

Chapter 3: Maze Offensive and Defensive Warfare

“Everybody, give it your all”—I seem to have said that.

No problem, I shouldn't be old enough to have Alzheimer's.

Only about three years have passed since my reincarnation.

No need to worry about that.

That being said…

Seeing the scene reflected on the big screen, I began to wonder: Did I really say that?

That's because the big screen has already shown our army's complete victory.

It's all right over here.

That part was fine, but the content was brutal.

It was a one-sided ravaging battle that even had me watching in awe.

Gobta was so cool that he didn't look like himself at all, running wildly across the battlefield, beating the magic tanks to a pulp. Since he had been 'assimilated' with Ranga, he was worthy of the title of the Four Heavenly Kings in terms of appearance and strength.

Gabil also had his own doorway, transforming into what looked to be a very powerful dragon monster, and also appearing to have an unusually high power mana attack that smashed the enemy's warship in one fell swoop.

It wasn't just Gabil, all the members of the Flying Dragon congregation were transformed, and that was no joke.

Although I discovered that the secret behind it was "Dragon Warriorization", I didn’t know when they started using it so easily…

It's time to forget about the effect of "Dragon Warriorization" before throwing it aside, I didn't expect it to be so powerful.

That seems to have a time limit, and in fact can only be active for about ten minutes with that state…

but the reinforcement is just too big, big enough to make up for that.

If used in the wrong place, it can become an act of suicide, but there is nothing wrong with using it as a great trick.

However, the large explosions in the air made the fortified Gabil look pale in comparison.

I don't know what's going on, but the enemy's command battleship suddenly had a thermonuclear reaction and exploded, which also affected the Empire's airship forces, and finally caused a big explosion.

Even I was shocked to see it.

As far as results were concerned, the aerial warfare on the Empire's side had been destroyed by this time. One fell to the ground without being left behind.

This became the beginning, and the Tempest Army began to attack heavily. Gobta rendezvoused with the rest with Gabil, and whoever watched would have known that the battle was in our favor.

Even in the midst of modern warfare, helicopters would have an overwhelming advantage over fighting vehicles. By analogy, the Gabil group also launched their breath attacks mainly from the air, unilaterally inflicting damage on the ground forces of the Imperial Army.

Because the target is small, the magic tank gun cannot pose a threat.

Simply put, if you can't hit them, you can't succeed.

It wasn't like the Empire just got pinned down and tried to fight back on several occasions. But it was only then that the counterattack began and was completely destroyed.

It was Ultima's men, Veyron and Zonda, who struck.

These two were worthy of the ancient demons, and seemed to have enough vision to see who was the expert, not to distinguish between captains or ordinary soldiers, purely choosing only the strong ones for blood sacrifice.

They wore the butler's clothes and cook's clothes that stood out on the battlefield. Yet these became symbols of fear for the soldiers of the imperial generals.

Hakurou was responsible for dealing with the enemy's supply chain.

No mercy at all, one cut, two cuts.

Among them are others who are planning to put in their names…

"Damn it! I'm number 97…”

Even without letting his opponent finish speaking, Hakurou's white blade flashed by and his opponent followed with a splash of blood.

And said to those who were cut down by him, "Forgive me. Lord Rimuru is watching this battle. Since he has ordered us to 'do our best,' I cannot be merciful.”

I didn't say those things from a point of view other than that it was a big deal.

Having said that…

I don't think there's any way to revoke the order at this point.

If I had interjected at will, the battlefield would have been a mess.

Finally I looked away and decided to watch the battlefield from the sidelines.

No plug is the right thing to do.

Seriously, the Imperial soldiers that Veyron, Zonda, and Hakurou packed away were already on par with the Paladins in terms of fighting ability, or had been. And they were tricky to arm, with a higher performance than the "Spirit Armor" worn by the Paladins—the equivalent of legendary levels.

Taken together, you'll find these people are stronger. Even I was surprised to hear the parsing results of Master Raphael, the King of Wisdom.

How did the Empire manage to get such strong equipment—it’s useless to think about it when the facts are already in front of you.

As for the people who got the equipment, could their true identities be the rumored Imperial Emperor's Order of the Near Guard?

There was some information from Gadra's side, and I heard that there were also "otherworldly visitors"

in it, and that the members of the organization were selected from among the Imperial masters.

The members are said to number around a hundred or so…they also have rankings, which proves the rumors are true.

Had these masters played to their strengths, perhaps the battlefield would have become more chaotic. It was right to go over and clean them up without waiting for the other person to be ready, like Hakurou did.

Veyron and Zonda did the same, secretly starting to finish up before these guys could even get their act together.

With a few strokes, you can see through your opponent's strength, and being able to distinguish between the eyes of the strong is the most frightening.

It shouldn't be so easy to deal with the enemy if they're all assembled. But on this point, the wrong people are the ones who are careless on the battlefield. If they had a complaint, they should have given it their all from the start.

The words apply to us as well.

If one casually sympathizes with the enemy, there is a good chance that they will take advantage of the situation. In this way, there is a great deal of damage to be done.

Such a foolish act of causing injury to us in order to save the enemy soldiers is never allowed. While it's close to sympathizing with them, it's the same thing as underestimating your opponent if you win all the way.

We are at war. It's time to chill out and please try to hang in there until the end.

There is one more point to consider, and that is whether the enemy has expressed surrender to us…

While I was watching Hakurou and their combat situation and saw as if he was enthralled, the Imperial Army's Combat Operations Command appeared in an abnormal state.

<<Notice. A mass annihilation magic "death blessing" has been confirmed. The user is the individual named “Testarossa.">> Hearing Master Raphael, the King of Wisdom, report this to me, I hurried to get the scene conditions projected on the big screen. The next thing you know, Testarossa and Ultima are standing there with a smile on their faces.

There are no other survivors.

The remaining strength—nearly a thousand vehicles—also ceased operations, and all the infantry that had been deployed around them fell.

The number is probably in the tens of thousands.

There was a talk about "death blessing", which shows that it is very dangerous magic.

<<Answer. The "Death Blessing" is a nuclear strike magic that emits a magical death ray that causes creatures to become extinct. There are additional effects…>> Although Master Raphael, the King of Wisdom, is happy to analyze and explain, how can such dangerous magic be used!? I almost called it out, but it's human nature.

It is said that the nuclear explosion used by Ultima is called the "Flame of Destruction", but the danger of death blessing is higher.

Testarossa should not be fighting them…

When this magic is unleashed, victory and defeat are decided in an instant.

There were absolutely no survivors on the enemy command's side.

It was only a matter of time before those remaining troops were eliminated.

In this way, the battle between the Dwarf Kingdom and the Imperial Army ended in a complete victory for us.

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The imperial army that had been sent as bait to deceive was all but dead.

As it literally means—all gone. I'm afraid there's no other military explanation for this either.

We've all been too messy.

I didn't think I'd cause this by just asking people to give it their all.

And Benimaru had looked terrifying from just now.

"I say, if this turns out to be the case, doesn't my battle plan mean nothing? What is this, what are those intelligence officers up to!? I've heard that they're under Lord Rimuru’s direct command…may I ask you to clarify that?”

I just hid it a little in every way, but Benimaru turned to me with a very big smile and said so.

This one, that one…?

It's impossible to have a plan of war that's all-encompassing.

But then again, Benimaru, you’re not the only one who wants someone to give you an answer.

I just want you to give me an account.

But how can such a heartfelt voice be spoken…

For help, I sneak a look at Veldora.

He averted his eyes in a flash.

I know that Veldora is particularly unreliable at times like these. So is Ramiris, who didn't look like she was going to help me.

"It's nothing really, I told you that before. Those are the new companions Diablo poached.”

"I know those are Diablo's men.”

It looks like there's no way to keep lying.

There's nothing I can do.

I'm going to be honest and give a full account of what happened.

Normally, if it was Benimaru and Geld, even knowing their true identity and danger, knowing that they were in fact the Primordials, those two would have accepted with a smile. And I'm going to hold Diablo responsible for all of it, so if anything goes wrong after that, we'll see what happens then.

I armed myself with these theories and decided to get the truth out.

"Actually, that's right. Do you know about the Primordials?”

"You mean the Original demons?”

It looked like Benimaru didn't know, and Shuna, who was making coffee, interjected to pick up the conversation.

"You're talking about the seven kings, the seven monarchs, who are the origins of evil, right? Hearing everyone's previous conversation, I was curious and ran to investigate. I was surprised to learn that Mr.

Diablo was one of them.”

The definition of a primordial is an original demon, and I didn't know there was such an exaggerated appellation in the original.

Saying that, Shuna told the important secret, but she had a peaceful smile on her face.

The aroma of coffee wafted through the control room, easing the tense air.

“Meaning…?"

Benimaru started muttering, looking puzzled.

"Geez, you don't know that, do you, brother? Not only Mr. Diablo, but even Miss Testarossa, Miss Carrera, and Sister Ultima seem to be primordials.”

"Is that…is that so?”

“Yes."

Shuna’s smile was so dazzling.

Faced with a smile like that, Benimaru couldn't seem to ask any more questions either.

Squinting my eyes at the silent Benimaru, I began to think in my mind.

Shuna is actually a big deal.

I had already tensed my nerves when I was about to reveal a frightening secret, but it turned out to be so easy to reveal that I got nervous for nothing. But thanks to her outburst, I went along with it a little easier.

"Diablo, I’ll let you speak for yourself.”

"Yes, Lord Rimuru. Mr. Benimaru, I am actually one of the primordials, just as I was introduced…"

As I listened to Diablo's explanation, I started to drink my coffee.

Hmm.

The black tea was good, but the coffee was also delicious.

"So it is, I have understood. That's why they’re so awesome, right? In that case, I wish you would have told me from the beginning.”

"No, no, no, I was afraid you'd be scared when you found out. If it was me or Veldora it would be a different story, but I really don't want you Benimaru to mess with anyone else's extra heart.”

I deliberately only emphasized this point because I was worried about my partner.

As for the good things I do—giving them fleshly names—it’s not appropriate at this point, so please don't go into it.

"I'm not scared either!”

Even Ramiris had said so, and I hope everyone didn't have any superfluous fears.

"Anyway, that's a lot of worry. As long as it's someone approved by Lord Rimuru, I will accept it as a partner.”

"Well, Mr. Benimaru is right. Our partners do not treat us differently because of our appearance or strength.”

Benimaru wore a dark smile on his face, while Geld took it for granted. Just like that, it blew my worries away.

Shuna didn't seem to have a problem with Diablo either. The proof is that she still treats them as she always does in a very general manner.

"That's good. It seems I'm the one who took the unnecessary heart.”

"Hahaha, you should trust us more.”

"That's it. It's too late for us to be thankful when we say that Lord Rimuru was worried about us accepting Miss Carrera and a few of them into our army.”

It was a little sheepish, but it was great that Benimaru and Geld were willing to take them in.

One wonders what Gabil and Gobta will think of them.

As things stand, they seem to be getting along just fine. One should expect to have peace in the future as well.

"All in all, Diablo and I get along just fine. It should be all right!”

Shion jumped out to hang the reassurance, but I wasn't worried about how you were from the start?

"What does that mean, Shion?”

"It means literally, Diablo.”

First Secretary Shion and Second Secretary Diablo began to glare at each other. I've heard that the other side is the Primordial and thought it was serious, but it turned out to be okay.

I felt relieved again, thinking that I was really over worrying myself.

Now that the story has been told, it is time for a reflection session.

"I think it would be bad if the enemy's army had demon lord level experts, that's why I arranged for Testarossa and the others to go there, but they seemed to be trying too hard.”

Although the reason for this is my one sentence. I didn't expect people to make such a big deal out of it.

Should we say they're messing around too much, or are they overdoing it?

These guys are too cold.

For they did not hesitate at all in annihilating the enemy.

"Kufufufufu. The effort was surprisingly overdone, and it looked a bit overwhelming. I'll come back later to educate them.”

Seeing Diablo chuckle and say such things, I didn't forget to tell him to "stop in moderation! .

Anyway, I'll leave the rest to Diablo.

I am sure he will educate people well so that they will not overdo it in the future.

Next comes the confirmation of our damage.

Less than two hours had passed since the battle had begun, and it had come to a full end.

It seems that a lot of people have been injured, and it is not known what the victimization is…

"As for the current situation, all the injured are said to have recovered!”

A bright voice sounded in the control room.

For those of us who go out to fight, we all distribute our own high-grade recovery medicine.

Everyone gets ten each. Thanks to these medicines, most injuries seem to heal immediately.

And also the ones I thought were dead at first.

In fact, they just faked their deaths, and even the missing limbs were completely healed with the full restoration of the potion’s potency.

It can be said that under Benimaru's command, they play the bait beautifully.

"Didn't you just say that? Don't worry about it.”

"That's true. I certainly do believe you and everyone else.”

Everything is going according to Benimaru's plan. Surprisingly, it seems that only Testarossa and the girls are active.

Although many recovery potions were used in terms of results, the number of casualties was zero.

We got the big, unexpected win.

But not entirely free of damage.

Just look and see Gabil and the "flying dragon crowd" under him.

Because the use of the special skill "Dragon Warriorization" seems to do a lot of damage to the flesh.

Originally, I wanted to say that the effect of this move was so powerful, but as it turned out, the bad thing was not just the time limit. As soon as the battle was over, barely a physical reaction appeared, and it was heard that the whole body would be as if paralyzed, and the whole person could not move.

Because it wasn't an injury, even the recovery medication didn't work.

Since they were absorbing the surrounding magical elements to build strong flesh, the reaction of repelling foreign objects was only possible.

This time, Gabil's arrogance was too much, and not only him, but all the members of the Flying Dragon congregation suffered the repercussions.

It's the only thing that's good enough—I hope they do some soul-searching.

By the way, it was added that this state would last for about twenty-four hours or so, and it was later concluded that the move could only be launched once in two days at most.

This time, they won after giving it their all, but if they use it in the wrong place, they might get themselves killed. That force is equivalent to a double-edged blade, so I want them to be more careful.

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Let's change the subject and talk about what's going on over there in the Empire.

Lieutenant General Geist's Division of Magic Guided Tanks had 200,000 men under his command.

There were 40,000 people in the "Air Combat Flying Corps" led by Major General Faraga.

Regarding the war power the Empire possesses in this regard, we have also confirmed it with Master Gadra.

<<Answer. No captives were taken. Because everyone was killed in action.>> That adds up to about 240,000 people…

It was a massacre.

How could I not be heartbroke?

