There were several men in the bow of the Emperor's flagship.

With Rudra at the head, Kondo and Damrada were standing behind him, while the surrounding four corners were guarded by a sequence of three to six four knights.

 Malcolm also stood behind Kondo, and all the remaining "digits" had been gathered in this place.

To Rudra's right, it was Velgrynd's fixed position, and in order to protect Rudra in case of any eventuality, she had left the last of her ‘other bodies' here. However, in order to focus her energies on the battle with Rimuru, the present Velgrynd let the body sit in the settled chair, then drew consciousness from it to make it snuggle up against Rudra.

Rudra tenderly stroked Velgrynd's blue hair in this state and looked out at the outgoing Demon Lord Rimuru with a hateful mutter.

"That's an exception. It was a lapse in judgment on my part. The first thing that should be taken care of is the Slime."

This is tantamount to declaring that the battle is not over.

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Until just now, this place was in the midst of a victory celebration for the capture of Veldora. Now, however, there isn't even a hint of that vibe left.

They all have recognized Rimuru as an enemy.

Led by the manifested Demon Lord Rimuru, even the subordinate-level monsters had returned. But at this time, Rudra and others were still more subdued.

''Hmph, to have escaped from the Dream Fortress, we seem to be underestimating them. Is it because the owner, who is the source of the power, was taken away from him that he came back alive?”

Rudra snorted. However, after witnessing Kondo's attack being nullified by Rimuru, he also had to look at the whole situation cautiously.

More to the point, it's the demons that Rimuru summons that are the problem.

Flesh-bearing ascendant demons were troublesome enough, but Rimuru had strengthened the demons again in front of the crowd.

Because it was not clear what he had done, he was certainly wary of it.

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"Tatsuya, you have no mercy, do you?”

"Of course. The Boundary Breaker and the Spellbreaker, both of which are ineffective against them, seem to be opponents that I can't defeat without using my true skills.”

 Kondo made a reply, looking at Demon Lord Rimuru and also generating thoughts of his own lapse in judgment.

Like Rudra said, he also considered Rimuru to be an extremely dangerous opponent.

Before the priority was to capture Veldora, it seems that was wrong. Instead of going after just one of them, they should go after both Veldora and Rimuru.

Even though this is now perceived, the situation has changed.

Kondo knew that Demon Lord Rimuru was an enemy with whom one could not be careless.

That's why he uses tactics to trap his opponent in a trap and dispose of it separately when he's ready.

At first, it was thought that by taking away Veldora, Rimuru's patron, Rimuru would naturally succumb.

Yet now…

Kondo's judgement was a muddle.

In the same way that Rimuru is a counter-scaled being to Veldora, Veldora is a counter-scaled being to Rimuru.

It was because Kondo was the first to realize that he had touched his opponent’s reverse scales that he was quicker than everyone else to take care of Rimuru.

The attack used is the "Boundary Breaker" and "Spell Breaker", which are Kondo's strongest attacks at this time when the "Kamikaze Shot" is not available.

However, it turned out to be a trick that didn't hurt Rimuru at all and couldn't even stop him from moving.

If you take away Veldora, the source of your power, you will become a powerless demon lord?

That's not true at all.

It was a raging, tyrannical will because allies were taken from them.

It should be thought of this way.

‘Don't be lenient, if you don't use ultimate skills to challenge, you'll lose’—Kondo made such a judgment.

''Since he said so, the Four Horsemen can't win either. Let him try the power of the newly arrived Veldora first.”

Without Kondo needing to ask, Rudra understood how threatening Rimuru was. Still, he made a point of illustrating it so that it would be a point of consensus for all present.

"Single digits" are the strongest that Rudra has worked so hard to assemble. It is for this reason that the enemy's level of threat must now be allowed to become their consensus, and they must be reminded to avoid errors of judgment at critical moments.

 Rimuru is indeed a threat, but not an unscrupulous opponent as long as he's not careless. But it is also now necessary to avoid the loss of battle power that is not easily gathered.

Rudra remained cautious at all times until the final grand showdown began. He is hoping to challenge Guy with the lineup intact.

From the status quo, it's close to victory.

The capture of Veldora brought great advantage to the Empire. In Rudra's opinion, it was just one step away from drawing the finishing characters for his and Guy’s long-running wins.

A lapse at such a time is never allowed.

So, to be sure, Rudra chose to let Veldora take on Rimuru, and with Velgrynd's support, he was sure that nothing would happen to him.

In the meantime, it was up to Kondo and the others to deal with Rimuru's minions, so that there should be no more problems.

If possible, Rudra wanted to take Rimuru under his command as well, but since things had turned out that way, he had to rule it out. The real target, Veldora, was already in control, and the plan could not be allowed to spiral out of control because of the local demon lord.

Originally, something like the demon lord was a very fragile existence compared to the True Dragon Race. It is for this reason that Rudra acknowledges Rimuru as a threat on the one hand, and determines that the battle is unlikely to fail on the other.

The True Dragon Race is the most powerful in the world. Since he had two True Dragons in his hands, Rimuru's defeat was inevitable, and it was only natural that Rudra would think so.

But it wasn't as if nothing could make him care.

…at that time, why did Veldora stop resisting my domination?

It's that little doubt.

Given enough time, Rudra's domination would surely succeed in the end no matter what. Having realized this, Veldora gave up—which makes sense.

