

転生したら スライム だった件 17

Regarding
Reincarnated to Slime

Story by Fuse, Illustration by Mitz Vah

伏瀬 イラスト／みつばー

“Sounds annoying,
so I'll pass.”



Raine

“Then you had better
prepare yourself.
Unlike me, the one
in charge of your
torture isn't going
to be that nice.”



Calgurio

“If you so desire,
I shall give you
the entire world.”



Velgrynd

“I should have taught
you your manners
much earlier.”



Myourmiles

“Oh no,
I assure you
that I would not
do anything
of the sort.”

Testarossa

The two beautiful ladies
stare at each other with smiles on their faces.

The forces of their gazes collide,
causing a fearsome pressure to fall on the surroundings.

“Ara,
may I ask
just what you
were trying
to achieve by
making Masayuki
cry like that?”

Velgrynd



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That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime

Volume 17

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Fragments Across Spacetime

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Manga

That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime

Chapter
1

**The Ambition
of Myourmiles**

Chapter 1

The Ambition of Myourmiles

My name is Myourmiles and I consider myself a fortunate man. Recently, my luck has been so overwhelming that it's difficult to describe it in just one word. This fortunate streak reached its peak when I accepted an invitation from Rimuru-sama, my boss and the head of state of the Jura Tempest Federation. Not just any ordinary boss, Rimuru-sama is also a demon lord, a fact that is not to be taken lightly.

When I first met Rimuru-sama, I knew he was no ordinary person. I still consider him to be a goddess, but the truth is, his power is beyond my imagination. And not just in the sense of leveling large cities; he defeated a sky dragon, a monster that could have taken down a small country, in mere seconds. At that moment, he was a hero in my eyes, but I was even more astounded to hear that he had become one of the Octagram shortly thereafter. To top it off, he is also friends with the legendary Demon Lord Milim-sama and the True Dragon Veldora-sama, of which there are only four in the world. Honestly, I am so used to being surprised by Rimuru-sama that I have become numb to it and find myself simply saying "hmm" at anything I hear these days. But that's enough rambling about Rimuru-sama for now.

Moving on, my ambition has always been to become a successful and respected merchant. I was able to open a shop in the small country of Blumund and a branch in the large Kingdom of Ingracia. Just as my business was starting to take off and I was gaining recognition, I was approached by Fuze-dono, the Kingdom of Blumund's Guildmaster, who introduced me to Rimuru-sama. Rimuru-sama, who had recently become a demon lord, asked me to work for him as an executive.



As the Minister of Finance in Tempest (as it's currently called), my role is to distribute the vast

wealth of the kingdom to various departments as deemed necessary. In my previous life as a merchant, I had to work hard to earn my income by raising working capital from the remaining funds after deducting the cost of purchases and labor. But now, the scale of the money I handle is on an entirely different level. My previous salary pales in comparison to my current one.

Currently, I earn fifty gold coins per month, after taxes are deducted. This includes a housing allowance and the added benefit of having trainees act as housekeepers for free, making it an unbeatable deal. I also take care of those who followed me from Blumund, but most of them work for me and are paid by the government. The only ones directly employed by the government are my family members and Bydd, who are responsible for housekeeping and earn a maximum of twenty gold coins per month.

However, what surprises me is that I have several other sources of income. One source of income is the profit from my company. Starting with a fast food restaurant at the Founding Festival, Rimuru-sama's idea came to fruition in the Kingdom of Blumund and a rest stop on the road, and I am the owner of each of these restaurants. I am paid by the government, but for some reason, I am also paid personally. According to Rimuru-sama, he and I have a destiny to be together, and he trusts me completely. Rimuru-sama said, "Myourmiles-kun, when you make money, I make money, isn't that right? These are the fruits of our combined ideas, so it's only right to split it, or am I wrong?" Rimuru-sama is determined to honor our unwritten agreement to split the profits, and I strive to meet his lofty expectations. As a result, I am receiving hundreds of gold coins every month from each store. Additionally, after recouping our initial investments, the profits are expected to continue to increase in the future as the existing branches expand and requests pour in from all over the world to open more branches. The variety of shops is also expected to increase, as Rimuru-sama asks Gobichi-dono to serve more and more delicious dishes.

The variety of shops is also likely to increase. Rimuru-sama has asked Gobichi-dono to serve more types of food, and I am more than happy to take a stake in the company as it means I get to taste good food first. The burger and ramen shops are doing well, teppan-yaki is more popular than ever, and ice cream stores are in the works, too. There is even an inn on the main road that is offering new dishes. Depending on their popularity, I'm sure there will be even more of them. As a result, I believe it is guaranteed that we will continue to make enough profit to match our investments.

All this money is making my head spin. To be honest, in less than a year, I've accumulated more than enough money to live a luxurious life for the rest of my days. But this is not the end of the story. I also have another source of income, which is the Three Drunk Sages.



The ‘Three Drunk Sages’ is a reference to Rimuru-sama, the Celestial Emperor Elmesia of the Sorcerer’s Dynasty Sarion, and me, ‘Gard Myourmiles.’ It is an acronym of these three names, and refers to a naming organization. I don’t care about myself, but Her Majesty Elmesia is a heavenly person. It is said that even for the nobility of a great country, there is usually a waiting list of several years for an audience with her. Even royalty can’t easily meet, even if they wanted to. Her influence is immense.

It is said that Sarion’s national power is comparable to that of the Western Nations, and since it has been supporting such a superpower since the time of its rise, the prestige of Elmesia shines brightly down from above. I hear that Her Majesty Elmesia is treated like a god in Sarion. I thought that Rimuru-sama was a very scary person to be casually drinking with such a person as her. I cannot remember now why I was drinking with him, either. But thanks to that, even I can now call Her Majesty Elmesia as an older sister.

That’s why some people call us the Three Drunk Sages, but it’s not known that we three are involved in the Three Drunk Sages. This is a top-secret matter, and only a few people know about it. In the Monster Kingdom, only Benimaru-dono and Souei-dono are known to be involved in this matter. Souei-dono has helped me by lending his subordinates, so I can’t keep it a secret from him. As for Benimaru-dono, Rimuru-sama called out to him...

“You will get married one day, won’t you?”

“No, I don’t think so...”

“Well in preparation for that time, you need to hide this from your wife and save up some pocket money, right?”

“No, my salary is enough—”

“You idiot! If you don’t at least keep your annual income stashed away, it’s going to be hard to go out drinking with your male friends!”

“Is that so?!?”

“Yes, that’s right. That’s what a man’s worth is all about!”

I remember him having a conversation like that. It may seem slightly wrong, but it’s not something I would interfere with. I wisely ignored it and avoided getting involved. Besides, the annual income of Benimaru-dono, the Minister of War, is the same as mine. And with six hundred gold coins, I don’t there’s any drink he can’t afford.

Well, that’s not important. For some reason, Rimuru-sama is afraid that Shuna-sama will find out about his plan. The reason Rimuru-sama invited Benimaru-dono is because he wants Shuna-sama’s older brother to keep an eye on her, and to get her to agree with him. Anyway, I got Benimaru-dono as a collaborator, and borrowed some of Souei-dono’s subordinates. The Three Drunk Sages’ secret society plan has been set in motion, with them as the executing unit.

Rimuru-sama’s point of view is very interesting. The crux of the plan is the transformation of the relationship between the three drunk sages. The plan was to gain complete control of the Three Drunk Sages, the secret society that serves as a device of violence, and to encourage clean conflict on the surface. If you only create one giant organization, it will eventually rot from within. It was decided to set up two organizations in the first place because we knew there

would be people who would have a grudge against the Jura Tempest Federation.

By making them compete with each other, we hope to revitalize our business. In addition, by making them compete with each other, the two organizations would be encouraged to cooperate with one another. In this way, we are trying to prevent the organization from becoming corrupt. When the organization was founded, I was impressed because I would never have been able to think that far into the future.

My role was to unite the two organizations. Older Sister is the one in charge of uniting the survivors of the Rosso clan, with King Dolan of the Dolan General Kingdom at the center. Then, the ‘Western General Trading Company’ was established by those who have enmity against our monster country. In order to counter this, it was necessary for me to establish the ‘Four Nations Trade Federation’ at the earliest opportunity. As planned, we set up an umbrella organization involving the leading figures of the Kingdom of Blumund, the Kingdom of Farmenas, and the Dwarven Kingdom.

The merchants I took in after the Founding Festival became my hands and feet. The number of business partners has decreased drastically, and they are on the verge of being ostracized by their homeland and abandoned by their families. So when the time was right, I reached out and offered my help. I offered them a living if they would work for me, and few would be so foolish as to refuse that offer. Of course, there were still a few who did.

Because this was reported in newspapers world-wide, their names have been sold in a bad way. Few people would trust such a person and hire them, so it was obvious that this was the last helping hand they would get. The reporters did a great job too. Needless to say, it was terrifying how Rimuru-sama and Diablo-dono guided it.

Thanks to that, my work went well. I owe it to them for making it so interesting. Of course, some of them would be aware of our intentions, and more than a few of them were, but doing anything about it would be useless. Also, they have no reason to complain about the payment, since we are not lying about it. It was their pride that was the problem, but that was about it. A merchant is a cash cow, and most things are acceptable if it makes a profit. Demonstrating competence would increase their position and salary. Their complaints gradually disappeared, and they pledged their loyalty to me.

I even got the former head of the store, Bach, involved. He had become a respectable manager while paying off his debts to me, and I left him with the job on the condition that he would pay off the rest of his debts. He felt that he owed me a debt of gratitude, so he did a lot more than I expected. There were other excellent human resources growing up.

When the King of Blumund heard from Fuze-dono, he gathered all his trusted advisors. He said that they were promoting human resource development in preparation for the coming day. The Dwarven Kingdom had also dispatched some excellent civil servants. The dwarves have a long life expectancy, so there is no way for them to rise through the ranks unless their superiors retire. And so, some quick-witted people who have taken advantage of this opportunity have come forward to offer themselves to me as well. It’s good to be ambitious.

I heard that the Western General Trading Company, organized by older sister (Elmesia), has

also signed up the elves, and with the participation of dwarf civil servants, there was no better rival than the Western General Trading Company.

However, the Kingdom of Farmenas, on the other hand, needed help to open a branch office, and the Freedom Association was willing to help, but the stability of the country was still the priority. This is to be expected, so we are taking a long-term view and have given our support to the people who will grow up to be able to do so.

But now comes the hard part. We didn't have enough staff to expand into Western Nations. As I watched the Three Drunk Sages expand, I envied the Three Drunk Sages from the bottom of my heart, as they continued to crush and absorb the underworld. The underworld was fine, but an organization that was active in the public arena required good people who could be trusted with the job. The people we scouted were sent to the Monster Country to be trained, but it would still take a few years for the buds to sprout.