But when I became the demon lord before, I had already killed 20,000 people with my own hands. I don't want to argue about it now.

Not to mention that after killing about 240,000 Imperial Army soldiers, many souls seem to have entered my body. It wasn't long after the war started that I felt the "souls" build up like crazy.

This feeling is that the ministry is collecting souls for me. Thanks to this feeling, I seemed to be able to correctly grasp the number of enemy soldiers who were beaten down.

That being said, there are so many human "souls" that have been acquired—

To evolve from a demon lord seed to a “true demon lord", 10,000 offerings are required to satisfy.

So what happens when you come to about 240,000 souls?

The answer is no change!

That means that I've reached my evolutionary limit by awakening as the "True Demon Lord", right?

So to speak.

If it wasn't for that, Guy would have been killing humans so wildly that they would perish by now, so let's take souls this way.

Because intuition told him he would never evolve again, he didn't engage in needless killing.

Didn't expect to receive unexpected news at this point.

<<Notice. The number of "souls" acquired has exceeded the required number. At present, it is possible to awaken others who are connected through the "Soul Corridor". The subordinates are…>> And so it was that Master Raphael, the King of Wisdom, uttered the unbearable words.

It seems that if one quantifies the "soul" of those who are qualified, they may be able to awaken. I thought it would be meaningless to get so many "souls", but even if it doesn't affect my own evolution, it can still be used for my subordinates to evolve.

According to Master Raphael, the King of Wisdom, there are several people who seem to have met the conditions for awakening. By giving me the acquired souls, they will be able to awaken—with a power as powerful as the true demon lords.

The necessary number of souls is one hundred thousand.

In order to awaken his subordinates, I never thought I would need up to ten times as many souls…

So far, no one should know about this.

While it is possible that Guy had knowledge…God only knows.

Even if you know it, it shouldn't be that easy to implement. Might as well pull in the people who have become true demon lord seeds and guide them to awaken, faster that way.

That's why Guy held a party of masters like the Walpurrgis and wanted to choose someone worthy of being a partner.

More than that, there may be other reasons.

But it's also possible that I'm thinking too much of him, when in fact he doesn't even know.

Needing at least 100,000 "souls" is a big battle. It's like killing everyone in a metropolis, there's no easy way to do that.

In a word…

Currently, I have an accumulation of extra souls in my body, about a quarter of a million or so. Using all that up should awaken two people.

The subordinates whoo can be awakened are—Ranga, Benimaru, Shion, Gabil, Geld, Diablo, Testarossa, Ultima, Carrera, Kumara, Zegion, and Adalman—twelve of the above.

<<Notice. Do you want to create "soul corridors" for your subordinates to evolve? YES/NO>> According to this passage from Master Raphael, the King of Wisdom, it can be learned that even the other party can make it evolve even if it is far away.

Just like Veldora, simply connect using the "Soul Corridor" so that it is not limited by time and space.

It's certainly a good thing that my ties with my partners have gotten stronger for this benefit.

So what's next?

I personally am becoming stronger than I was before the awakening, so much stronger that I can't say the same.

The unique skill “Great Sage" has also evolved into the ultimate skill "Raphael the King of Wisdom".

If Benimaru and the others can evolve too, then what's there to hesitate about?

It's just that…

The phrase "the genealogy of the soul" is a cause for concern. I'm afraid it's the "naming" that connects the soul.

Just naming a monster will allow it to evolve. Although I didn't even think much of it and messed with it, I now know that comes with a high degree of danger. It was because Master Raphael, the King of Wisdom, analyzed the security for me that I could safely name them.

If the naming fails, there is a good chance that all of my power will be taken away and I will die as a result. Even if I didn't fall this far, there was a chance that I wouldn't be able to regain my strength and the whole person would become weak.

Personally, I have a convenient skill, such as the "stomach bag" of Beelzebub, the king of gluttony, to keep the excess mana created.

If it's not enough it seems like it's all on loan from Veldora, then it's all in the hands of Master Raphael, the King of Wisdom.

Simply put it's actually a foul play.

Generally speaking, one has to use one's own magic element, and no one can simply "name" creatures, which is a matter of course.

Even if it's Guy, it's the same.

So few people have subordinates where souls are connected to each other.

Those partners are irreplaceable to me.

If it was me, I wouldn't want to use my partner as an experiment.

But Master Raphael, the King of Wisdom, recommended it all so that there should be no danger. No, it's the direction I want to think in.

Yet there was a sense of overly dangerous foreboding.

And I'm also struggling with who to choose.

There are a bunch of other issues that exist.

If the benchmark was the amount of mana, then Souei should also be qualified. However, he was not chosen, so I had my doubts about the conditions of awakening.

One wonders what the reason for this is.

To evolve into a demon lord requires a dormancy to evolve. I'm not sure that's going to happen this time either, so I think it's best to be prepared to do it all over again.

The most important thing is that the war is not over.

The Empire’s own army, which amounts to 700,000 troops, is invading our capital.

It's best not to take any chances in such a crunch.

So be it, my answer is NO.

Let's put this matter aside for now, when the dust of the war has settled.

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I ordered the green legion to stay on site and do recovery work.

Ask them to recover the undamaged magic tanks, plus the wreckage of the blimps.

Gabil and his group all seem to be out of action, so I'm going to have the Flying Dragon troops drive them to the Dwarven Kingdom and let them tune up slowly.

Instead, I want the Blue Corps to meet up with the green legion.

It was too late to come back in time for the showdown, so Benimaru gave instructions and told them,

"It's okay to come back in no hurry.”

Incidentally, Gazel asked if we needed reinforcements, but I told him no problem.

Gazel and the rest are also still fighting. Even though the battle in the central part was over, there was still an Imperial army deployed on the side of Isthmus, which was adjacent to the Empire.

The total number of troops is 60,000.

According to Gadra, this is all a fake move by Yuuki's forces…it's unclear how the situation will play out and definitely not to be taken lightly.

It would be nice to remind Gazel that they should be careful here—even if I didn't, they would be careful.

We'll be responsible for a showdown with the Imperial Army.

By the time we get to this side, there is a consensus.

In the meantime…

Although we won a big victory in the outpost battle, there is still a huge battle force on the enemy's side that cannot be taken lightly.

It is an overwhelming disadvantage in terms of numbers.

Although not to our advantage, the subordinates were highly motivated.

Shion looked energetic and even said to my chagrin, "Those monsters, they only let themselves get the spotlight! I have to go out there and show everyone what it means to be really strong!”

‘What the hell are you fighting against?’—I can't help but want to spout off like that.

"Aren't you my bodyguard?”

As soon as I pointed out the problem, she panicked and searched for her senses. It is also doubtful that it is too much to fight—I thought at the moment.

The energetic people are not the only ones.

"My Lord! Ultima came to show off. I heard you won in your first fight, right? Ahhh, I'd like to get a chance to make an appearance soon. I think it's okay to go over there and say hello now, right?”

Carrera rushed into the control room, red-faced and shouted out the words.

I've ordered her to stay with the Second Legion, so it turns out that she's been in touch with Ultima and the others on the Communication Network.

“I can't seem to hold myself back anymore after hearing my colleagues brag to her about their great exploits…but I'm troubled by the fact that I’d be acting without permission.”

"Go say hello?”

The person who asked this back was Benimaru.

Even knowing that Carrera's true identity was the Primordial, his attitude remained unchanged. It looks like I really was overly worried.

"Yeah, that's it. Trying to say a little nuclear strike magic as a gift to them.”

I can't believe she’s saying something so ridiculous with such a cute smile.

It's the Yellow Primordial, it's a jump of ideas.

“No!"

Benimaru replied with a dumbfounded look.

"Miss Carrera. I want to ask you one thing, and that is to please wait for the order from above. It only makes sense to act and do those things when it counts.”

Carrera looked rather grumpy, but she didn't seem intent on disobeying Benimaru's orders. Geld also stepped in to reprimand, and she nodded reluctantly.

"Got it. I would love to show you my active performance, but I need to wait for the 'moment' when I can make the most of it. I'll be good and wait for the right time.”

It's great that she can understand.

Still seemingly willing to listen to Geld’s advice, the two might turn out to be a more tacit partner than they thought.

"Hahahaha, Carrera, it's not the only way to make a big show of yourself. To be the sword of the lord, so that we can glow!’

"I know that, Miss Shion. I also seem to be a little too pushy. I'll let my mind cool down a bit and calm myself down.”

You’re saying things like that of all people? I'm thinking in my mind.

The words sounded good, but the thought that it was Shion who said them made it hard to accept.

I mean, you, up until just now, were the one who wanted to mess around the most, weren't you?

Although I almost got that complaint out, I held back at this point. It took a long time for everyone to reach a consensus, and it would be a bad idea to let it get stuck in a stalemate again.

While watching the departing Carrera, I gave Shion white eyes.

However, it's enough to see the fighting spirit.

Our side also includes the Labyrinth Force and the Second Legion, which is always in reserve. It wasn't just the subordinates, it felt like even the soldiers at the very end of the line were very energetic.

Probably hearing what I said, everyone was in high spirits and about to give it their all.

Relatively speaking, there are 700,000 people on the Imperial side.

It seems impossible to fight them in terms of numbers, but the point is—quality is more important than quantity.

The other side should also have a master lurking, but we still have the ace of the maze on our side.

"The key to winning or losing is in the maze. Please, Veldora and Ramiris!”

“No problem. Just leave it to us!”

"Just say it. With us, you won't have to worry about fighting anyone!"



Hearing such a powerful response made me feel like I was in the right place.

The most important thing is how to avoid casualties.

To do so, luring the enemy's army into the maze was the best course of action.

If we were in a maze, there would be no attrition in our army.

Not only that, but the magical creatures within the maze can also join the battle and can make up the unfavorable gap in numbers in one fell swoop.

If even the lower-order magical creatures were counted together, the total number should reach hundreds of thousands.

"Next we'll see how much the empire believes in Yuuki's rhetoric, isn't that right?”

"I think it's the other way around. It's precisely because this guy isn't trustworthy that he was able to successfully induce and make the Empire suspect him, isn't it?”

"I see. It does make sense!”

Presumably, it's like Benimaru said.

If Yuuki is treated as an enemy, he is a very tricky opponent.

For the time being we are only joining forces with him, but to treat this man as one of our own is really not to be trusted.

Maybe the Empire side thinks so too.

"It would be more reassuring to have them lurking among the enemy than to have those suspicious elements join us in the fight.”

Shion unexpectedly hit it.

"This way you don't have to worry about being betrayed, and you don't have to spare your mind to deal with it.”

As such, Benimaru agreed.

"In this regard, the empire must not have fully regarded Yuuki as one of its own. There should be vigilance and suspicion of what he says. By analogy, there are 60,000 troops deployed in front of the eastern metropolis of Isthmus in Dwargon, and there is no telling how they will act. It is likely that the empire will send troops there to clean up the mess, and also to speak to Gazel and tell them to be on the alert.”

"If it is King Gazel, there is no need to worry about him in this regard. But nothing is more problematic than our untrustworthy personnel. If it was me, I would have gone over and disposed of them first.”

I also told King Gazel about Yuuki. As Benimaru said, I don't need to worry about it, so I'm sure the other party will take every measure.

We should be worried about the Imperial Army.

They are currently on the offensive, intending to surround us from all sides. There was only a huge door left on the ground, and while that made it unnecessary to panic, I couldn't help but feel nervous.

There was nothing more worrying than the fear that they would overtake the Jura Tempest Federation and attack the new kingdom that Youm had established—Farmenas.

Although there were two major forces over there, Razen and Grucius, that country didn't have any spare energy for a major war. Even if we are providing assistance, there are reforms under way, and it is hoped now that we can avoid turning the place into a battlefield.

Of course, if that happens, we will also send additional reinforcements, but the battle will become more complicated.

Although it has not turned out that way for the time being, you can rest assured that it will not be taken lightly.

If the Empire didn't believe Yuuki's words and went directly through this land towards that direction of the Blumund Kingdom…then Geld and the rest would attack from behind the Imperial Army.

Even if it is possible to send the entire Second Legion through my ‘teleportation’…there will still be fighting on the ground at that time. There would be far fewer reinforcements from the labyrinth, and it was conceivably going to be a harsh battle.

If one went inside the labyrinth to collect volunteers, one should be able to recruit a considerable number of people. If you say so, we can't bring out all the magical creatures that don't have a will, and the number of reinforcements will be small.

That said, if we were to fight on the ground, there would be no way to cover us on the other side of the maze, and we would have to be prepared to suffer a lot of damage. The ideal development is for the enemy to put the target on the maze.

The same is true of the battle plan proposed by Benimaru, the one with the highest success rate and security is the "Maze Offensive and Defensive Battle".

If it evolves into a ground war, the vantage point that only exists within the maze is gone. We must go head-to-head and fight on even terms.

In fact, this is a matter of course, how you can build a situation in our favor in wartime is the key to winning or losing.

Although using a maze even I find despicable, as long as I can beat it.

So if you can, hopefully the maze will become the main battlefield.

Even when switching to ground combat, the basic approach is the same.

The primary goal is to find out who is the master buried on the enemy's side. Just as the previous battle had sent the green legion as bait, that job would go to Geld’s legion this time.

Benimaru's battle plan was based on a certain objective.

All for the sake of protecting me as the King…

I cherish those partners, the same—or even more so—and I always feel that Benimaru puts me first.

I hope they don't force themselves, but Benimaru has more detailed insight on this part than I do, who knows nothing about tactics. Even in the fight just now, looking at the results alone would reveal that the damage suffered was minimal.

Since everything is in Benimaru's hands, all I have to do is wait patiently.

In addition to that, I want to continue to work quietly in order to make everyone feel more at ease and more willing to rely on me.

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To facilitate the Imperial invasion, we prepared a gate on the ground, but that was perhaps a little too deliberate. I was a little worried about whether the other person would suspect that it was a trap, and I ended up worrying too much.

I don't know if my wish was granted, but as far as the conclusion is concerned, the subsequent developments were as I had hoped.

"The enemy has deployed in front of the gates on the ground!”

The communications officer came to report to us.

The large screen shows the neatly arranged Imperial General soldiers.

It's information is obtained through the Argos, so I don't think there's any mistake, and Souei's men are also watching, so there's no need to worry about being deceived by illusions or other tricks. It looks like the Imperial Army has really taken the bait.

The other side does not seem to want to continue to hide, and all 700,000 troops have shown up. I guess on the one hand they are trying to scare us, but it means nothing to us.

