“So, Rimuru-sama. Regarding the matter of firing Diablo and choosing one of us to be your second secretary, unfortunately, we have not come to a decision yet. What shall we do?”

I didn’t think there was even such a thing.

Perhaps, leaving the demons for the end was a mistake.

Even if Shion hadn’t given me unnecessary work, I still had to report to King Gazel. I should have taken care of these troublesome problems first.

That’s what I thought, but it was too late now. I didn’t have much time left, so I would have to use force.

“Actually, we don’t have enough time for a leisurely meeting. Not to mention calling in your subordinates—”

“That won’t be necessary.”

“I don’t think it’s necessary. It’s much too good for them.”

“Yeah. If you need any information on my men, I’ll report it!”

“That’s right. I wouldn’t want something to cut into my time with Rimuru-sama…No one under my command would be so foolish.”

All four of them replied at the same time, with big smiles on their faces.

“O-Oh.”

I had no choice but to reply.

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The reason was that Diablo and the others had said that they all answered with, “Please do whatever you want.”

Ciel already knew this, but to me it seemed like they were just ignoring all the others’ wishes. I forced myself to accept that it was for the purpose of managing my subordinates. With that thought in mind, I managed to convince myself.

The first of the four to be interviewed was, of course, Diablo.

He had kicked out the remaining three from the room and was happily sitting across from me.

The fact that his numbers were so organized was like admitting that he did something.

But since Ciel didn’t say anything, I was too lazy to further pursue it.

After all, I still think Diablo is the strongest of all my subordinates. His existence value is overwhelming, and his resistances are perfect.

Diablo’s ‘Temptation King Azazel’ includes the abilities ‘Thought Acceleration,’ ‘Universal Perception,’ ‘Demon Lord Haki,’ ‘Spacetime Manipulation,’ ‘Multidimensional Barrier,’ ‘All of Creation,’ ‘Punitive Control,’ ‘Charm Control,’ and ‘World of Temptation.’ It was a Skill that could do almost the same things as me.

He seemed to have wanted to boast about it for a long time now, so he explained it to me in detail with great enthusiasm and care.

Ciel also seemed satisfied with Diablo’s perfect comprehension.

I can’t actually utilize my Skills without Ciel’s help, so Diablo is actually stronger than me.

His magicule count is high, his level is high, and the quality of his Skill is also high.

An all-around excellent demon, versatile in all aspects.

Why he was my subordinate remained a mystery to me.

Despite his battle-obsessed tendencies and being a bit too clingy with me, this guy’s unfathomable strength was always very reliable.

Now that he’s evolved, I was curious to see how a mock battle with Zegion would turn out.

I’m sure it would be an interesting fight.

Also, Benimaru.

Benimaru was usually pretty reserved when fighting, as if holding himself back. But once he got serious, he would burn everything up before the fight even began.

In the labyrinth, one could fight fully without having to worry about survival, except Benimaru would probably not agree to it, because it would expose his hand.

In terms of attribute conflicts, water was stronger than fire, so Zegion had an advantage over Benimaru…but the answer could only be known after an actual battle.

Well, there’s really no need to decide on superiority or inferiority though.

If Benimaru, Diablo, and Zegion were the top three fighters of my entourage, then there would be no disputes about it.

That was it for Diablo.

Also, it seemed that in addition to Venom, Gadra had officially become his disciple.

“Disciple?”

“Yes. Now that he is my servant, you will not have to worry about his betrayal.”

I thought that he would be fine anyway, but now I was definitely relieved.

Gadra was bound as a guardian of the labyrinth, so he couldn’t be forced to do chores in a big way, but Diablo didn’t seem to mind. He seemed to think of his disciples in a different way than his usual subordinates.

“That’s good, but why did you decide to take him?”

“Yes, this man’s faith in Rimuru-sama is still lacking, but his quest for magic is real. He did have some merit for a human being, so I thought I would teach him personally and intervene in his mystic art ‘Reincarnation.’”

“So…?”

“Shamefully, he almost died in the last battle. It was an act of disobedience to Rimuru-sama’s order, so I reincarnated him as a demon to prevent that from happening…For some strange reason, he became some unheard-of race known as a ‘metal demon.’”

Diablo stopped talking at this point and looked at me as if asking for clarification.

I have no idea. What did I do?

«Oh, I interfered.»

What do you mean, ‘Oh’—?!

This is why I thought we needed to have a private meeting as well, but it looks like you’ve really done a lot.

I really wish I had thought more about it.

This ‘metal demon’ race sounded kind of like a repeat of Beretta…

«Please be rest assured about that. It is a completely different concept.»