By principle, it is out of the question, from my point of view, to entrust such an important job to a stranger. When it comes to that, it is necessary to be very selective about the people we hire. And as I feared, we have been short of people to hire due to sending personnel to various countries. Thus, I turned to Rimuru-sama for advice.

"Well, I'm in a bind. Our country's human resources are monsters, so I am reluctant to send them out into human society."

"Yes, that's right. There are many excellent people, and I think they will be accepted once they start working together, but I wonder if it is still too early to do so."

"I agree with you, Myourmiles-kun. If the person who looks down on you is too good, one will be jealous of them and vice-versa. It would be worse if they were persecuted or something, and I feel it's not good to think about things in a hurry."

Rimuru-sama and I agreed. Then what should we do? Just as we were pondering, Rimuru-sama came up with a solution.

"It can't be helped. She seems to be very capable, and I'd like to ask her to cooperate in this matter as well."

After saying this, he called up his direct subordinate, Testarossa-dono. Testarossa-dono was a diplomat and was reputed to be a very talented person. I was introduced to her, but she was so beautiful that I was too nervous to have a proper conversation with her. And then...

"Rimuru-sama, you wanted to see me?"

A smile, full of grace, and a look of extraordinary beauty. The scent in the air was so overwhelming that I couldn't help but be overwhelmed by it. While I was stunned, a conversation between Rimuru-sama and Testarossa-dono was occurring beside me.

"To tell you the truth, we're short on people."

"I see, if that's the case, please leave it to me. I'll have my subordinates work with you."

"Oh, yeah? Yes, that'd a big help. Also, this is a secret mission, so make sure to keep it a secret."

"Oh my, it's a secret between me and Rimuru-sama. I promise I won't tell anyone. And of course, my subordinates as well. If they ever speak of this..."

Testarossa-dono laughed. Seeing that smile, Rimuru-sama and I felt very confident that our secret would be kept strictly to the letter. Thus, it was very easy to come to an agreement. Then Testarossa-dono looked at me and smiled.

“I have strict orders that I am to be absolutely obedient to you, Gard-sama” she said. When her voice reached my brain, I felt as if I were going to heaven.

“Gard-sama,”—that Testarossa-dono called me by my name.

“Thank you very much!”

I couldn’t help but answer with a gluttonous smile. And so, with the help of Testarossa-dono, the plan began to take off almost scarily well.



In just a few months, a branch of the ‘Four Nations Trade Federation’ has been set up in every member country of the Council. It is small, enough to accommodate about ten staff members, but it should be enough for the time being. This was a surprise to me, but an even more surprising event still awaited me. I was elected as the representative of the Four Nations Trade Federation.

“Myourmiles-dono, whom Rimuru trusts, can trust me too. I’ll leave everything to you.”

When Gazel, the king, gave me encouragement, I was so nervous that I felt paralyzed. As long as the king had said that, the dwarven officials had no objections. They may have been dissatisfied, but on the surface, they obediently followed.

“Because we are on the side of being helped, I don’t have any complaints at the moment. So, good luck with that.”

And Youm-dono. Then I overheard him saying, ‘It must be hard for you to be pushed around by that guy, isn’t it?’ but I smiled and replied, ‘That’s true for both of us. Thanks to you, I’ve been able to live a very pleasant life.’

Youm-dono laughed as well, so I think the feeling was mutual. The King of Blumund was troublesome. At first glance, he seemed to be a friendly man, but my gut feeling told me something else. Drum Blumund—this man can’t be trusted. And sure enough, negotiations with the King of Blumund were not going to be easy.

“Ho-ho-ho, you are the representative of the federation, so you will have unimaginable power in the future. If Myourmiles-dono is going to take over the reins, I’ll be at ease too.”

Is it that bad? I wondered, but it could be, depending on how things unfolded.

“Ha-ha, I’m honored. Well, I’ll see you in the future—”

“By the way...”

Here it comes! I braced myself.

“In my country, we are in the process of training our staff for Rimuru-dono’s project. We would, naturally, want to expect job security.”

“Of course, of course. In fact, the plan won’t be able to move forward without the cooperation of those people.”

“Well, I am relieved to hear that. Then, of course, you are aware of the situation in our country, are you not?”

“The situation, sir?”

I didn’t know what he was talking about, so I didn’t bother to answer the question. Then the King of Blumund, with a friendly smile, said something that made me want to scream at him like an idiot.

“Let me put it simply. We have abolished all agriculture in our country. We are now selling off all the food stored in the national treasury to keep the people in line. We need your support.”

“What?!”

I couldn’t help but exclaim, but I think it couldn’t be helped.

“Mmm, of course I’ll do everything I can, but I’m afraid I’m the only one...”

“Well, I’m sure Rimuru-dono will smile and give us permission. He has built the ‘World Station’ of the magitrain in our country, and I am sure that you will not abandon us for responding to your spirit.”

That’s unreasonable! I want to scream at him for his absurd logic, but somewhere in my heart I am convinced. This man had staked the fate of the nation on Rimuru-sama’s plan. Would this be considered an incredible act of stupidity or a wise decision? No, no...

I must prove that he made the right decision. Because if this is seen as a fool’s errand, it would mean that Rimuru-sama’s plan has failed. We have no manpower to begin with, and it would be a great help to us if all the people of the Kingdom of Blumund were to work for us. Therefore, I had only one answer.

“That’s right. King of Blumund, I swear to you that I will take responsibility for hiring all of Blumund’s people. Of course, you will leave the food aid to me as an advance on my salary!”

“Ho-ho-ho, Myourmiles-dono is reliable! I would like to be able to continue relying on and helping you with various things in the future as well. Therefore, please call me ‘Drum’.”

Well, what a surprise. A mere merchant like me is allowed to call him by his name?

“Oh, I’m afraid not...”

It could be a trap, so I refused it for the time being...

“Myourmiles—no, I’m going to go ahead and call you Gard-dono.”

“No, no, no, no, I’m just a former commoner who was taken in by Rimuru-sama...”

“Ho-ho-ho, no need for modesty. Nobody would think of Gard-dono, who is a friend of not only Rimuru-dono, but also Her Majesty Elmesia, as a mere commoner.”

“Even I can’t call her by her name,” King Blumund said with a straight face.

Although he is acquainted with Rimuru-sama and knows him well enough to be on friendly terms, the expression on his face tells me that to Her Majesty the Emperor of Sarion, a superpower, he’s nothing more than an insignificant member of the royal family. There’s no denying it. I have turned my back on this fact, but I have to admit that older sister is an extraordinary person. If so, I assume that this is the reason that the King of Blumund wants to have a close

relationship with me.

It's an honor to call him by name, and it's also a great way to build a good relationship. But what to do...well, don't bother. Come to think of it, it's not the name of the country over there. Prince Figaro is the representative of the country, so it's okay.

"Then, with His Majesty Drum—"

"Wait, wait, let's be on equal footing here. Even with Drum-chan..."

"No, no, that's not right! I mean, it's absurd!"

"Is that so?"

"Yes, it is! I understand. Well, then may I call you Drum-dono from now on?"

I was afraid to change the name, since it was the person himself who had asked me to do so. I didn't want to be arrested for being rude, though I didn't believe that was likely. As a result, Drum-dono laughed happily at me.

"Well, I'm glad to hear that. Being friends with Gard-dono, I feel as if I have become a great person," said Drum-dono. "I look forward to working with you as a friend in the future!"

Before I knew it, I had become friends with Drum-dono. I didn't know if I was allowed to do that, and I asked for help from others to see if they would disagree. And yet...

Behind Drum-dono stood a group of stern-looking ministers, but no one complained. On the contrary, everyone was smiling happily, as if they were relieved. I had no choice but to realize that the Kingdom of Blumund was serious. They had invested everything they had in the Four Nations Trade Federation, a supranational organization represented by me, and they were betting their country's survival by joining forces with it. That's an unbelievable gamble. It's not easy for me to make a decision like this. In that sense, this Drum Blumund is undoubtedly an impressive man.

"I wish to build a good relationship with you for a long time. Please guide me as a friend, so that I do not become a 'fox that borrows the power of the tiger.'"

I replied to Drum-dono with sincere respect.



After the meeting with the King's Drum-dono, we had a practical meeting. Veryard-dono, who had risen up to the rank of Viscount, gave us a report on the current situation. He told me that they have enough food to last for one year, and that their education is going well. Those with high ability have been dispersed throughout the country as an immediate asset.

"Well, in our country, we have always been very good at underworld espionage activities. Those people have gone to various countries to conduct price surveys and so on. We are working hard to train our administrative staff under the slogan 'Rich country, wise people.' Adults and children alike are working together to learn about world affairs and economics."

I didn't doubt Drum-dono's words, but I didn't expect him to be as thorough as he was. If a king is a king, then his subjects are his subjects too. Oops, I can't help but be surprised.

"I understand. Then I will report on the progress of our plan."

I, too, should stop hiding things. After that, I spoke about the current situation without hiding anything.

"The development of the magitrain is going well."

The construction of the rails is underway from the end point at Dwargon via the intermediate Farmenas, to Blumund in the middle of the line. The ingredients produced at Farmenas is transported to Dwargon, where the cargo is replaced with industrial products. Then they unload at Farmenas and send the rest to Blumund. Eventually Blumund will have to act as a collection point.

"Of course. So, food hygiene will be an important part of the job in the future?"

"Yes, sir. Also, we would like Blumund to consider where to sell the necessary supplies."

"Of course. I've explained that to the officials we sent to you as well."

"Mmmm, I heard you are Fuze-dono's best friend, but Veryard-dono is no exception."

Come to think of it, Rimuru-sama also told me that Veryard-dono is a shrewd man, so we can't be too careful. I see, this is indeed an opponent with whom we can't let our guard down.

"That's a good point. Then what do you intend to do about the abandoned land?"

"I've made plans on that as well. Here, in the vicinity of the royal capital, we have secured a site for the World Station. From there, we will set up a vacant lot in all directions to connect to the city road."

"How?"

"We've prepared some land on the outskirts of the Royal Capital. We plan to connect it with the World Station and make it a logistics base."

"My God..."

We were so well-prepared, it was astonishing. From here, the negotiations began in earnest, without any bellyaching. Our monster kingdom will provide the labor force. We will build a huge 'World Station' and open a line to Dwargon. This will be followed by the opening of new routes to Sarion and Ingracia. At the same time, it was decided to build warehouses on the vacant land that had been prepared. This will allow Blumund to grow into a major commercial area in the future. With land prices likely to rise, it's imperative to secure a prime location before it's too late. This place, the Kingdom of Blumund, will be a logistics base in the future. I had planned to buy the best location for the site, but...

"Then, it's a branch of the Four Nations Trade Federation, but because the current location is temporary, I would like to build a new one."

