

Overlord

- Overlord Compilation Movie 1 Bonus - Pleiades Days

AUTHOR:

MARUYAMA Kugane

[Translated by: Nigel | Skythewood]





ユリ・アルファ

yuri-α



ルプスレギナ・ベータ

lupusregina・β



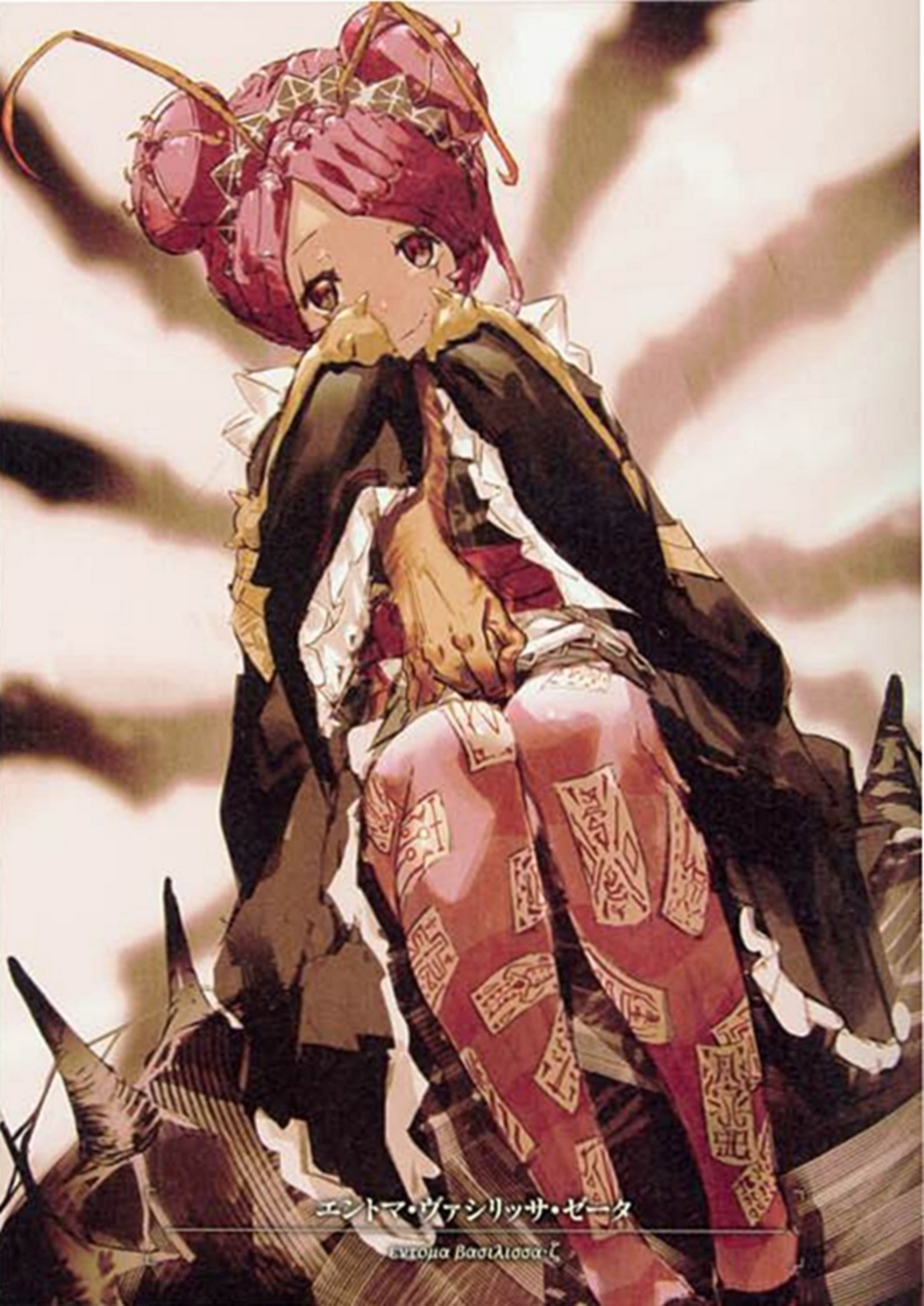
ソリュシャン・イブシロン

solution・E



シズ・デルタ

CZ2128-6



エントマ・ヴァシリッサ・ゼータ

έντομα βασίλισσα ζ



ナーベラル・ガンマ

narberal-γ

PART 1

Yuri Alpha — one of the Battle Maids and the assistant leader of the Pleiades — was thinking as she observed every action taken by the subject, with a keen gaze that did not miss a single movement.

—Yuri was not the most suitable person for this job.

Ultimately, she was a Battle Maid. Combat was her primary calling, while being a maid was a secondary vocation.

Originally, the responsibility for this task would surely have been borne by a person who could have been called her friend, Pestonya S. Wanko.

However, she understood very clearly that such a thing was impossible.

Yuri's friend was currently within the Frozen Prison of the 5th Floor. It was a harsh environment that would set one's bones shivering with cold, but Yuri did not have any special thoughts about the matter. That was because she knew that her confinement was nothing more than merciful treatment from the Supreme One.

After all, Pestonya had used her own judgement to twist the edict of the Supreme Beings' leader, the absolute ruler of the Great Underground Tomb of Nazarick, Ainz Ooal Gown.

Such disloyalty should have warranted capital punishment.

Nigredo, who had committed the same offense, was confined in the same place as her. Due to that incident, they were as closely joined as if they were tied by blood. In addition, Nigredo would not be too badly chilled with Pestonya by her side. After all, Pestonya's fur possessed cold resistance. Rather, if they had been imprisoned on the 7th Floor, perhaps she might have been worried for Pestonya.

That said, would it not be better to let a regular maid help with this? No, there's no way Sebas-sama would not have considered that. But still... Yuri glanced at the steely butler who stood to one side. *Was it inappropriate to do so because of her position? —Hm.*

“—Hold on for a moment. Your body’s center-line has shifted a little. Please visualise the difference in the strength between your dominant and non-dominant foot, and then try again from there.”

“—Yes.”

The person who answered was a human in a maid uniform.

This person was an extremely rare sight in Nazarick, a pure human. Her name was Tsuare.

She was a woman who had been brought to Nazarick from the Re-Estize Kingdom’s Royal Capital, and she had been assigned to Sebas as his direct subordinate. That said, while she had done some maid’s work before, she had zero official experience as a maid, which was why she was undergoing training like this.

Since she had been through a fairly long period of training, which included proper walking posture and a regular maid’s duties, Yuri’s personal opinion was that she passed. In other words, it was time for her to accumulate practical experience and progress towards her goal of a being more perfect maid.

However, the man beside her would not permit that.

In order to train this maid to further perfection, they had been drilling her harshly without pause.

Yuri returned to her original position, quietly watching Tsuare as she walked.

...Seems like she’s getting tired.

Tsuare’s forehead sparkled with shiny beads of sweat.

That was only to be expected. She had been practicing for over an hour now. Even walking normally for an hour was enough exercise to make a person break a sweat. How much more so for someone like her who had devoted her whole heart to this, focusing her attention into the tips of her fingers and toes? It was exhausting work, not just in a physical but in a mental sense.

To Tsuare, who was purely human — unlike Sebas and Yuri — these drills must have been a harsh experience.

...Why is Sebas-sama training her like this? She's already reached a certain standard... Or does he want her to reach the level of a regular maid? The poor thing.

A regular maid of Nazarick could easily clear the training routine which Tsuare was doing now. However, they had been created by the god-like Supreme Beings. Thus, it was only natural that they should be capable of doing so.

In contrast, it was also natural that Tsuare — who was not made by the Supreme Beings — would be unable to do so.

However, the present circumstances would not permit that.

By order of the Supreme One, Tsuare would apparently be serving as the leader of the human maids within E-Rantel in the future. That would imply that she would be the bearer of the Supreme One's will, and thus obliged to produce excellent results.

But according to rumors from the regular maids, the human maids in question would not be serving the Supreme One. Instead, they were simply hired help responsible for cleaning and odd jobs in the residence of E-Rantel's former mayor. If that was the case, was there a need to place such high demands on her, Yuri wondered.

She observed the way Tsuare walked.

It was 25 meters from the opposite wall to here.

She had walked this short distance so many times already, and she had done so every day.

Honestly, this girl is really hardworking.

Beneath her cool exterior, Yuri smiled faintly.

"...I submit that she is of a passable standard. What do you think?"

She turned to the side, requesting confirmation from the butler beside her.

"No. She is a long way from passable. It would be better to continue training her for a while more."

“...Sebas-sama, attempting to pile on too much instruction within a short time will not produce good results. Shall we break here for the day?”

Sebas shook his head.

“As you have said, forced instruction will not produce good results. However, she has little time left. Several days ago, Ainz-sama officially informed Tsuare of the date when she would begin assuming her duties. Tsuare will be taking the position of head maid and she will be managing the human maids. Any mistakes she makes, now and in the future, will shame Nazarick.”

“While that is true... you will be going with her as well, Sebas-sama. If anything happens, would it not be better for you to handle it?”

“Such thinking would be a mistake. While I will strive to keep her from making mistakes, I cannot always be by her side. In addition, she is placed above others. It is her duty to serve as an example for her subordinates — to be someone whom others look up to.”

This argument was sound. It was so sound that it permitted no further response.

In truth, Yuri felt the same way. As the eldest of the Pleiades, she worked hard everyday to keep her little sisters from seeing her in a disgraceful state.

Although Yuri had already accepted his reasoning by this point, Sebas was not finished speaking.

“Please think about Ainz-sama.”

“Ainz-sama?”

While Yuri was confused by the sudden mention of the Supreme One’s name, she thought of the pure white face of her absolute ruler. The being who had united the 41 Supreme Beings.