That’s fine, I guess.

It really isn’t a problem to me, but it’s just that I find it troublesome.

“I guess I interfered a little?”

I had no choice but to answer that way, so I told him honestly.

Instead, Diablo was so excited that we ended up talking for a while.

To sum up, Diablo also liked Gadra. That’s why he had promised to include Gadra in his lineage in case something happened to him.

It was well known that Gadra was a magic fanatic. He was the master of Majin Razen and was even willing to become a demon to satisfy his intellectual curiosity.

Since he was such a man, as long as he didn’t cause me any trouble, I would let him do as he pleased.

I didn’t dislike the old man either, so I judged that there was no problem.

However, it would be uncomfortable if he turned out to be like Adalmann, so I would have to declare a prohibition on overly faithful hearts.

Just because he was Diablo’s disciple did not mean he could have identical beliefs. I would firmly reject it.

“From now on, he is your responsibility, so take good care of him.”

From my perspective, Gadra-sensei was very much an elder, and while I don’t speak in a tone that is quite appropriate for elders, Diablo was much older.

The notion of age had to crumble, because Diablo was so old that the concept of the word “old” would collapse.

In this way, Diablo now had two disciples.

She took a seat across from me with a graceful demeanor.

Hmm.

I wasn’t planning on it, but I suppose I could ask her to be my secretary…Oops, no. Doing that would mean appointing Diablo as a diplomatic marshal, and then he’d definitely go out of control.

I did want to add unnecessary problems, so I’d just keep things the way they were.

Besides, I had a favor to ask of Testarossa.

Just as I was wondering what to say, she presented me with a document.

It contained information on Testarossa’s subordinates.

Neither Moss nor Cien were directly involved in the previous battles. Therefore, they had not fallen into crisis nor into Ciel’s clutches.

By the way, what about Testarossa…?

“The amount of magicule seems to have increased a lot, right?”

“Yes. It’s a shame, because it would have been a more interesting demonstration if it had been done in time for the battle with Velgrynd-sama.”

Hmm…Fighting is not how you have fun, is it?

Well, it’s probably useless to say that.

Once again, I was reminded that in combat, it was not the quantity but the quality that mattered. In this case, combat experience had played a bigger role than the amount of magicules.

The reason why Testarossa was able to fight so well against Velgrynd was because they were evenly matched in terms of combat ability. If the battle had gone on for a long time, she would have been defeated, but since she was only stalling for time, she was able to manage.

The fact that Testarossa’s magicules had increased means that her fighting ability had also greatly increased.

It was all very encouraging, but it also meant that I was now responsible for keeping an eye on her to make sure she didn’t go out of control. For now, I would leave it to Diablo, but I was also thinking a little more attention should be paid in that aspect.

Still, ‘Death King Belial?’

As befits Testarossa, it was a Skill with a dangerous scent.

As for the powers it contains, it included ‘Thought Acceleration,’ ‘Universal Perception,’ ‘Demon Lord Haki,’ ‘Spacetime Manipulation,’ ‘Multidimensional Barrier,’ ‘All of Creation,’ ‘Life Domination’ and ‘World After Death.’

This was also a ‘world system’ Skill.

It was also a “World After Death,” which I would rather not ever experience.

I’m scared, so I’ll leave the management to Ciel.

“You mentioned a private meeting, so there should be something to say that cannot be discussed publicly, correct? What exactly is the content?”

After Testarossa provided the information on her subordinates, Moss and Cien, she then asked the question very clearly. She was quite perceptive, which was very helpful.

I changed my mind and decided to confide in her about one of my problems.

It was about the meeting with Masayuki and the others that was supposed to take place tomorrow morning.

“I might be reading too much into it, but I wanted to talk to you about it. I’m supposed to meet with Masayuki and the others, so I’m wondering about what to do.”

“I see, so it’s about the treatment of the Empire.”

I was surprised how quickly she understood everything.

“That’s right. Masayuki seems to be troubled, but it’s difficult to respond to such a sudden request…”

Shion probably didn’t think about it that much, but if Masayuki was the reincarnation of Emperor Rudra, it would not be so easy to become an Emperor.

In the first place, we didn’t know where the current Emperor Rudra—though now transformed into Michael—had disappeared to.

Even if Masayuki declares himself emperor—that is to say, I don’t think Masayuki is willing to do so…

It would also be strange if my country suddenly supported him.

What’s more, Michael’s power, the ‘Castle Guard,’ was unbreakable as long as there were people who believed in Rudra. In other words, we had to think about how to deal with the Imperial subjects at the same time.

I really wished I had more time to think about this.