"Don't worry. We've secured a special area for you."

I had a bad feeling about that. I tried to decipher Veryard-dono's expression, but the smug smile on his face kept me from doing so.

"Does that mean you'll have to give it away?"

The land needed for stations and rails is treated as compensation for technology and labor,

as well as joint expenses in the future, so there's no problem since we've discussed that it would be free. Therefore, I have put off the purchase of the branch's land until later, but the situation is getting worse. My fears have been proven true.

"No, no, please don't do that. In the Kingdom of Blumund, we have decreed that all land is the property of the state. And we have transitioned to a new form of government-loaned lands."

They got me! Even I never would have guessed that they would pull off such a feat. I'm impressed that they've passed such a bill. I wonder how they managed to convince the aristocrats who have vested interests in it?

"What are the rents in that area...?"

"On a per square meter basis, we plan to pay one silver coin."

It's not expensive. It's not cheap, but if you wanted to rent land in the capital of Ingracia, you'd need three silver coins per square meter. So it's better to buy, even if you have to pay income tax every year. But there is a bigger problem. The problem is that the other party can take control before the profit or loss! Rimuru-sama is surprisingly unconcerned, but this is the kind of thing that makes things hard to deal with. What will you do if they change the terms and conditions in the middle? As long as we're on friendly terms with them, it's fine, but people are replaceable, so it's important to secure permanent rights.

I don't think this would happen, but what if they raised the rent? If it is within the range of common sense, we can accept their request on a case-by-case basis. However, if they raise the rent unreasonably, one can't deny the possibility of quarrel. I understand that this is just a contingency, but older sister has told me to think about that eventuality. If we owned the land, the unreasonable demands would be grounded. But if the other party has the right to the land, it will be a problem if conditions are not met. If you complain, the owner has the right to question you. If you don't like it, you have no choice but to leave. That's why I want to make sure we get possession. If that's not possible, then it's hard to over-invest in this place. Now, just as I was wondering what to do, Veryard-dono grinned.

"Rents will fluctuate according to the economy, but here's an interesting story only for Myourmiles-dono!"

This guy really can't stop. I have a bad feeling, but I'm afraid I mustn't stop listening.

"What's the story?"

"It's very simple. We in the Kingdom of Blumund would like to offer you a settlement concession as a token of our friendship."

"Concession, you say?"

"Yes. It's about the special area mentioned earlier, and that we're willing to grant extraterritoriality to the special area by entering into a perpetual land lease that will be in effect permanently."

"My God!"

I was surprised, but it was too good to be true. It seems that Veryard-dono is going to explain it to me before I even have time to ponder what kind of a backstory there is.

"There's no backstory. It was His Majesty Drum's idea. I was against it, but the other

ministers voted for it, and it was adopted. There are equal advantages and disadvantages to this idea. The disadvantage, of course, is that we will be hit by other countries if we sell off our land.”

“Well, I guess so.”

I was surprised that they didn’t try to hide it, but when I heard it was Drum-dono’s idea, it made sense. And I think I see the merits of it.

“The advantage is, of course, that we can expect your country to invest in us to the fullest. Also, we have decided that our country can gain an advantage by adding various conditions to the permanent land lease contract.”

“What do you mean?”

The question is what kind of conditions will be added.

“What? It’s simple. One, that you employ our citizens as your employees. The other is that I want you to establish a headquarters for the Four Nations Trade Federation in our country.”

I see, I thought to myself.

If the headquarters of the Four Nations Trade Federation is in the Kingdom of Blumund, it will not only become a logistics center, but also a center of the world economy. Replacing the current position of the Kingdom of Ingracia would not be an impossibility, and the value of the Kingdom of Blumund will skyrocket. Land prices will rise, of course, and the real estate income alone will be very lucrative if the representatives of each country have embassies there. Unlike tourist destinations, this one is not affected by the economy. Moreover, it promises jobs for the people of Blumund. If you have the will to join and work together with the Four Nations Trade Federation, it becomes a gamble with a great return. I was convinced from the bottom of my heart that this is just like Drum-dono, a genuine gambler. And it was also in Rimuru-sama’s vision that the Kingdom of Blumund would be the center of the world economy. I had no reason to oppose it, so I nodded my head and agreed to it.



After that, we had a detailed discussion with Veryard-dono and signed a contract. The contract is basically to protect each other’s rights and interests. For example, all contracts will be cancelled in the event of a war. I thought it was satisfactory, but I wanted to hear what Veryard-dono really thought, for future reference.

“I would like to ask you one thing.”

“What is it?”

“Well, Veryard-dono was against the deal, or so I’m told. I’d like to know what you think about the result.”

Because the content is such that we gave preferential treatment to the ‘Four Nations Trade

Federation,’ miscellaneous matters such as explanations to other countries will increase. I was wondering if he wasn’t amused, if not displeased.

“Oh, I see.”

Then Veryard-dono looked thoughtful. He got up without looking at me, and then, while I was wondering what was on his mind, walked to the window and looked out.

“?”

Veryard-dono clears his throat in front of me.

“I’m talking to myself, so please pay me no mind.”

After refusing that, he opened his mouth seriously.

“A nobleman is a creature who never shows his true feelings. You must not. If the negotiations turn out to be unfavorable, they will say that things went as planned. Otherwise, you will show your opponent weakness. I said, ‘I was against it.’ That is, I want you to understand that I was for it at the time of the negotiations.”

I was surprised that that was the real intention. If so, it was exactly what Veryard-dono was aiming for. I don’t think I’ve lost, but I’ve learned once again how hard it is to negotiate with the nobility. That’s why I couldn’t help but grumble about it too.

“Oh dear… I still have a long way to go. I thought I was good at dealing with noblemen, too. But I’m not sure if I’m going to be able to represent the Four Nations Trade Federation if this continues.”

“No, no, Myourmiles-dono is a tough guy, even from my point of view. Excuse me.”

“Ha-ha, I’ll take that as a compliment.”

I looked at Veryard-dono with a wry smile. Unexpectedly, Veryard-dono laughed too. His usual cool expression belied the humanity in his face. That’s why I couldn’t help but smile at him.

“I hope you won’t be offended, but would you be interested in working for me?”

Well, he’d definitely say no. But there was still a hint of truth in my questioning.

I was confident that having a man of Veryard-dono’s caliber working for me would give us the best possible advantage as we expand our operations in the Kingdom of Ingracia, which would be plaguing us in the near future.

“Hmm.”

“Ha-ha, it’s not my place to say anything. If you can pass this off as a joke…”

“No, no, it’s an interesting suggestion.”

“What?”

I looked intently at Veryard-dono’s face. He’s very serious, not a joke in sight.

“Are you serious?”

“Yes. I’m actually thinking about changing my job, too.”

After saying this, Veryard-dono told me about the current situation and future prospects for the Kingdom of Blumund. The rich and wise are a double-edged sword. The future of the people is secure, but the status of the nobility will be shaken in the future.

“We have no land-owning aristocrats in Blumund. Nor are there many of them. Maybe one

percent of the city's million people. There are less than 2,000 knights, and their families number 8,000 or so, so there are less than a hundred people involved in politics. That's all well and good for now, but in the near future, everyone will be in an honorary position. That's the direction His Majesty Drum has set."

Indeed, it was a small country that was able to achieve this drastic reformation by protecting the interests of the nobility. There may have been opposition, but as a result, they've continued to this day.

"Because Veryard-dono was not, you know, opposed?"

"No. It's more a matter of profit. I just thought I'd have to find another job before I became unemployed."

With a grin, Veryard-dono said that. I saw that smile, and I knew. I've been beaten.

"Well, that's one for you. Did you pretend to answer my question and then sell yourself?"

"Huh, I was hoping you'd figure that out."

I see. If I hadn't figured it out, I wouldn't have passed.

"Then, really?"

"Yes. I'd like Myourmiles-sama to hire me. However, is it okay to treat me as a consultant for the time being?"

Of course. I understand his position as a nobleman. He won't be able to move much for a while. But I'm counting on Veryard-dono's intellect and experience, so there's no harm in being a consultant.

"Of course! I look forward to working with you in the future."

"Thank you very much."

Veryard-dono and I shook hands with each other, laughing invincibly.



With Veryard-dono as my advisor, the Four Nations Trade Federation began to grow steadily. And now the time has come for us to face our worst enemies in business—the big merchants.

"Are you going to be in Kingdom of Ingracia today, Gard-san?"

The one who asked was Bydd, who was in charge of the escort. We have gotten to know each other well and have allowed each other to call us by our names. Forged in monster country, Bydd's current strength has risen from a D-plus rank to a B rank. Now that he's renewed his armor, he's become reasonably reliable, and I always ask him to accompany me when I go out on excursions. Of course, Gobemon-dono was there too. This one is even more impressive and looks like a warrior of the past. His strength is now over Rank A and it seems he's evolved into a kijin. I heard that they are of legendary status...but they're common in the monster kingdom. I think I'll only lose if I look into everything, so I'm just going to let it slide.

“That’s right. I have an important meeting today, and I’m afraid I’m going to have to go somewhere dangerous.”

“Huh? I guess it’s my turn, too.”

“What are you talking about, brother Gobemon! You don’t have a chance with me here!”

“Huh, I’m not so sure about that.”

Gobemon-dono is laughing at the confident Bydd. Gobemon-dono became a Kijin, but his skin color remained the same. I guess that’s the difference between individuals. He’s grown horns too, but they’re small so he hides them with a bandana or hat. He was wearing a hat that matched his suit and looked stylish. He still seems like a hobgoblin at first glance, so it’s easy to catch any opponents off guard. Bydd is stronger now, but he’s still unreliable. Gobemon-dono has always helped me as my bodyguard. I’m leaving it up to them to protect me, but today I’m afraid it might not be enough. After all, the merchants who control the Western Nations are the ones we are meeting today.

But I needn’t worry about that. After all, Rimuru-sama knows what we have planned for today. Whether the negotiations go well or not, my safety is assured. So for now, I want to enjoy this comfortable tension. In response to my call, the big names of the world have gathered in one place—this is a man’s romance. To straighten up after a long absence, the three of us have decided to wear dark suits today.

“Now, are you ready?”

I asked, and Bydd and Gobemon-dono nodded emphatically. I steeled myself and headed to the hotel where we were to meet. The automatic door opened.

“Sir, may I ask your name?”

With a refined motion, the hotel clerk inquired.

“Myourmiles.”

“...! Oh, I’m so sorry. May I see your ID, just in case?”

No one else is going to steal my name, but I have to cooperate. It means that we’re thorough with everyone else, so it’s rather safe.

“Is this okay?”

Bydd took a letter of introduction from his pocket and showed it to the hotel man. After looking at it, we were searched to make sure we weren’t carrying any weapons. Meanwhile, my subordinates came running in.