“As the Supreme One, he has no need to take action personally. That is because we were made to serve as his arms and legs, to complete any task given to us no matter how difficult.”

That went without saying.

The denizens of Nazarick existed to receive orders and perfectly execute them. No, one could say that they were permitted to exist in order to do so. Nobody here thought otherwise.

“That is a matter of course, but what about this?”

“But what is actually happening now? Right now, Ainz-sama has personally taken the lead. I feel this is in order to show us what it means to be a ruler.”

Yuri grunted in agreement.

“...And there is one more possibility, a most disastrous possibility, one that frightens me and which I do not wish to say is the correct answer...”

Before Yuri could ask about that possibility, Sebas spoke again.

“In the past, Ainz-sama defeated the strongest of the Floor Guardians, Shalltear-sama. With his charm, he united the Supreme Beings. And his wisdom can even awe the twin intellectual pinnacles of Nazarick, Albedo-sama and Demiurge-sama. Thus, he has shown us the image of an absolute ruler who is fully furnished with the essential qualities of fighting power, charisma and intellect. That being the case, should we not follow in his footsteps?”

“I see...”

“Naturally, setting the unattainable peak that is Ainz-sama as our goal is not only disrespectful but foolish in the extreme. But even if it is just by one step, I feel we should strive to draw closer to Ainz-sama. While forcing her to do this might be a mistake, it is also necessary if she is to stand above others.”

Yuri sighed deeply. That was a perfect explanation.

That being the case, Yuri had nothing else to say.

“Still — is that really all?”

Sebas looked at Yuri as he said this, and then he spoke so quietly that even Yuri, who was standing beside him, could barely make out his voice.

“Ainz-sama said that we could welcome Tsuare as a guest of Nazarick, but Tsuare herself told Ainz-sama that she wished to work as a maid. Some people might think her words would be a sign of underestimating the work of a maid. Under these circumstances, if Tsuare makes any mistakes in carrying out the instructions given to her by Ainz-sama, his opinion of her will surely plummet. It is very difficult to restore a ruined reputation, and so I do not want her to even begin to stumble, regardless of the harshness of my methods.”

Yuri frowned in her heart.

That was because training Tsuare harshly for that reason was equivalent to saying that Nazarick was at fault.

While the Supreme One had decreed that Tsuare would be a fellow worker in Nazarick, Yuri had heard from Lupusregina that there was a subtle separation between her and the regular maids. The regular maids looked on Tsuare as an outsider who was stealing their precious job from them. While they would not treat her coldly or disdainfully thanks to orders, what they really thought sometimes shone through in the way they treated Tsuare. I noticed because it's me, her little sister had said.

Perhaps Pestonya could have mediated matters between both parties, but she was under confinement and had missed the chance to meet Tsuare.

It was almost as though she had changed places with Pestonya. That might have been a source of the regular maids' unhappiness.

Yuri had no words to answer Sebas, but she made a suggestion anyway.

“I understand. However, it might be best to give her a rest. ‘Too much cramming is unproductive’, Yamaiko-sama once said.”

“Did Yamaiko-sama say that?! Is that so... while we could eliminate fatigue with our abilities... if Yamaiko-sama said so... Very well. Then, Tsuare, take a break. Have a seat on that chair and rest.”

“—Yes.”

Yuri and Sebas watched Tsuare's back as she walked to the chair.

“She moves much more beautifully now compared to before.”

“Thank you very much. It is all thanks to you, Yuri.”

“It was nothing of the sort. That was the fruit of her hard work. Speaking of which, what sort of training will she be doing next?”

Yuri had been asked to handle walking practice, and somebody else would handle other things.

“Cleaning and the like will be taught by Eclair.”

“Ahh, is he in charge of that?”

He was the perfect candidate to teach someone how to clean. Yuri felt that it was a bit of a shame.

Yuri enjoyed teaching other people. While that did not extend to taking the jobs of others, she would gladly accept any request to do so.

Yamaiko-sama probably expected that of me — that is to say, myself.

While she could not behold the revered visage of her creator now, she could feel a warmth in her heart when she did things which were related to the Supreme Being who had made her.

She observed Sebas — who was standing beside her — produce a pocket watch from his breast pocket.

“Yuri, we still have quite some time until we are due to meet Eclair...”

“I feel we should stop here for today. Forcing her to carry on while she is tired might lead to bad habits. If they end up being ingrained in her, all our efforts until now might be wasted.”

Yuri shrugged.

“...Bad habits are hard to break, are they not?”

“...It is as you say. Then, let us stop here for today. Thank you for coming here today for her.”

Sebas nodded to show his thanks. After that, Yuri heard Tsuare make to rise, so she held out a hand to stop her. Tsuare also nodded in thanks.

Yuri looked at the gloves Tsuare was wearing.

They looked like the same gloves Sebas was wearing. If they possessed the same abilities as well, they would be magic items which reduced elemental damage from fire, acid and the like. While they were only about as powerful as expendable items, the fact that Sebas had actually given her an item bestowed upon him by the Supreme Beings showed how much he thought of her.

No. Yuri immediately rejected her own thought.

Given the way he was worried about how the people around Tsuare looked at her, he had been thinking of her from the very start.

Was it because he had been ordered to by the Supreme One, or was it for some other reason?

When Yuri saw the white handkerchief peeking out of Tsuare’s maid uniform, the corner of her mouth settled down.

Asking would be terribly insensitive.

PART 2

Yuri returned to her room — or rather, she returned to one of the rooms assigned to the Battle Maids. This room was a suite which comprised a bedroom, guest lounge, bathroom, toilet and other such sub-facilities. It might be easier to think of this place as a compressed version of the Supreme Beings' rooms.

The bedroom did not feel cramped, even with three double beds in it. The guest lounge had a dining table and a sofa, as well as chairs — enough to seat six people in total.

There were three Battle Maids who lived in this expansive room.

They were Yuri Alpha, Lupusregina Beta and Narberal Gamma.

Adjacent to this room was another one of the same size, which was occupied by CZ2128 Delta, Solution Epsilon and Entoma Vasilisa Zeta. Incidentally, while Shizu and Entoma had other private rooms besides the 9th Floor, it was not uncommon for them to stay with Solution or Yuri because sleeping alone was boring.

Yuri leaned against the stylish sofa and consciously tried to avoid looking anxious — though because she was undead, her anxiety had never been that strong to begin with.

This is bad... there isn't any more work... what should I do now...

Her sole task today was the education of Tsuare, which she had just completed.

She flipped through her planner, but there was nothing else scheduled for her. Naturally, she had not specially arranged things to be that way. In other words, what awaited her over the next few hours would be hellish boredom.

It was not that today's schedule was particularly light, hence the free time. Rather, to Yuri Alpha the Battle Maid, she had always had long stretches when she had nothing to do.

No, saying that she had nothing to do would be wrong.

To the Battle Maids of the 9th Floor, who had been created to defend the 10th Floor of the Great Underground Tomb of Nazarick, patrolling and preparing to respond to

intruders at any time was fulfilling the core purpose which their creators had intended for them.

However—

Nobody in this world could possibly reach this Floor.

Indeed, even when beings on par with the Supreme Beings had assailed this place in their hordes, they could not breach this holiest of holy sanctuaries. This invincible fortress of all invincible fortresses. Standing watch here was no different from doing nothing.

In all honesty, Yuri was somewhat displeased with her present circumstances.

Too much free — no, too much standby time is a little... I want to have more work.

Of all the tasks assigned to the Battle Maids, the ones which took the longest to carry out and which felt the most fulfilling were duties in the log cabin on the surface. However, due to the rotation of their shifts — it was Entoma's turn today — they would not come around that frequently. Yuri had just completed her shift two days ago, so she would have to wait for two more people to go — two people had not been assigned this duty — before it would be her turn again.

Therefore, in order to make use of all this time, Yuri had been looking for extra things to do, but regretfully she had not found anything like that on the 9th Floor.

For instance, whether or not she could stand guard along the hallways. The problem was that hallway security was now handled by Cocytus' personal vassals. If she did so, it might be taken as mistrusting Cocytus' subordinates. That would be indirectly insulting Cocytus.

She knew this was just a selfish impulse of hers, but her body told her that it wanted to work hard and throw off a spray of sweat — even though the undead did not sweat.

Is there really nothing to do... I'm envious of the regular maids...

Since she did not have anything to do in terms of her primary vocation of “battle”, then she would just have to perform her secondary tasks as a “maid”.

However, if she did that, it would lead to a fatal problem.

In Nazarick, there were beings known as the regular maids, in addition to the Battle Maids.

To them, the work of a maid was their primary vocation. They were the main force responsible for such tasks. Therefore, it would be strange to arrange for such work if it did not revolve around them. If anyone asked why, the simple and natural answer would be because the Supreme Beings had arranged it in that way.

In other words, even if Yuri found work which could be done, it was very likely that it had already been assigned to someone else. In contrast, if it had not been assigned to someone else, then there was probably some special reason behind that.

With those reasons in mind, if Yuri performed those tasks, she would be taking their jobs. Of course they would not show their displeasure if Yuri had actually done that. But when Yuri put herself in their shoes and thought about how it would feel to have someone take her work away, she no longer wished to do so.

Yuri once more thought about the two people in confinement.

If laboring to one's last breath for Nazarick was the greatest joy imaginable, then betraying them was the most horrific torture. It was deeply ironic that she, as a free person, could understand the sentiments of those two people so well.

"Haa..."

From deep within herself, Yuri exhaled the dissatisfaction which filled her.

—*Crunch crunch.*

"Aiyaya, what's wrong, Yuri-nee? Stomachache?"

The person addressing her in such a casual tone was one of her sisters, Lupusregina Beta.