Explaining it to King Gazel would also be complicated, and that honestly felt even more difficult to deal with.

As I’ve said many times, I didn’t want to get involved, but I couldn’t say that.

“If that’s the case, then let me join the meeting. The East, where the Empire is located, used to be my domain, so I’m sure I’ll be able to serve as a diplomatic officer.”

Ooooh, how reliable!

I couldn’t just leave this to Ciel. I might be able to verbalize Ciel’s solutions, but how to actually instruct the subordinates would still have to be left to the locals.

In the first place, even if an opinion was absolutely correct, we would have no choice but to reject the proposal if the Imperial side did not accept it.

It might have worked if the Empire had been made a vassal state, but otherwise, we wouldn’t be able to interject too much about how other countries operate.

In this respect, Testarossa would be able to respond flexibly.

Testarossa had a proven track record with the Western Nations, and once the policy was set, I felt comfortable leaving it to her.

“In that case, I’ll be counting on you tomorrow morning.”

“I understand, leave it to me!”

Testarossa’s bewitching smile was so encouraging that it made me feel a little better.

That was all I had to say, so I stood up to see Testarossa off—

“Rimuru-sama, there is one thing I would like to report to you as well.”

“Hmm?”

“As you may remember, Rimuru-sama received a petition for life from Calgurio, one of the Empire’s generals…”

Testarossa’s words reminded me of that too.

It would be a bit of a hassle, but it was not impossible.

“All right. Then now…”

I’m glad Testarossa remembered.

This kind of attention to detail was one of the reasons why I found Testarossa so reliable.

In order to complete my work before dinner, I accompanied Testarossa to the research facility.

After dinner, I called Ultima over.

“I’m tired of waiting.”

Ultima said cutely as she sat down gently.

I’m sure it would have been so cute to have a sister like her, and it made me smile.

I made us some tea and served her some of the best baked goods.

“Whoa, whoa! Rimuru-sama did all of this?”

“Fufufu, I can make tea too. Well, not black tea, but I can make coffee.”

It was just drip coffee, though.

It wasn’t even as good as Shion’s, which was an unwelcome reality.

Although it was limited to beverages, tea and coffee, Shion’s craft had really progressed in that aspect.

I thought it would be wrong to keep complaining about other people’s cooking, so I tried it myself…It was surprisingly harder than expected.

Before I died, I always ate take-out and never cooked for myself. I was busy with work, and considering the time and effort required to clean up, it was more cost effective…

The kitchen in that apartment was still as new as ever, and although I had wanted to do it in my spare time, only the cooking books had changed.

I couldn’t say it was all in vain, though, because those memories were useful now.

Anyway, since it was just a matter of adding hot water to the ground beans, even I could make coffee.

“No way! Just this cup of tea, makes me so happy!”

Seeing her so happy made me happy too.

“Don’t be shy. The coffee will take a little longer, but it’ll boil while we’re talking.”

I wanted a cup too, so I set the filter on the coffee server and poured the boiling water.

This set of tools was made by Kaijin. There were mass-produced models based on this, so the coffee shop was also thriving.

The aroma of coffee beans wafted through the air.

In this way, I showed off my prowess to Ultima.

It was sure to raise my reputation.

It’s always important to earn points in such situations.

«In my opinion, that’s pretty cheap.»

Don’t be silly!

This is an advanced strategy, not a petty one at all.

Besides, what’s the point of showing off your strength when you’re up against battle-crazy “primordials?”

The best thing to do is compete in different areas.

«Haa…You’ve already shown enough of your majesty, so your worries are superfluous.»

It’s fine.

Besides, I never intended to show off my majesty.

I didn’t care about that, so let’s just get down to business.

“Then, let’s hear your report.”

“Yes, then this first.”

What was handed to me was a report on her subordinates.

One would think that it was in the same system as Shion’s bullshit Skill, but it wasn’t. Instead, his powers were focused on status assessment and support.

It could heal any injury by ‘cooking’ it. I was relieved to find that it was not a terrifying skill that would affect the law of cause and effect.

Next up was the real deal, Ultima.

It seems that the amount of magicules continued to increase after the end of evolution.

Since she had already surpassed the million-class mark, it was both a threat and reliable that she would grow stronger.

And let’s not forget about Ultima’s Skill.

Ultimate Skill ‘Poison King Samael’ included ‘Thought Acceleration,’ ‘Universal Perception,’ ‘Demon Lord Haki,’ ‘Spacetime Manipulation,’ ‘Multidimensional Barrier,’ ‘Weakness Identification,’ ‘Lethal Poison Creation,’ and ‘World of Annihilation.’

Yup.