“Myourmiles-sama, we’ve been expecting you!”

“Everything is set up right away. The venue is here.”

My men, who sent the hotelier away, lead me to the ballroom. The venue this time is where the aristocrats hold balls and other events. There were already many people milling about, and all eyes were on me as I entered.

“So that’s the representative of the Four Nations Trade Federation, the organizer of this event?”

“Hmm, he looks familiar. He was a very smart businessman, if I remember correctly.”

“That man, I hear that he has taken over Demon Lord Rimuru and taken his current posi-

tion?”

“That’s right. But don’t underestimate him. I hear that the trade in monster country was arranged by that man. Rumor has it he gained some leverage over a beleaguered retail community.”

“Hmph, it’s a nouveau riche after all. The Rosso family’s influence is now a thing of the past, and although there seems to be a move to rewind in the Dolan General Kingdom, the other Five Great Elders show no signs of being replaced. It’s probably over.”

“Johann Duke of Rostia was also arrested by an Ingracia Magical Inquisitor. He won’t be able to recover.”

“I have heard that the Border Count Cidre has been captured as well. He was charged with the defense of Ingracia, and now he’s abandoned it. I doubt he’ll ever see the light of day again.”

“In other words, whoever takes the lead at today’s meeting will be promised the power of the next generation,”

“Fufufu, I won’t let a newcomer like that take that place. I’m not calling for a bunch of rednecks like Four Nations Trade Federation!”

“But the monster kingdom is tricky.”

“Right. Their military might is not to be underestimated, and I hear that a woman named Testarossa or something like that has even taken control of the council.”

“Well, let’s see what he can do, shall we?”

“Master Left. If that man has no ability, it would be best for us to take his place.”

“And I’m sure Demon Lord Rimuru will also give preference to those who are more competent.”

And so on and so forth, the flowers of rumor are blooming madly. Everyone seems to be curious about me. The conversation is so obvious that I can hear it. Well, that’s understandable. Today, not only the old Rosso faction, but also some of the biggest names in the world’s underworld are gathered here. These are men who control the wealth of the world and who usually don’t ever meet each other. These are the tycoons of the old days, whom I would have once had difficulty meeting. One only has to look at the rumors of the Five Great Elders to see the breadth of their connections. Those who live as if they were living horses. That desire is endless, and instead of being frightened by the fall of Rosso, they are enthusiastic about the opportunity. I can’t let my guard down. I brace myself even more.



Suddenly, someone calls out to me.

“Hey, Myourmiles. You’re getting pretty big, aren’t you? Why don’t you say hello to me?”

Well, that’s Don Gabbana’s bodyguard, Arlecio. A big, muscular, middle-aged man. He

wears full-body black leather armor, which is unbecoming, but no one blames him. That's just as well. After all, Arlecio is a retired former A-rank adventurer, and the incarnation of so much violence that there isn't anyone in the underworld who hasn't heard his name. Of course, I knew him as well. Not that I wanted to see him though.

Arlecio is a ferocious beast of a man. Always hungry, and always ready to hunt. Ever since I met him as a young man, he's always asked me for food and pocket money. I'd complain, but this man was the incarnation of violence. And worst of all, Don Gabbana is standing behind him. He is a nobleman without a title, but of such stature that even Ingracia's royalty cannot resist. When Arlecio went too far and killed a thug, the gendarmerie settled it by suicide. After that, no one dared to challenge Arlecio.

We are here to talk about the future of the business world, but this is not the time to quarrel with Arlecio. I, as a founder, will have to get through this, even if it means stepping out of line. I smiled and turned to face Arlecio.

"Well, well, well, Arlecio-san. What a surprise to see you here."

"Ahn? What's with that tone? Hey, you look like you're in some kind of shape while I'm watching you."

Hey, this is scary...

Arlecio's threats don't involve shouting or anything like that, but it's like a bite to the gut. I'm going to chatter. In Blumund, I was also called the king of the backstreets, but in front of such a 'real' deal, I am reminded of how small I can feel...

"Well, Mr. Arlecio, it's a happy occasion. I'll tell you about it later."

Bydd is also under pressure from Arlecio. He seems to know about Arlecio and is now afraid of him. I can't speak for other people either, and on the contrary, I've even reviewed Bydd. In the past, I would never have tried to go against Arlecio. But it leaves a bad taste.

"What do you want? You call my name so casually, but who gave you permission? Huh?"

Arlecio's attention is shifting from me to Bydd. Just as I suspected, this man doesn't remember Bydd. I guess he didn't think he was worth remembering, either. It seems that Arlecio would not tolerate being accosted by such a small person without permission. He's in a terrible mood. In the old days I would have put my hands on some money to see him out.

But today, that's not going to happen. I am a representative of the Four Nations Trade Federation and I will not be taken for a fool by our enemies at this time. The people around me are laughing at us now, instead of helping us. This may be a show and a diversion, but I'll lose my position if we allow this to go on unchecked. If I can't handle this kind of trouble, I'll only draw the ire of the guests.

"Arlecio, you misunderstand me. I'm a representative of the Four Nations Trade Federation. I'll let you off on the basis of our old friendship, so leave quickly!"

I said to Arlecio, poised in a relaxed manner. I struggled to keep my voice from trembling, but I was relieved that I managed to do it.

"What?"

Is this what you call a killer intent? The air around Arlecio changes, his eyes narrowing as

he stares at me. I'm scared shitless.

“Myo-Myourmiles-san...”

Bydd shuffled to his feet and called out to me in a tearful voice. But there was no time to answer, and I couldn't take my eyes off Arlecio.

“Hey, Myourmiles. Are you sure you didn't misunderstand? Or maybe you did. Do you think I can't get to you in this kind of public place?”

“Uh...”

I do think so! No one with a bit of wisdom would meddle with a man of high rank in a place like this. It wouldn't be natural for a monster that follows their instincts, but someone with common sense would usually put up with it. Moreover, Arlecio is Don Gabbana's body-guard. If you make trouble here, it would get your employer into trouble. Just when I thought I was absolutely safe, I felt Arlecio's left hand shaking. In that moment, Bydd was pulled down and Gobemon-dono was in front of me. It seems that in that instant, Arlecio tried to hit me. Gobemon-dono then covered me. It was Gobemon-dono who pulled Bydd over, and if he'd just left him there, it could've been dangerous. As proof, Bydd's ear is torn off by the pressure of Arlecio's fist.

“Are you okay, Bydd?”

“Yes, yes. I'm sorry, I can't help you...”

“It doesn't bother me. Rimuru-sama will be very angry if you die here.”

“Oh, are you going to get angry for me?”

“Of course. I'll be mad at you, too!”

I'm reaching out to Bydd and pulling him up. Meanwhile, sparks were flying between Gobemon-dono and Arlecio.

“Were you trying to kill me?”

“It was an accident, an accident. I was just trying to give you a quick pat on the back. I guess that's why that punk over there fell over because you interfered.”

“Don't be silly. I'm still a work in progress, but Bydd is like a little brother. I've been looking up and watching, but you, that's too much.”

“Fuhaha, it's bad because that guy is weak. You're not allowed to bring weapons into this place, so you're not going to die from a little poke.”

“...Oh yeah?”

Wow, the atmosphere in Gobemon-dono is changing.

I thought that this would no longer be a meeting, but then Don Gabbana arrived at that very moment.





“Oops, Gabbana-san. Nothing really, I was just saying hello to my old friend for a bit.”

“Yeah? I guess so. You there, you’re hurt. Here, use this.”

What a bloody farce. Threats and intercessions, trying to do me a favor and holding my head down. Arlecio knows just what to do. He’s just sprinkling Bydd with the restorative without a second thought. A sprinkle on Bydd’s suit instantly restored Bydd’s ear. That kind of efficacy can only be the complete recovery potion (full potion).

“Ooh, to use your precious ‘full potion’ on such a low-ranking person!”

“As expected of Gabbana-dono! For him, he doesn’t even mind using a rare, secret potion.”

“That’s right. Arlecio-dono’s prowess combined with Gabbana-dono’s financial strength is truly invincible.”

What’s that? I went pale as soon as I heard that voice. Suddenly I wasn’t scared anymore and I felt like I’d just woken up from a nightmare. I look at Bydd and he’s very puzzled. I guess he’s feeling the same way I am. Because, ain’t that right? The full potion is a familiar sight to us.

Every now and then, Gobemon-dono trains Bydd too, but I can’t tell you how many times he’s had his arms and legs chopped off in one day. If he didn’t have the full potion, he wouldn’t be alive today. That’s why we’ve always had the full potion on hand. Listening to those who appreciate it made me realize again how blessed we are now.

“Oh, and look! Behold the bright badge on Gabbana-dono’s chest!”

“Oh, I see it too. That crest is shining.”

“Right. That means it’s made of genuine magisteel.”

“No doubt, it’s just as they say. An up-and-coming, mysterious organization is absorbing all the illegal organizations. And this organization’s very crest is exactly what it looks like.”

The voice from the outside intrigued me, so I looked at Don Gabbana’s chest, only to be astonished. There, shining in a familiar pattern, were three snakes intertwined, snaking their way around. No wonder they were so familiar. I had spent three days and three nights thinking about it.

As I recall, Rimuru-sama said, ‘Why not just make it a snake? Rather than dragons and phoenixes...simple is better. Besides, the snake symbolizes wisdom, desire and eternity, which is perfect for the Three Drunk Sages, right?’ And older sister agreed too. She said, ‘Well, snakes also have the image of being drunk, so it might suit us.’ And I said, ‘Wahahahaha! Then let’s make the three snakes intertwine. Let’s make them snake around like the three of us. No matter how you look at it, it’s the Three Drunk Sages!’

I haven’t heard about the members in detail, but was Don Gabbana’s organization also absorbed by it...? Now that I know, I’m feeling a bit jumpy. But this is my chance. Let’s make sure Don Gabbana stands out from the crowd to showcase my position.

“You are, I believe, the chairman of the Gabbana Trading Company. Now, how do you wish to make amends for this?”

“What did you say?”

“You are not aware? Apologize for injuring my escort. Bydd wouldn’t go against that thug

just because of a situation like this. And now he's gone too far, just because we wouldn't hurt him!"

"...I'm a thug?"

This is great fun. It seems that both look bewildered by my counterattack.

"What's with that man?! What's that man doing challenging Gabbana-dono?"

"Gabbana-dono is a member of the mysterious Three Drunk Sages, isn't he?"

"Yes. I heard that a major militant group has fallen under the umbrella of the Three Drunk Sages. And yet..."

"You're a daredevil...or do you have a secret plan?"

"I can't believe it, but the Four Nations Trade Federation has a plan to counter the Three Drunk Sages. You really think you can?!"