However, Rudra always felt that there was more to the reason than that.

The mere fact that Rudra was able to feel Veldora's anger intact through the king's power, shows that the Storm Dragon is not the kind of character to give up easily.

Could it be that Veldora was guarding something more important than himself?

—Such doubts lingered in Rudra's mind.

If that's the case, the important thing…

"No, I don't think so.”

Rudra shook his head in denial.

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Velgrynd shifted back into human form and came to Veldora's side, then tenderly approached her brother's head and stroked his dragon scales.

"Good boy. The next time you wake up, we'll be companions. And then, I'll cherish you.”

Velgrynd already has a hunch that the long game is coming to an end.

However, things will not be so simple…

Suddenly, Rimuru appeared.

The ill-advised obstructionist made Velgrynd's mood a lot worse. But at the same time, she also developed a bit of a sense of crisis.

How the other party escaped from the 'Dream Fortress' made her wonder.

Then, in the presence of Velgrynd, who was pondering what to do next, things went in an unexpected direction.

Rimuru summoned up a large number of demons and then granted them power as if deliberately done to the onlookers.

This is provocation.

It was too daring to show your card in front of Velgrynd and stop it if you could.

That's not all.

Testarossa and the other primordials, among the demons summoned by Rimuru, had evolved into the

“true demon lords", a higher being, somehow.

Velgrynd, who had produced the above sentiment, had become completely wary of Rimuru.

On top of that, there are other unusual parts. Rimuru's anger generated fluctuations that were actually on the same level as her brother Veldora.

A mere Slime who has become a Demon Lord, but with the same level of dominance as her own True Dragon Race, is a reality that makes Velgrynd unbelieving.

That alone makes it clear that there must be something unusual going on.

If only to hear such a report from someone else, Velgrynd would have thought it impossible and laughed it off, and since she had seen it with her own eyes, she could not believe it.

In front of her eyes, this maiden-like demon lord continued to unleash unbridled waves of fury.

This fluctuation couldn't be more clear about his danger.

A human without patience would die instantly just from exposure to this fluctuation.

No, it's not just humans.

 Any higher being that is not a superior being that can be called strong—a being defined by humanity as A-ranked—will die because it cannot resist.

It's an overwhelming "Demon Lord" that can rival the “True Dragon Race".

 Okay, what to do now? That Slime is a being that even the Primordials can take in. I thought the kid had been fooled by him, but it looks like I was seriously mistaken.

If it's just Veldora, then it's possible that he's been tricked by him. However, it is impossible for that method to be effective against the cunning and sophisticated “primordials.”

Understanding that, the plan must be amended.

This 'Demon Lord’s Aura' could show that there was something about Demon Lord Rimuru himself, and it would not be wrong to think of it that way.

When you think about it, Veldora's growth has also been quite amazing.

If it had been three hundred years ago, Veldora would never have get Velgrynd hurt. However, he had become exceptionally good at fighting in only a short time from when the seal was lifted until now.

The reason for Veldora's growth, which was far beyond her own expectations, was also due to the Slime in front of her.

 I was going to go back to my home country one more time and make plans when my fatigue is gone.

But, there's no way around it. It feels like he'll be the bane of Rudra's existence if this Slime isn't addressed here.

Velgrynd made her decision.

She took it upon herself to completely and utterly crush Rimuru.

‘If we don't fix it now, the future is bound to be dangerous’—that's Velgrynd's judgment.

Although a lot of mana had been used up in the battle just now, she had recovered to a state of perfection after receiving the mana from Veldora. And for Veldora, even after that intense battle, the consumption was not much.

In other words, Velgrynd wouldn't have any problems even if he fought at full strength next.

Velgrynd leisurely shifts back into a fighting stance again.

She discarded the idea that "everything is just as it was supposed to be" and thought she had won.

It can be said that it was that kind of carelessness that led to the current situation.

At that time, if Rimuru had been eliminated in the 'Dream Fortress', Rimuru would not have been able to summon the demons. In that case, the only question left is the final win against Guy.

Thinking about it this way, the situation isn't great, but it's not the worst. The Empire still has a good chance of winning, and as long as there are no more mistakes, solving the enemy in front of us without problems should be possible.

What happened next, however, was a bit of a bummer.

 Contrary to what Velgrynd had expected, there came only Rimuru alone over there.

That's a win. If they all come at me, even I'll have to work on it…

No matter how much Rimuru was worth guarding, it was impossible to lose as long as both herself and Veldora struck at the same time, or so Velgrynd thought.

However, the battle has to be won and lost in one fell swoop.

If the demon lord’s men get in the way, there is a danger that the battle will be prolonged. That's why Velgrynd chose to go head-to-head a short time before something like that happened. She’s the type who would follow her instinctive actions.

“Rudra! To Veldora, give the order to attack the Demon Lord Rimuru.”

"Hmmm. Do you also feel the danger of that person as I do? That being the case, there's no need to hesitate. Veldora…"

In response to Velgrynd's request, Rudra unleashed the 'Kingship Unleashed'.

Rudra saw Rimuru as much of a danger as herself, which was a relief to Velgrynd. Since the emperor was not careless, his own side would be sure to win.

With two of the strongest “true dragon seeds" fighting against each other at the same time, it is unthinkable to lose.

The terrible battle that is now about to begin…

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