It was a Skill that specialized in killing.

What was worse was the ‘Lethal Poison Creation.’ By combining this with ‘Weakness Identification,’ she could create the perfect poison to kill her enemies.

However, what bothered me even more was ‘World of Annihilation.’

This was a heinous world system power that could unconditionally kill all non-mental life forms that did not possess an Ultimate Skill.

It’s like a super-enhanced version of my ‘Merciless.’ Since it wouldn’t work against a super strong opponent, it was better to have this sealed away.

“Ultima, I’m sorry, but…”

I started, pouring myself a cup of coffee to calm myself down.

“What is it?”

“It’s about your ‘World of Annihilation’…”

“Yes.”

Ultima happily accepted the cup I offered her.

Now was the best time to say it.

“From now on, it is prohibited for future use.”

“Okay! I was thinking that I didn’t need this power either. Rimuru-sama knows how I feel!”

“Huh?! Oh, uh, well of course, right?”

I laughed my way through the deception and patted myself on the back for good measure.

I didn’t know why, but it seems that Ultima did not intend to use ‘World of Annihilation’ either.

No, thinking about it more, it was not too surprising. As a battle maniac, she probably didn’t like the idea of such an unconditional victory.

Well, as long as Ultima agreed, then it was fine. I was relieved and enjoyed the rest of the conversation.

“Hello, Milord! If it wasn’t for your help, I doubt I could have defeated Kondou. That man was so strong that it was hard to believe he was human.”

Carrera laughed as she finished her report.

I had heard this from Ciel, but to hear it from her own mouth made it even clearer. Carrera really seemed to have won by a hair’s breadth and was sincerely praising Kondou.

Indeed, Kondou seems to have been quite strong.

Benimaru had defeated Granit, the third ranked soldier, but even he was wary of Kondou. Or rather, he was confident that he could defeat anyone but Kondou.

It was not an exaggeration to say that Carrera secured a huge success by defeating a man who was so highly regarded.

‘It’s because you gave me the power,’ Carrera insisted.

“To have gained flesh, broken through my own limits, evolved, and been given even more…I want to repay this kindness. I hope you understand that my loyalty is forever yours.”

The normally unruly and arrogant Carrera was quite honest when she faced me. Well, in terms of “rank,” a primordial who had lived since ancient times was far superior to some newborn demon lord.

Regardless of loyalty, the answer remained the same.

“In that case, I look forward to working with you. Without you, we wouldn’t be able to hold trials.”

Monsters still had the tendency to follow the strong.

Anyone could arrest them, but only the strong could judge them.

In the future, I was planning to establish a kind of Supreme Court Judicial System, and leaving all but the most heinous criminals to the hands of the people. But that was for when the nation was more stable. Because Tempest was still a developing country, Carrera’s strength was a great help.

“Oh, it’s my pleasure! In addition to myself, my whole family will act as Rimuru-sama wishes!”

Carrera replied, smiling happily.

And about the status of Carrera and her subordinates?

First off, I looked down at the documents that were handed to me.

Carrera’s subordinates were Agera and Esprit.

I mean, they were all old demon lord class, weren’t they?

Agera was comparable to a pseudo-awakened Clayman, and hypothetically, if I had fought him way back then, he might have won…

I think it’s wrong to have so many subordinates of the old demon lord class.

Rather than that, I was more concerned about being a ‘friend.’

It was Carrera’s evaluation after all, so I guess that’s just how they were.

Certainly, Esprit has a bit of a girly-girl vibe to her, and if one didn’t know the inside story, they could assume that the two were a well-connected pair of sisters. Rather than a master-slave relationship, they seemed more like schoolmates.

Honestly, I thought Carrera’s lineage was quite unusual.

What was truly shocking, though, was what came next.

Carrera was really terrifying.

However, the most dangerous thing of all was the ‘Annihilation King Abaddon.’

Its powers included ‘Thought Acceleration,’ ‘Universal Perception,’ ‘Demon Lord Haki,’ ‘Spacetime Manipulation,’ ‘Multidimensional Barrier,’ ‘Limit Break,’ and ‘Dimensional Rupture.’ And although it has no world system power, it specialized in attack power. In particular, ‘Dimensional Rupture’ was a power that could penetrate a ‘Distortion Field’ and space to destroy enemies.

If Carrera’s Skill was coupled with destruction spells, along with what was given to her as well, there would be few who could endure it. It might even be able to destroy the levels of Ramiris’ labyrinth, so one could understand how powerful it was at a glance.

To be honest, I wouldn’t want to deal with it either.

“You’ve gotten stronger…”

I couldn’t help but spill out my true feelings.