We have no intention of surrendering at all. While there is the possibility of escape, there is absolutely no submission to the Empire.

Plus everything is in ideal condition.

"It's a win.”

I couldn't help but mutter.

"Right. We will win."

Benimaru replied with morale.

In fact by this time it was already certain that tactically we had won.

Enter the maze and we will be unscathed, and with some more time we will surely win. Then, as long as there is no overpowering person above the demon lord, there will be no flip-flop to take advantage of.

"It's a good thing some greedy fool was drawn to the maze.”

"Indeed. Originally I was going to say that the bait spilled by Lord Rimuru was too obvious, and it was great to smoothly get the opponent on the hook.”

"Yeah. It looks like Gadra has got things in order.”

For the moment the enemy has given us a glimpse of them.

Once the battle power is dispersed, the rest of the unease is not knowing where the master is hiding.

Spreading the war effort was basically a foolish act, but this time the other side all came together and kind of helped. It seemed like they were going to invade the maze in order, so the question would only be how much combat power the other side would actually stay on the ground…

"In any case, it would be strategically unwise for the Empire to pass through our doors. If they just blocked the door on the ground like that and went straight to the west, there would be trouble."

"That's true. A hundred thousand of the seven hundred thousand would be enough to surround.”

Moreover, if the remaining armies were to march on the Western countries, they would be able to cut off their worries.

By the way, if that's the case, we'll be able to get in and out from other locations. However, places that are blocked off by techniques such as fixed space-type "boundaries" cannot open the entrance or exit, so they can only open the door to places where they have been to some extent.

Realistically, if we can unseal the entrance and exit to the Spirit Realm, which is Ramiris' lair, we can get in and out from there.

Only in this way, we're locked in a maze. He would have to watch the Western countries being ravaged, and he would have to send troops even if he barely could.

The result is to go to ground combat.

In the end, you'll have to face off against your opponent, but until then, cut the enemy's battle strength as much as possible.

"Don't you have to warn those people on the ground?"

"If it's to incite them to anger, they'll probably be outraged to go to war, won't they?”

At this point, Veldora and Ramiris made this observation.

"These comments are worth listening to, but with no warning.”

"Oh? What's the reason?”

"You know that, don't you? There are 'words' above the door.”

"Ah! To hear you put it that way it does.”

In fact, there is an engraved message at the gate on the ground.

The weak have no right to pass through this door…

I wonder how the enemy will react?

"I wonder how my opponent will act when I see that.”

"I think I'd feel the heat and rush in. It's just that they'll let the men go first."

Benimaru might actually do that. He's the kind of guy who still rushes in knowing there's a trap.

"I wouldn't care. Because I'm strong!”

Yes yes yes, again, not asking Veldora.

"My words would be like this. If Beretta had said he wanted to go anyway, I probably would have thought there was nothing I could do with him and gone along.”

Ramiris…don't force it if you're afraid. Beretta, who was named by me, is laughing bitterly.

"Lord Rimuru is merciful, and there can be no complaint about someone being stupid enough to ignore your warning, no matter what happens in the end.”

I'm tempted to ask "why are you so happy?” but like Diablo said, I would write those words on the one hand and warn them on the other.

"So if anyone is too cowardly to walk through the door, he is not qualified to go to war. We will destroy them without mercy, and must show them how foolish it is to be hostile to Lord Rimuru!”

Miss Shion, if you say something like that, won't you end up in a fight? Even Geld was smiling darkly, wishing she had thought a little before speaking.

Despite saying so, the other subordinates actually thought very similarly to her.

People were really energetic and looked energetic as they talked to me about giving me a bigger victory.

Testarossa and the others’ "soul" collection was dedicated to me, and for some reason, others who had learned of it were planning to paint gourds as well.

Testarossa—supposedly of the demon race—seems to enjoy the emotional residue that attaches itself to the soul. I've heard that there are all kinds of ways to eat, but her favorite is to see the look on a face when they’re cramping up from fear—that’s what Testarossa said.

That smiley face was a little scary at the time.

If it was before I was reincarnated, I might have been scared, but now I just think, "That's how it is.”

The demon race didn't matter, what were the other demons doing that for?

Even if it's okay to collect "souls" and not know what can be done. It should be said that even I was just learning about it for the first time and it even made me wonder why they were racing like this.

It's probably a trophy or something, but I don't really want it…

That's 700,000 people.

If I did get all these people's souls, I could awaken seven other people—horrible to think of myself as naturally emerging from this.

No, no, no.

In order to avoid turning my mind into a demon, I'll have to get in a good mood to deal with it.

After renewing my resolve, I turned my eyes to the big screen.

"Looks like they're out in force."

There, the Imperial soldiers are reflected in full gear.

They didn't look frightened at all and began to barge in the door as if nothing had happened.

"Everything is going according to plan. If more than half the people break in, it will be much easier for us after that…”

When I muttered these words, Benimaru smiled arrogantly.

"We will not spare a single soldier. Depending on the situation, I will also strike.”

Geld nodded as he listened.

"My Second Corps can actually send out about 17,000 men. We are at a disadvantage in terms of numbers alone, but we are not at a loss. Let's change the terrain and seal off the enemy's army.”

"So reliable. If the inside is completely burned with my flame again, then only the strong ones worth fighting will remain.”

''On that note, I suppose Ms. Carrera will help as well. She seemed eager to make a scene from a moment ago, and would have been happy to play to her strengths.”

"The power of the Primordials is unquestionable. But I won't lose to her.”

Ouch ouch ouch?

This conversation sounded very different from what I expected to hear.

Benimaru and Geld both talk with a win in mind. Personally, I'm a little worried too, they're really hoity-toity.

It was only natural to count Carrera among the warriors, and to feel no fear or politeness towards the Primordials.

"Benimaru, you're too cunning. Since we're going to fight a war of annihilation, we should put me on the field!”

In the end, even Shion followed suit and volunteered.

It looks like she forgot she was my bodyguard again, but the control room is in the safest place. The selling point of this unit is the resistance to beatings. It would be a pity to leave them to cool off on the side, if we had to fight on the ground, which I intended to do.

If Shion had that intention, I could have given the order to attack…

"Calm down, Shion. Be the first to see how the enemy will act. Depending on the situation, it may also be possible to ask you to go out.”

Anyway, let's placate her with these words for now.

"Kufufufufu. Speaking of Lord Rimuru's bodyguard, having me alone will suffice.”

Even Diablo had said so, if anything happened, just call Testarossa and the girls back. They can

"teleport" and come in an instant.

"Since Lord Rimuru has said so, all right. I'll ask you to strike at that time too, Shion.”

"Mmm! Benimaru, just leave it to me.”

With a full smile on her face, Shion thanked Benimaru.

Why is this girl so into combat? It's a little hard for me to understand. But since she was so happy in person, let's do that.

"That follows. Rimuru, I'm going to get ready!”

"I'm coming too! To show them the horrors of the maze!”

"Mmm. You can rest easy with me as your last line of defense.”

"Then if you'll excuse me, Lord Rimuru.”

Looking combative and full of energy, Veldora and Ramiris leave the control room. Beretta followed suit and the control room returned to silence.

In Veldora's opinion, this was his first job as a labyrinth master. It's not sure if he's actually going to make an appearance, but that look feels so reliable just looking at it.

"Then let's go and see what the enemy is capable of.”

Watching everyone walk through the door one by one, I said something very Demon Lord-esque.

The group nodded.

As such, we are about to face off against a total of 700,000 Imperial troops.

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When the leader of the Mecha Legion, Calgurio, saw that the situation was developing as expected, he secretly snickered.

He looked at his army with great confidence.

A number of elite men were passing through the gate one by one.

Ahead lies the labyrinth that will bring great wealth to Calgurio.

I guess the monsters are now in a panic because of the unexpected presence of an army.

They were able to do so thanks to their careful planning and the strength of the soldiers and generals who could match.

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He had consulted with those staff officers several times about the invasion route, deliberately allowing the Magic Tank Division to attack from the front so as to be conspicuous.

In addition to that, if the evil dragon Veldora shows up to repel him, they also send a hundred blimps of the killer Air Combat Air Corps.

It was also the job of the Air Combat Flying Corps to transport the Legion of Warcraft led by Gladim to the West. Yet they would fly over the sea and the journey was bound to be safe.

He didn't think the blimp needed the war effort, so Calgurio had to ask for resupply support. It was his intention to put an end to the duties of the blimps by having all three hundred of them go out while carrying military supplies.

So the battle was all focused on fighting against Veldora. As for the hundreds of airships sent to the Great Forest of Jura, they were all fully prepared and carried the most powerful magicians.

It was a sure thing that even if they had to take cover, Calgurio thought that these forces alone could completely suppress the whole West.

If Gladim and the others had attacked the capital of Ingracia, they would have put an end to this war in one fell swoop.

By waging war on two fronts at once like this, Calgurio's mech legions were responsible for a great deal in comparison. This means a lucrative campaign once successful.

In this way, his power within the empire will rise even higher. Thinking about this side, Calgurio laughed until his mouth was full.

As for the outline of the battle plan, it’s…

He will let the Magic Tank Division invade in a conspicuous way, and once the enemy takes the bait, this time the team led by Calgurio will appear in full force. Followed by an attack on the base of the Demon Lord Rimuru.

According to the intelligence obtained beforehand, the metropolis ruled by the demon lord seemed to have been isolated into the maze. He had originally wondered how that was possible, but it was all true.

What remained on the ground was a single door to the maze.

That being the case, all they had to do was surround this door and let the enemy stick their wings in it.

If you disrupt the space around you, you will be sealed with the teleportation magic. This will allow for a complete blockade.

The problem of the combat power of the armed power, Dwargon, is greater.

The heroic king Gazel is not to be underestimated, and the dwarven soldiers are notoriously tough. It's not a lie that the Millennium Undefeated would die a horrible death if they were underestimated.

However!

We can't lose. There are up to 2,000 magic magic tanks here, so if they sacrifice the antiques of the old days, they are no match for us at all.

The armed power of Dwargon remains neutral, but this is not at all important in the eyes of the Empire.

I've only let them go because I thought it was tricky, but since I knew my own army would win, I didn't have to.

Magic and Science.

The fusion of the two creates the strongest legion, with a whole new way of fighting as a foundation.

That's the mecha legion led by Calgurio.

Gazel is indeed a hero, but he alone can't do anything. Of course, it's common sense that the quality of the force is more likely to change the battlefield than the number of men. Calgurio knew how destructive the magic tank cannon could be, and fighting with swords and magic was just an outdated way of fighting in his eyes.

Those dwarves would just have to prepare old equipment that couldn't keep up with the times and certainly couldn't imagine how capable the legions of the new era were. By the time they know, it will be too late. The dwarves were just waiting to be unilaterally ravaged.

But these ideas are fundamentally wrong, except that at this point the Calgurio has no way of knowing.

Lucky along the way, Calgurio was sure he would be victorious, and could not have imagined what eventuality would defeat him to the enemy—

Then came the report that had been awaited from the very beginning.

The enemy sent an emissary to visit, and bargaining broke down. They will go straight to belligerence.

Upon receiving this report, the Calgurio's marched in according to the intended plan and have now suppressed the land that looked like the base of the demon lord Rimuru.

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Calgurio waited there leisurely and began to think about the ministry.

It might be a bit of a shame to let Geist get Gazel's head, but the minions won't come after me until they give me something sweet to eat. There's no way around that.

That said, Lieutenant General Geist and Major General Faraga, who were among the best under Calgurio's men, were among the best. Sure to echo his expectations, Calgurio was convinced.

Although both Geist and Faraga were now dead, it was too much for Calgurio to detect.

"By the way, hasn't Geist contacted us yet?”

"Yes! Ever since Lieutenant General Geist returned they had begun to engage the enemy and had been unable to make contact since!”

"Mmm. I think it's about time we got a look at the situation. After all, it's impossible for them to get into a bitter fight and not contact us, isn't that too lazy?”

"Yes, I'm not sure…”

"Forget it. So, what's going on over at Faraga?”

It seems like Geist was too excited to go to war for so long. Calgurio thought he saw a big victory coming, so he focused all his attention on the battlefield.

That being the case, let's ask Faraga about it. If it was him, he would currently be looking gracefully at the battle from the air. In other words, he should bring the right information.

However, the liaison officer in charge of liaising with Faraga was not quite right. He was sweating furiously and was desperately trying to make contact with the other man.

"What's going on?”

The good mood was doused with cold water, and Calgurio stood up in displeasure. The tone of the words was a bit harsh.

Perhaps anxious about the relationship, the intelligence general replied in a panic.

"Report from Major General Faraga that he's encountered a suspected Veldora! We'll report back when it's confirmed, but…”

There was no further contact after that.

No further contact at all after the first report.

According to the Communication Magic Instructor underneath them, the magic element of the Jura Great Forest was very strong, and under normal circumstances, it could easily obstruct the Communication Numinous Wave.

Hearing him say that, Calgurio realized that the magical element seemed to be really thick, and knew why that was. After all, this forest was created by the nemesis, Veldora.

And this is the land of the Demon Lord. Let's just say that explanation makes sense.

Calgurio didn't think it would be useful to worry about it, so he didn't intend to go into detail.

There should be no time to report if one is fighting the other. And as the Communication Magic Instructor said, the surrounding magical concentration will have an effect, and there's a good chance that the "magic communication" won't get through.

And nowadays, if that Veldora was actually on the battlefield…it would be impossible to communicate through magic.

After a rational explanation in this direction, Calgurio immediately changed the direction of his thinking.

"Huh! Then just wait for them to bring good news. If they did run into Veldora, Geist and Faraga certainly couldn't contact us. That being the case, we can't afford to lose. Come on down to the maze!”

Geist and side had given a huge battle force, and this sense of reassurance did not make Calgurio feel that they would lose the battle. He believed that such a thing as defeat could never happen and had long ago eliminated that possibility.

Not only that, but it even felt right to his advantage.

Now that Faraga met Veldora, all that's left in the maze is the Demon Lord. He heard that the Four Heavenly Kings under him are also tricky, but it's not enough to watch against the elite of the "Mechatronics Transformation Corps".

Without the slightest confusion, Calgurio decided to set his mind on the maze before him.

The spot where Calgurio was staying was a large open field.

Big enough to stuff an entire metropolis. There was a gate towering over the central area, which was the junction to the maze.

Magic probing also revealed no harmful substances such as traps. There was only one door there, just waiting for Calgurio and the others to come and challenge them.

There was a phrase written on the gate—The weak have no right to pass through it—and Calgurio thought it proved he had thought it right.