She had the same smile she always had, but the fact that she had asked that question while knowing full well she was undead was clearly to tease her.

Yuri narrowed her eyes and glared back.

And in the face of that innocent, pure-hearted smile, she sighed again.

“Uwah~ How mean, to sigh when you see your little sister’s cute face~”

“I do envy you...”

One could almost see the question mark appear on top of Lupusregina’s head.

The reason why Yuri envied her was not for her happy-go-lucky personality, but for her area of responsibility.

Lupusregina was one of the busier Battle Maids. Her job was to defend Carne Village — although she felt that the word “village” could no longer be used to describe something of that scale — and maintain its security. More precisely, her purpose was to observe and remain alert while preventing the leakage of the technologies developed within the village, among other colorful tasks.

I’m sure she finds her job very meaningful.

Yuri’s gaze then turned to another one of her sisters, who had been entrusted with an equally meaningful task.

Her little sister had her mouth half-open — Narberal Gamma.

She had been sitting motionlessly on the sofa since just now, her mouth half-open as she looked into the air. Her typically energetic ponytail drooped lifelessly.

—*Crunch crunch.*

“Nar-chan, what’s wrong with you?”

“Nothing, I guess I’m just spacing out.”

The two of them were talking, but Narberal’s eyes were still fixed in space, making people think that something was there.

Yuri’s eyelashes twitched.

As a Battle Maid, one ought to behave accordingly, even in the privacy of their own room. However, before Yuri could say anything, Lupusregina spoke up first.

“Well, it can’t be helped. She’s resting, after all.”

“Was she like this in the past?”

“Nar-chan’s security for Ainz-sama, after all. When she’s outside, she can’t let Ainz-sama see anyone being rude, she has to decide whether or not to immediately kill anyone who’s rude to Ainz-sama, and then she has to focus herself to stay on alert for the enemy, so wouldn’t that wind her up? It’s only when she’s in a safe space that she can unwind, so it can’t be helped. Also, a face like that might be pretty normal for her species.”

She thought about the face of the Treasury’s Area Guardian. Indeed, her face seemed to resemble his.

Yuri cast out the mental image of the their two faces overlapping.

Speaking of which, if I say that Narberal’s attitude isn’t fitting of a Battle Maid, then isn’t the way I keep sighing even less fitting? I can’t do that.

Sebas had said before that “One who stands above others must be an example for their lessers”. As their big sister, and as their assistant leader, she had to project an image that could serve as a role model for her little sisters.

Since the Supreme Beings had made Yuri as the eldest of the sisters, then Yuri had an obligation to play the role of the eldest sister to the hilt. That would be a combination of her loyalty to and repaying the kindness of her creator, Yamaiko.

However — how should she do it?

—*Crunch crunch.*

“Yuri-nee, you’ve been looking pretty suspicious since just now. What’re you doing?”

After pondering whether or not to give an honest answer, she decided to use Lupusregina’s question to speak her mind. She would have Lupusregina lend her a hand... or a paw, as it were.

“...I have no tasks to perform.”

“Ahh~”

Lupusregina looked at Yuri like she was gazing upon a starving refugee from afar.

Her eyebrows twitched, but she powered through the impulse. She was a person who worked at the behest of the Supreme Beings. Her currently unoccupied self could not hope to compare. She had to know her place.

“Yuri-nee, didn’t you go to the Treasury with Ainz-sama?”

“...Just once.”

“After that?”

“...Not at all.:

“Ah~”

Lupusregina cast her eyes to the air. Strangely enough, it seemed to be the same place where Narberal was looking..

Hm hm... Is it something which people who aren't working can't see...?

—*Crunch crunch.*

“...So what have you been eating since just now?”

“Oh, these? You slice potatoes thinly, then fry them, and then you sprinkle salt on them. I had the head chef make them — they’re delicious.”

Lupusregina pulled out several thin potato slices, delivered them to her mouth, and then ate them.

Crunch crunch.

They made a crisp, lively sound.

No, in truth she already knew what Lupusregina was eating. Yuri could not consume food, but she could prepare it. Her skills were simple and could not produce special effects from special ingredients, but when it came to regular dishes, she could make just about anything.

Then why had she asked that question out loud—

“—Eating while standing is hardly graceful, and the crumbs are falling everywhere. Remember to clean up afterwards.”

The regular maids did not clean this room. Instead, Yuri and the others took turns to clean it. That said, it was fundamentally Yuri cleaning up for the other two while they were out to work. The reason why they did not let the regular maids in here was not so much that they did not want to let their jobs be taken, but more that their pride refused to allow them to let others clean up their own messes.

Thus, ordering the person who had clearly dirtied the room to clean it up was only to be expected. Even if that person was under the orders of the Supreme Being and led a busy life every day.

In addition, having someone eat something which went crunch crunch while she was feeling frustrated made Yuri angry, as though she was being looked down upon.

This was her complaint against Lupusregina, who had made an undead being like herself feel that way.

“Okie~”

—*Crunch crunch.*

Irritation flooded Yuri’s heart.

—*So help me, I will throw a silver dagger at you.*

Lupusregina was a Werewolf, and while she was weak against silver and similar metals, she possessed a resistance to other metals as well.

For instance, a silver weapon would increase its damage done to her by 25 points, while weapons of other metals would do 10 points less damage. The final damage was calculated after subtracting defensive strength and the like, so if that value was zero, even a silver weapon would not be able to do her harm. Since it was only a silver dagger, a light throw would not cause any damage to her.

However, silver was the metal which Lupusregina hated the most. Just touching it disgusted her. One could say it was the best metal to punish her with.

Perhaps she had used her skill [Animal Instinct] to sense Yuri's thoughts, but Lupusregina hastily spoke up.

"H-hang on! Come on, give me a break while we're off-duty. I'll speak properly in front of Ainz-sama and stuff, I'm a capable woman, you know."

A capable woman. Yuri was about to furrow her brows when she heard that, but then she thought that Lupusregina was working harder than her, so she could not say anything.

I want to work too... No, Yuri. How can you be jealous of this girl?

Yuri beat back the Dark Yuri within her heart. Then, she felt something connecting at the same moment as she heard a voice.

『—Yuri Alpha.』

Nobody in Nazarick could possibly mistake the owner of that voice for any other.

"A-Ainz-sama!"

Yuri genuflected in the appropriate posture of greeting.

Of course, her Master was not here and he was probably not watching. However, she could not show any disrespect to her Master's voice.

『...I have a request for you. Come to my room... ahem, my room in Nazarick.』

"A request for me?!" Her absolute Master had no need to ask Yuri Alpha for anything. All he had to do was give an order. "I will proceed there at once!"

『—Umu. And hurry.』

After saying so, the [Message] ended.

"Was that from Ainz-sama?"

"Yes, he said he had a request for me."

The tension and passion she was feeling was so surprising that it made her face stiffen up.

As an undead being, her strong emotions should have been suppressed, but the enthusiasm kept welling up inside her.

Right now, she was like Shalltear.

For some reason, she felt excited despite being undead. While that might have been because of a status abnormality like [Blood Frenzy], she could not conclude that was the case.

Even the undead could be divided into those who could feel strong emotions and those who could not. In order to ascertain this, the Guardian Overseer Albedo had taken it upon herself (apparently) to experimentally investigate the matter.

She gathered superior undead mercenary monsters, undead created by the Supreme One's skills, as well as automatically spawned lesser undead generated by Nazarick in order to collect various data from all of them. Yuri had taken part in that exercise as well.

However, these experiments had begun with a special experiment just for Shalltear, and it sparked a great uproar between Albedo and Shalltear that soon spiralled out of control. In the end, the experiment was terminated with no definite findings. After that, she had been interested in hearing about the results of the research as an experimental participant herself. She heard from Albedo — who had been punished to do cleaning with a mop — that it was hard to reach a conclusion due to the lack of information on the superior undead beings in this world, so the plan had been temporarily put on hold.

Yuri vaguely recalled Demiurge saying that if that research had been conducted in a different place, perhaps it might allow the undead to feel strong emotions.

At that time, would she be able to express her emotions more fully?

And would that be a good thing?

She did not know if the upwelling within her was one of unease or anticipation, but Yuri locked away her personal thoughts on the matter. She would be appearing before the Supreme One soon, and she had to focus herself.

“—Then I’ll be off. I don’t think anything will happen, but please take care of things if they do.”

“Kay~”

“I understand. Take care, Yuri-nee.”

Narberal interrupted Lupusregina just as she was about to raise a thumb that was oily from her potato chips.

The relaxed mood around her up till now had vanished.

Narberal had her usual faint smile on her. Her ponytail was still drooping slightly, but one could say it was the same as always. Time spent with the Supreme One was special.

“Oi, oi, she was saying that to me!”

Ignoring the voice of her little sister from behind, Yuri set forth.

There was no special meaning to that.

She had been summoned by the Supreme One, so spending even a second extra in conversation with her sisters was a waste. It was most definitely not because her sister’s smile had angered her.

PART 3

Yuri Alpha arrived before the chambers of her Supreme Master. On either side were the insectoid vassals Cocytus had assigned as sentries, who remained stock still. While they were higher-level than Yuri, it was nothing worth worrying about. More than that, Yuri's heart was focused on the thick, heavy door before her.

She exhaled — of course, Yuri did not need to breathe, so she was just going through the motions — and inhaled. Then, she worked her shoulders up and down, as though to relieve her tension.

Her tension was not for a good reason, such as excitement at being summoned to the chambers of the Supreme One. It was for a bad reason.

That was because she could not think of a reason why she would be selected out of all the entities in Nazarick who were stronger and wiser than herself. The most likely possibility was that he had business with herself, as the assistant leader of the Pleiades Seven Sisters. However, Yuri felt it was more likely that the Supreme One was going to rebuke her for idleness.