“Yeah, it was thanks to milord. And also Kondou, who entrusted me with this. Even if it is only in response to that man’s wish, I will crush Emperor Rudra.”

Hearing her say so, I remembered.

Kondou was also manipulated by Michael.

“About that, the real Rudra is gone…I mean, all sorts of things have happened, but what you were fighting was actually an entity that had taken over Rudra by the will of a Skill.”

I explained to Carrera that Rudra’s true identity was Michael, who had become a Manas. Upon hearing this, Carrera nodded, not seeming surprised.

“I see. So that’s why that Feldway guy was calling Rudra as Michael. Now I understand, milord.”

That’s how it was.

Now don’t go picking any fights with Masayuki by mistake.

With that warning, the interview with Carrera ended.

Just as I was about to leave the room, Carrera turned to me and said,

“Oh, yes, I forgot. There was one thing I had to tell Milord.”

“Hmm? What is it?”

I asked as I took a sip of my coffee.

“Actually, I’ve been debating whether or not to tell you…”

It must be important if Carrera was troubled by it.

Then, I went back to my seat and calmed down—

“—Agera seems to be Hakurou-san’s grandfather.”

Pffft?!?!

I almost spat out my coffee.

I just barely avoided it at the last second, but it was such an important matter—you can’t just tell me that so casually when you’re leaving!

“You—that!”

“Hahaha, this is important, isn’t it? I can’t handle it, so I’ll leave the decision to Milord.”

With a laugh, Carrera left the room.

She completely threw the ball to me.

That laugh must have been a sigh of relief, as if a burden had been lifted from her shoulders.

In short, this was a problem that could not be ignored.

Although Diablo and the three demon girls said that I didn’t need to meet with their subordinates, I decided to meet with Agera later.

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The personal interviews had now concluded successfully.

I didn’t want to work anymore today because I had a meeting with Masayuki and his friends tomorrow, although I didn’t need sleep either way.

I returned to my more relaxed slime state and hid under the covers.

For some reason, I felt very comfortable in this darkness.

«Okay, then I will report.»

Excuse me, I’m done with work…?

«This is about Master’s Skills, so it’s not work.»

That was fine for Ciel because it was their hobby, but for me, this was no different from work.

But even if I said that, Ciel wouldn’t listen to me, would they?

Sooner or later, I would have to do this anyway, so I gave up resisting.

Actually, I was kind of looking forward to it.

I’m sure there would be some crazy results, and I was well prepared.

The integration went very smoothly without me having to go into sleep mode. It took about a day and a half to complete the integration, but I was having private interviews, so there was no problem.

Well, that’s how it was.

Since I had been asked for permission to use Skill Alteration in the middle of a real battle, there was no reason to stop the activity.

I would have been furious if that had happened.

The report began silently in my mind, and the information immediately showed up.

Well then, let’s see what it’s like, shall we?

I didn’t realize it before, but my existence value was amazing.

If I include the increase in number with my sword, it would reach 10 million.

Now the straight sword I was very familiar with was at the mythical level. Its shape had been altered by my race’s characteristics, and I had decided to call it the “Draconic Sword” for convenience.

It also had two holes in it. The sword seemed to be evolving smoothly to my satisfaction.

If I gave it an official name, would it evolve?

There’s no way.

No, no, no.

I might give it a try, but I didn’t want to give it a random name.

If I came up with a nice name, I would change it.

Even if existence value and total amount of magicules was outstanding, it did not mean that I could let my guard down.

Benimaru, Diablo, and Zegion, not to mention Testarossa and the other demon girls, all had very high combat abilities.

Testarossa, for example, had fought very well against Velgrynd, who had almost ten times the amount of magicules.

As you can see from this example, the most important thing was not the size of the existence value, but how skillfully one could use their power.

That overall power was the combined strength of one’s magicule quantity, skill level (combat ability), and Skills.

Everyone had used their powers to the fullest during the battle against the Imperial Army.

Looking at the battles ahead, I knew that I could not be left behind.

Anyway, at this stage, I was still in the lead, ahead of Carrera.

Reassured by the current status, I turned my attention to the other things.

The blessing (protection) I got from Veldora had disappeared, and now I was my own protector. I went from being under protection to becoming the one providing the protection. I really had grown.

—But now was not the time to be escaping reality.

I knew I was not at the level of feeling comfortable, but why did I only have two Skills now?

As if to answer my question, Ciel happily began its explanation.

«First of all, I no longer needed ‘Wisdom King Raphael’ and ‘Gluttonous King Beelzebuth,’ so I integrated—»

Hey, wait, wait, wait!!!