Hide everything for fear of being plundered by us. It's obviously magic and a little clever, isn't it?

Whichever country it is, it is rightfully afraid of looting operations in the name of "dispatching supplies on the spot".

Seriously, not being able to get food is a major annoyance. The Empire had a huge army, which was undoubtedly a big pain in the ass for them. He admits it's also a tactically effective means to an end.

But you guys are so naive!

Calgurio was laughing at the shallow intelligence of the demon creature.

The soldiers underwent intensive surgery from otherworldly science and magic, and were able to do their best even if they didn't eat or drink for a week.

The food they carry focuses on energy balance, and one will supply the energy needed to be active throughout the day. Each person carries twenty of each, and the consumption so far is being calculated.

They had already distributed enough for them to consume, and they could continue to fight even without robbing the city of its food, which was foolproof.

Small, lightweight carrying food, but also made as simple as possible for the supply station, even the most problematic drinking water can be made by magic.

That way everything will be fine. According to their calculations, those elite soldiers would be able to move within the maze for twenty-seven days.

One of the greatest weaknesses in the conduct of military operations by the great armies was the interruption of the sources of supplies, on which the other side seemed to be pinning its hopes, but Calgurio must say they were naive.

"Think you can win by cutting off our supplies? It's stupid.”

Calgurio acted like he was laughing at their stupidity, and one of the staff officers followed suit. The man was of noble birth and wanted to follow Calgurio for oil.

"Hahahaha, Lord Calgurio. Don't make them sound so sad. That demon lord Rimuru made a mistake right from the start. Our proud "mech-modified regiment" sends its strongest assassin, the evil dragon Veldora, to take on the bait. By the time they found out, they were already surrounded by so many heroes.”

Other staff officers jumped in to echo the sentiment.

"But there's no reason to think so. It's bait, but it's a big army.”

"Exactly. I can understand that.”

After listening to these staff officers' conversations, Calgurio's mood became good.

"Huh! You think you're a demon lord, but that's not all! You must be shrinking into a ball in the depths of the maze right now!”

Besides mocking the Demon Lord's short sightedness, Calgurio was sure that their expedition would be successful.

"Whoa, whoa, whoa! That's how it is. The next thing we need to do is drag the demon lord to Lord Calgurio and cut off his head. That way, Lord Calgurio will become a hero for killing the demon lord!”

Staff officers of noble birth began to tout Calgurio.

That wouldn't be so bad, thought Calgurio.

The first step is to attack this maze and establish roots here.

Military positions were then constructed, and the West was taken advantage of.

If they didn't act fast, Gladim, who led the Warcraft Legion, would ravage the Western nations from the north. Seriously, Calgurio would love to get through the Great Forest of Jura before then.

But he used it without panic.

It is true that the number of feats they could have erected would have been reduced, but that would have been a mere ninety cents.

The Empire's long-held wish—to crush the "Storm Dragon", Veldora. If such a great feat is achieved, the other feats are not worth mentioning at all.

On top of that, if one could also hand over the head of the Demon Lord Rimuru, Calgurio would surely be chosen as the one who would take the most credit.

Like Calgurio, the staffers seemed convinced that they would win.

After all, they had an army of 700,000.

Seeing such a majestic sight, no one could have imagined that they would be defeated in battle.

"Let's start the 'border' on this land and make it a camp. Then send troops there in order. Everyone, get up and tackle the maze!”

"Leave it to us.”

"Then proceed as planned.”

No objections were raised. After all, the situation is not urgent, oppose it without deliberately risking upsetting the other party.

As for the glory to be gained by marching into the West, let it be given to Gladim. Everyone in the room had that consensus.

It's more about something else these days.

Most were able to get substantial gold and silver treasures within the labyrinth, which heightened their interest.

The lust in the hearts of these people wins.

All in all, they were going to flood this maze with manned tactics and then plunder it all, a pure and simple battle plan. The fact that no one has objected to this battle plan proves that they have all been blinded by the interests at hand.

It is because they are sure they will win that Calgurio and others openly accept their desires. They were convinced that their share of the treasure in the labyrinth would make them a fortune.

With that, Operation Maze Raid began.

Immediately following…

The poor people who knew nothing about it walked happily down the ladder that they never would have a chance to climb again.

The labyrinth is a maze of people…

Even if the opponent doesn't follow the rules.

It's just that…

The safety locks have been disengaged.

The real posture of the labyrinth, which no one has ever experienced, awaits them just ahead—it is hell on earth.

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The current location is one of the deepest rooms of the maze.

There was a secret conference room there that even Rimuru didn't know about.

The masters within the labyrinth then gathered in this vast hall.

On weekdays, the members who appear here do not gather. And they'll be there in full force like this, so imagine how important this discussion topic is.

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The leader is Beretta, the labyrinth coordinator, who is the adjutant and agent of Ramiris.

There are four Dragon Kings of all kinds.

There was the Flame Dragon King, the Ice and Snow Dragon King, the Gale Dragon King, and the Earth Shattering Dragon King, each occupying four corners of the hall.

And in the middle of the hall, in front of the ebony round table, sat those who were…

The floor guardian of the ninetieth floor, the "Nine-Tailed Beast" Kumara.

The floor guardian of the 80th floor, the "Bug Emperor" Zegion.

Apito, the "Bug Queen", the 79th level of the Domain Guardian.

The floor guardian of the 70th floor, Adalman, the "Immortal King".

The vanguard of the 70th level, Albert "Paladin of the Dead".

They are what people call the Ten Lords of the Labyrinth (Labyrinth Ten).

There were also three other people who looked abrupt.

Next to Adalman was an old man with a keen eye—he was Gadra.

To accompany the end seat were the floor guardians of the fiftieth floor, Gozu and Mezu, knowing that they looked out of place among these strongmen, so they didn't dare to be too high-profile when they came to participate.

That being said, the two of them always feel like they can win no matter what kind of opponent they meet. However, after actually witnessing people standing on top of each other, they realized the difference between them.

That's why they’re sitting on pins and needles.

There was another reason why they didn't dare to be too unbridled, and that was that those present and gathered often argued about who was the strongest.

Nowadays, they were also in a dark tide with each other, making one feel as if the space was distorted by an unusual pressure.

Even though Gadra was new to the scene, he was still not looking good in this battle. Seeing this scene, Gozu and Mezu realized how much they weighed.

Those guys are the real rabble-rousers, there's no way they can beat these guys.

Being able to make people like Gozu, who had been fighting for a hundred years, think like that, Gadra was not too simple either.

Although Beretta and those Dragon Kings didn't join the scramble, they weren't going to stop it either.

The attitude from beginning to end says "let them be".

While this is not the reason, the debate over who is the strongest among the Ten Lords of the Labyrinth is arguably growing stronger.

The fact that Adalman was praised to Rimuru's face and elevated to the next floor is still fresh in his mind.

After that, everyone's spirits were high.

Each person believes that he or she can be of greater help. And the idea is reinforced by the fact that none of the floor guardians below the comparison have a chance to make an appearance. They want a chance to make a difference.

As for newcomer Gadra, he is full of blood and wants to help his friend Adalman. If there was a waking good showing here, he thought to himself that would really solidify his position.

Adalman is now more eager to fight for the Rimuru he believes in than he was before, and wants to improve his status if he can. Thus the other floor guardians are an eyesore. Although not the enemy, they felt in the way.

Albert followed Adalman, in addition to secretly having ambitions to enhance his feats and make a name for himself. I didn't expect him to be very intentional.

Apito is the same female as Kumara, and their relationship is very sinister.

Especially the Nine-Tailed Kumara, who was responsible for guarding the deep 90th floor. Thus the chances of appearances are almost equal to zero.

Apito had a good showing against those Paladins, and Kumara was jealous of her and therefore particularly easy to work against, all out of a heart that wanted to work against the other.

Apito, on the other hand, was very unconvinced and was completely unwilling to give up half a step in the face of Kumara. So these two are at each other's throats all day long.

Zegion always looks like he's staying out of the way, but he's actually the top guy in the maze.

Everyone was jealous of him. He hoped, or didn't hope, that he would be caught up in the dispute.

And just like that, the masters within the maze have a nasty relationship.

But to say whether they hate each other to the core, they really don't.

In fact, they're just trying to prove they're the best, and not trying to fight their opponents off.

Respect each other despite being jealous.

Just because they will fight doesn't mean they hate their opponent.

Both consider each other to be good opponents for each other's cutting.

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Such a gathering of them together, but quiet to the point of surprise at the moment. Everyone's eyes were fixed on the still-empty main seat of the round table.

Look at the seat that belonged to the king of the labyrinth, Veldora, and to the great Ramiris who created it.

Two hours had passed since they had been summoned.

It was all still noisy just now, and Beretta's presence silenced everyone.

"In a short time, Lord Veldora and Lady Ramiris will be visiting. Everyone has to wait quietly.”

With that said, Beretta sat down in his seat.

"Chief, may I ask a question?”

Beretta nodded when he heard Nine-Tailed Kumara ask that.

"This time we'll be here because…?"

"You should all have guessed that. Some fools have invaded this maze, and the purpose of this time is to consult with everyone to see how to defeat them.”

Upon hearing this, everyone shut up.

They've all heard about the current situation, too.

Although they hadn't heard the purpose of the meeting that brought everyone together, they could almost guess the main points. Therefore, although the big moves had held each other back before, now, when they heard that the Imperial Army had invaded the labyrinth, they were more in the same mood than a competitive heart.

What would it mean to make an enemy of the labyrinth? To make sure those people understand that, let's all work together—that was their mindeset.

The scene is filled with breathless tension, followed by…

“Yah-ho-ho-ho!"

"Everyone, welcome to the party!”

The atmosphere in the hall heated up in one breath because of the relationship between Ramiris and Veldora’s debut.

Seeing such an atmosphere, Ramiris was happy and addressed the group in a serious tone that she wouldn't normally have.

"We haven't had a crisis of this magnitude since the opening of this maze! That's why I want to hear from everyone!"

As soon as this was said, everyone started meeting.

The first person to react was the Nine-Tailed Kumara.

"Gee, that goes without saying."

It seemed that she had been waiting for this moment for a long time, and was about to say what she thought when Apito snatched up the conversation.

"Just shoot to kill.”

Kumara began to glare at Apito with each other.

"You've got a chance to appear on my floor this time, haven't you? Apito and those Paladins should be playing satisfied these days, right?”

"What's that supposed to mean? If it's Hinata-sama, it's not bad, a Paladin is too weak to be an opponent, but it makes me feel even more bored!”

There was another wave of tension in the venue.

I didn't think it would be Veldora who came out to play roundup.

"Kuahahaha! Everyone, stop arguing. And everyone can rest assured. This time there's a chance to prepare everyone for the battle on the field. According to what I've heard, the guys seem to think the maze is only 60 levels at most. Despite our outward propaganda that the maze has a hundred layers, they don't believe it. Do people think it's okay to be so stupid?”

Everyone was like, “No!”

Veldora also 'hmmm'ed and nodded.

"It's fun to make a scene with them…but it's a pain in the ass.”

"Yes, that's it! Just like Master had just said, waiting for them to attack to the fiftieth level was really troublesome. Not only is it troublesome for us, but for each other as well.”

"Mmm. There are about 700,000 people crowded out there right now. Rimuru wants us to lure as many people as possible into the labyrinth—“

"If they're all crammed in by the entrance, it'll take time, won't it? The sheer number of enemies is also a problem. So we intend to distribute the enemy forces separately from the beginning, sending a thousand men to each floor!”

Fortunately, the Empire's general soldiers were disciplined and everyone lined up for action. Smoothly entering the maze, the ranks were not messed up, but that still took time, of course.

If the man in front starts fighting the man, that line of movement will be broken. In this way, one has no idea how long it would take to get everyone into the maze.

"If you're lucky enough to draw straws, you might be able to run into some serious enemies!"

“Ho ho ho! Maybe there was someone inside who would threaten Rimuru's life, the same guy Benimaru was looking for! But that might be his over worrying, but then again, just finding out who this person is would be a big help.”

Everyone's eyes changed when they heard Ramiris say that to Veldora.

To be one of the Four Heavenly Kings under Rimuru, that was a vision for the men in charge of the maze. One of them, Benimaru, is also Rimuru's right-hand man and is his best friend. People want to go up against him one day and see.

‘No, his best friend is me'—that’s what Veldora would think. But everyone didn't let that out of their mouths, and the live conversation went smoothly.

"That means…everyone has a chance, right?”

"If that's the case, I'm fine with that."

As soon as he heard this, Apito and Kumara instantly showed signs of reconciliation.

Others have their own ambitions in mind, and everyone is full of fighting spirit.

"So if someone comes into their own dominion, we can all do as we please?”

Hearing Adalman ask that, Ramiris nodded sharply and said, "That's it! This became the key message, and the members of the maze became more serious again.

Ramiris went on to explain.

"They're also invading one by one at the moment, so all in all we'll put them in order starting with the fortieth floor. Whenever the number reaches a thousand, drop down a floor and follow this pace! Gozu and the others will assign other tasks and explain later.”

The jealous eyes of everyone on the scene were focused on Gozu and Mezu, causing those two to tremble with nervousness. Their bodies shrank even more than just now, desperately trying to pass.

Instead of falling into this situation, it would be better to fight the foolish invaders, which would be a thousand times better—the mood of both men.

Also not bothering with such a Gozu and the others, Ramiris continued to illustrate.

"That's about it, we're going to skillfully disperse the enemy on all floors. The last forty to fifty tiers would be 100,000 people. The fifty-first to sixtieth floor is also 100,000 people. Sixty-one to seventy layers of 100,000. Seventy-one floors to eighty floors and 100,000 Eighty-one levels to ninety— 100,000.

And then probably let each Dragon King deal with 10,000 people? If someone still keeps breaking in, it will divide them up to the upper floors!”

The maximum number of people accepted at one time was targeted at 540,000. Ramiris said she wanted a minimum of 350,000 as well. Finally she would address the most important matters.

"One more thing not to be forgotten, and only this time, we are going to change the rules inside the maze. Each room with dragons will expand to ten times the normal size, and we'll also let the floors swap and fall into the room with dragons as soon as we break through the ninetieth floor. But that's not the point. The real point is that the conditions for breaking the barrier change!”

Ramiris flapped her wings and flew around, one side for emphasis.

So what exactly were the conditions changed to?

First of all, once you get through the door this time, you can't get out if you don't break it. To break through would mean having to defeat Veldora, and that would really be a showdown with the whole army out in force.