The outsiders may be annoyed, but it seems to stand out in the public eye, so I shall bear it. Now, more than that—

"You're dead, man."

"Well, wait, Arlecio. It's not good here. Besides, it's not much fun if you kill it easily."

"All right, Gabbana-san. This one's for later."

First, I've got to do something about these bastards who are hiding in plain sight.

"Shut up!"

I shouted to him on the spot. My voice didn't shake. I can feel my voice returning to normal. It's almost as if the fear Arlecio had instilled in me a moment ago was a lie. Now that I think about it, it's only natural. After all, I've had conversations with much scarier beings.

Don Gabbana would be no better than a bug from Veldora-sama's point of view. All he'd have to do is release his aura and Gabbana would be no more. Arlecio might be able to hold out, but it'd only be putting off the inevitable. All Veldora-sama would have to do is turn on the killing intent, and he'd be gone. In other words...

I usually deal with Veldora-sama and others who are that scary. I've even refused to bargain for a raise in pocket money. And there are also many calamity-class majins living in that town. It's my job to manage the accounts of the inhabitants of the monster country. Even those that could easily wipe out small nations are begging me to make their budgets work. I'd yell at them and chase them away... It's hard to believe it, but it's become my daily life now. Speaking of which, Cien-dono and I had a little chat the other day.

"Well, Testarossa-dono is very good and fast at what she does, which is a great help to me. And she's beautiful. I envy you, Cien-dono."

"What? Well, well, well, hahaha! Myourmiles-sama has a very good sense of humor. I haven't laughed so much in a long time!"

He was laughing a lot, even though he was usually so calm and collected. After that, he liked me for some reason, and we became good friends, so much so that sometimes we went out for drinks together. Then I remembered that Testarossa-dono was a terrible demon. Her appearance was deceiving. Her graceful demeanor and soft smile made me think she wasn't so scary. It's well known that Testarossa-dono gave the council a hard time, so I tried to keep a

modest attitude. Sexual harassment, no! Absolutely never! That's our slogan at work. This is a digression, but there are many great people in our office. Now that I remembered, there was no reason to be afraid of Don Gabbana or Arlecio.

“You—!”

Don Gabbana and his friends are all red-faced and furious, but that doesn't make me feel anything. It's not only me, but Bydd too, seems to have had a reality check.

“Hey, Myourmiles-san is a gentleman, so I'll say it for you instead, but your tone of voice is not very nice, is it? Myourmiles-san can't talk to you like you do!”

Or so he says. However, with this, the line of sight in the venue was nailed, and it was a great show. Let's beat Don Gabbana to the punch and complete the ratings.



Here's where I showed a fearless smile. I'm not much of a fighter, but I have a reputation for having a bad face.

“That's true. Bydd is right. I should have disciplined him from the start, not chided him for his old friendship.”

“That's right, Myourmiles-san. That way, I wouldn't have to put up with it, and I wouldn't have been hurt.”

“Smart man. And how am I supposed to make him pay for what he did?”

“First, he should apologize to you. It's not too late to learn from that attitude!”

“You're right. Oh, Arlecio, and Gabbana-dono. I can close my eyes for this if you apologize now. But if you insist on making things worse, that's another story. I, Gard Myourmiles, Minister of Finance of the Jura Tempest Federation, and representative of the ‘Four Nations Trade Federation,’ will buy the quarrel! How about it, eh?”

I said that as if I were about to make a big spectacle of myself. Their faces are twitching as they listen to me.

“Y-You...”¹

“Wait, Arlecio. Calm down. If it looks like there was a misunderstanding, and you were offended by us, then let's apologize. Myourmiles-kun, wasn't it?”

“And you?”

“Oh, no...Myourmiles-dono...”

When I asked him back, Don Gabbana sounded frustrated. We've won, I thought. There are many great merchants here. Not only from the Kingdom of Ingracia, but also from other nations, whose wealth is valued by these merchants. Don Gabbana was forced to recognize me

¹He has been saying “Teme” which is basically a rude/harsh way of saying “you.” Kind of like saying “You bastard...”

in front of these great men and women. I guess it was out of the calculations, but it was sweet. He is staring at me with cold, snake-like eyes, but I am not afraid. I'm sure I would have cried and apologized if it was in the past.

“Hmm. So, what’s the misunderstanding?”

Don Gabbana bowed, a blue streak on his forehead, as he set out the rescue ship.

“My guards got ahead of themselves this time, and I’m sorry for the inconvenience. I think he was a little too excited, and I think you can tolerate one thing—”

“Ahn? Do they teach you to laugh and easily forgive people for hurting you? My Bydd had to suffer the shame of losing an ear, remember?”

“The full potion...”

“Hah! You don’t know what you’re talking about if you try to fool me with such cheap medicine!”

I laughed out loud. In fact, I still have a few of those potionos because Rimuru-sama let me keep them. It wasn’t a lie, so I said so emphatically.

“You are not worthy of participating in the grand scheme I have planned to call upon you to carry out. Leave this place!”

Don Gabbana scowled as I shouted at him. Then, in a chilling voice...

“Don’t you regret it.”

“Don’t you regret it” he said, for me only, and left the hall with Arlecio.

It was a complete victory for me. The hall had been quiet for a while, but as soon as Don Gabbana disappeared, the audience erupted in cheers. But there were not just positive reactions. There were also some malicious voices in the crowd. I’m sure the consensus was that they didn’t think I would get rid of Don Gabbana. I, seeing my chance to get the attention, made the opening statement. Then afterwards, I unveiled the ‘Blumund Distribution System’ that I had discussed with Rimuru-sama and Veryard-dono, and succeeded in attracting the interest of many people.

However, they did not agree to join the project on the spot. The reason is simple. By Don Gabbana, or rather, by the Three Drunk Sages, they thought I’d be killed off for fighting with them. If the organizers are going to be gone, then go after their replacements. If the core group is gone, the project may go down the tubes. This is not a matter for the big merchants to rush into, is it? But that’s good for me. I will have more credibility if I can survive here.

And that’s with the Three Drunk Sages. I am the G in REG, and victory is guaranteed. And so, I gave a passionate speech to my heart’s content. The venue was filled with enthusiasm and the meeting was very lively.



And the next morning. When we came out of the hotel, there was a black carriage parked in

front of us. That's a pretty bold thing for a public figure to do.

“Get in.”

Arlecio announced in a low voice. I grinned and climbed into the carriage with Bydd and Gobemon-dono.

“—You've got some nerve!”

Arlecio came aboard at the end of the ride and threatened us, but from what I can see, he's just a sore loser.

“So where are we going?”

“A nice place. Well, enjoy your last ride.”

And then Arlecio kept his mouth shut. He didn't seem to want to say anything else, so we got into the carriage without saying a word. The carriage arrived at our destination after about twenty minutes. Judging from the distance from the hotel, this must be an upscale residential area. In other words, it's the place that I had guessed.

I was truly relieved. If I'd been taken to Don Gabbana's domain, I would have panicked a little. But now we have nothing to worry about. This is where the Apostles of Verte used to have a base in Ingracia. I helped to renovate this place, so I know it well.

“Stay down. The scariest people you could ever imagine are waiting for you down the road. I'm looking forward to it. I'm looking forward to seeing you crawling around, spewing shit and piss and begging for your life.”

I look at Arlecio with pity as he threatens me. This guy's a pitiful guy, too.

“What is it, bastard? What's that look in your eyes?!”

“No, it's all right. It's not going to happen.”

This guy's going to die.

“What?! You...what the hell are you talking about?”

I think Arlecio sensed something about my attitude. He has a slightly uneasy face. There's a group of men lined up in front of the mansion that stands there. As soon as the carriage stops, they come running. One of them speaks to Arlecio.

“Arlecio-san. It's a message.”

“What?”

“Well, some of the higher-ups are waiting downstairs.”

“Upstairs? The Seven Blades?”

“No...more like...”

“You don't mean to tell me that an old wise man from the ‘Wise Men's Club’ or the group of evil shinobi from the ‘Dark Heavenly Clan...’”

“Those people were the guides.”

“The three leaders—?!”

Arlecio is astonished, but I'm so unfamiliar with these people that I have no idea what they're like. From the sound of the conversation, I'm guessing they're not in the Gabbana family. I guess they're still newcomers. Well, even I don't know exactly which organizations the Three Drunk Sages have under their umbrella. That's why such unfortunate events are happening.

Even though I knew about the underworld, I'm surprised there are so many organizations in the Western Nations...

“Gabbana-san was taken earlier.”

“Okay. Hey, let's go.”

Accompanied by a look of triumph on Arlecio's face, we stepped into the mansion. We were headed for the basement, but it's still a luxurious place. The Apostles of Verte originally enshrined an altar, but that was torn down and replaced with an audience chamber. It was Rimuru-sama's idea to make the room's atmosphere more important. He believed that a secret society should be like a secret society, and was thus very particular about the details.

It might even be more luxurious than the one in the monster country. I control the budget over there too, so I can't allow them to waste it. But here, it doesn't matter what is done with the money earned, because it's an evil organization.

“You...why are you so calm?”

Perhaps due to anxiety, Arlecio spoke to me.

“Well, why not?”

I answered, and he gave me a little ‘tsk.’ He remained silent the rest of the way until we came to a large door on the third floor below.

“Enter.”

“And, Mr. Vigan from the Seven Blades, you're a doorkeeper?”

“Tsk, Arlecio. I was thinking of you. I'd give you a pass on Seven Blades if it was vacant. Idiot.”

“Oh, no, Vigan-san! What did I do?”

“Just quickly get the hell inside! Hey, you guys wait here. I was told only the guests and Arlecio can go in there.”

Vigan told him, staring at Arlecio's men. Well, that's about right. The fewer people who know I'm one of the bosses, the better. That's why I say nothing here, and follow quietly.

“I'm coming in.”

With that said, Arlecio enters, followed by us. Vigan is the last to enter the room, and the door is closed. The door has been magically sealed so that no sound can escape. No one outside can tell what's going on inside. Even though the room is underground, it's bright and shiny. Countless wax candles lit the room at varying degrees of intensity. Rimuru-sama said that there was no need to use candles when they could be made by magic. It was in this waste that romance was found. The basement floor is not divided, so it's more of a hall than a room. That's why it can be used as an audience room, but only executives are allowed in. And by ‘executives,’ I mean those who know who I am. But more than half the people inside this room are people I don't know. I walk proudly into the room with all eyes fixed on me, nearly a hundred of them.

“Hey!”

Arlecio shouts to stop me, but I ignore him. Arlecio tries to put his hand on my shoulder, but Vigan knocks him down before Bydd or Gobemon-dono can move. He was told about me when he was named doorkeeper. The reaction of the other executives who I did not know were

also different. Some were surprised and others were baffled. They saw everyone who knew me kneel down at once and guessed who I was. They followed my example and hung their heads in unison.