What did you just say?!

What did you just say in such a refreshing tone of voice???

It said that it used the Wisdom King Raphael, which was basically like its mother, for the integration…because it didn’t need it?!

«Is there a problem?»

Apparently, I had not heard wrong.

No, I knew there was no way I could have misheard …but I didn’t think it would actually do it.

But if the ‘Wisdom King Raphael’ was gone, wouldn’t Ciel be able to exist as well?

«No. I’m already independent, so there’s nothing to worry about!»

Ciel calmly answers my question.

Even ‘Wisdom King Raphael,’ which can be considered as its own mother…I was surprised that Ciel could consume it so easily, but according to them, the Skill was already an empty shell, so there was no problem.

What mattered more was the contents.

Ciel seemed to have done the work without any emotion or sentimentality.

Eliminate all useless abilities, and do everything thoroughly.

However, although there was no problem, was it really necessary to consume ‘Gluttonous King Beelzebuth’ as well?

«Of course!»

Maybe I should’ve confirmed before approving anything…In the face of my weak questioning, Ciel replied to my questions, as if understanding me, and forcefully went ahead with the explanation.

As it turned out, my Skills had changed so much that they had not retained their original forms.

This was no longer the level of modification.

No, my Skills really were integrated and modified, but there was still something unacceptable about it.

So then, let’s talk about the key Skills.

The first, ‘Void God Azathoth,’ was created by merging ‘Wisdom King Raphael’ and ‘Gluttonous King Beelzebuth.’

Not only that, but it seems that the ‘Storm King Veldora’ and the newly acquired ‘Scorch King Velgrynd’ were also sacrificed. However, I had inherited those powers, so there was nothing wrong with it.

In other words, the Ultimate Skill ‘Void God Azathoth’ contained the abilities ‘Soul Consumption,’ ‘Turn Null,’ ‘Imaginary Space,’ ‘True Dragon Release [Scorch and Storm],’ ‘True Dragon Core Transformation [Scorch and Storm],’ ‘Spacetime Domination’ and ‘Multidimensional Barrier.’

Even the original ‘True Dragon Summoning’ had disappeared, it seems that there were still no problems with unleashing or releasing it. In the first place, Veldora and the others actually came to me of their own free will, so it was the same without this power.

The ‘True Dragon Core Transformation’ was more interesting, and as its name implied, it was literally the power to transform the dragons into a nucleus core that could fit into the hole openings in my sword.

Once again, the True Dragon, a vast body of energy, would be condensed into the blade’s core. It was frightening to imagine how much power that would generate.

It appears that the dragon’s approval is necessary, but…it’s too scary to imagine the timing of its use.

Even without ever using it, it looks like this one is going to have to be sealed away.

Well, at least Velgrynd would presumably decline it. But Veldora might want to try it just for fun.

I was a little worried about that, so I decided to keep it a secret.

Rather than that…

What is truly dangerous is the original power of ‘Void God Azathoth’ which had been perfectly optimized after integration.

—Soul Consumption…a super-enhanced version of ‘Predation’ and ‘Gluttony’ that could even devour the target’s soul along with it.

—Turn Null…the ultimate destructive energy that fills the chaotic world. Full control over it was possible for the first time thanks to the Manas.

—Imaginary Space…a chaotic world. The super-evolved version of ‘Stomach’ and ‘Isolation’ was a prison that locked away whatever should be isolated.

—Spacetime Domination…instantaneous movement is possible by simply being aware of time and space. Affects even time.

—Multidimensional Barrier…a constantly active, ‘Multilayer Barrier,’ which provides absolute protection by a ‘Dimension Fault (sub-dimensional fault defense field).’

That was Ciel’s explanation.

It was pretty terrifying.

The fact that it would even try to implement such a modification in the middle of a battle was terrifying.

However, there was one thing that I did not trust. The Absolute Defense by Dimension Fault. It claimed to be stronger and safer than even the ‘Distortion Field,’ but I knew that there were no absolutes in this world.

I would not fall for that.

Besides…The moment Ranga acquired ‘Stellar Wind King Hastur,’ I had long since known that my Skills would become very powerful.

So, rather than being surprised, I was more horrified that with ‘Void God Azathoth’ alone, all other powers were practically unnecessary.

My second Ultimate Skill, naturally, was the ‘Harvest King Shub-Niggurath.’

After the Skill Alteration, my powers had now become these two abilities.

It’s obvious that I had become more powerful than before the integration, but it occurred to me that there were some abilities that had disappeared. For example, ‘Thought Acceleration,’ was gone, but seemed to still be working fine.

What did this mean?