On top of that, the challenge to Veldora was conditional on collecting the ten keys that the Ten Lords of the Labyrinth had dropped.

That is, even if some people started off from the eighty floors, they still had to go back to the upper floors to beat down Ten Lords of the Labyrinth.

Hearing this, a satisfied expression appeared on all ten of their faces.

The Dragon Kings in the four corners of the hall chattered in small voices.

"If so, it seems an equal opportunity."

"That sounds about right. There can also be more prey than whoever hunts it."

Sparks began to flare up among the group.

"Huh. I hope I have a match to make me swing my sword seriously.”

"Can't be too arrogant, Albert. We just have to figure out how to annihilate the enemies of god.”

There is a fight between the master and servant that begins to burn.

There are also people who have been meditating quietly.

The group seemed to be full of energy in the face of the upcoming battle.

Faced with such a labyrinth of ten masters, the chief—Beretta, identified as the chief of the Ten Lords of the Labyrinth, opened his mouth.

"By the way, Lord Ramiris. It's been a matter of asking you before…"

"Oh, oh, that's what I'm talking about. Hmmmmm, Rimuru allowed it too, let's observe it this time.”

"Thank you. So…”

After conferring with Ramiris over something, Beretta stood up and looked around the Labyrinth Lords.

"Ladies and gentlemen, Lord Ramiris has assigned me the role of labyrinth coordinator. I'm also a Labyrinth Lord, but…

Beretta personally felt that becoming Chief of the Ten Lords of the Labyrinth was just a side hustle. It takes ten people to put together a good sounding name, so Beretta joined the ten just to put together the numbers.

And the title also reflects the casual nature of the things that Ramiris does, changing again and again.

It's not like he's willing to do it.

As for his colleague, Treyni, though in the same position as himself, Ramiris held her in high regard.

The reasoning was that she wouldn't scold Ramiris just yet…but Beretta felt it was too much to take.

That being said, Treyni still does what he does. She seems to have gotten the promise of Ramiris to go somewhere without Beretta's knowledge.

It was so disturbing, Beretta sighed quietly at the thought of it.

All in all, he was currently forced to rank among the Maze’s Ten Lords of the Labyrinth in order to make up his numbers. Beretta himself didn't want that, so he was keen to cede the position of the Labyrinth Ten Chief to someone else.

Now the opportunity he had been waiting for had finally come.

"I want to cede my place to the man who made the war.”

The Labyrinth Lords’ eyes seemed to light up for a moment, and all their eyes changed.

Even Gozu and Mezu were no exception, and began to hold ambitions that were not commensurate with their status, thinking that perhaps they could join the Ten Lords of the Labyrinth. Only that ambition went up in smoke with Beretta's next words.

"As for my share in this war as a Labyrinth Lord, I will leave it to His Excellency Gadra over there for the time being. He has been recommended by Lord Adalman as having considerable strength, and his knowledge is recognized not only by me but also by Lady Ramiris.”

Gadra, who was suddenly named, was surprised but unfazed. He hadn't lived this long and was used to such scenes.

Here we go…! The time of this old man has come. If I had taken advantage of this opportunity to make a splash, I wouldn't be a temporary replacement!

Gadra is always positive. How else can there be a way to quickly get a head start and navigate between countries?

And Gadra was also well aware of his own abilities, relying on his accurate vision to see through the Ten Lords of the Labyrinth. Some of them were not as good as themselves, or not on a par with him, and there were even some masters among the Ten Lords of the Labyrinth who were not comparable to him.

There was absolutely no way he could ignore these over-the-top strongmen and think of himself as the first. Because he was well aware of this, Gadra's goal was limited to joining the Ten Lords of the Labyrinth.

"Well, then, I'll take that as a compliment!”

"Will you take it? That does me a favor, Sir Gadra.”

Just at this moment, Gadra and Beretta agreed on what was at stake.

So much so that, though only temporarily, on the eve of the upcoming battle with the Empire, they had a personnel change. Beretta emerges from the Ten Lords of the Labyrinth, and Gadra joins to become one of them.

"Mmmmmm! Gadra was willing to accept, and I was happy. Ask Gadra to take charge of the sixty floors. You will do well to enslave the Colossus, the Floor Guardian Colossus!”

Things were quickly finalized.

In this regard too, Ramiris had talked to Rimuru, and they had long since decided to try Gadra.

Gadra was usually there to assist in the research work of Ramiris, so he agreed without a second word.

The other party was willing to send him the floor guardian statue, which was a great request from his point of view.

"Mmm! In that case, let's get a nickname for Gadra, too.”

"Ah, that's right, Gadra. Do you have a nickname you want?”

Suddenly being asked so, Gadra was at a loss for a moment as to how to react.

"This, this…”

Gadra personally doesn't think that's very important.

The Imperial Army had also invaded, and now it was best to start defending quickly. He also thought that even if he didn't say it, everyone knew it by heart.

But that doesn't seem like much of an issue to the top people, and even at times like this the attitude is as usual.

Frustrating. His majesty Rudra was already very good, and these people were no match for him. No, no, no, since the other party is a "Storm Dragon" and a "Labyrinth Fairy", that's a natural reaction too…

Gadra was impressed.

Gadra, a man with no connection to loyalty, could nevertheless be said to harbor a sense of awe for both Veldora and Ramiris—plus Rimuru, who could use both of them deftly.

"Should we name him 'The Magic Guide’?"

"Master, I think that sounds cool!”

"Right? I'm cool when I'm supposed to be cool. Kuahahaha!”

How could Gadra herself dare to have an opinion.

That's the way it is.

Thought it was all largely explained, he didn't realize that it seemed like there was something else Ramiris had to say.

"That's right, that's right, I remember! Gozu and Mezu also have important missions!”

Hearing that, being nervous about not knowing what kind of task they would be assigned, Gozu the whole of them jumped up.

"So, then, what are we responsible for?”

"What's the best thing to do?"

The two men inquired tremulously. Not taking such a reaction to heart, Ramiris ordered it.

"Go to the 30th floor and stand by so that you can summon the monsters of the passers-by over there. If anyone escapes, get rid of them. The location of the resurrection with the bracelet is also arranged on the 30th floor, so it's okay to accidentally kill the wrong person! You've got to work hard!”

She sounded like she could do it as if it was a matter of course.

Gozu and Mezu too could only accept it.

It's not that they don't want to do it, it's that the unease in their hearts is greater.

Worried if they didn't get it right this time, they would be cut off. If they play hard, they'll probably be cut from this honor-filled post. To avoid that kind of thing, they had to cheer well, and Gozu and Mezu looked at each other and nodded.

The 30th level of the maze, the floor guardian, is a B+ level Ogre King and five of his men. They will obey the orders of the A-ranked Gozu and Mezu and are now considered reliable partners.

And even the newcomer Gadra agreed to take over the Labyrinth Ten post without changing his face.

As predecessors, they could not afford to miss out on this battle.

One other point. The two of them also discovered one more thing.

Even if someone broke away from the thirty levels, there was nowhere for the Imperial Army to run.

Even if those people ran to the first level, which was located at the top, they would still have to be forced to turn back from there.

In that light, the responsibility they have taken on in this mission is actually very light. And they find that the more people they lose to themselves, the more people they can kill.

"Look at us. We're the floor guardians, for better or worse. If this battle is recognized, our 'status' will be enhanced!”

"That's right, that's it, buddy. This time, don't talk about the petty family business there, talk about taking turns and all that. We'll do everything we can to crush the enemy!”

"If any of the Imperials escape, we will expel them all!"

"That's it! I won't let Lady Ramiris down!"

Since there was no way back, they had to move forward.

The uneasiness in their hearts vanished in an instant, and the two men's energy rose with them.

And just like that, the task for each person to take on was set.

"Rimuru asked us to bring as many Imperial soldiers into the maze as possible! In order for that to happen, we have to give our opponents some sort of sweet treat!”

The group listened and nodded forcefully, indicating that they understood. Everyone is clear about their responsibilities. At least on the first day they planned to quietly watch the enemy's movements.

Ramiris originally looked at everyone with satisfaction, but she finally dropped a shock bomb.

"Very good very good. Then everyone, come on! By the way, Rimuru said he would be watching the battle as well. Not only is this a way to judge who should be Labyrinth Chief, it's also a chance for him to see how you all behave!”

The moment those words came out of Ramiris' mouth, everyone's expression suddenly turned serious, serious to the point of being full of killing aura.

"You say Lord Rimuru will watch us?”

Zegion had originally been silent, and now even he spoke up.

This surprised Apito.

The "Worm Emperor" Zegion is a quiet man who rarely speaks.

Aside from his allegiance to the Demon Lord Rimuru, the only thing that interests him is to become stronger—Zegion is one such person.

"Well, umm, umm, Rimuru said he'd watch it too!”

Stammering in response, Ramiris was caught off guard by her opponent's airs.

After all, even Ramiris didn't get much of a chance to watch Zegion speak, and would be surprised quite normally.

"Oh Zegion, what Ramiris said is true. Rimuru was also intrigued by the strength of the Maze members. That's why I chose to trust you and decided to let you take on the heavy responsibility of this battle.”

Like looking for the steps down for the astonished Ramiris, Veldora so stated.

For Veldora, Zegion was an excellent apprentice to the combat training he had implemented since before.

He's also a great player who has a long history of friendship with Veldora. Not only that, but depending on the conditions, he even grew to the point where he could fight Veldora to the point of being above even odds.

Zegion was too powerful.

To ask if there was anyone in the Maze who could be Zegion’s opponent, there was no one else but Veldora.

Just because Zegion was such a master, this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity was all the more exciting for him.

"Yeah? Lord Rimuru will be watching to see how we and others fare…it really gets my blood pumping.

Let the adults see how much I've grown, and I'll show it all.”

"Hey, hey, that's a must! He says he's looking forward to it, so people are going to surprise him!”

With a smile of innocence, Ramiris ended with these words.

Despite her innocence and kindness, Ramiris is inherently without mercy. She was the one who had become a demon lord and had no objection to the absolute law of the weak and the strong.

When entering the maze, everyone will see the rules. Even the general soldiers from the Empire are no exception, and while confirming ‘their own will to enter the labyrinth,’ they are also asking their instincts, ‘If they can't come out without meeting the conditions, can they still accept this?’

Will people take this as a threat or a warning? Everyone fantasizes about what riches can be gained in the maze, and like the colony of ants drawn past by sugar, all get sucked into the maze.

From this point on, Ramiris stopped being merciful.

So she would no longer be polite and would greet these enemies.

Next, the soldiers of the Empire's generals will understand.

They will witness the true gesture of this maze.

Taste the fear…

"We are going to win. Dedicate the victory to Lord Rimuru.”

Zegion read the words and rose from his seat.

It became a signal that everyone was out in force.

In order to get to the venue that had become hell, they’ll wait for the guests to arrive.



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At the entrance of the underground maze, soldiers from the Imperial Army were drawn in one after another.

They were in neat rows, their movements were not in the least bit strained, and they were all well behaved.

Each person is equipped with a seat belt around their waist that links them together, spacing them back and forth for a total of three meters.

There were other squads in charge of the fight, and these men were not connected by ropes and could move freely. When there was no combat going on, they held the life-saving ropes that bound those soldiers.

In the face of such a large army pressing down on the territory, the maze was nothing. They were prepared beforehand, they were coming to challenge the maze, no one would get lost.

In addition to being satisfied with their elaborate arrangement, Calgurio began to think of the wealth he would receive.

This maze is basically some kind of trickery for kids. The problem is the magical creatures that inhabit it…

It's not just how strong those magical creatures are, it's also a question of how much time fighting can consume. According to the research they've done beforehand, the 60th floor is the bottom floor, but that's not necessarily true.

It was said that the labyrinth had so many layers of a hundred, but he didn't think it made sense.

Calgurio always thought it was bluffing.

The deeper you go, the more valuable treasures you can acquire, and most importantly, the higher the purity of the "magic crystals" you can recover. This is fascinating to hear that it increases in proportion to the strength of the magical creatures that inhabit it, etc. But Calgurio had been bitter and found that tricky.

In any case, if you can identify the type of magic creature, you will be able to find the proper way to dispose of it. It would be more efficient to hunt that way too.

Stroking his proud beard, Calgurio came to this conclusion.

Looking at the well-trained general soldiers, the Maze is not even a threat. Their majestic looks are proof—proof that they have untouchable power.

They've imagined what battles might occur within the maze and have done training.

Able hands using spirit magic will confirm the way forward and a special work team will disarm the traps. The combat team will be responsible for expelling the magical creatures, and the team responsible for handling them will disintegrate those magical creatures and harvest the "magic crystals". This sequence of moves will have the top of each column executing.

And the acquired treasures will be transmitted to the rear through the linked soldiers. Then it was just passed to the front of the entrance for those waiting over there to move back to Operations Command.

Linking soldiers together allows for a change in circumstances. If something happened, they would immediately send back information that had been rigorously trained on these soldiers.

Calgurio's response started out well. Over time, however, abnormal changes began to appear. When about a thousand or so soldiers entered the maze, communication between the two sides was suddenly broken.

"My lord, how can this be?”

What happened to those soldiers?

It is not yet clear. Watching the ropes being neatly cut, one can imagine that space has twisted.

Information obtained in advance mentions this, saying that sometimes the structure of the maze can change. But I've heard it only happens every twenty-four hours…

Calgurio agonized over it, but had no intention of preventing the soldiers from parading in. He intended to keep the soldiers rushing in for the time being.

As it turned out, he discovered one thing—for every thousand or more people who entered, the structure of the maze changed.

No, that's not right. By this time Calgurio was alert.

"I get it. The enemy seemed happy to see us in, too.”

"What the…? What does that say?”

"It's obvious. If the labyrinth is overcrowded, they probably won't do well. Going down that staircase doesn't lead to the second basement level, I'm afraid it connects to another level.”

“What!? How could such a thing happen…?”

Looking at the surprised staff officer with a foolish look, Calgurio snorted.

"Of course it's possible. The opponent is at least a demon lord. If they couldn't do even that little thing in their own territory, they would have been destroyed long ago.”

Calgurio accurately predicted what would happen in the maze.

Based on conversations before the soldiers broke off contact, it didn't seem like there was anything unusual going on. But that doesn't mean that something suddenly happened to them.

"Also, when it was just over a thousand people, contact was suddenly broken. What do you think that means?”

"I see…Your Excellency is aware of this, I am afraid."