“No way, Myourmiles, you are the leader?”

The room is quiet, and I can hear Don Gabbana’s stunned voice. The air-conditioning is good, but the voice echoes because the room is underground. Don Gabbana was in the back of the room, addressing a man I know well. Perhaps he was negotiating to have me killed as an example to an insolent new organization, the Four Nations Trade Federation.

“That’s right. The one you’ve been working so hard to persuade, hoping to inflict a horrible death, is the one of your three great leaders.”

Don Gabbana was answered not by me, but by a woman in a flamboyant and revealing dress. Glenda Atlee, the woman who plays the boss of the Three Drunk Sages on behalf of me and my friends. And her words confirmed what I had thought. However, somehow, even though it’s about me, I feel like it’s someone else’s affair.

“Geh, hey, whaaa—?!”

The cool-headed Don Gabbana is sitting up in shock. I never thought I’d be witnessing something so outrageous like this when I was a nobody back in my day.

“Glenda, thank you for your help. Thanks to you, the plan is on track. Our meeting was a great success yesterday.”

“Thank you very much for the compliment! In that case, I’d love to see the merit points—”

“I know. I’ll give you twice the amount I usually give you.”

“I’m glad to hear that. That’s my leader, he knows what he’s talking about!”

Glenda led me to the former altar. There were three chairs and I sat on one of them.





No one complains about me being the leader after seeing Glenda's reaction. That's how much everyone fears her. And now, right in front of me, Don Gabbana and Arlecio are hauled up and held down. I must decide how to deal with Don Gabbana, who had advised to kill the leader (me), and Arlecio, who has spoken rudely to me. The executives are unanimous in their desire to see them dead.

"Only death will redeem the disrespect to our leader."

"It's better not to kill him comfortably. By way of example, let's give them seven days of torment."

"Right. It would be fun to sacrifice them to the devil, and it would be fun to make a synthetic beast out of their corpses."

"The man himself was happy to talk about how to kill the chieftain. Now is the time. You should try everything he said in person!"

And so on and so forth, the brutal discussion continued. Don Gabbana has lost color and is breathing hard. A stain has formed on his trousers, but I'll pretend I didn't see it. Arlecio looks pale. He must have realized his fate and is calculating whether or not he should resist. But there are some powerful men in this room, from the underworld. I could have many of them killed in a heartbeat if I were alone, but many of the other leaders are the best in the world. I couldn't defeat them all, even if I fought them. Glenda would stand a better chance.

The heat in the room grows louder and louder as the executives grow more and more outspoken. Now I'm not sure what to do. I ponder while looking at the two who hang their heads in surrender. Honestly, these two are at fault, but they are not entirely guilty. Threatening an up-and-coming force is a perfectly natural thing for an underworlder to do. Disrespecting the boss of your organization is a problem, but that's because he didn't know my face. I was pissed off at the assault on Bydd, but it didn't matter when I looked at the results. And since Rimurusa knew about this incident, someone was supposed to be protecting us from anything that might happen. There are several of Souei-dono's men here as well. Therefore, I'm sure there is no danger in that regard. If that's the case, then disposing of Don Gabbana is a bit much.

"Be quiet!"

I silenced them all as I gathered my thoughts.

"I won't dispose of them. Gabbana didn't betray the organization. He just didn't know that I was the leader. If he betrays me in the future, that's another matter, but I'll let him off the hook."

I was a little pissed off at times, but that's bearable. That's how I decided. However, some people weren't happy about it.

"How naive! That's no way to represent the organization!"

Many agreed with those who shouted that. Some went so far as to say...

"Chieftain...you are an amateur, aren't you? You know, for an underworlder like us, face is the most important thing, right? If you don't take a swing at them now, no one will follow you."

Some of them even began to look down on me. I could have let them off the hook if they only wanted to complain about my decision. But this was no good.

"Whoever said that, step forward."

As I said this, a scowling young man stepped forward.

"I'm Yang of the 'Black Claws.' During our time together as mercenaries, we fought together, and I was a harsh man who was merciless towards the enemy. My personal strength is also quite impressive. I have a rank of A."

And before I knew it, Girard, who was standing next to me, told me. 'He was the leader of the Apostles of Verte.' I nodded at him and looked at Yang.

"I hear you're called Yang."

"Yeah."

"You think I'm an amateur?"

"Am I wrong? No one in our line of work gives mercy by doing something so half-assed."

"So, you can do it?"

"...Is it different?"

My God, Yang doesn't realize he's making me look bad, does he? No, he doesn't. He's just trying to build distrust of me here so that he can defeat me in the future. Those without power do not prosper in the dark. You must always assert your power, or you will be ostracized. But I don't want the Three Drunk Sages to be that kind of an organization. Well, apart from me, it's impossible to kick down Rimuru-sama and older sister out of office. So I must tell them here and now.

"Who's going to oppose me?"

"Huh?"

"I ask, who's going to oppose me? Yang, do you think you have a chance against me?"

"No, no..."

When I asked, Yang glanced at Glenda. It looks like it was Glenda who crushed the Black Claws, not the Apostles of Verte.

"You say it's all about saving face. So, Yang, aren't you the one who should be held accountable for the way you treated me?"

"Well, that is..."

"Glenda, about those merit points you mentioned earlier, I knew it was a no-go."

"Oh no, that—"

"Shut up! Shut up! Like Yang, I wonder if everyone also has no respect for their leader! You have no right to blame Gabbana!"

Don Gabbana and Arlecio look at me in surprise. The look on their faces made me think of one more thing. These two men were being used.

“Glenda, you have to teach them a lesson on purpose, don’t you? And guys, didn’t somebody smartly put you up to the challenge?”²

“Am I in the clear?”

“It’s natural. You’re lucky it was me, but if it was them, we’d have a big problem...”

“Don’t miss that point. I’ve already consulted about this matter, and it was Master El who insisted that we go ahead with the matter without your knowledge.”

“Is that so ...”

Her antics never cease to amaze me. Well, surely, thanks to that, things seem to have worked out. But that’s beside the point.

“Yang. If someone wants to thrash me for letting Gabbana off the hook, I would live to meet them. So would everyone else. I’m not saying not to go for the downfall, but be prepared. It may succeed because I’m weak...but if I that happens, the Three Drunk Sages will disappear.”

I clearly warned him. Yang is shivering when he hears it. I think he realizes that I’m not exaggerating or bluffing.

“So, are the two remaining leaders of the Three Drunk Sages by any chance...”

“You don’t need to know.”

“Really. If you know too much, they’ll erase you, so I wonder why you would want to know?”

Girard and Glenda answered, and the executives fell silent in a cold sweat. I look at them and give them one last reminder.

“Now, Gabbana and the others have no objection to my decision. Do you have a problem with it?”

“ “Yes sir!!” ”

They all prostrated themselves to show respect for my decision.

“Yang, rejoice. I’ll let you off the hook for once. But there will not be a second time.”

“Of course! Thank you. I will work as hard as I can to repay you for this favor!”

“Well, that’s good to know.”

With that, I am satisfied. And now that I have complete control of the Three Drunk Sages, I’ve decided to take this opportunity to enact a fundamental discipline.

One: Never betray your fellow man.

Two: Have the heart to forgive the failure of others.

Three: Do not kick others down and make them unhappy.

Those three things are the basics, aren’t they? It is a matter of course not to betray your fellow man, and anyone who breaks this rule is punishable by death. It is difficult to forgive others’ failures, but the Three Drunk Sages will be the final resting place for those who fail. There will be a few excellent people, so I have told my subordinates to cover for their mistakes. This kind of thing can only get better if we raise awareness from above. Thus, I took this opportunity with all the executives in attendance to make sure it was done right. The last rule

²Honestly, I didn’t really understand this part, so I didn’t change anything.

of not kicking someone down and making them unhappy is the most important one.

“The Three Drunk Sages will bring together the armed forces of the underworld, and if you pay attention to this, the merchants out in the open will have no chance to compete. However, from now on, such evil deeds will be banned altogether.”

From now on, they must realize that their influence is different from what they have been doing up until now, and aim to contribute to society in a fairer and more straightforward manner. Rather than a lawless and violent group, we must become ‘chivalrous guests’ who help the weak and defeat the tyrants. It is not only my wish, but Rimuru-sama’s as well. But that doesn’t mean we should lose our pride. If the top rots, those below cannot resist. This is also true for me and I’ll keep it in mind.

“Be mindful that this is what the Three Drunk Sages are called upon to do, though it will be difficult to change your way of life. Let the young ones slowly learn that there is more than one way to live.”

As I concluded, the executives looked puzzled and thought about it. They’ve grown accustomed to doing the dirty work. It’s not going to change their minds anytime soon. But with the help of me, or rather Rimuru-sama, it’s not impossible. I have been able to silence their opposition with force, but since we are dealing with people who believe that force is justice, this is the right way to go. I hoped that this will give an impetus to the people to change.



The Gabbana family was disbanded, and its members were transferred to other organizations. Gabbana is now under my direct control and will work under a new name, at Blumund Headquarters. He’s a man who is good with money and accounts. It’s a waste to just leave him there. He was a pain in the ass, but I put him in charge of train operations. Well, it was Rimuru-sama that was the root of all evil. He just comes up with stuff, and then makes me do all the work. But, well, that’s okay. It’s my job, and I don’t deny that it’s a very attractive plan. But I would also like to remind him that I have only one body. And unlike Rimuru-sama, I am a very ordinary person and need a good night’s sleep. It’s hard to refuse when he says, ‘Please, Myourmiles-kun!’ but the reason I forgo the project is for my health.

But that excuse wouldn’t work either, especially now that I’ve started earning this much money. It was at this time that I was lucky to have Gabbana working for me. Gabbana said, ‘I’m thankful, but I’ve got a lot of work to do! I didn’t expect it to be this hard!’ He complains every day, however I was also ridiculed by Rimuru-sama for that job, so if he has a grudge, he should take it to him. But I felt a little guilty about it, so I thought I’d give him better pay. Arlecio was left in Gobemon-dono’s care.

Because of the history with Bydd, Gobemon-dono wanted to straighten things out with a

match. Arlecio didn't have the right to refuse, but the match was agreed on the condition that if he won, he would be picked as an executive. The result was, of course, a landslide victory for Gobemon-dono.

"Now you understand. There's always someone better than you. Even I'm at the bottom of the heap back home. Strength is not something that's openly displayed, but rather something locked inside. It must be exercised correctly to protect what is absolutely essential. That's what I was taught. It's not too late for you to take another good look at yourself."

Arlecio must have been awakened by what he said to me. He volunteered to become Gobemon-dono's younger brother. Thus, Gabbana and his friends were dealt with amicably, but the official announcement was different.