These negative thoughts kept floating up in her head, and they weighed down Yuri's footsteps. Whatever the answer was, she would find out when the door opened.

Yuri reached out to knock.

And then, the regular maid Decrement poked her head out. She was probably on duty today.

She was a lively, short-haired maid.

Her pure and innocent eyes were always sparkling, and her movements were as cute as a small animal, bringing the usual smile to Yuri's face. In particular, the regular maid Increment — who was made by the same Supreme Being as Yuri's own creator — had a way of tensing up her back while she was reading which made Yuri feel very warm.

However, Decrement's air of vitality was gone. It would not be quite right to say that she was nervous about her shift today. The slightly green tint to her face conveyed a sense of fear.

Something cold flowed down Yuri's back. Her heart which should not be beating lurched.

What tragedy had happened before Yuri had arrived?

However, once she recognized who Yuri was, a hint of relief came to Decrement's eyes, and she regained a bit of her composure. Why was it that a maid who should have kept these emotions hidden could not help but reveal them?

The look on Decrement's face implied that the situation was the opposite of what Yuri had imagined.

Whatever the situation within the room was, Yuri's arrival had put Decrement at ease. In other words, Yuri's presence had saved Decrement.

"I am Yuri Alpha. I present myself in response to Ainz-sama's summons."

"I understand. Please wait a moment."

As expected, her voice carried a hint of relief within it.

The door before Yuri closed. Naturally, Decrement was awaiting the instructions of her Master within the room.

Yuri gulped audibly, preparing herself for whatever awaited her within the room.

Decrement opened the door once more.

"Ainz-sama has granted his permission. Please enter."

As though she was urged forward by Decrement's uncharacteristically tense voice, Yuri entered.

Yuri's gaze rested on her Master, while she took in the interior of the room without moving her eyes — the situation was grave, and when Yuri sensed what had happened, her face twisted for a moment.

It was no wonder that Decrement had that look on her face. Being made by the same Supreme Being, it was only natural that they would have the same expression when they were worried.

However, Yuri worked to ignore that, and so she passed through the door, arriving before her master.

“—Your servant, Yuri Alpha, has come in response to your summons, Ainz-sama.”

Yuri bowed her head, and Ainz responded immediately, as though he wanted her to raise it immediately.

“Mm. You came just in time, Yuri.”

Her master slowly steeped his fingers in front of his mouth.

“Do you know what I wish to say?”

“If you will permit your servant to guess...”

Yuri wanted to look at a certain corner of the room, but she resisted.

“...Is that so. Well, that makes things easier.”

Yuri knew her Master’s eyes had left her, going in the direction she was strenuously trying to ignore.

Yuri stiffened her resolve, and spoke.

“Does it concern that matter?”

“Indeed. That is precisely the matter.”

In that place was Yuri’s sister, Solution Epsilon.

For some reason, she was in a *seiza* position.

The fact that she would be sitting in that posture within the room of the Supreme One suggested that she had done something worthy of rebuke.

Yuri was undead, but her gut suddenly cramped up.

“...W-what has, my sister done?”

“Umu...”

The Supreme One slowly rose from his seat. Then, he turned his back on Yuri. After looking to the sky for several seconds, he turned his head around and spoke.

“Solution took my Miyoshi-kun, no, Miyoshi — I don’t know if you know, so I shall quickly explain; he is a Sapphire Slime which I use for certain purposes, and Solution has hidden him away somewhere. Even when I asked her, she refused to speak. Therefore, I called you over.”

“Aieee!”

A strangled shriek escaped Yuri’s lips.

That was a truly monstrous sin. It would not be surprising if one were to be executed for it. No, it was a sin which demanded the complete annihilation of the party in question. Since Solution had committed such a grave offense, she could not even begin to beg for leniency on her behalf.

Yuri mustered up all her strength to speak.

“...If she must be questioned, your servant submits that Neuronist-sama might be more suitable.”

Yuri desperately struggled to keep the tears which the undead should not possess from escaping her eyes.

She had to kill off their sisterly ties. This was the appropriate attitude to take with one who had disrespected the Supreme Beings.

“...I will not do that. Firstly, if I seriously intended to investigate this matter, I would only need to read her memories.”

“Yes!”

Indeed, that was correct. That would mean the reason why she had been called up was to shoulder her responsibility as elder sister, to make Solution confess even if she had to use harsh methods.

“—Understood!”

Yuri hardened her heart.

Solution was a Slime. Thus, she was adept at dealing with physical attacks, and she possessed an especially strong resistance to piercing or slashing attacks. However, bludgeoning attacks could hurt her.

Yuri activated her gauntlets, having them envelop her fists. Then, she stepped towards Solution.

“..Wait.”

This time, her supreme master had given an order.

“May I know what is the matter, Ainz-sama?”

“Yuri, what did you intend to do?”

“..Your servant was planning to interrogate Solution.”

“..Umu. Then, then why, are you using your gauntlets to cover your fists?”

Yuri realised her Master’s intent, and then she was stunned. The implication was that he wanted Yuri to carry out the procedure with her bare hands. She would directly feel the sensations of striking her little sister, thus tormenting Yuri, the person carrying it out.

“U-understood. If that is what you command, Ainz-sama.”

Yuri returned her gauntlets to their standby state. Her supreme Master grunted and nodded, then tilted his head.

“Hm?,,, It feel like my question was not answered, but if you understand, then that will make things simple. Well, forget it. Let’s go with this. In that case, get the answer from Solution, Yuri.”

“Yes!”

Yuri stood before Solution. Perhaps she knew what would happen to her after this, but her little sister merely looked downwards. Yuri raised her fist high, prepared to strike.

“—Stop!”

Yuri sensed worriedness in her Master’s voice as her body went stiff, and then she looked back.

“You... what were you planning to do?”

Yuri did not understand what her Master’s words meant, and she was confused.

“No, ah, in accordance with your orders, your servant was planning to obtain the answer from Solution...”

“...Uh...hm? ...Was I mistaken? Let me ask again, how did you intend to make Solution answer me?”

“Yes! Your servant intended to beat her until she was near death, and get the answer from her while her mind was clouded.”

After hearing this, her Master suddenly froze. Then, he stared closely at Yuri.

Had she said something wrong? After nervousness swept over Yuri, her Master turned his back to her once more.

After a few eternal seconds, her master slowly began to speak.

“Yuri. That was not what I ordered. Perhaps Solution hid my Miyoshi because she was obeying some wish of Herohero-san’s. It is something which she cannot tell me. That was why I was thinking that perhaps you could help me ask her for the answer.”

“M-my sincerest apologies!”

Yuri hurriedly put her hands on the floor and bowed deeply.

Indeed, if it was for that reason, then she would not be blamed. The assistant butler could be excused because the Supreme Beings had decided that he should be that way. However, it was one thing to permit it and another to like it.

“—It is fine. Incidentally, I believe you are mistaken. I am not angry at what Solution did. Rather, I find it quite intriguing.”

Yuri noticed that it was not just her expression which had changed, but Decrement and even Solution as well.

Why was that? Before Yuri could ask, her Master had already spoken.

“—Solution.”

“...Y-yes, Ainz-sama.”

This was the first time Yuri had heard her sister speak since she had entered the room. Her voice was very much unlike that of the Solution which she knew.

Her Master circled around the table, passed near Yuri, and stood in front of Solution. Then, her Master took out a data crystal. It would seem he knew what abilities the crystal had just by holding it, but almost all data crystals shared the same appearance, and only certain job classes could tell their types apart by their exteriors alone.

“I now give you an order. While there is no doubt that this item belongs to me — destroy it.”

“T-though it is your will, p-please forgive me, Ainz-sama...”

Solution refused in a trembling voice.

“I see. Then, let’s move on.”

Her master pointed to the lamp on the ceiling.

“That light is part of my room, but you are to destroy it.”

“B-but...”

“Repairing damage to the Great Underground Tomb of Nazarick requires the payment of a fee. However, one can repair a certain sum’s worth of damage every day for no charge. In particular, the upper floors were designed to be particularly cheap given the fact that intruders often attempted to invade, so even repairing the entire floor is not a great expense... In contrast, things on the 9th Floor are quite expensive. Well, items within the royal suites are usually expensive; that’s the usual impression one would have of them in the world.”

Her master spread his arms.

“Even so, repairing a single lamp is no great expense, and it should fall under the amount for the free daily repairs. Very well — proceed.”

“...Is that really alright?”

“This is my order, so it is fine. Do it.”

Solution rose and walked below the lamp and extended her hand. The slimy hand engulfed the lamp, and after a while one could hear the sound of dissolving and crushing.

With one of the lights destroyed, the interior of the room grew slightly darker.

“I see, I see. So I should consider that I can order damage to be dealt to the guild base so long as it does not cause incur an actual loss to the Guild, then? Solution, why did you break it? Or rather, why could you break it?”

Solution had a surprised look on her face.

“...I see, it would seem there was a problem with the way I asked that question. Pay it no heed. Then... if you can do damage so long as it does not incur a loss to the Guild, what is the extent of damage which would qualify as a loss? ...The creator’s instinct? Or was it because I ordered it? What is different from summoned monsters? Is there a difference between Aura and Mare? Hmm, now this is interesting.”

Her Master seemed to be in a world of his own, as though there was nobody else within his eyes.

“Still, you could only destroy it because friendly fire was enabled, so would this have originally incurred a cost? If that’s the case, then fighting within Nazarick would be

very troublesome... I need to investigate this in detail. This is wonderful, Solution. If you had not hidden Miyoshi-kun away, I would not have thought to look into this.”

With that, her Master turned around and looked at Solution.

“You’ve given me quite an interesting research topic. Well done.”

“M-my deepest thanks, Ainz-sama.”