“Hmmm—" with a nod, Calgurio began to think of a course.

Several treasures have been shipped over. It's all amazing equipment, or "magic steel" made weapons.

Everything is top-notch. Moreover, the "magic crystal" received just now is of excellent quality and has an impeccable energy conversion rate.

If the invasion was interrupted at this time, the 2,000 soldiers who had gone in would have lost their lives. Instead of doing that, it would be more effective to stick to the original plan and use that kind of manned sea tactics.

Calgurio so judged.

"This is a threat to us. To get us to abandon the Maze, they intend to buy time. That way they'll have a chance to wait for reinforcements from Deva Heights.”

"Ridiculous. Even that Dwargon today…

"Exactly. To interrupt the operation here would be to call the enemy's will!"

"Yes! Then let's get back to the maze battle!”

Seeing through the enemy's tricks, Calgurio was satisfied. Then weighing the benefits that could be gained against the lives of the soldiers on the scales, he decided to ignore the slightly unnerving elements.

It was at this moment that the fate of the Imperial Army was sealed.

A full day had passed since they had started invading the maze.

They pushed on day and night, and about three hundred and fifty thousand soldiers and generals invaded the maze without incident.

As usual, for every thousand people sent, the route of aggression they take changes.

It seemed that only those who ran to a particular floor could barely get a part of their body to appear outside, and the kinds of treasures acquired there would change along with it. There are almost no low-quality objects, which also contain weapons with holes.

Those weapons look like a new type of enemy weapon.

From this one can infer how panicked the enemy was.

If there was time, they would have taken it back. Failure to do so proves that the enemy doesn't have that leeway now.

Blame them for trying to suck up customers with a maze, only to have one head and two tails in a sudden situation. They are too stupid.

The idea of using the labyrinth to attract people from the surrounding countries—an idea that Calgurio found interesting. Yet they couldn't pick up the pieces at the crucial moment, and can only say that they did things too roughly.

In this way, at first, Calgurio thought that the Demon Lord Rimuru's gang were all fools, but after a whole day, they decided to watch the situation for the time being.

Soldiers at the command headquarters would take turns resting. It would have been fine to continue the invasion plan in this manner, but Calgurio suddenly felt uneasy.

"The total number of people who have broken into the maze is 350,000, right?”

"Yes! Half of our army has invaded the maze.”

Although almost every full thousand people were disconnected, that was as Calgurio had predicted.

After a while, someone reported that they had found the soldiers who had entered the maze earlier.

The Imperial Army's morale was instantly boosted. Originally, everyone was very upset and relieved to know that our soldiers and horses were fine.

To get into a panic over a little thing is a disgrace to the Imperial Army.

All the soldiers thought so, forcing down the restlessness in their hearts to act. So this good news breathes life into them. There was nothing to be afraid of this time, and the pace of aggression increased with it.

As a result, half of the General's soldiers entered the labyrinth right now, but…

"So many people were sent, and it still wasn’t enough to fill the maze…”

"I didn't realize it was so vast."

"That's what I heard. Thought we'd be able to suppress the whole maze in a little while…"

By what they expected to think, the Imperial Army should have taken control of the entire maze long ago. However, this was not actually the case, and when they temporarily kept the soldiers out of the maze, they cut off contact with the people inside.

If the troops who had gone in first were found, they would be able to move out a great deal of treasure.

But now that the movement into the labyrinth has been interrupted, those gains have been temporarily halted.

No one has come out yet, have they?

"Yes, yes. It seems that in order to get out of there, we have to break through the maze first…

"Then I've heard. I've heard that during the invasion, someone in every soldier's head was asking questions of them, right?”

"Exactly. However, although the conditions are clear…it seems that before defeating the Labyrinth King, the Guardians of the Ten Keys need to be crushed first…

"So that's it, then we haven't crushed them yet?”

The answer is in sight.

But that's not what Calgurio wants to know.

The King of the Labyrinth is probably referring to the Demon Lord Rimuru. If the goal was to succeed in crushing him, it would have been a great one for them.

As a matter of fact it should be.

Yet in fact they were interrupted for a time, didn't continue to send troops in, and currently couldn't even get in touch with the soldiers inside the maze.

"Do you think it's possible to defeat Demon Lord Rimuru with 350,000 soldiers?”

The staff officers are at a loss for words when asked. But they answered immediately and with aplomb.

"The reason the Kingdom of Farmus had failed is because they met Veldora, I believe. If it's just Demon Lord Rimuru, it should be more than enough to defeat him.”

"I think so, too. There's no shortage of people who've taken part in this Raider Operation, so we just have to wait for them to bring back good news.”

Seemingly reassured to see someone agreeing with them, the staff officers began to shout one after another that they would definitely win. Yet Calgurio could not erase the uneasiness in his heart no matter what.

"The first thing is to get in touch with the people in the labyrinth. Also send liaison troops over and try to communicate by various means of communication.”

Receiving orders from Calgurio, they tried various methods to get in touch, but all failed. They also tried the Thought Communication or the Communication Network, but none of the people inside the maze responded.

Things have evolved to such an extent that it's hard for the staff members to fool themselves anymore.

The loot from the labyrinth had excited them, but in the face of the present, with no future in sight, they began to look demoralized.

The reason for all this is the inability to get in touch with the people inside the maze. Without clarity, the function of those staff officers cannot be fulfilled.

"Then we'll continue to organize the troops and let them enter the maze once more.”

At this point Calgurio "hmmm'd" and nodded.

Either way, they had to send soldiers in to confirm the situation. Even if they continued to stay on the ground, they couldn't confirm what was going on inside the maze.

The entrance to the labyrinth—that door had not been closed, but was still wide open. Nothing has changed since the beginning, as if nothing has happened.

Even so, as long as the person who entered next was slightly late, they immediately couldn't sense the scent of the people in front of them.

This action was also interrupted by the fact that the gold and silver treasures had been transported smoothly from inside the labyrinth. On the one hand, perhaps because of this, a heavy breath began to pervade the Combat Command.

Then—two more days passed.

"Why doesn't anyone return the favor after that?"

"Since every thousand people are put in different places, there's no way to find the forces that invade the depths of the maze again.”

"What, the maze is this big!?”

"I don't think…”

“What?"

"It's not all gone…"

"You fools, are you afraid!?”

"Everybody calm down. I'm afraid these are all tactics of the Demon Lord Rimuru. His purpose is to make us suspicious and give up on the maze.”

The practice is different now than it was in the beginning, sending out only a thousand people per hour to enter discreetly. But in that case, it would be difficult to bring back the information, not to mention the treasure.

On the first day alone, three hundred and fifty thousand people entered the maze.

An additional 150,000 people were added the next day.

There were only 30,000 people on the third day.

As for the Imperial General soldiers who remained on the ground, it had been reduced to the remaining 170,000.

"Wouldn't it be wise to hold on to your strength now?"

"We also send supply troops into the labyrinth to extend the activity limits of the general's soldiers.

Shouldn't it take at least 20 days to observe the situation…?"

"That's so negative!”

"But we still can't reach Lieutenant General Geist or Major General Faraga. Are they still tangling with the enemy, or are they…"

They have sent out spy troops several times, but none have returned. There has been no contact with reliable friendly forces.

"That's because of the high concentration of magicules. There could be no other reason."

Calgurio so asserted.

It would be bad if morale continued to be low, based on that judgment, he would say that.

But it's still hard to erase the uneasy atmosphere that pervades the scene. In an unspeakably eerie silence, the soldiers of the Imperial Army General had an ominous feeling of foreboding.

Even the speaker, Calgurio, was no exception.

There were 170,000 more Generalissimo soldiers on the scene. The converse can also be said of only 170,000.

Maybe I made a big mistake…

The thought suddenly flashed through Calgurio's mind.

The gate was towering. Nowadays it seems that the door was very eerie and fueled the unease in Calgurio's mind.

What will be the fate of the labyrinth's challengers in this door…

It wouldn't be long before Calgurio would know where they were headed.

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Forty-first through forty-eighth floors…

Those Imperial General soldiers who entered the labyrinth, because of the different floors they entered, had fates that were vastly different from each other.

One who is put on the forty-first to forty-eighth floor can be said to be lucky. Although the magical creatures that appear are very strong, they are only B-grade at best. The soldiers were fortified, the magic creatures were not their opponents, and the Raider operation went off without a hitch.

These empire's generals and soldiers were very powerful.

When converted to an adventurer's rank, everyone comes to C+ as a minimum. It's a first-class skill.

This way, they could handle it without any trouble even if they came across a magical creature.

They march in neat rows, at this pace.

Slightly behind the front row, the combat team took guard action on one side.

A stronghold was set up at each corner, followed by the clearing of the entire road. Act according to what they've been trained to do, and gradually take care of the entire floor.

Neither had passed the day yet, and the upward steps and the downward steps had been found by them both.

Their current combat goal became to crush the demon lord with all their war power once they met.

The task of capturing the treasures of the upper floors is left to the other troops, or they can wait until it's over. They used the stairs as a stronghold to suppress the entire floor. Then moved on to the strategy.

There was a locked room with a door near the stairs. The bulletin board above that door says "Lounge".

Just like the results of their prior investigation, the only thing that was different was that the door would not open.

"The door is really not open. They deliberately made us unusable."

"Think so. There's no way to destroy it?”

"Yes! Using firearms or magic had no effect. Just like the road inside the maze, it should be difficult to destroy!”

After hearing the soldier's report, the captain nodded.

It's nothing to be surprised that there will be such an outcome for granted.

If the magic tank guns are brought in or massive magic is unleashed, perhaps the destruction is possible. However, this would not guarantee the safety of their own troops in the labyrinth. I don't know how many casualties there would be if they planned to launch nuclear strike magic and so on.

So the captain decided to challenge the maze head-on, as originally planned. That is, the use of human sea tactics.

Now that he heard that even the lounge could not be used, he was not only annoyed, but also took it for granted.

"Report it up. Then tell them the operation is going well.”

"Yes, sir!"

He had faltered in the beginning when only a thousand of them were left. But to panic like this would be a disgrace to the Imperial Army.

The department captain decided to continue with the strategy. That decision was the right one. It wasn't long before they rendezvoused with the other troops.

Although the floor was larger than expected, there were spirit emissaries working hand in hand with the surveyors, and the Raiding Operation went smoothly. And defeat, magical creatures will drop "magic crystals" of good quality, and from the treasure chests they found, great gold and silver treasures will be opened.

The man who came down the stairs returned to him, saying that the forty-two floors were almost complete. There was a great cheer, and everyone said that the Imperial Army would not be defeated.

The next day they also explored all the rooms on the fortieth floor. Step into the forty-second floor at this rate and meet the troops who are staying there. They pounded straight into the forty-third floor with the momentum of a bamboozle, approaching the forty-eighth floor in less than three days.

The results have exceeded expectations.

But the forty-ninth layer doesn't start out that easy.

Forty-nine to fifty levels of the maze…

"Oooh, oooh, oooh, oooh…”

"It's going down, my…my feet are melting off…!"

"Help me! I can't get my hand out…!"

It's a living hell.

Drop it and you run into Slimes.

There's a bunch of Slimes everywhere.

Slimes, Slimes, Slimes, Slimes, Slimes…

Halfway through the break, Slimes fell from the ceiling.

As soon as the corner was turned, the squad was cut off and wiped out.

The walls are made of Slime, and the floor is Slime.

Weapons and defenses were destroyed and the soldiers' physical strength was taken from them.

"What the hell, still no way to break through!?”

"Yes! The entire floor smelled of magical creatures, there was no way to sense through magic. And they seem to have a high level of resistance to physical attacks, half-assed attacks are useless!”

"And the enemy is multiplying at an abnormal rate! They don't seem to feel pain either and don't seem to be afraid of our attacks at all!”

If it was an average Slime, only one would be nothing to be afraid of, but becoming so massive, it would take a lot of effort to burn the Slime out and turned into a tougher opponent than expected.

Every few hours reinforcements would come in to help, so the damage they suffered was not so great that they had to retreat. But it's just a matter of time consuming and delaying to come up with the desired results.

It turned out that all the floors were not explored until the third day was almost over. This time, they could finally rendezvous with the troops from the upper floors, and they were able to survive with the human sea tactics.

And coming to the fiftieth floor, they saw hordes of the wounded.

The road is like a dark, damp cave. The sound of battle echoes here.

"Damn it, these monsters are back!”

Someone shouted in feverishness.

He was looking at the giant snake that stood in front of him and wouldn't let anyone pass, moving stupidly like the incarnation of darkness.

It's a Tempest Snake.

The scales were like armor, half-dangling magic and gunfire could not do the trick.

Even if you want to get close enough to cut it with your sword, the Tempest Snake's "poisonous spray"

can spray up to seven meters away. The swords are bathed in death spray before they even touch.

"Damn it! This narrow passage is equivalent to being their world!”

"If we can still get around the wide area, there's nothing we can do.”

"Are the heavy magic cannons ready?”

"It's not working. It's been used just now, and it will be another two hours before the energy is replenished.”

The so-called "Heavy Magic Cannon" is a new type of magic-guided weapon that is capable of exerting the greatest power among portable weapons. Unlike "magic guns" that use magic stones as an energy source, they collect magical elements from the atmosphere and are filled with magical elements.

It's filled with magic, the elemental magic of the "Air Breaking Cannon", which is a high-powered magic that explodes continuously after compressing air. It doesn't catch fire and can be fired in a specific direction. So this kind of magic is also useful in confined spaces like buildings.

Just by being able to manipulate this kind of magic, you will be judged as an A grade, which is a high level magic.

But the problem is that the energy consumption is too great. This is why the surrounding mana is used to fill the maze, but even in a maze with a high concentration of mana, it would take three hours to fill it up. That kind of speed is fast enough under normal circumstances, but it was still too slow to use on this one.

"Oi oi oi, are you kidding me? What does that mean? Does that mean those monsters come back to life faster?”

The Tempest Snakes are clearly unusual individuals. Wearing a collar around its neck, it felt set apart from the other magical creatures.

The most important thing is that no matter how many times it is knocked down, after three hours it will come back to life. In other words, no matter how many times they are knocked down, they have to fight again as soon as a certain amount of time passes.

The tricky part is that there is no so-called safe zone on this floor.

And…

"Tweets, tweets, tweets..."

The sounds of fighting began to come from other roads as well.

Yes, there's more than one Tempest Snake.

There were ten of them found alone. A group of high-risk magical creatures with ranks coming to A-are using their characteristics to dominate this area.

This is the lair of the black snakes.