The Three Drunk Sages must be used to mark the spectacular debut of the Four Nations Trade Federation. At the same time, we must find a way to prevent the Three Drunk Sages from being taken for a fool. That's why we crushed the mansion we had purchased for the Ingracia branch of the Four Nations Trade Federation to smithereens. I had the workers evacuated, so they would be safe, but this is sure to have a huge impact on the public.

The reporters under Diablo-dono wrote a really good article about it. And so, I was featured in the article as well as the horror of the Three Drunk Sages, but I was not deterred by it. I'm the Finance Minister of the Monster Country, and that explains why I do not succumb to unwarranted violence. The breakup of the Gabbana family was also a big story, and I was able to show that the Four Nations Trade Federation is a much bigger organization than people thought. In addition, rumors were spread that the Three Drunk Sages and the Four Nations Trade Federation were splitting up. This was accepted by the public, and the dispute was settled safely.

The Four Nations Trade Federation is now up and running without a hitch and when I saw the profits from each branch, I was at a loss for words. If I were to speak frankly, I could make dozens of gold coins in an hour, and more than my annual income in a day. The annual income in this case is equivalent to my salary as a minister in the Monster Country...so in the eyes of the average person. I'm a man who makes more money per hour than they do in a whole year. By the way, Benimaru-dono and Souei-dono are also paid by Three Drunk Sages. It's about fifty gold coins a month. I'm sure Souei-dono's subordinates in the Three Drunk Sages should be paid a great deal more than that, including necessary expenses.

Well, it's hard to show the men under my command that the executives are poor. Glenda and Girard, playing the boss, were getting paid handsomely. We also get a fine, but Rimuru-sama, older sister, and I each get two percent of all the profits. The money is paid yearly, and I've heard that we've accumulated an astonishing amount so far. I consider myself a fortunate man, but this is too unrealistic to the point of being scary. However, this isn't the end of my ambitions. This is not the time to dream big and be content with small successes.

My name is Myourmiles. A man whose fate was changed when he met Rimuru-sama. I will do my best to see how far I can go in this life so that I will not regret it. My challenge will not end until I am at the brink of my final death.

That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime

**Chapter
2**

**Distant
Memories**

Chapter 2

Distant Memories

Velgrynd took her first leap into the strange space between unknown worlds. There, she found herself unbounded by time and confronted her inner self. By doing so, she made the Ultimate Skill ‘Divine Flame King Cthuga’ completely her own. The Ultimate Skill ‘Divine Flame King Cthuga’ had the power to track Rudra’s soul. Strictly speaking, the effect was to discover an entity once specified. Velgrynd can now find pieces of her beloved Rudra’s soul, no matter how remote or far away they are, even beyond time and space.

All she has to do now is ‘jump’ for it. It is a perfect combination of Spacetime Manipulation and Dimension Leap, a technique that is only possible with the Ultimate Skill’s ever-growing power. However, it was impossible to jump to a specific time and place because the target coordinates could not be determined. In other words, the ‘Spacetime Leap’ is only possible when there is a destination.

However, this does not apply if the time and space are the same. Even ‘Instantaneous Movement’ was possible because it could travel over any distance without regard to time. That is why Velgrynd relied on her own authority to pursue Rudra.

First, she found herself on a starry continent where civilization was still in its infancy. A barbarian chief with bronze skin. The young, blond-haired youth was the one who had a fragment of Rudra’s soul in him. The young men were hunters and had eventually settled in the Great River Valley. Velgrynd helped them without her own weight. She brought rain and conquered the great rivers and made the land fertile. It was around this time that she began to move away from hunting and pursued agriculture. Their food situation improved greatly and the number of mouths they could feed increased. Soon the village became one that was feared by the surrounding villages. It makes sense for the rich to be targeted.

So Velgrynd prepared her next move. She gave them a high-temperature furnace hot enough to withstand the melting point of iron, which could be called out of place in that era. This allowed the people to skip bronze ware from stone tools, and take possession of iron tools instead. It was decided that the surrounding villages would be swallowed and combined together, and the

land eventually developed into a kingdom. The throne was passed on to sons and grandchildren. Velgrynd stopped helping the kingdom and simply stuck with what she loved. No matter how much they begged her, she did not exercise her authority. Because that's what her beloved wanted.

"I am indebted to you more than I can ever repay. But I don't want more. It will be too much power for those fools when I retire as king."

"Yeah, okay. Rudra."

Velgrynd had no reason to help the king's sons and grandsons, since they lacked a trace of soul. She could help on a whim, but as the king's desire was for his children to be independent, Velgrynd would respect that will.

"Tsk, not 'Rudra' again. My name is—tch, if I have other lovers, is it any wonder if I'm not taken seriously?"

"Hmmm. Jealous? You're so cute."

"Shut up. I'm going to kill you alive in front of such a superb woman."

True to his word, the man who rose from barbarian chief to the first king of the Kingdom of Arcia, the founder of the Great River Civilization, treated her like she was his goddess, but he never embraced Velgrynd in his arms. Velgrynd was fine with that. Her role is to watch over. Loved ones beget children and the bloodline is inherited. And so she waits for another piece of Rudra's soul to dwell in their offspring.

That was Velgrynd should be. A time of growth and prosperity. The good times pass quickly. The young man had grown old and was now an old man waiting for his death.

"I was happy. Goddess. You—you called me master, but did I live up to it?"

"Yes, enough. I was happy, you know."

"Well, I'm relieved to hear that. Bless you."

Those were the last words of a great king. With a muffled cry, he gave his soul to Velgrynd. In this way, Velgrynd got the 'soul' she desired. But it was only a fragment of it. The journey has just begun, and Velgrynd leaps toward her next destination. The Kingdom eventually conquered the surrounding nations and became an empire. Those who remained, left it for posterity in the form of biographies.

And so, a myth was born. The young man's blood runs through the veins of the Holy Arcia Empire, where Velgrynd has long been revered as the Goddess of Creation, who controls the flames.



Velgrynd had a series of encounters and goodbyes. Through it all, Velgrynd came to understand that there is no single world that Veldanava has created. He created many worlds. There was

one world, and there were no parallel worlds. But there were other worlds.

There were ‘otherworlders,’ so she was aware of that fact, but Velgrynd had never imagined that there were so many different worlds. They were governed by completely different laws, and there was no causality. It was a material world within a great spiritual world of many different civilizations. From the familiar world where swords and magic are the norm, to the world where magic is non-existent and cannot be used. There was also a rare world where scientific civilization had developed and humankind had become mechanized. There were weak worlds that could be blown away by a True Dragon if it unleashed all of its strength, and there were desolate worlds where angels and demons comparable to awakened Demon Lords were in constant conflict.

Velgrynd had traveled through all those worlds. But all of it was not of her own intention, but by what she was guided to. There were different levels of civilization, and Velgrynd had no way of guessing which dimension or timeline she was in. Also, because parallel universes do not overlap, it is impossible for the same entity to overlap on the same timeline. In other words, just because you went there once does not mean you can go to the same place. If the Velgrynd exists in the same dimension at the same time, the exact space-time coordinates can be recognized. However, as there is already a Velgrynd at that time, ‘Spacetime Leap’ cannot be used to jump there, even with the Ultimate Skill ‘Divine Flame King Cthuga.’

So Velgrynd remembered all worlds, all of Rudra. The fleet commander of the interstellar world. The minister of a small country in the world of swords and magic. The rare scammer in the world without magic. The poor scientist in the civilized world. Velgrynd is often called upon at moments of crisis when one who possesses a fragment of Rudra’s ‘soul’ is in danger. It is only when he is on the verge of death that his soul shines forth.

Some people died as children because they couldn’t get help in time. It was a very sad event, but Velgrynd is convinced that it was fate. And there was no need to mourn, because then the soul shards would gather quickly. But she didn’t take it upon herself to hasten the time. It was the Velgrynd’s pleasure to watch over Rudras of various personalities.

She realized early on that bloodlines were meaningless. Even physical characteristics meant nothing, some had dark hair, some had red hair. But all of them were ‘Rudra’ to Velgrynd. And it would continue to be that way for many stars. The pieces of soul she had gathered were growing in size and regaining their beautiful form. Just by intuition, Velgrynd was convinced that there were only a few pieces of soul left. The next one or one after that would be the last. And so, she did as she was called, and jumped into the world.



It was called the Empire. In the Emperor's room, Velgrynd appears from time and space. She is dressed in a silk robe. It's a deep blue color that suits her very well. Velgrynd was noticed by the old emperor, the owner of the room.

“—Who are you?”

The Emperor, frail with age and infirmity, is lying in his large, luxurious bed. A suspicious woman had suddenly appeared in the room, so it would only be natural to be surprised. The emperor's courage was considerable, as he only spoke out. Velgrynd didn't care.

“Oh? You're an old man this time. It's been a long time ago. You remind me of the barbarian king by the looks of it.”



To Velgrynd, ‘old age’ is irrelevant. It’s just a form of the human condition. So she reached out and brought her hand affectionately to the old man’s cheek and whispered to him.

“Velgrynd. That’s my name. And you are?”

“Have you no fear of me? And are you a god or goddess of power?”

Suddenly, a sword slashed at Velgrynd’s throat, but it was interrupted by a white-fish-like finger which held out without looking back. The sword strike of brutality that slashes the evil spirit was received without even a drop of blood flowing. Of course, it was not done by the Emperor, but by one who stood by as a guardian.

His name was Araki Gensei.³ He is the guardian and sword bearer of the kingdom who wards off evil spirits. He is the greatest swordsman of the present generation and is the current head of the Oboro Shinmei Style.⁴ Although he was only in his early 30s, he was appointed as the ‘guardian of the emperor’ because of his strength. Not even Gensei’s sword could hurt Velgrynd. That was only natural, but from Gensei’s point of view, it was an anomaly that was beyond comprehension.

“Who would have thought that my sword would fail me?—You are in charge of protecting His Majesty!”

“Got it!”

The one called Minamoto by Gensei was a young man, still in his early twenties. Minamoto Sanrou. Like Gensei, had completely disappeared and was on the Emperor’s guard. Even among Gensei’s disciples, he was the third most skilled master.

“Oh, you don’t have to be so careful. I know you guys must be great, but it’s just cute from my point of view.”

“Let me tell you. I may not be able to match you, but I can at least buy some time.”

“That’s true. It would be hard to tell me to trust you. Well, okay, but I hope you won’t take that person out.”

Velgrynd shrugged her shoulders. Even if she wasn’t trusted, the burden on the Emperor was unacceptable. Velgrynd saw that the Emperor’s life was running out. It would be a shame to put out its last fires for her own sake. She wanted to let him live out his last hours in peace. It was Minamoto who took the blame. Just Velgrynd’s stare was enough to make him stiffen his whole body. Just feeling the pressure of her gaze was enough to make him realize the vast difference in their abilities. No, it’s not even that level.

