an overly absurd tragedy. The war effort had been thwarted long ago, but they had not fled, so he must say something remarkable to them.

In fact, they have all understood that even if they run away, there is still no future.

If one's own death prolonged the little time one's family had to live, it was enough as a meaning to stay here, to still maintain the column, supported by such thoughts.

 The soldiers believed that the heroic king Gazel would not let them die in vain, so they swore allegiance to Gazel.

Bearing the expectations of the soldiers, Gazel felt bitter. Although it is not visible on the surface, it has actually become a mess on the inside.

 We can't win, more than that, it's a waste of everyone's life. You want to surrender? However, the Empire does not allow such things, at least we have to show a certain amount of power before we can do so…

The Empire will not tolerate subservience if it cannot be made to believe that the interests of drawing us in are greater than those of direct combat.

Then, there is no other way to live except to resist the war outright.

No matter how much sacrifice has to be made, one has to believe that these are not deaths for nothing.

"Quality is more important than quantity, but that's too much of a foul, so we'll have to go ahead and take her down.”

"Hey hey, doesn't the king care about his responsibilities anymore?”

"Idiot, isn't there only one enemy, so there's no point in even asking me for responsibility in this situation, is there?”

Ben’s question made Gazel laugh bitterly.

With the enemy alone, Velgrynd, any strategic tactics were pointless, and it was up to Gazel to open up a way to live. Ben was well aware of this and joked with him like this in order to relieve the pressure inside Gazel.

Sensing this, Gazel's confusion dissipated.

At this point, Anrietta came to report.

"My lord, the enemy seems to be more than just the Scorch Dragon, and behind it the scent of plural creatures appears to be performing some kind of ritual, and Lady Jane says that the great magic is part of the ritual…"

Gazel nodded in response.

The great magic cast by sacrificing 60,000 troops was used to perform some sort of ritual, and just by hearing that, one could tell that some sort of evil attempt was being made to make people not want to imagine it.

Even so, it would be extremely difficult to defeat the key Velgrynd, so the only thing that could be done was to defeat those located behind her.

"Want the troops to move?"

At Dorf’s question, Gazel shook his head.

 A heavily-armed strike force has poor mechanics, and a flippant move could be a target for magic. It was meant to rely on their thick shields to move forward, but none of that made sense in front of Velgrynd.

So, the only way left is for the 500 Knights of the Sky to launch a special attack…

"It's not a good idea to reduce the defensive strength here, but we'll have to do what Gazel said. Isn't that right, Dorf?”

Ben chuckled.

Dorf scratched his head and replied matter-of-factly.

"That's disrespectful, Ben. You call the king by his first name, but you should behave yourself! More attention should be paid to the position…”

The lecture was going to go on forever, but Dorf grinned in approval again as if he had suddenly looked away from something.

"But this time, you have a point. In order to buy as much time as possible, one should avoid spreading the battle. Besides, we're the only ones who can easily fight the enemy, so we might be able to surprise them.”

And Anrietta didn't object.

"Lady Jane also said to come to the battle after convincing the elders. Leave the matter of the rear to Lady Jane, and come and make a fuss, as before!”

He waited for Gazel's reply.

These old companions, as always, haven't changed much.

Willingness to work with Gazel to overcome the current difficult situation.

Gazel laughed.

"Oh, what a bunch of idiots. The brief in charge of supervision is to hear what these really don't know what to say…"

Jane has been tending to the Gazel group since the past and has given much advice. As the strongest magical mentor in the Dwarf Kingdom, she was very trustworthy for Gazel to consult with.

 Jane will be angry, I suppose.

Even so, Gazel made a decision.

Only, this decision seems to have come a little late.

"Oops, oops, I'm just not watching for a moment, King Gazel is a real pain in the ass."

Just before Gazel and the others were ready to go out of the formation, Jane arrived first with transfer magic.

"Jane, did you hear everything?”

 Jane glanced at the embarrassed Gazel and shook her head.

"I thought I would be able to have the look of a great king, so I can feel at ease. However, I won't blame you this time, there's no other way to fight with such a presence. It's because it's impossible for the nation to deal with it, so the Dragon Race is classified as a natural disaster.”