Yuri could understand Solution’s confusion very well. The reason she had earned the Supreme One’s praise was far too mysterious for their meager powers of reason to comprehend.

“Then, I shall continue the investigation. Yuri, give your possessions to Solution.”

There was no hesitation as Yuri handed over her precious gauntlets — which had been made by her creator — to Solution.

“Now, destroy them.”

“I - I beg your forgiveness, Ainz-sama.”

Solution lowered her head.

“Hmmm. I’ll take it that you can’t destroy her possessions. Then—”

A Death Knight suddenly appeared before her Master.

“Destroy this.”

Solution shook her still-lowered head.

“You can’t destroy a Death Knight which I made? Then, can you swallow it without damaging it?”

“If that is all.”

Solution approached the Death Knight and pressed her face to it.

Her head swelled up like it was floating, and her hair lost its false form, revealing its true nature as dirty-colored slime as it swallowed the Death Knight whole. After that, Solution's head returned to normal, and the massive form which had been standing there had vanished without a trace.

"Hmm. ...If I had the Death Knight disappear in this state, would it cause you any harm?"

"No, not at all."

"Really now. Then I shall do it. Good, I see, hm... in other words, the basic consideration is that concealment by itself is not a crime? In that case, maintaining another shape should be the important point, then? Or is there some other reason? Is allegiance the key...? Or is it a system reason? Friendly fire is active, no? It's also possible that it might be purely due to unwillingness... huh. As I thought, this does merit careful study. That said, I've conducted all sorts of experiments, but I haven't investigated enough. The fact that I could reaffirm that point is also an excellent out—"

Her chattering Master suddenly fell silent. Then he clapped his hands and looked to Yuri.

"...What am I doing? Didn't I call Yuri here to get the location of Miyoshi-kun out of Solution? Forgive me. I seem to have lost myself in my investigations"

"No, I would not dare. Your servant understands that your investigations are very important, Ainz-sama."

It was immediately obvious that her Master was pondering a complex and difficult problem. Perhaps if one of the two intellectual peaks of Nazarick were here, they might be able to explain a part of their Master's thoughts. Unfortunately, neither of them were present. As a result, all she knew was that being able to understand her Master was an amazing thing, but she did not know exactly how amazing it was.

Yuri was a little unsatisfied with that.

"Now then... go speak with Solution and find out why she did such a thing."

"Yes! I hear and obey!"

She wanted to say that her sister was speaking normally now, but Yuri mentally shook her head. Her Master must have roughly gathered the reason why.

She recalled what Sebas had said today.

As the one who had assembled the Supreme Beings, there was no way he could not have seen through her little sister's thoughts. In other words, there must be some special reason for this.

Yuri turned back to Solution, who had resumed her seiza position at some point.

"Before I ask you where you hid Miyoshi-kun-sama, answer a question for me. Why did you do such a thing? Miyoshi-kun-sama is Ainz-sama's possession. You should have known that."

Solution's eyes flickered.

In order to keep her from evading the question, Yuri pressed both her hands on her face and forced their eyes to meet.

For someone with no fixed form like Solution, escaping from between those hands should have been easy as pie. However, she did not do so. Incidentally, Solution's eyeballs were also fake, so meeting her gaze was meaningless. After all, she did not use vision to perceive others. Even so, she locked eyes with her elder sister, because Solution could understand how she felt.

The two of them looked at each other.

Finally, Solution's lips moved.

"Yuri-nee... I-I'm not happy with this."

What aren't you happy with? The reason why she did not ask that was because Yuri sensed that Solution had not finished speaking. Thus, she released her grip on Solution's face, and stepped back.

"...Ainz-sama!"

Solution's eyes turned from Yuri to her Master.

“Why! Tell me why! I am a Slime too! I can clean you better than Miyoshi-kun-sama! Why! Why won’t you let me bathe with you and lick your glorious body clean?!”

Her Master turned around.

Sensing rejection from his attitude, Solution’s face was filled with despair. Yuri could understand this misery very well, and from the corner of her eye, she saw Decrement making the same face.

Why did it end up like this... if that was not what the Supreme Beings wished for... then my dear little sister will have committed a terrible sin...

It was a grave offense, worthy of capital punishment. No, there was no other possible response to it than the death penalty.

Just how long had passed since her Master had turned around? While the actual amount of time had probably not been very long, it felt like several times that amount to Yuri. When would he give the order to punish her sister?

Finally, a question rang through the air.

“...That’s it?”

“What else could there be?!”

Solution wept in response to her Master’s question — although her tears were only a part of her body, and they were reabsorbed back into her when they reached her chin.

She could understand her sister’s feelings, but—

“Solution Epsilon! How dare you!”

At the very least, she wanted it to be done with her own hands, those of her elder sister. With that in mind, Yuri clenched her fists—

“—It’s fine. Yuri, there...”

She looked over because of her Master’s voice, and so her eyes met the red points of light staring at her. No, that was not right. His gaze might have appeared to be resting

on Yuri, but that was not the case. It was as though he were looking at something far away, far, far away.

Did something happen, Yuri thought as she stopped moving, and then she heard a faint voice saying something along the lines of “Muscle— Brain—?”

The voice was very soft, so she did not hear it clearly. As Yuri’s Master looked upon her confused form, he coughed to clear his throat.

“No, Yuri. Ah... there is no need to strike her. In any event, I am not angry, no?”

“Understood! My deepest thanks!”

Yuri’s eyes could not help but moisten up at her Master’s broad and merciful heart, which could forgive even Solution’s disrespectful attitude. No, if she were not undead, she would surely be weeping copiously by now.

“Uh, Umu... then. Solution. I understand how you feel. It would seem my considerations were not quite appropriate. As for why I did not order you to do so, Solution, one reason was because you were not made by me. If I did so. I would be ashamed to face Herohero-san.”

“Herohero-sama?!”

Perhaps it was because he had mentioned the Supreme Being who had made her, but Solution made a sound which one would hardly imagine she could have produced under normal circumstances.

“Umu. Indeed, that is so. Allowing someone like yourself — who would be Herohero-san’s daughter — to do such ah, what, well, that sort of thing, would surely result in a scolding for me.”

Solution lowered her head, and soon after she raised it again.

“...Ainz-sama, please accept my sincerest apologies. Your servant will gladly accept any punishment you wish to mete out.”

“Umu, it is as I just said. On this occasion, my considerations were not complete. If I had explained this from the start, then this would not have happened... Solution, I will

not pursue that adorable little rampage of yours... the events of what happened today shall remain a secret between the four of us. Do you have any objections?"

There was no way there could be any such objections.

Yuri breathed a sigh of relief in her heart.

It was good that her sister had not been killed.

"Then... where is my Miyoshi?"

"Here," Solution's mouth swelled up greatly, and a blue slime flowed out of it. "It is."

"Oh..."

Solution held the Slime in her hands and respectfully offered it to Ainz. However, her Master did not reach out to take it.

"Solution, put him back where you found him. And don't forget to let him soak in water."

Her Masters intention was to have her follow through on her responsibility until the end.

When one thought about it, that was only to be expected.

Just as Yuri began feeling ashamed of not having noticed how obvious that was, Solution rose and left the room.

"—Ainz-sama, I cannot thank you enough for the mercy you have shown Solution."

"Hm?" Her Master, who was watching Solution leave, seemed to speak in order to revive his spirits. "No, it was simply that I failed to consider the full picture. I should have tried considering Solution's side of things... although, I had no intention of entrusting her with bathing duties under any circumstances."

"Even so, I am still extremely grateful."

"Hmm... speaking of which, are you Battle Maids dissatisfied with the current situation in any way?"

“May I know what you mean by that?”

“I did not notice Solution’s discontentment. I have failed as a Master.”

“But that is—”

Yuri stopped halfway because her Master had raised his hand.

“Well, please hear me out. I would like you to help me find out if the other Battle Maids are dissatisfied in any way. In the past, I had a Death Knight ask the Guardians about the same thing. Granted, at that time I was only asking about what resources they needed. Then, Yuri Alpha.”

“Here!”

“I now bestow upon you a task. Go and meet with the other Battle Maids and see if they are unhappy with their current environment and treatment.”

“Understood. Your servant shall immediately carry this out.”

“—Also, I will leave you with a warning. When you encounter an unknown enemy, you are not to say anything along the lines of ‘We’ll punch them first and think about whether we can beat them later’, do you understand?”

“Y-yes. I understand.”

A momentary confusion left Yuri unable to immediately respond. That was because she had no idea why her Master would be saying something like that to her. However, it was an order from the Supreme One, so naturally all she could do was obey.

She was forbidden to punch them and then consider whether or not they could be beaten.

Yuri made a mental note of that.

PART 4

After emerging from her Master's chambers, Yuri thought: *Now then, how should I proceed?*

Yuri had to meet Shizu and Entoma. The Supreme One would check on Lupusregina and Narberal by himself.

Of course, Yuri balked at the thought of troubling her Master with such things, but since her master had already said so, there was no need to say anything else.

Ahh... Please don't do anything weird.

After what Solution had done just now, if Lupusregina did something weird again, the overall reputation of the Pleiades would assuredly drop. No, it would be good enough if the problem could be settled by a mere lack of approval. Her gut ached despite the fact that she was undead.

"Let's finish this as soon as possible."

If she finished this quickly and returned to the two of them, perhaps she might be able to prevent any fatal situations from developing.

However, she did not know where Shizu was, though she knew Entoma's location.

Therefore, Yuri activated an item which only she possessed as the assistant leader.

"Can you hear me?"

『—Ara~ Yuri-nee, what's the matter』

A calm, gentle voice spoke in her head.

"Au-chan, I'm sorry to bother you, but I need a favor. Could you help me find where Shizu is?"