The Tempest Snake was originally a floor guardian of the forty floors, and now even the spare ones were put together on this floor.

The soldiers later managed to rendezvous with reinforcements from the upper floors and had a chance to rearm. This time, they finally had enough heavy magic cannons to defeat the Tempest Snake. It was late in the night on the third day that the Tempest Snake was finally successfully exterminated.

"Everyone, while maintaining this floor, beware of monster resurrection. Let the injured and sick take refuge on the upper floor.”

“Yes!"

With that, the Imperial Army reorganized its forces here. The next thing you know, they're in an even worse hell.

Fifty to sixtieth floors of the maze…

The fifty-first floor has a large area of modern access.

The Imperials seemed to have mastered this one floor, and soldiers could be seen around every corner.

The scene can be seen to leave traces of fierce fighting, and one can imagine that this floor is also tricky.

One of the troopers tried to make contact with the people on the scene.

"How's it going?"

To avoid waking the soldiers who were resting, he quietly questioned the station staff.

"The situation is dire. We have underestimated the Demon Lord.”

"What do you mean?"

"There are a lot of traps on this floor. We are standing in the right channel. The others should never go.

I think most of the traps should have been destroyed by us, but maybe some haven't lost their function.

"Got it. That said, those are…"

In order to report to his superior officer, the unit chief asked for further details.

The soldier then told him about the various chemical weapons that seemed to be not in use in the Empire either.

There is colorless and odorless gas that can poison the eyes and throat.

It is also sprayed with neurotoxins as well as melting solution.

Those vicious traps maimed quite a few people. The Imperial Army originally thought that this knowledge was exclusive to them, and therefore felt it was all the more threatening.

"There will be no magical creatures on this floor for the time being. Instead, some of the puppets that used Mana as a power source are hovering there. The tricky part is that they seem to be self-healing, and it takes some work to completely destroy them.”

"That's a lot of work.”

The department captain originally wanted to say that he and the others had also suffered a lot, but he still swallowed those words back and asked the other party to continue to reveal the subsequent situation.

"Yeah. The weary and the injured went to the fifty-fifth level to rest. It should be safe to go over there and have a meal.”

"Thank you. What about the situation on the front line now?”

"The front line……According to the information I just received, they seem to have arrived at the 60th floor. They also say some pretty bullshit things, and if they were to present this information upwards, the people above them would surely think they were crazy. I think it would be tiresome to hear, and even then do you still want to hear it?”

Watching the soldier who answered begin to sigh, the troop leader could only nod in agreement.

"Yes, please.”

"So. Then I told you, I heard there are huge human weapons sitting on the 60th floor! About the strength of that guy…”

The more you listen, the more you feel. Makes you want to say that because the other side is so strong it's a mess.

It is said that even if the A-ranked fighters team up to challenge, they still can't find the knack to beat their opponents. The opponent's body is made of "magic steel" and physical attacks like swords and guns don't work at all. Moreover, the opponent is always protected by a "barrier", and it is said that even the "heavy magic cannon" can't hurt him in the slightest.

There's nothing to be done—that’s what's happening right now.

"And then there was the sound that came out of that huge magic doll, and it turned out to be surprising that the sound was similar to that Master Gadra. Even I find it hard to believe, but it has to be reported upwards, right? It teaches one how to do it, really…”

The soldier's complaint came this way.

The head of the department decided to report what he had just said directly to his superiors for their instructions.

“We can only go forward now. You guys go to the fifty-fifth floor first, go there and talk about what to do in the future.”

"Yes, sir.”

At such times, one can only do as one pleases the superior officer. There is no alternative on the side of the chief of the department, how can one oppose the superior officer's approach.

But that just puts the question on the back burner first and the answer must be found out soon after. In any case, the Imperial Army could not retreat.

"You're leaving? Well, think about it too. Good luck to you all, but before that I almost forgot to give you a piece of advice. Five special magical creatures have been found to be present, so you should be more careful.”

"You mean special creatures?”

"Right. There have been no reports of successful crusades, that must be exceptional individuals. Very tricky, and several companions have been taken out by them.”

There's the Red Slime, the Golden Skeleton Swordsman, the Ghost of Death, the Monster-Moving Armor that looks like a heavily armored knight, and the small, powerful Dragon Wraith.

Those dreaded monsters seemed to be lurking in this area of the floor. They are an extraordinary presence mixed in with the magic puppets.

The soldier concluded by saying, "You might die in the first place.”

The survivors from the upper floors took this advice to heart and moved on. What exactly lies ahead awaits them will be known shortly…

The general soldiers of the Imperial Army gradually went down. Not knowing that going any further was their demise, the whole team pushed forward without interruption, continuously.

The maze at the 61st to 70th floors…

"Not yet? We haven't won yet?”

"I'm sorry! It seems that this operation has also failed…"

Hearing this in return, the soldiers of the General were in despair.

There is a gate on the seventy level.

It leads to the city of the dead, the border between the world and the living.

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Advancing amidst a mass of demons, the soldiers of the Imperial Army strutted through the maze.

It all went well at first.

Right. Only in the beginning…

The magical creatures that appear are all Necromancers. Just getting used to the stench of rotting flesh, and judging by the strength of the Imperial General's soldiers, those enemies won't let them get into a bitter fight.

The first 1,000 people to enter were responsible for establishing the position. After confirming that the men behind follow, the battle will continue.

Losing contact with the troops on the ground is a major defeat, but they are not completely alone. It only took a little time to wait for the rear troops to arrive, so they didn't think there would be any problems.

The Imperial Army suppressed the entire layer with a wave of fury. On the first day they explored almost all of the sixtieth to sixty-ninth floors.

The problem is on the 70th floor.

For some reason, the seventy layers were a large, dry, hilly area of grass and trees.

The look is hair-raising, a remnant of a battlefield that drifts with the scent of death.

A huge gate loomed ahead, about the size of the one on the ground.

The gate, made of skeletons, was used to guard the fortress city, which was located in the middle of the moat that protected the town.

Why would such a thing be in a labyrinth—the question came to everyone's mind.

There are no other entrances to the city but the main gate. Drainage facilities, universal gates, and other amenities essential to life are not available in this city.

That's no wonder.

None of the people who live in this metropolis are alive.

It's all Necromancy.

At first day, the door was still closed.

Even with the attempted destruction, the walls are just too thick. Not that the deceased would have been running out to make repairs, hence the delayed progress of the damage.

Even if one wanted to get close, there were skeletal archers with bows on the outer wall.

The imperial superiors felt that relying on a few men to attack was too much of a stretch, so they had to wait for reinforcements to arrive.

Immediately following the time came the next morning.

The Imperial Army has increased in numbers to over 10,000.

They began to attack the gate, which opened soundlessly before them.

Then the horrifying-looking King of the Dead appears.

To say that he was a skeleton is not an appropriate description.

This rather genteel white bone spoke in fluent human language to the general soldiers of the Imperial Army.

"Welcome to my land of the dead. My name is Adalman, the Immortal King. The party is all set. Let's just have a good time. So, here we go!”

As soon as the king, Adalman, had declared his name, there was a sudden sense of oppression in the whole space.

Following this king are a group of Necromancers, as well as the dead but still brave Necromancer dragon. This dragon of death let out an evil roar that felt like it was going to overwhelm the entire space.

The next moment the Necromancer descended from the sky and came to the door. It was the most ferocious dragon at the pinnacle of the Necromorphic System, and in this instant, it bared its fangs at the Imperial Army.

Not only that.

The gates had been opened, and legions of the undead had emerged from them one after another. The Necromancers led by the Necromancer Chief climbed out one after another.

The Imperial Army had been lined up in front of the door, but the sudden battle had caused them to be in a state of confusion.

The Dragon of the Dead is a Class A magical creature, which is so powerful that it is frightening to be attacked.

Its attribute is “Immortality”—there is no other means of elimination than a direct attack on the "soul".

The soldiers of the Empire had a high level of combat ability that they prided themselves on, but their attacks simply couldn't hurt each other, and nothing could be done in the face of such an opponent.

"Fall back, fall back! This is not an opponent you can beat with one blow—poof!”

"Damn it, if you burn it all with fire…"

"It's not working! That guy's regenerating faster than he's burning!”

"Get out of this place! Otherwise, the spirit will be destroyed by the guy's miasma!”

The Imperial Army is in chaos.

As if in mockery of these soldiers, the dragon's jaws opened considerably.

"Shit! That’s... ah-uh!!”

“Pfft."

"The body is corroding…!"

The corrosive spray of the Death Dragon poured down from high in the air, bathing those crawling on the ground. As a result, most of them were unable to resist and ended up losing their lives.

That's not all.

Certain people suffer from spiritual pollution due to the miasma of the Necromancer, and they turn into walkers, obeying the orders of higher-order magical creatures.

The so-called high-ranking magical creature here is the King of the Dead, in other words, Adalman.

The damage suffered by the Empire directly adds to the war effort for Adalman.

The tragedy of the Army is more than that.

It was hardly safe even to escape the threat of the Necromancer. That's because some Necromancers rides a Necromancer horse and starts hunting down the fleeing people.

The Imperial Army's numbers plummeted in an instant, and ten thousand were wiped out in less than an hour.

These tragedies were passed on by the few survivors to the troops who followed later. Because of these things, the 70th Level Raiders Battle began to become white-hot.

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After the next day, there were several times when the Imperial Army wanted to try to rush into the seventy levels.

But every time, they lose miserably. The next two fights, the second and third, were all with the same result, and things didn't get any better at all.

As for the overwhelming threat posed by the Necromantic Dragon, even less so.

Although there are only a thousand or so Necromancers, these opponents do not fatigue nor die. And they're also the threatening equivalent of an A-, which is pretty high. It's unbearable that no matter how you kill, you'll still keep coming back alive.

As for the long Necromancer who commanded them, his strength was not even close to that of the high-ranking warriors of the Imperial Army. The quality alone is also above the Imperial Army, with enough combat range to overturn the numerical disadvantage.

In addition to this, there is one of the Ten Lords of the Labyrinth, Albert "Paladin of the Dead", under Adalman. Even the elite of the Imperial Army had no chance of winning against the army of the undead.

"But we will not repeat the mistakes of this campaign. Looking forward to your performance!”

The Imperial Army brigadier finished his speech to the soldiers of the general.

The Raiders team from the upper floors met them on the fourth day. Then they bet all their existing strength that this battle will send all the troops on this side.

Plus the Imperial Army is not incompetent.

The techniques used to deal with the Immortals are well known from ancient times to the present.

Divine magic is most effective against the enemy of mankind, the undead.

Dialysis of the principles of divine magic. There has been research being done on this part, and a technique has been developed on the Imperial side that can have an effect similar to praying to God.

There are veterans of this in the Imperial Army.

They gathered these men from among the existing fighting forces and deployed them in various units.

In this way, it will be able to resist the evil miasma and break through the so-called "immortality". That's what this combat plan is all about.

The Army was in full formation in the hilly terrain, bringing the total number to 70,000.

In contrast, Adalman's men were still less than 40,000, even counting the increased number of walkers over the past few days.

Just by looking at the number of people, it looked like the Imperial Army had the upper hand, and at that time, everyone thought that they would definitely win this time.

Then the showdown begins—the king takes action.

"You guys think too much. The ‘Holy Reversal’”

The Immortal King Adalman's dominance extends to the end.

As for the holy attribute that was originally their weakness, when this force covered, weakness was no longer weakness. And it was this weakness that the Imperial Army relied on, their miscalculation leading to their own loss…

This defeat broke the spirits of the Imperial generals' soldiers.

The survivors were pushed to the breaking point and started running towards the upper floors.

Simply forget about the maze's breakthrough conditions. All that remains in the mind is the desire to survive, just to live.

The seventy-first to seventy-ninth levels of the maze…

Walking into this floor, the Imperials were forced to engage in a never-ending battle with an entire swarm of insects.

The insects launched a fierce attack that went on and on and on.

Fearing no death, they repeatedly attacked, a whole group showing absolutely no signs of interruption.

Maze Day 1.

The soldiers of the generals who had first begun to send in were frightened but not frightened by the onslaught of insects. They took the channel build site and processed it immediately.

The gigantic insects were dozens of times bigger than ordinary bugs, not only were they swift, but they were also very powerful. One careless glance and they'll kill and eat you in the blink of an eye.

But a calm observation will reveal that each bug is not very strong. And they are endless, which means there are many "magic crystals" to be had. Plus the quality was good, and the look on the soldiers' faces went along with it.

Well, it's not really a big deal’—the soldiers think so.

Changing to a normal contingent of adventurers will get more and more tired with no way to rest. Until finally there will be no way to put out your full strength and get knocked down by the magical creature.

But the Imperial Army has less of that layer of worry. A well-trained army comes to raid the maze, and a swarm of bugs is no match at all. No matter how many bugs there were, the numbers on the Imperial side would not lose.

Change shifts when you feel tired and can always stay in top shape. As such, they gradually increased their positions and the operation went smoothly.

While it's not possible to relax mentally, that's all that's wrong with saying it. On the flip side, their gains are not small.

Even this floor of what can be called an insect paradise, there are still hidden rooms that are indeed prepared such as tree caves or caverns, etc. There are powerful magical things there, but there are also treasure chests.

Some soldiers even laughed at the luxurious treasures.

Perhaps it was the person who opened the treasure chest and found the short sword in that room just now.

A short sword with exquisite goldsmithing on top would look expensive. The performance seems to be good too, with the glow on the blade proving that the short sword is made of "magic steel".

Only the hilt part of the scabbard was made of items that were already expensive, and the short sword was all made of "magic steel.” No wonder the soldier was laughing.

Upon entering this maze, it was explained to them that items such as "magic crystals" were to be given to the military. But something as small as a short sword was likely to turn a blind eye.

Of course, after that, they are subjected to an inventory of their belongings, but considering the fact that the leader who defeated the guardian of the treasure is also a credit, then the item will definitely be given to the soldiers.

The other soldiers around seemed to be envious, and everyone was thinking in their hearts "next time it will be my turn".

Without such benefits to take, there would be no incentive to fight the bugs consistently in places like this.

The amount of "magic crystals" harvested is also considerable.

Normally high purity "magic crystals" are rare, but you can easily get them by defeating magical creatures here.

That's what I mean by making people laugh, and at this pace, there should be all kinds of added benefits.

The other floors seem to be pretty much the same as far as they've heard. The more tragic ones are the floors where many people die, right?