"Well, that's true, too."

Magic that humans can use cannot harm the Dragon Race. Just a moment ago, the tremendous magic that Velgrynd had used had long been beyond the ability of anyone to cope with.

Even if all the people who can be called heroes in the human nation are gathered together, it is still unknown whether they can beat the Dragon Race.

But that's not to say there is no hope.

Jane put that hope out there.

"Just now, there was a contact.”

“Hmm?"

"Your Majesty will send reinforcements. We'll take action when they arrive.”

"Not much time has passed since I contacted you!”

"Even the old me doesn't understand a bit, but it's true, it's a report from Vesta. After all, the people of that country, with just a word from His Majesty Rimuru, would have taken action…”

Listening to Jane's dumbfounded words, which contained a sense of fatigue, all those present could only nod their heads.

That's right, everyone understood right away.

After that, faster than they could switch moods, reliable reinforcements had arrived first.

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 Suddenly, space distorted.

As if wrapped in a huge cocoon, the few elite troops then showed themselves.

From Gabil came one hundred of the Flying Dragons and three hundred of the Kurenai, commanded by Gobya, making four hundred men in all. Everyone had crossed the threshold of A level, a battle group that was good enough to rival the Order of the Sky.

Even more striking is a huge weapon.

"I've heard of it, but I didn't think I'd go straight to war without stint."

"That is, the finished form of the magical soldier?”

"Exactly. It seems that naming the Floor Guardian Colossus Statue is still reliable as a companion.”

 Gazel certainly knew that this thing couldn't beat Velgrynd, but its majestic appearance could put the soldiers at ease just by standing there.

"So reliable. If it's a power plant, it should be able to fight a little bit like a fight."

"Unfortunately, there's no point in facing these things in Velgrynd, and if it's just catastrophe level, maybe something can be done.’

At this point, someone approached towards Gazel and the others in the session.

Coming were the army chief, Gabil, and the trio of demonesses headed by Testarossa, and behind them, Gobya and Hakurou.

"It's been a long time, Your Majesty Gazel.”

Somehow, instead of Gabil, it was Testarossa who came to greet him.

With a diplomatic license and a wealth of experience, Testarossa was already well versed in such occasions.

"Long time no see, Lady Testarossa. Thank you for the reinforcements."

Originally, there would have been all sorts of questions answered by Gazel, and ritualistically, it would have been the norm for an intermediary to answer instead.

However, now is not the time to count such things.

Everyone understands that, so the war meeting was conducted without regard to form.

The location shifts to the command post and cuts to the chase.

Represented by Testarossa, who communicated the guidelines laid down by Rimuru, and then proposed the course of action to be taken here.

"Hmm, did Rimuru attack the Emperor directly?”

"It's more realistic than a special attack."

"Is that so? Always felt like it was a pretty messy fight too…"

A thoughtful Gazel.

Classes that have expressed approval of the improvement in the situation.

Dorf who struggles to think otherwise.

There's no time to think about it.

Since no one offered an alternative, Testarossa pushed the topic forcefully.

"Lady Velgrynd will be dealt with by us, so the others will go and stop the rituals that are going on behind us."

 "No objection.”

Gazel agreed to the request for proposals.

Since no other way could be found, the most dangerous task had to be left to them—he had judged.

Jane raised questions.

"One moment, Lady Testarossa, will you, the primordial, defeat the Scorch Dragon?”

This issue has very important implications for future combat.

Jane argues that Testarossa and the others can't win because Velgrynd is just that overwhelmingly powerful.

There was no doubt that the three Primordials were the most powerful, so it was important to make sure that if Testarossa and the others were defeated, it would mean that the fate of the remaining people had come to an end.

"Honestly, we can't win."

"In that case! We should take defensive action and not provoke the other side rashly, and wait for His Majesty Rimuru to succeed."

Since there is no chance of winning, one should try to buy time. While Jane's statement sounded correct, those in the Rimuru camp had a hard time accepting the proposal.

"Unfortunately, that won't do. If Velgrynd is left alone, then she may return to the Empire to interfere with my lord.’

Carrera said firmly in her attitude.