She was one of the Pleiades Seven Sisters, Aureole Omega.

Yuri was in communication with her little sister, the Area Guardian of the Cherry Blossom Sanctuary. Usually, she would know the movements of all of the Seven Sisters.

『Shizu-nee? I understand. ...Ah, she's on the 6th Floor. ...Do you need me to send out one of my servants, the Uka-no-Mitama, to lead the way?』

The Uka-no-Mitama was a level 85 monster who was adept in the use of mental-type magic. She had two forms — a short-haired girl in a fox mask, and a bestial form which sacrificed the ability to use all magic in exchange for a tremendous boost in her physical combat ability.

There was also a young man who wore a sun-motif mask within the Cherry Blossom Sanctuary, a servant known as Ootoshi.

(TL Note: Uka-no-Mitama-no-Kami is a Japanese god of food and the patron of Inari Taisha, while Ootoshi-no-Kami is Uka-no-Mitama-no-Kami's elder brother)

“No, there's no need for that. I just need to ask the Guardians of the 6th Floor, Aura-sama or Mare-sama, and I'll know where she is.”

『I understand. Then, if they don't know either, please contact me again.』

“Mm, I shall leave it to you when that time comes. Still, the Uka-no-Mitama are your servants, so do they not have the sacred duty of defending your domain? While you're only lending out one of them, is that really alright?”

『Yes. When Ainz-sama graced me with his presence, I received permission to send up to two of them outside the Cherry Blossom Sanctuary at any one time.』

“Is that so? Then that should be fine.

Her little sister was currently on the 8th Floor, and she could not go there directly. Even the Ring of Ainz Ooal Gown would not be able to travel directly to the Cherry Blossom Sanctuary. Instead, it would teleport one some distance away from it. With her servants as shields, she ought to have enough time to flee to the 9th Floor.

『Thank you for your concern. However, I have other defenders in addition to the Uka-no-Mitama, so it is fine.』

“I see.” Having said this much, going on any further would just be rudeness instead. “In that case, I’ll be counting on you when the time comes.”

『Yes, please leave it to me.』

Her giggling voice made Yuri think of her littlest sister crossing her arms with an adorable smile on her face.

With a smile that cut through all her previous unease, Yuri ended the conversation.

“Now then — let’s go.”

Yuri permitted the demons to escort her through the searing-hot world of the 7th Floor, and then she passed through the door leading to the 6th Floor.

Right after that, a Dark Elf came towards her, back facing the arena.

It was Aura.

Floor Guardians could sense the people who entered the floors which were their responsibility. However, it would be more accurate to say that they could sense the activation of the teleport gates, but there were conditions which had to be met and some restrictions.

After learning that the person teleporting over was Yuri, Aura slowed her pace. Still, even though she had slowed down, she was still a level 100 NPC and thus far swifter than Yuri.

“Are~ what’s wrong, Yuri? Heading out to the first floor to work as usual? Or did you come to play?”

“No, I came here today to find you, Au—”

Yuri told herself that she had to say this.

“—Aura-sama.”

Aura’s eyebrows shifted. The change in the way she was addressed told her whether or not Yuri had come on personal or official business.

Aura, Mare, Pestonya, Eclair and Yuri were close enough that they could refer to each other with nicknames outside of work. That was because the Supreme Beings who had made them were close to each other, and they felt similarly close to each other. They would occasionally gather on this floor. The fact that she had not addressed her by a nickname meant—

“I see. So its work today? Were you passing through? Or is there something important you have to do here? Oh, and sorry Mare isn’t around.”

While she was curious as to where Mare — who rarely wandered outside — had gone, that was not the first question Yuri should be asking when she was carrying out a task.

“Yes, it’s fine. I did not come here to seek out the two of you, but I have business with Shizu, who should be here.”

“...Shizu? Ahhh, yes, she’s on this floor.”

The tone with which she said those words turned Yuri’s mood dark.

Had her little sister been causing trouble for people here too?

Yuri felt her gut ache again. How many times had she experienced this sensation in less than an hour? Perhaps she ought to gather all her sisters and train them up properly.

Yes — I have to be strict!

Yuri struggled to to keep her eyebrows from knitting up, and she asked Aura a question with an unnatural-seeming smile on her face. While she did not want to ask it, she had to. Then, if it turned out that something had happened, she was prepared to apologize on behalf of her younger sisters as their eldest sibling.

“Eh, ah, d-did something happened?”

“H-m~ well, I suppose we do have something to talk about. Could you come with me for a while?”

I hate this, Yuri thought as she followed Aura’s lead.

They left the Colosseum and entered the forest.

Walking in primeval jungles was extremely annoying. In particular, Yuri's long skirts meant that she had to slow down in order not to get them caught onto things. Of course, the maids' uniforms were magic items and would not be torn by mere branches. Even so, she had to take care of the clothing which the Supreme Being Yamaiko-sama had bestowed upon her.

Aura seemed to have understood this, given that she was leading the way at a pace slower than her usual speed.

We would be fine if we were riding Fenfen...

The mighty beast with the comfortable pelt had the ability to pass through the earth, so he would not get caught up on thorny paths or environments like this forest, and that effect also extended to his riders and their possessions. She held the idea in her heart but did not give voice to it, because that would be too wilful.

In the end she was led to a corner of the forest, where was a lifeform which looked like a white ball of fur about two meters across, in the shadow of a tree. There was no sign of Shizu at all. There was nobody else besides the furry ball lifeform. However, Aura had brought her to this place, which meant that there was something here which was connected to Shizu.

No—

If it was Shizu, isn't it possible that she could be hiding? Or is she invisible?

Shizu was not on the level of a professional, but she could conceal herself and turn invisible. In addition, there was also—

Yuri took off her ornamental glasses and changed it for another pair.

These glasses could see through invisibility.

“—Ggh!”

Yuri's eyes went wide as she discovered Shizu.

Aura must have seen Yuri's expression. She went “Mm, mm” and nodded, her expression seeming to say, “that's how it is.”

“I am very sorry,” Yuri apologized.

Shizu was on top of the white ball of fur — a Spear Needle. She was buried face down in the fur of what resembled an angora rabbit. If one considered Shizu — whose arms and legs were spread wide open — to be a giant hand, it would be tightly gripping the white ball of fur.

“Yup, that’s how it is. This poor kid was calling for help, saying ‘ahhhh, she’s doing it again’ or something.”

“Doing it again? Ah, no, has it always been like this?”

“Always, Well, this is the first time she’s clung so tightly, though.”

“I shall immediately recover her.”

Yuri reached out, grabbing Shizu by the collar and planning to pull her out of the Spear Needle’s fluffy fur. However, she could not budge her. Shizu was clinging tightly to the Spear Needle, as though she were hugging it.

“Shizu! Let go at once!”

“...Denied. Denied. Denied.”

“What do you mean by ‘denied’?”

Though she planned to use force to pull her away, she ended up grabbing the Spear Needle’s fur too, and the magical beast yelped in pain.

“Mmm, it hurts.”

“Really now...” Yuri let go as she heard Aura speak on the beast’s behalf. “Shizu, I’m going to get mad at you.”

“...Yuri-nee, you are already angry.”

“I’m serious. I’ll tell her that you’re not allowed to come here any more.”

“...if you do that by yourself, Ainz-sama will be angry.”

“I am here to see you on Ainz-sama’s orders. I trust you understand my meaning?”

Shizu hopped off the Spear Needle in the blink of an eye.

What Shizu had taken away from Yuri’s words was most definitely what her master had intended. While she had misunderstood, there was no need to correct her.

Shizu touched her scarf and deactivated her invisibility spell.

Her scarf was a legendary-class item imbued with several specialized stealth and ambush-type spells. It could even turn her invisible for a short while.

In the moment Shizu jumped off, the Spear Needle ran off, as though to say “so long, I’m out of here.”

Shizu watched it leave with regret in her eyes. While her expression had not changed much, as her elder sister, Yuri could pick out the minute differences on her face.

“...Shizu, why did you do that?”

“...”

She looked aside, like a kid. It would seem she did not intend to answer.

Then what should I do? As Yuri thought that, someone extended a helping hand from the side.

“Well, Shizu often comes by and plasters herself to the magical beasts. Do you like them?”

“...Mm.” After Aura said that, Shizu looked Yuri straight in the eye. “...They’re cute, so I like them.”

“Yes, that’s how you are.”

That was the kind of girl Shizu was. She liked cute things and furry things.

“Ah~ It’s as I thought~ Well, I figured it’d be this way~”

“...I want to raise one. Eclair’s been running from me recently.”

“Umu~”

Yuri looked into the sky. The 9th Floor had no cute creatures.

For a moment, she wanted to ask Eclair to offer himself up here as a sacrifice, but that would be too cruel.

How about something like Ainz-sama's pet, Hamsuke? While its fur would stiffen on impact, said fur was quite soft under normal circumstances —yes, in that case, once I report what happened here to Ainz-sama, he'll be able to come up with a good idea, I'm sure!

In that case, one task would be dealt with.

Shizu's discontent stemmed from her desire for cute pets.

Is that really alright? She had considered whether or not she should ask questions related to work like how the Guardians had been questioned, but she could not think of a way to allay Shizu's frustration, so all she could do was ask her Master for help.

“I understand. I will discuss how to satisfy you with Ainz-sama.”

“Ahh, that's right. If it's Ainz-sama, it'll be fine.”

“...Mm.”

The name of the Supreme One was very powerful. While her expression had not changed, her mood seemed to have changed from overcast to a sunny day.

“...Ainz-sama. In that case, I want Hamsuke.”

“I understand. That fur must be great.”

“...Mm.”

While Hamsuke might be a rarity in Nazarick, there might be many of her kind in the outside world.