«These abilities—’Thought Acceleration,’ ‘Predict Future Attack,’ ‘Analyze and Assess,’ ‘Parallelism,’ ‘Integration,’ ‘Separation,’ ‘Chant Cancellation,’ ‘All of Creation,’ ‘Food Chain,’ ‘Thought Domination,’ ‘Law Domination,’ and ‘Attribute Transformation’—all of these have been integrated into me, so it is now possible to respond more quickly.»

I suppose I should praise it as excellent.

Perhaps it might even be overkill, but for the sake of the battles that would follow, a change in mindset was indeed necessary.

The weaker I was, the more I would have to sacrifice.

In order to settle the matter and enjoy a life of peace, there was no need to hold back or be polite.

It goes without saying that his resistances were perfect, but what was most noteworthy was the extent of his existence value.

That said, when I did look at the value, I was laughing rather than getting surprised.

That guy, he had messed up when he was determining the value.

It had happened just recently, after dinner.

I had just finished a meeting with Ultima, so I tried to leave immediately.

However, I was interrupted by Veldora.

“Kuaaaahahaha! Rimuru, I understand that you are having personal interviews with Benimaru and the others. I, too, have a lot of free time at the moment—”

“Ah? I’m busy. I’m sorry, but I’ll play with you after I’m finished.”

“Wait, wait, wait, wait!!! I’m not talking about that—I’m talking about your personal interview with me!”

Huh?

There was no need to meet with Veldora.

After all, it’s not like Veldora was my subordinate, and if I really wanted to, I could just ask Ciel about it.

“No, we talk to each other all the time, so there’s no need to have an interview, right?”

“What?! Don’t say such lonely things!”

“That’s right! You should understand how lonely Master and I are!”

Even Ramiris joined in.

But seriously, even if they say that, we do see each other all the time.

Of course, I wanted to play with the Avatar Core too, but my work was more important.

In the first place, we were currently in a war.

It’s just that the whereabouts of Feldway and his colleagues were still unknown, so I was able to rest a little.

At the very least, until we were ready to intercept them, there was no time to play around.

“Don’t be selfish. Once things are properly settled—”

“No, I told you it’s not that! I’ve grown stronger and I want to show off to you. I know you’re busy, but what’s the harm in keeping me company for a little while?!”

“That’s right, that’s right! You’re the only one who can accurately measure the existence values, so I want you to come with us for a bit!”

“Hmm?”

“That is to say, I have been concealing my existence value from when Ramiris measured it. I’m trying to prove it to you.”

Hmmmmm.

“That’s absolutely impossible! It’s true that we can’t measure the numbers in too much detail, but it’s impossible to fake it!”

I see.

In other words, I was being involved in a very stupid argument.

When thing get to this point, these guys won’t listen to anyone. Instead of trying to convince them, it would be easier to just go along with them.

“All right, all right. Then let’s go to the Control Room.”

With that, we began to measure Veldora’s existence value.

The measurement devices were linked to the monitors throughout the labyrinth, and the control panel in the Control Room managed them. Ciel was able to synchronize with the labyrinth itself, so it could take measurements no matter the location, although that was a secret. That’s why we went to the Control Room.

I didn’t have much time, so we started right away.

“Master’s existence value is 88,000,000! It’s amazing, but Master insists that it’s higher. I want Rimuru to scold him for being so vain!”

Indeed, it was value beyond imagination.

Far from being average, even a Million-class ‘Saint’ would be unable to win.

So, were those numbers accurate?

«Yes. Veldora’s existence value is definitely 88,126,579.»

They were almost identical.

Too high of a value would cause the machine to lose accuracy, but it was still sufficient to measure labyrinth challengers and intruders.

That said, if Veldora was really able to fake the numbers, it meant that the system was flawed. This would be a problem that could not be ignored, so it was necessary to check.

I was a little impressed that this trip didn’t end up being a total waste of time. Now, it all depended on whether or not Veldora was actually able to fake the numbers.

“My measurement is 88.12 million, so it’s almost the same. So, are the values going to continue rising from here? Or will they be under-measured?”

Either way, I needed to know the approach think about countermeasures.

I urged Veldora to demonstrate.

With a proud look on his face, Veldora smugly began taking off his coat.

No way, could it be that…?

My body, which would not have been sweating, felt like a cold sweat had fallen.

Veldora began to laugh loudly.

“Kuahahaha! Take a good look. This is my true power—!!!”

With a thud, his coat fell to floor, and with another thud, the wristbands on Veldora’s arms and legs rolled off, shaking the ground.

H-Hey…

Taking off your heavy clothes…doesn’t mean the numbers will go up…

Maybe he was feeling warm?