The opponent is a dead spirit and can get relatively little. But it was hard work to defeat the dead souls, in contrast. By comparison, this floor with bugs moving around is more profitable.

At least the treasures obtained were satisfactory, and everyone thought that they should be able to treat this battle as a fond memory when they returned, and the delusion of happiness swelled more and more.

It started to get out of hand the next day.

One soldier's eyes widened in surprise. Because the head of the partner walking next to it suddenly fell to the ground.

"When we get back, we'll have a good time…”

Looking down at his missing head on the ground, the soldier had a look of dismay on his face. The words that didn't make it came to a halt in mid-sentence, and the mouth just opened.

Blood spurted upwards. As if spraying water on the surrounding partners.

"Hey, hey…!"

There were screams from the soldiers. Still talking to the other party just now, the sudden and tragic death made people momentarily unresponsive.

However, the soldier was lucky.

It's not too late to keep thinking, he's already been chosen to be the next victim.

The head dropped with a clatter.

Like the soldier who was turned into a corpse in the beginning and could no longer speak, the man died in the moment.

The place where they died was the seventy-ninth floor.

This place is so full of flowers that everyone thought this floor was a safe zone until just now.

"Uh-huh-huh-huh. The day of waiting was worth it. Because there was a lot of prey gathered around and made a point of running over themselves. Thank you for your hard work. Just die for us and become fodder.”

Those soldiers heard a clear sound.

Beautiful tones resounded throughout the floor.

The words came from the Queen.

It was the wonderful voice of Apito, the Bug Queen, the Domain Guardian responsible for guarding this floor.

Apito's voice transformed into a wave of chanting power that could be heard throughout the entire floor. This was to communicate the order indeed to her faithful servants.

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Apito was leading the "Legion Bees".

Its true identity is a killing group formed by bees about thirty centimeters in length.

They have superior super-sensory abilities and will not let go of humans who are hiding—their prey.

The tiny transparent wings emit high circumferential waves that become terrifying blades that can easily achieve irregular high-speed maneuvers.

They will approach quietly at a speed beyond the speed of sound, a silent assassination bee.

If you're going to deal with Legion Bees, it's useless to just have superior dynamic vision. Without going beyond the limits of the human race, it is simply impossible to discover the existence of an opponent.

Without the additional skills of "Thinking Speed" and "Over Speed Reaction", there is no way to capture the movements of your opponent.

Just one alone is equivalent to a Class A disaster, and is a formidable magical creature.

By the way, it is common to find only one emergency alert in the West. It would be reported to the higher units of the countries immediately and the high ranking knights would form a crusading force. If feasible, the Order of the Paladins will also be invited to march and conduct a massive sweeping campaign.

They would first rely on the divine barrier to gather these bees together from all around, performing weakening magic or making them sluggish, indeed weakening before coming to pack. However, be prepared for sacrifice, as these magical creatures are classified as fearsome by the rules.

If more than one is found, the level of danger increases dramatically.

Plus, what would happen if there was a queen's rule? The answer is…

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The number of legionnaire bees that received Apito's orders casually exceeded a thousand.

What followed was a one-sided act of torture.

It's just that people who are a little more or less confident in their own hands, that level of confidence doesn't work at all. Even if you're an A-grade warrior with a certain level of strength, you'll end up like a layman.

If you’re too late to react, you will surely end up dead.

The Imperial General soldiers gathered on this floor were all killed, and it took less than ten minutes to go back and forth.

Eighty-first to ninetieth floors of the maze…

It can be concluded by now.

The first day was just to give them a taste of something sweet.

All the surviving soldiers thought so.

Those comrades in arms are gone.

Everyone was killed.

The monster in front of them—a monster that is as strong as a ghost.

Yet they are not the only ones who are unfortunate.

The same tragedy is unfolding on other floors.

Everyone is fighting a desperate battle these days. Staying on their own floors, facing their own strong enemies, forced to fight battles that have no chance of winning…

The eighty-first floor is a paradise for those magical beasts.

Powerful individuals walk around and lead whole groups of people.

But those are no more intelligent magical beasts. If it was a group of imperial soldiers with a hundred years of combat experience, it could be said that it would be easy to defeat them.

The strength of each one should be above a B on average. They would appear in teams of three to five, forcing the Imperial Army into an unexpectedly bitter fight.

But it wasn't enough to cause death or injury, and they managed to find the ladder.

They also rendezvoused with the 82nd floor Raiders team, which was pretty good for the first day's results.

It would take some time to proceed at this pace, but the Imperial Army thought it would be breached in a matter of days.

However, when they cheat the next day.

Because "that guy" showed up, the situation suddenly turned upside down.

On the 82nd floor, in the dense forest, appears a monkey with an IQ high enough to speak human language.

The monkey was able to control the wind and sound and could fly through the air and call out storms.

It was a pure white demon monkey—the name was White Ape.

The beautiful white hairs that adorned the supple body looked so beautiful that it even gave the illusion of dancing as it came and went rapidly across the battlefield.

He can use sticks and stones to create unique kung fu and perform aerial martial arts that can change freely.

And it also releases vacuum blades in all directions, an extremely dangerous beast—this is the White Ape.

The White Ape used monstrous arts and was even close to destroying the entire Imperial Army.

After wreaking havoc for an hour, it left like a gust of wind. Leaving a comment and saying it will come back.

For the next two days, the white apes would repeatedly come over and attack regularly.

One by one, the Imperial Army's own members fell.

He took out his pride as a soldier of the Empire and fought desperately against this beast, and finally lost the battle.

The sniper team's shots were all blocked by the storm, and even the magic that could make the opponent weaker or attach an abnormal state was not spared, those effects were all blocked by the demon magic.

The Magic Gun's attack magic was also not powerful enough to break the barrier formed by the wind.

When we look at close quarters combat, the Mechs are the elite of the Imperial Army, and even their fortified soldiers are beginning to be toyed with.

It was like dealing with small children, those elite people being teased by the white apes.

Then when the time comes, the white ape will retreat.

In fact, the White Ape's reason was simple. He wanted to wait for the Imperial Army's soldiers to gather.

At first the Imperial Army was indignant, thinking the other side underestimated them, but now began to pray that the opponent would retreat.

And the number of survivors is now down to a thousand.

‘How long will I live?’ wondered a soldier.

How did things get to this point? It doesn't matter how many times you think about it or not.

The soldier's eyes caught the remnants of the white ape.

‘Where did it all go wrong?' It's too late to think of the answer, the soldier's eyes are already dark…

Eighty-third floor—This is an expanse of open grassland.

While there are cute traps like groundholes, such things don't pose a hindrance at all.

The weather is clear. The marching soldiers were also glowing.

But…

The next night, the Imperial Army was greatly wounded.

At that time, a bright moon in the sky was about to turn from the upper lunar to the full moon.

With the moon as a backdrop, a lone rabbit floats in the air.

It’s the rabbit that can manipulate gravity—the Moon Hare.

The Moon Hare's attacks were indistinguishable from each other.

It's because you don't care if one of your own is harmed that you can give it your all.

Although swayed by the moon's gains and losses, even during the new moon period, the moon hare possesses enough power to turn heaven and earth upside down. The supergravity is used to oppress and wreak havoc on the Imperial Army.

But it's not over here.

The night comes again.

And it's a full moon in three days. The night is coming when the moon hare pushes its power to the limit…

Eighty-fourth floor—a maze of streets formed by stone slabs.

The Imperial soldiers who walked on top of them all blanched.

It looks like they are wearing out more than expected.

“Give…give me water…”

"No way. There was no way to contact the supply force. You have to be patient.”

"Damn it! It's only the third day, but I want to drink water…If I can't drink water, I can't even eat…”

The reinforced soldier had undergone reconstructive surgery, but he couldn't resist the thirst in his throat and said something depressing. This sight makes one look incredulous for a moment.

But he can't be blamed for that.

Because of the ability to make water by magic, everyone carries only water from a water bottle.

Because they think it's more important to carry food than water.

That's a misstep on their part.

This floor seems to be so full of toxins that it would be impossible to drink them at all if only to collect moisture from the atmosphere.

It wasn't until the third day that they found out about it. Some of the soldiers' bodies began to appear, and this is when they realized that something was wrong.

And these poisons are so vicious, there's no way to detoxify them with antidote magic.

No matter how many times the toxin is detoxified, one will look back and realize that the toxin ingredients have been mixed in the water.

Thankfully, there was no problem breathing, but…even so, the soldier's injuries were about to get too big for one shot.

The soldiers in front of us all fell in pain. A look at them will reveal dark spots on the skin and a high fever.

"Here we go again! Their strength is reduced and they must be treated…"

"Oh, my God, there's no doctor here! And with healing magic?"

"No effect…”

The situation was like this, with partners falling one after another.

The soldiers of the Empire's generals were beginning to feel uneasy when they saw the situation, guessing whether it would be their turn next.

There were small magical creatures running past those soldiers' feet in intermittent bursts.

These are black rats that are less than five centimeters in length. Because they looked so overwhelmingly fragile, the Imperial soldiers didn't even take them to heart.

It's just that…

It was a huge mistake. Those rats are the culprits that make the situation what it is.

The Dark Sick Black Rat—that’s the floor guardian on this floor.

They spread the Black Death and are the master of the plague. That's what a black rat is.

The Imperial soldiers would be completely wrong.

They were overly concerned with the powerful magical beasts that walked on, and thus left out the weak, black rats that seemed to die at the first step. There was absolutely no finding that it was the minions sent out by the black rats, and the individuals who allowed the spread of the pathogenic bacteria led to this result.

If one of them had a skill like Shinji's, he should be able to paralyze this floor. It's just a shame there's no such coincidence in the world, no such doctor on the team.

Healing through magic has a weak effect on disease. It would be a different story if the magic was used specifically to heal the disease, but the magic used to heal wounds is simply not effective against the disease.

At best, it will restore strength, not cure. This is because treating a wound and treating a disease, the principles of which are followed, are two entirely different things.

After all, divine magic masters who could completely cure the disease were so rare that it was uncertain whether even the countries could identify one or two people. Not to mention the fact that getting them to go to the battlefield together is not possible unless there are special circumstances.

In this way, "death" began to spread on this floor…

Eighty-fifth floor—This is a dense forest of deciduous leaves in which the Great Tiger King is walking.

While the other floors were able to make a fuss as they pleased, on this floor it was ruled by the king.

The tiger was covered with thunder and lightning—the king's name was Thunder Tiger.

Before he showed up, the Imperial Army had the upper hand, but after that, it was different. They could only defend one-sidedly and were also forced to pull the stronghold back to the front of the ladder.

The woods are full of magical creatures.

The fighting conditions were not favorable for the Imperial Army, who continued to resist…

Eighty-sixth floor—this is a sparse oasis in the desert.

Under the sun, the temperature rises.

The temperature drops after nightfall and the chill is frightening.

The temperature difference was so great that although there was no combat, the Imperial soldiers lost their strength as a result.

So those generals and soldiers thought the temperature was the biggest enemy.

This statement does not say the wrong thing, but it is not the correct answer.

The real trap out is in the oxygen concentration.

A winged snake—a pterodactyl.

Pterodactyl affects the atmosphere.

The operating ingredients zero out the oxygen concentration, which is as easy for a pterodactyl as breaking a baby's hand.

The general soldiers of the Imperial Army thought that it was the temperature difference that made them unwell, thinking that a night's rest would allow their bodies to recover, thinking too simply. They just died quietly…

The eighty-seventh layer—This is somehow a vast expanse of mountains.

The laid-back scenery reminded the soldiers of their families.

Without relaxing, they think about their happy childhood and dreams of having a date with their beloved woman.

It took less than five days for everyone to let their guard down.

The low frequency of the appearance of magic can also be a reason. Unlike the other floors, it's hard to keep the tension up all the time here.

Just by being in this state, they didn't notice.

Didn't find the shifters asleep and not up.

I didn't realize that anyone who seemed to be awake was really just a wishful thinking of their own.

The sheep that make men dream—the sleeping sheep that tempt them.

Gentle sheep love peace and deprive soldiers of their consciousness in a state where there is no bloodshed.

If seduced by the hallucinatory hypnosis of a dormant sheep, those people will fall asleep and never wake up again—

The 88th floo—This is alongside a river in a forest where firebirds live.

Incredibly, these flames do not burn into the trees. It will only react to people who are hostile, it will keep burning and it will not go away.

It was a bird with a full body of fire—the flamingos.

The floor guardian of this land is called by that name.

Flamingos and flocks of dependent birds set out to burn the Imperial Army to death…

Eighty-ninth floor—This is the maze of mirrors.

This floor is not affected by vegetation.

It's well managed and the mirrors are all polished.

The passageways are reflected on the mirrors, making the maze even more complex.

And none of these mirrors will break.

Because these are all born of a magical creature using secret magic.

The dog that can wander in the mirror—the Mirror Dog runs through it.

He was free to run around in the mirror and tease the Imperial Army.

His body is in the mirrors, and those mirrors reflect all spells on the user.

Even capturing its essence was difficult, and the Mirror Dog was such a magical creature.

Under the light of the mirror, the Mirror Dog grows infinitely, and the poor prey is bitten and killed by him…

On the various floors, the vicious floor guardians went on a rampage.

If it's a handy domain, the floor guardians will be at their best.

Even so, the Imperial Army resisted desperately.

There will be times when the opponent succeeds in taking down the opponent, and a big cheer will be raised at that time.

But…

All of these magical things will come to life.

Resurrected again and again.

This part is the scariest.

When the situation on the other floors comes back, it will be found that they are in the same situation.

Soldiers who learned of this could not help but be discouraged. They had been fighting a hopeless battle, only to find that it was all for naught.

Beyond that, who is more desperate…

It is said that monkeys, rabbits, rats, tigers, snakes, sheep, birds, and dogs, which are the demonic beasts of the animal family, are the eight tribes under the Nine-Tails. Just some cute pets.

Those demonic beasts were all illuminated by the tails of the Nine-Tailed Kumara, and their respective abilities were only from Kumara.

The gesture of the eight congregations assembled was the true face of the Nine-Tailed Kumara.

Nowadays, Kumara is no longer childlike, but rather beautiful.

The illusionary queen who leads the monstrous beasts is the floor guardian of the ninetieth floor, the Nine-Tailed Beast, Kumara.

Some foolish and pathetic sacrifices came to Kumara.

These people were nothing more than fodder to Kumara—more dead people appeared in the maze.

Immediately following…

A few days passed when the Imperial Army's fifty-three thousand soldiers stormed the maze.

The survivors in the labyrinth go to zero.