“...After Ainz-sama has finished what he's doing, I'll be able to go outside too.”

“I do look forward to that. When the time comes, shall we visit the city which Ainz-sama rules together?”

After smiling to her seemingly excited little sister, Yuri’s expression turned serious.

“Come with me, Shizu.”

“...Where are we going?”

“To Entoma... Aura-sama, I apologize for the trouble Shizu has caused you.”

“Hm? Oh, it’s fine. It’s not like when she pasted the one-yen stickers from before.”

Yuri sighed, “Haaaaaah.”

“Please paste the stickers which show you like something on your own things... Then it would seem she also gave you trouble back then. I do apologize.”

“It’s fine, she didn’t paste any more after that. That stuff doesn’t come off with water. I thought it’d be easy, but it gave me quite a surprise.”

“...Specially made by the Professor. They’re gone once they’re used, but Ainz-sama said he would mass produce them for me.”

“Is that so, how nice.”

Ainz-sama is really kind, Yuri thought as she sighed, and then she noticed the same look on Aura’s face. After that, it appeared that Aura had noticed her noticing, because they ended up looking at each other.

“Ainz-sama is truly compassionate.”

“Mm, I think he’s the nicest person after Bukubukuchagama-sama.”

“...Shouldn’t that be after Yamaiko-sama?”

“...It’s Bukubukuchagama-sama.”

Yuri glared at Aura, and Aura did not shift her gaze.

“...Ainz-sama is the nicest of all the Supreme Beings because he stayed behind.”

They stared dumbly at Shizu after she said that. Nobody could object to her words.

“Indeed.”

“Yeah, er — hm? Looks like someone came in from above through the door. I didn’t get an intruder notification, so it should be someone from Nazarick, which means I can probably ignore it... But it wouldn’t be good to let them wait, so I’d better go over and take a look. How about the two of you? Entoma’s topside today, right? Shall we go together?”

There were no objections to Aura’s suggestion.

Both of them nodded and followed behind Aura. A glance behind the door that led to the 5th Floor revealed that there was someone — something — there.

“A-ra~ It’s been a while, Aura. And Yuri and Shizu too.”

While the tone made people think that each sentence ended with a <3 mark, the voice in which those words were spoken was hoarse and defied easy identification as male or female. This being truly deserved to be described as “monstrous”.

It had a human’s body, but its head resembled a distorted squid. Said head sprouted six tentacles which reached all the way down to its thighs, and they writhed and twitched.

Its body was the ghastly white of a drowned corpse. Its body was similarly swollen up like a drowned corpse and wrapped in many black leather straps in lieu of clothing, cutting deep into the skin like the string used to tie up sides of meat.

The monster had four slender fingers on each hand, with webs between each finger. Its fingernails were very long and painted with pretty lacquer, and further decorated with bizarre nail designs.

This was the Special Intelligence-gathering Officer of the Great Underground Tomb of Nazarick — known as Neuronist Painkill.

“Are~ it’s rare to see you here, Neuronist. Is something the matter?”

“Kukuku, someone mentioned that it had been a long time since the Worst had met up, so I came here. I believe Kyouhukou will be coming along too.”

“Ueehh~”

A look of clear disgust crossed Aura’s face.

“Worst Job, Worst Personality, Worst Homebase, Worst Looks and Worst Lewdness?”

“That’s right. Yuri, you’re — on — the — mark.”

Neuronist nimbly closed one of its slimy-looking eyes. Had it come from someone better-looking, that movement might have been taken as a wink.

“...What are you holding there?”

“Ara~ Shizu, you’re interested in this? Kukuku, it’s an essential item for a lady. It’s perfume~”

Neuronist wagged the cute bag in its left hand.

“Well, this one’s for men. Did you notice Gashokukochuuou built a new home? This is a housewarming present.”

“Perfume is essential for ladies? Isn’t it just for stinky people?”

Yuri concealed her smile at Aura’s childish reply.

“Kukukukuku, that’s still too early for you, Aura. But should the day come when you need it, onee-chan will personally impart all sorts of essential knowledge for ladies to you. That disgusting freak won’t teach you that sort of thing.”

“Really? ...Ah... Well, I don’t quite get it, but is it stuff that’ll make people happy?”

“...Ara. Make *who* happy? Kukuku, it feels like things are more interesting now. Say, Aura. Want to chat with onee-chan? ...There’s some time before the meeting.”

Neuronist brought its massive face close to Aura’s, which twitched. Aura raised her hands to Yuri and the others, and then ran like a fleeing hare. The others could not help but be impressed by her speed, which was to be expected of a Floor Guardian.

Neuronist could not possibly catch up to her, and so it rested its chin on its slender fingers as it muttered to itself.

“Ara ara, I’ve been dumped.”

After saying so in a voice that did not seem particularly disappointed, Neuronist shrugged to Yuri and Shizu.

“...Well, I’ll be going, then. See you next time.”

“Yes, see you next time.”

They watched Neuronist wave lightly as it turned to walk off, and then Shizu asked a question.

“...Neuronist is androgynous and thus has no gender, but why does it call itself ‘onee-chan’?”

“Who knows? Perhaps the Supreme Beings decided that it should be that way.”

“...I see, I can accept that.”

PART 5

They would be looking for Entoma after this, and so Yuri led Shizu from the 4th Floor to the 2nd Floor. Then they went back down to the 3rd Floor, then ascended to the 1st Floor through the 2nd Floor. At last, they had reached the surface. They had taken several shortcuts along the way, but they had still walked a very long distance.

If they had asked Shalltear the Floor Guardian, they could have shortened their journey, but Yuri had a hard time dealing with Shalltear, excusing herself hastily after a quick greeting.

There was no way she could not feel uncomfortable after being eyed like a prey.

On the surface, Yuri saw the log cabin.

The most important task of the Pleiades members stationed here was to receive their Master who had returned from the outside while not wearing his Ring.

A secondary task was to divine the enemy's intent in case of an invasion. In addition — when the enemy was too strong, they were to allow themselves to be slaughtered without putting up any resistance. A sacrifice like this would give Nazarick the moral high ground, and it would also allow them to see how far the enemy would give way during negotiations.

For instance, the opposition might claim to have just cause, and they might have the strength to oppose Nazarick. In that case, they could request that the opposition pay for the lost items and resurrection costs of the deceased Battle Maid, and from there they would be able to observe the opposition's attitude. If the enemy was really powerful enough to put up resistance to Nazarick, then depending on the circumstances, they might abandon requests for compensation and try to sue for peace. If they did not account for negotiations and give and take from the beginning, it might end up spiralling into a full-scale war, and the bystanders would end up reaping the benefits of such an engagement.

Yuri recalled the iron tones of her Supreme Overlord as he had handed down those orders.

Those orders had been given by the Master who led those two Guardians — the Guardian Overseer Albedo, and Demiurge of the 7th Floor.

However, Yuri could not understand why her Master had to say “sorry”.

Dying for their Master — a Supreme Being — was the highest honor of all Nazarick. Therefore, Yuri and the others were very envious of the various Floor and Area Guardians who had died gloriously in battle against the invaders of the past, those whose power had rivalled the Supreme Beings themselves.

The maids — who were the last line of defense — did not have the chance to fight, but that implied that the filthy feet of the enemy had not had the chance to tread the ground of the 10th Floor. Yuri was glad for that, but at the same time also a little sad.

And then, when someone politely came to the log cabin to visit, the maids’ final task was to politely give them a final warning — which was considerable generosity on the part of Nazarick’s members.

There was no trace of anyone on the silent surface. While more powerful vassals than Yuri and Shizu patrolled this place regularly, they did not seem to be around at the moment.

The Guardian Overseer Albedo had designed the patrol system, deliberately leaving gaps in the surface patrol routes to create opportunities suitable for invasion.

This was because it had been considered that the enemy would immediately pounce on any weaknesses in the security system once they were found and draw up plans designed to capitalize on them. Of course, any such gaps in Nazarick’s patrols were under remote observation, which meant that there was no actual weakness. In other words, this was a strategy to make the enemy think they had exploited a vulnerability and thus lure them into a trap.

Yuri walked up to the door of the log cabin and knocked, and she sensed Entoma moving inside.

However, Entoma had not opened the door, but was hurrying about inside for some reason.

Yuri narrowed her eyes, and opened the door.

It was not locked.

Inside the cabin's plain interior, she saw Entoma frantically stuffing something under the chin of where a human face would be.

Surprised, Yuri's face turned stern.

First Lupusregina, now her...

Why were all the Pleiades' members so gluttonous? Yuri, as one of the undead who did not need to eat, could not understand that sentiment.

In Shizu's case, she likes drinks.

"Yu-Yu-Yuri-neesama. Is something the matter? It's still too early for a shift change, and the next shift is not yours either, nee-sama."

Perhaps she should try to deal with her little sister's attempted diversion first.

"Yes, that's right."

"Then why?" Entoma tilted her head.

Entoma's face was a bug and not her real face. It displayed no emotion, and so there was no way to tell what she was thinking through the subtle changes in her expressions.

Therefore, there were times when she had to use her body language to express what she meant, for instance, by shrugging or tilting her head.

"And then—" Entoma turned to look at Shizu "—Isn't that our little sister (Shizu) over there?"

Yuri heard a *crack*, like something hard had broken.

"...That's wrong, Entoma. You're the little sister."

The *crack* from just now resounded in her head again.

The members of the Pleiades called each other sisters, but unfortunately they were not true sisters, since they were made by separate creators. They were simply designed to be that way.

However, Yuri could confidently say that they loved and cared for each other like true sisters.

Among them, the Supreme Beings had designated Yuri Alpha as the eldest sister, and Lupusregina Beta as the second-oldest. However, it was less clear when it came to the others. Solution Epsilon and Narberal Gamma were both treated as the third-oldest.