What is measured here is mainly energy levels which has nothing to do with direct combat power.

But Veldora…

“Kuahahaha! How about that?! Try measuring now! I don’t care if it breaks—!!”

Hmmmmm, this is embarrassing!

Now that I understood what he was trying to do, I couldn’t help but feel sorry for the pitiful Veldora.

«I’ve measured it, and there is not the slightest change in values.»

There’s no change!!

“Ve-Veldora, you know…”

“Master, after all that, it’s still the same 88,000,000?”

Ah, Ramiris went straight to the point so harshly!

“Don’t be stupid! Rimuru, what’s the truth? My numbers have doubled, haven’t they?”

I looked at Veldora with pity.

“If it was youki, you could hide it, but existence values are completely different…”

Then I carefully explained to Veldora that these values were not a measurement of combat power like in manga, but rather a measurement of energy.

Needless to say, Veldora turned bright red once he realized his mistake.

Well, it still makes me laugh even now, but there was no doubt that his magicule count was tremendous.

Even if I examine it seriously, there is no way to harm him except with attacks at the ultimate level.

Moreover, the Skill that Veldora acquired was also extremely troublesome.

His Skill evolved into ‘Chaos King Nyarlathotep’ by Ciel’s modification, which included ‘Thought Acceleration,’ ‘Analyze and Assess,’ ‘All of Creation,’ ‘Probability Manipulation,’ ‘Parallel Existence,’ ‘Investigation of Truth,’ ‘Spacetime Manipulation,’ and ‘Multidimensional Barrier.’

The practical convenience had been greatly improved after the Ciel’s integration.

Even Veldora had acquired ‘Parallel Existence.’

I understand from the battle with Velgrynd that this was troublesome, but in the case of Veldora, he also has ‘Probability Manipulation,’ which makes him seem truly immortal.

In the first place, as long as I didn’t die, he was indestructible.

Because the core of Veldora remained within me, his memories and feelings were backed up. If he could produce a ‘Split Body’ in addition to this, it might be impossible to destroy him.

I laughed about the existence value mistake, but he really was reliable to have on our side.

Well, Veldora’s existence value was more than ten times that of mine, and even if I fought him, I probably couldn’t win…though I did have a few doubts.

Not only did I defeat Velgrynd, I even ‘Predated’ her. The value of Velgrynd’s existence at that time was 26.87 million.

At that time, I predated a little over 50% of them, and about 30% of it was in recovery. That 30% seemed to be trying to come back to the side that I predated.

As expected of Ciel, they did not miss a thing.

So, back to the main point…I felt that my existence value seemed a bit low for the amount of energy I had consumed.

Well, I still think that I’m strong enough as it is, and I also still think it’s one’s fighting sense that is important, but I was still a little concerned.

«—As for that, it’s only natural. The predated energy was once taken in, but it was turned into the Master’s flesh and blood before using ‘True Dragon Release’»

Well, what does that mean?

«In other words, Master’s maximum existence value is correct when the values of Veldora’s and Velgrynd’s existence values are added together.»

—What?!

I couldn’t help but be dumbfounded.

In other words, it was only when I released ‘True Dragon Release’ that I would be able to display my maximum power.

Hmm?

But you know, since the output is the same, it might be the same even if the energy increases.

Even Velgrynd might have shifted to increasing the number because the upper limit had been reached.

Of course, there was no limit to an increase in power, but it was meaningless if it didn’t hit the target. Once you reach the level of shattering stars, it becomes more difficult to control the power.

I was deeply convinced that there was no point in focusing on maximum power.

For reference here.

I ‘predated’ Velgrynd, whose existence value at that time was estimated to be 49,829,987.

It should have been almost perfect because of Ciel’s calculations, but now, her existence value had increased more.

After returning from a 20% reduction in status, there had been a significant increase.

Rather than growth, should I say evolution…

The power was still the same as it had been after Ciel had changed it, but I’m sure Velgrynd must have mastered it. The contents of the ‘Divine Flame King Cthugha’ included ‘Thought Acceleration,’ ‘Thermal Excitation,’ ‘Parallel Existence,’ ‘Spacetime Manipulation,’ ‘Dimension Leap,’ and ‘Multidimensional Barrier.’

Also…

For me, it had only been a few days since we split up, but it was still unknown just what kind of experience Velgrynd had gained.

I would be meeting her tomorrow, so I was wondering about how I should talk to her.

I was afraid of what might happen if I offended her, so I decided to be careful to avoid a secondary conflict.

In this way, the status confirmation by Ciel via personal interviews, was successfully completed.9