Although Rimuru said it was okay to leave it alone, she still felt the need to attract the other person's attention.

“More importantly, I'm not here to discuss a battle plan, but only to communicate it by order of Lord Rimuru. If we can help each other, we can discuss it, and if it gets in the way of the battle, I hope you understand that it's not something you can do."

Hakurou, who normally didn't talk much, was a harsh opinion when he opened his mouth. It is precisely because there is no time left that we must unite our minds even if there is a lapse in etiquette.

Gazel rightly comprehended the implications.

In order to put a stop to angry companions, speak up.

"Since His Excellency Hakurou, My Master, has said so, we can only give in. Or do you guys, have any other proposals?”

Gazel's companions could only shake their heads heavily.

"The Imperial Army’s intelligence service is already on the move, and it's not easy to obstruct the ritual, so the best thing to do is to join forces now.”

 Dorf uttered the decisive words.

After that it was just confirmation of the details, followed quickly by the start of the operation.

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 Stimulating Velgrynd was like stepping on a tiger's tail.

Even understanding this, the demoness trio were undaunted.

"Can we get in the way of the ritual by dealing with her?"

"Who knows?"

"Gravity collapses in a state that even I can't maintain. I'm afraid even Velgrynd can't handle the three of us while maintaining the cast, right?”

"That's why I'm so vigilant, because I think she can do it.”

“Really?"

"Gee, I'm serious."

"Never mind, don't bother. Just play around.”

With the usual tone of conversation, Testarossa and the others didn't play any tricks either, coming to Velgrynd squarely.

Of course, Velgrynd had spotted the three of them as well.

But there was no warning at all, rather than letting the trio of demonesses come closer with interest.

"Greetings, it's a good day for a fight."

Testarossa sighed and Velgrynd responded with a smile.

"Yeah. But before we start, I'd like to ask you a question. If you join my team, you'll be treated well as the ‘primordials.’”

The demoness trio was still calm in front of her.

The answer from Testarossa and the girls is of course, NO.

"There is still some karma with the Empire, but allow me to reject this offer.”

"It's the same for us. It's nice to have a master for the first time, but I'm not letting go."

"Yeah, and more importantly, the words are out of the way, let's get this fight started. If you don't want to go one on three, you can have those behind you join the fight.”

As if to completely cut off any possibility, a categorical rejection was made.

To Carrera, it didn't matter at all what the negotiation or whatever was going on, entirely because the fight had become atmospheric, and seeing Velgrynd's magic up close had stimulated her fighting instincts.

 Velgrynd smiled.

"That's your answer, all right. Then let's have a little fun with you guys!”

This is the signal that the battle is on.

Light and fluttering.

In the presence of Testarossa and others, Velgrynd split.

Nope.

Like looking in a mirror, Velgrynd became two people.

Testarossa had a clue about this phenomenon in her mind.

"Tough aura then. It's not the same as simply 'splitting the body', but it's a bit similar to Rhein's 'all embracing', right?”

Testarossa had fought Rhein in the past, and the cause of the dispute had been forgotten, but the combat experience had been gained nonetheless.

The "all-embracing" of Rhein is to divide one's body beforehand, and to have the ability to regenerate any part of one's body, but unlike the "other body,” consciousness can only be housed in one body.

Even so, it can be quite vicious depending on its use, and it's perfect for luring the enemy's attention.

Even if it's slightly less useful against prudent opponents, it's still a very powerful ability to use as insurance.

But comparing creatures is too bad.

From the mere fact that the Parallel Presence of Velgrynd gave birth to the Other Body, it cannot be denied that the All-Pervading Presence is a total disadvantage.

Testarossa didn't understand as well as she did, a shadow showing on her beautiful face.

"What is it?”

"You can spread out your body and regenerate any piece of flesh."

"I see. That means either one can be considered the main body, right?"

“Yes.”

Testarossa and others, who were not panicking and analyzing the status quo, had already started the battle and still spoke with such grace.

Velgrynd said cheerfully.

“White Primordial is very clever, and yes, this is one of the powers I hold, 'Parallel Existence'. I don't want you to interfere with the ceremony, so let me be your opponent.”