If they were designed as twins like Aura and Mare, then that would be the end of it. However, that was not the case.

Perhaps Solution and Narberal really were twins, since the two of them interpreted that to be “as close and caring as twins”. Thus, they became a pair of siblings who disregarded seniority

The question now was the remaining two.

“You’re, the little sister.”

“...No, you are.”

The two of them glared at each other.

Nobody knew their relative seniorities.

Even the sole remaining Supreme Being did not know, and so every now and then they would argue about the matter.

They had pleaded with Ainz-sama to make a decision, but Ainz-sama had replied, “My old friends might have left it undecided for some special reason. I cannot casually make a decision without knowing the details,” and that had been the end of it.

However, both of them always fought like this because neither of them wanted to be the little sister.

Entoma put up her hands in a threatening display.

She was making herself seem bigger to cow her foe, but that movement did not possess any special properties. To Shizu, the target of this intimidation, it was little more than a gesture.

In contrast, Shizu put up her fists under her chin, in a boxing stance. However, Shizu was a gunner, and not skilled at melee combat. In a real fight, Shizu would not be able to touch Entoma.

They were basically just playing with each other.

Yuri understood this. Thus, she said nothing and did not act to intervene.

After staring at each other for a while, their eyes — in Entoma's case, her entire face — turned away to look at Yuri.

Knowing what they had in mind, Yuri sighed internally, and then said:

"That's enough from the two of you. I'll get angry, you know?"

"It can't be helped since Yuri-neesama said so. I'll let you off this time round."

"...Hmph. Thank Yuri-nee for this. You got lucky."

"What?"

"...What?"

Yuri squeezed herself in between the two of them as they started to glare at each other again. If she did not do this, she would only end up having to mediate for the two of them later..

It would be better not to argue at all, Yuri thought as she shook her head.

"Entoma, we came here for a reason. Ainz-sama has given me an order to see if there is anything the Battle Maids are unhappy with."

"Unhappy?"

Entoma tilted her head again.

“I’m not unhappy with anything. And I can eat delicious food.”

While she had no idea what kind of food Entoma was talking about, Shizu silently covered her mouth.

Yuri frowned internally.

If only she wasn’t like that...

Or rather, it would be better to say she ate strange things...

While she wanted to say that there was no need to eat Kyouhukou’s familiars, Entoma continued, “They go crunchy crunchy like desserts, crispy on the outside and soft on the inside.”

If it was only a matter of preferences, she could still tolerate it.

But at the very least, could she not do it while holding the food in question?

Yuri decided not to think about these weird things. All these could be discussed later. She could not mix up her priorities. Yuri was here by order of the Supreme One.

“—Entoma.”

“—Yes.”

“I’ll ask you again, is there anything you are dissatisfied with?”

“There is nothing.”

“Is that all? Then I will report that. But you don’t have to hold back.”

“...In that case, could you ask Ainz-sama if I could weave webs?”

“Don’t you have webs on several floors already?”

“No, they’re just temporary.”

There were several large spiderwebs in Nazarick. For instance, on the 3rd and 6th Floors. She knew that Entoma would go to those places too, and apparently, one of

those webs had been personally made by the Supreme Being who had created Entoma. Yuri had thought of them as something like a private home for Entoma, but that would not seem to be the case.

“For starters, it’s near Our Lady — Grant’s territory.”

Grant was one of those whose levels were second only to the Floor Guardians, a rare Guardian who protected areas scattered over many floors.

“While I think it would be allowed, I can’t weave a web in Mother’s domain.”

“I see...”

“After all, I feel—” Entoma’s stomach area began to make pinching motions. “I can’t just eat all the time, so I’d like to weave webs to capture prey.”

If she wanted to capture prey, then she should not be weaving underground, but on the surface.

“Does that mean your first choice is this log cabin?”

“Yes.”

“...I’ll ask for you, but I don’t think it’ll be allowed. This place is shared by the Pleiades, after all.”

“That’s true...” Entoma said with a hint of regret in her tone. “I’d like to personalize this place more.”

“...Spiderwebs stick to the hair. They’re annoying.”

Yuri agreed with Shizu’s assessment.

That said, she still had to relay Entoma’s requests to her Master.

“I understand. I will tell Ainz-sama about this. If there’s nothing else, I’ll be going.”

“Mm—”

Entoma thought for a while, and then shook her head.

“That’s it, there’s nothing else.”

PART 6

“Thank you for your hard work.”

While she had rushed back as quickly as she could, her Master had already finished speaking with the other two. On the way back, Yuri received a [Message] to go to her Master’s personal quarters.

After meeting her Master did not have a bad impression of those two, so it would appear that the meeting with them had gone well.

Yuri’s impression of the two of them went up slightly.

Just as Yuri thought, *looks like the job’s almost over*, her Master spoke.

“Now then, tell me what you think.”

She must have accidentally let a look of surprise appear on her face.

With what seemed like a wry grin, her Master repeated:

“You are also a member of the Pleiades. Should I not hear your opinion out as well? Tell me, is there anything which displeases you?”

“N-no, there is nothing which I am unhappy with.”

“Hm~ Is that so. Then, I shall ask something else. Have you been busy lately?”

How should she answer that question? Either response she could give — being busy or not busy — seemed very disrespectful.

Yuri struggled to find an answer, but she could not.

“...Really now. Then, I shall rephrase my question. Yuri, I would like to give you a new task. Will you have the time to complete it?”

“If it is your order, then I shall make as much time for it as need be, Ainz-sama.”

“I see. Then, your — no, I came across a suggestion. And that suggestion said—”

Her Master unrolled a piece of paper on the desk.

“I believe that we need child education services which can scout out talented individuals and cultivate them. This way, we might be able to strengthen Nazarick. Even if it does not work out, we can still use it to develop technologies for ourselves, which can also be used as a foundation to strengthen Nazarick as well,’ or something like that.”

Yuri was familiar with that suggestion.

After all, she had written it herself.

“That is a good suggestion. I reached a decision after discussing the matter with Albedo. Yuri Alpha.”

“Yes!”

“You will be in charge of the orphanage we will be building in E-Rantel.”

“An, an orphanage?”

“Indeed. Children will be educated there. I will entrust the founding and administration of that orphanage to you. You need only discuss the details with Albedo. —Now then, are you up to the task?”

Her eyes full of determination, Yuri replied:

“Yes! Please leave it to me!”

“Very good,” her Master nodded.

“You will be in charge of this matter, and I will guarantee you the full support of the Great Underground Tomb of Nazarick. Build the orphanage of your dreams — you may tell Albedo that those are my words. Do not allow yourself to regret anything. However, like I said just now, we have other goals in mind, so we might not be able to perfectly fulfil your desires. However, we will not be able to obtain good results if we abandon things from the start. Do you understand what I am trying to say?”

“Yes!”

Yuri understood her Master’s intentions. However, she did not understand why he had to explain everything to her in such detail and in such easily-understood terms.

“Then... if you are to be in charge of the orphanage, you will need the help of capable people. If you feel anyone in Nazarick is up to the task, you may pick as you see fit. Naturally, people who are already busy are exempt from selection. ...Do you have anyone in mind?”

Yuri blinked for a moment, unable to comprehend her Master’s intentions. Had the Supreme One’s peerless instinct and intellect seen through her confusion?

Yuri decided that she would need to clarify, even if it could be taken as disrespect. Just as Yuri was about to speak, a flash of inspiration flashed through her mind.

“Does, does that mean I may pick people who are in confinement?”

“Of course. If need be, they can even be freed from confinement.”

In other words, the two of them were fine. Yuri struggled to resist the urge to smile and maintained a poker face while bowing respectfully to her Master.

“I understand, my Supreme Lord!”

As she realized the great mistake she had made, Yuri made a mental note:

—*The Master before me is as kind as Yamaiko-sama.*



As he watched Yuri leave, overflowing with passion, Ainz spoke to the people in the corner of the room.

“Now then, you may dismiss the spell.”

“Yes, Master. My apologies.”

The forms of two of the Battle Maids revealed themselves.

They were Narberal Gamma and Lupusregina Beta.

“We are deeply grateful to you for bestowing an important task upon our sister Yuri.”

Ainz looked back to Lupusregina, who had spoken in behalf of the two of them.

“...I had already considered having Yuri handle the management of the orphanage. It was no trouble at all to go along with your suggestion. Then, do either of you have any other requests?”

“No, Master.”

While he could be said to be studying Lupusregina’s expression, Ainz was not good at reading the thoughts of others. All he saw was the same earnest face Lupusregina always had, the girl who had earnestly pleaded with him to give her elder sister work to do.

“Hm~” Ainz leaned back in his chair. “...Then, if anything happens or if you notice anything, notify me immediately.”

After hearing their answer, Ainz dismissed the two of them.

He watched the two of them leave, and then Ainz looked at the regular maid Decrement, and spoke as though he was seeking her approval.

“It is a good thing for sisters to get along. Indeed... it is a beautiful thing.”



琪雅蕾妮納・貝隆

人類種族

tuareninya veyron

Head Maid Outside Nazarick (pending)

Position: E-Rantel Head Maid Candidate

Residence: A servant's room on the 9th Floor

Levels: Maid (regular) ———— 1 lv

Slave (regular) ———— 2 lv

Birthday: 14th Day of the Lower Wind Month

Interests: Formerly - making pretty flower crown,
now - nothing in particular

{ personal character }

After being released from a hellish existence, she is now immersed in bliss, and thus she always has a smile on her face. Her greatest difficulty now comes from the fact that she lived a long time being subservient and soft-spoken, and she finds it hard to interact with others. Her little sister still weighs on her mind, but when she recalls her, bad memories come back with them one after the other. Thus, she tries her best not to think of her