Elegantly slapping the fan, Velgrynd declared.

 That's not a very funny thing to say to Testarossa.

The eyes glared angrily at Velgrynd.

"I now have the name Testarossa, given to me by my lord, Lord Rimuru, so don't call me primordial white."

She said, casually creating a flaming whip without thinking, the whip twisted like a snake and attacked Velgrynd.

"There's such a thing as a name for the primordial by the Slime. It seems to be true."

Uncertain information was affirmed, and Velgrynd was unable to hide her surprise, but she nonetheless dodged the whip's attack with ease and without panic.

"It is rude to call my lord the Slime.”

The indignant Carrera roared and let out her magic.

The starting point is "gravity collapse".

Reduced in size as much as possible, and thus increasing in power, it was the largest attack that Carrera could muster right now, hitting her directly as Velgrynd's consciousness focused on Testarossa.

As if the pitch-black pillar that connected heaven and earth surrounded Velgrynd, the column just happened to hold her, like a prison from which there was no escape.

However…

Velgrynd smiled generously, a bemused look on her face even in the cage of hypergravity.

"He is the one who commands demons, and the power of magic is unmistakable. But as long as the laws of the world are followed, it won't work on the Dragon Race.”"

As if to prove the point, Velgrynd smashed the Pillar of Darkness from within, raising her own magic to interfere with Carrera's magic, rendering it impotent.

"Ha ha ha! No less than Lord Veldora's sister, it was almost playful. Since the magic doesn't work, I guess I'm out of options? No, and the swordplay learned from Agera may not be of much use either, let me try it!”

While her own trick was broken, Carrera seemed to be still happy and not at all frustrated as she took the sword created by magic and set up a pose.

The beautiful Taishou showed a strong aura that was disproportionate to the demon, and Carrera's demon aura flowed into the blade just like that, emitting a radiance.

This is the right choice, not just to rely on magic or skill, but to create a skill that can touch the power of the Dragon Seed, the root of the world. According to Lord Veldora, a woman named Hinata seems to prove it.

Without trying, Testarossa already knew that magic wouldn't work on Velgrynd, so she created a whip with magic from the start.

 The whip is white and has the paradoxical nature of a "frozen white flame", a forbidden spell developed by Testarossa.

"Well, humans are fun, so let's use this.”

Ultima said as she took out two solidified swords, the bodies of which had a very toxic purple color, wrapped in an extraordinary demonic aura.

“You're not hiding anything. Those things are the same ones that managed to hurt Zegion, right?”

"Well, to be honest, we always thought there was no point in moving our bodies.”

"I'm surprised that the experience of fighting with Lord Zegion would come in handy in such a way.”

The women who were good at magic didn't put a lot of importance on melee combat, but when fighting Zegion, there was no other means of attack that worked other than melee combat.

Because Zegion had an iron-wall-like defense, as well as an absolute advantage against magic, almost all of which didn't work against Zegion, and as a result, they were forced to fumble for other ways to fight.

And the answer they came up with is now this.

By betting on the existence of a spiritual being to give "an attack based on the strong power of the mind,” they finally succeeded in hurting Zegion.

For spiritual beings, the power of the mind trumps all.

Skill is also a form of the power of the mind generated by the desire of each individual, and the ultimate culmination is the ultimate skill.

So how close can one's mind get to the point where they conclude it's just a matter of trying?

By materializing this idea, you create weapons that you can use while they are still in hand.

Zegion's defense was not even inferior to the Dragon's ability, and despite this, Ultima's blade still managed to do damage.

That is to say, the attack of the demoness trio was even able to touch the probe ability.

"After learning my weapon, my sword skills are just for fun, but I've got the true legacy of Agera, let's try it out!”

Saying that, Carrera quickly ran up.

Totally unconcerned with the defense, she makes a full force chop to Velgrynd.

Velgrynd opens the attack with a lupine.

A fan made of high grade feathers could hardly be called a weapon really, but its strength had become even harder than diamond due to the monster aura of Velgrynd.

Thin, soft and hard, not at all inferior to Carrera's Taishaku, a weapon that Velgrynd loved to use.