The monsters and demons they’ve dealt with are so obscure that they almost seemed cute in comparison. As soon as his master Gensei’s sword failed to get through, he knew that the Velgrynd was trouble. He had no choice but to realize that even that was still a naive perception.

I’m not going to be able to do my job, Minamoto thought ruefully. So, at the very least, he summoned up all the courage he could muster and glared at Velgrynd.

“Are you the demon’s head, Gai?⁵ Did you get tired of the skirmishes and have come to us

³Translation kept coming out as “Arcane Wood,” but the hiragana reads as “Araki Gensei”

⁴Kanji/hiragana seems to read as “Oboro Shinmei-ryu” so “Oboro Shinmei Style”

⁵This was confusing, but it looks like ‘妖魔の首’ means the ‘demon’s head,’ and 魁 means ‘Gai?’ Not sure, so

yourself?”

He was just talking in a cold sweat. It’s a statement meant to expose her, but Velgrynd sees through it and replies without a care in the world.

“A demon? So, there are demons in this world too. They really spring up everywhere, don’t they?”

“Oh, so you have nothing to do with demons?”

“No, it’s not related. In the first place, I’m not sure if the demon you’re talking about is the same ones I know.”

Velgrynd can parse and speak any language from any world with fluency. It is a special skill that does not rely on authority because it can read the ‘thoughts’ that fly around in the world. However, some similar concepts can be confused, and care must be taken not to make a mistake. In this case, the word ‘demon’ is important. What Velgrynd knows is that it is a phantom race with the demon king Feldway at the top. He was an Aggressor tribe in every dimension and had many collisions with the Velgrynd throughout her long journey. Velgrynd was disgusted that he was there this time as well, but at the same time, she also considered the possibility that he might be different.

“A demon is a demon. I myself do not know much about them.”

The answer to Velgrynd’s question came not from Minamoto, but from the Emperor himself. Gensei immediately changed his mind when he saw that Minamoto was unable to move. While Minamoto was attracting his attention, Gensei tried to get the Emperor to flee. Gensei and his team’s trust in each other was at an all-time high as they changed roles at a moment’s notice. Although there was no chance of success, the plan to let the Empeeroor escape was worth a try. But the Emperor himself had stopped it.

“Your Majesty!?”

“It’s all right. Why do I get a familiar feeling from this person? And where in the world are we going to escape to when we’re already in the safest place in the heavily fortified Imperial City? This person evaded all security measures to get to this place. I don’t think we’d be able to escape.”

It was just as the Emperor had said. The Empire, the country of the Grand Duke, was now at war with a formidable enemy. That’s why they were on high alert, and any attempt to sneak through it would be tantamount to defeat. Besides, the Emperor couldn’t bring himself to be wary of Velgrynd. As he said, he felt a nostalgic feeling, which was somewhat comforting. So the Emperor decided to believe in Velgrynd. He decided to tell her what was going on, and if it was possible, he wanted her to become his ally.

sorry.



The current location is still the Emperor's quarters. He had ordered the maid to prepare tea and snacks for us.

"Let me introduce myself first. My name is Velgrynd, as I said before."

"I am Araki Gensei. I am the guardian of the kingdom and the protector of His Majesty."

"I am the third-ranked member of the Imperial Guard, Minamoto Saburo. I have been appointed as a captain of the Imperial Guard Swordsmen."

"Yeah, nice to meet you. And Rudra?"

Velgrynd was not interested in those two. She brushed off the greetings from them and turned her attention back to her beloved.

"At my age, I never thought I'd be stared at by such a beautiful woman. I don't feel bad about it, but I can't help but feel sorry for my younger self."

"Well, Rudra also flatters me. It's a rare experience."

"Huh, it's not flattery, but oh well. I have been known as Sakura Akira.⁶ I thought it was reasonably well known, but I guess I just liked it."

It was a posthumous name, widely known as the wise emperor, but it was a taboo. It is the true name of the emperor and should not be casually spoken. Even those closest to him would not call him by that name. But it was a name that everyone in the land knew with respect. But to the Velgrynd, he was Rudra. She had no intention of calling him that from the start, let alone not calling him 'Sakura.'

"Ufufu, well, it's no wonder I don't know you. Because I came into this world the moment I first met you. The 'you' who I know is named Rudra, so that's what I'm going to keep calling you."

To the others, she seemed rude to him. But it was officially allowed. The Emperor laughed it off.

"Allowed."

"Your Majesty?!"

"It doesn't matter. If it will buy the goddess' pleasure, it's a small price to pay. However, I can't allow her to stand next to me in public."

"Oh, why is that?"

"I, too, have my position. It would only cause my subjects unnecessary anxiety if there was someone calling me by a name they don't know."

If Velgrynd showed her power to everyone, it would be disruptive. The Emperor wanted

⁶The Japanese name in Kanji was 桜明 which can translate as Sakura Akira. The hiragana next to the Kanji was おうはる which basically sounds like Ou Haru. Sometimes I've seen the name translated as Ou Akira, but I think using the Kanji Sakura Akira works okay for now until a Japanese speaker can actually translate.

to keep things quiet and out of sight. Velgrynd understands this and stops asking for more. She would have listened quietly if Rudra had asked her, so she agreed for now. For now, it was more important to listen to the situation.

“Then let’s think about what we would do if we had to go out in public. So, can you explain to me what the situation is now?”

Velgrynd is no dead weight. If Rudra is in trouble, she’ll do her best to help. The two guards got a headache from such a transcendental attitude.

That Velgrynd is an unfathomable competitor. His Majesty was right. She may be a kind of god or goddess. Perhaps it’s better to ask for cooperation rather than to humiliate.

Gensei thought. Minamoto, on the other hand, is more complicated.

It’s not an attitude towards His Majesty, but why? It just seems natural, doesn’t it? This disqualifies me from being a bodyguard, but if the Emperor allows it, it’s not my place to speak. But I don’t know how I would explain it to His Highness or Her Highness.

More specifically, he was thinking about the problems that would arise. As an emperor, he can’t be blamed for one or two mistresses and vice versa. The birth of a child would also involve the issue of hereditary succession, so she must be a woman of strong family background. It was also necessary to make the position clear; there was an insurmountable difference in status between the empress and the concubine. In this case, the Velgrynd must be convinced to be a member of the household.

Is she really the kind of woman who can live with that? If she insists on being the empress, there’s nothing we can do...

Minamoto is the kind of person who worries about such things, but his real job is to protect the Imperial Palace. No, he was not overly concerned, as any trouble the Velgrynd might have with the Empress or her entourage would be a disaster. There was a big difference in the psychological burden between Gensei, who only had to protect the Emperor, and Minamoto, who had to look out for the safety of the entire palace. Nevertheless, right now, Minamoto thought it was time to answer Velgrynd’s question.

“I’ll explain that myself. The environment surrounding our country, the Empire, is very tense. One of the biggest enemies we have seen in the past...”

The Imperial State means the state ruled by Emperor, and is different in meaning from the Empire, which is the state of the Great Conquest. Unlike the name of the present, it was a title passed down from generation to generation in the eastern island nations. The emperor and his guardians protected their subjects from demons. But apart from that, the world was in turmoil.

In the east, the Empire. In the south, the United States of Azalea. In the north, the Great Roziam Dynasty. In the west, the Holy Arcia Empire. In the center, the Middle Kingdom of China was working together with a Japanese country.⁷ In each region, they emerged as the standard-bearers of the five major powers. Decades ago, they competed for supremacy, but

⁷Confusing to understand, but I think a portion of the raws said “Sino-japanese” referring to Chinese/Japanese working together.

eventually they came to an equilibrium. While looking with an eye on the decline of the other forces, the economic relationship had been maturing for some time. When this happened, conflict no longer surfaced, and peace seemed to have returned to the world.

However, dissatisfaction amongst the major powers has not disappeared. If there are those who make profit, then there will be those who will lose, and dissatisfaction will accumulate. And so, four years ago, it exploded.

The catalyst was a great drought in the middle of China. Water shortages led to famine, and epidemics were rampant. Humanity was understandably distressed, but the Chinese government, in order to protect its own position, turned its discontent to the outside world. And this is what the whole world is caught up in.

The Chinese first turned their attention to the South, which was as rich in grain fields as their own. The National People's Congress unanimously voted to invade the United States of Azalea. This was the signal for the start of the war. And in the blink of an eye, warfare spread throughout the world. Seeing the Chinese move their armies, the North moved next. The Great Roziam Dynasty began its invasion of China. The aim was clear: to secure a rich granary and a perennial port. The country was suffering from the natural disaster of drought, but that would subside in a few years. Under such a decision, the Great Roziam Dynasty resurrected its hegemony.

The Chinese would not allow it. It was decided to gather its remaining forces to counter-attack and plunge the country into full-scale war. The empire was caught in the middle of this. Their dependence on the Chinese for food imports compelled them to send their troops to China in the name of humanitarian aid. It was an effort to bring this war to a quick conclusion, but the Great Roziam Dynasty was furious. Relations with the United States of Azalea were also deteriorating. Faced with a choice between Azalea and China, the Empire has chosen to ally itself with China, its lifeline. Thus, the Empire is plunged into war with the United States of Azalea. The Holy Arcia Empire did not budge at first, but that peace did not last for a year. This time a famine broke out in their own country, and they became unable to provide aid.

Bad things continued to happen. There was an accident at the oil storage facility. As a result, three years' worth of fuel was burned down. From the trail left at the site, the culprit was determined to be an agent of the Great Roziam Dynasty. The public sentiment in the Holy Arcia Empire was turning toward the anti-Great Roziamism. With that, the Holy Arcia Empire was able to take advantage of the momentum and take military action.

There were those who questioned this course of events. Mystery Monk Pulcinella is a member of the Holy Spirit Sect, one of the three major religions of Buddhism, Holy Spiritism, and Free Spirit⁸. He said he sensed someone's malice and left the oracle. After hearing these words, the Holy Churches around the world began to investigate and found a clue to the existence of the demon. But it was already too late.

“You've had your desires stimulated and anger inflamed for the right reasons.”

⁸Liberalism or Freedom are also other possible translations

“It’s a shame, but you’re right. On second thought, this was obviously a strange turn of events. But the people’s anger, once kindled, was not going to go away easily.”

“I don’t need to mention the Holy Church, but the leaders of the nations also sensed the anomaly less than a year after the war began. And yet, there were extremists in the military as well. Even those people took advantage of the enemy’s machinations and began to be active, and by the time they found themselves in a position where they realized it, there was no way to stop it.”

To Minamoto’s explanation, Gensei added, “The same is true in other countries.”

The same was true in each country, and now it is out of line with the upper management. Those units that have been dispatched are now close to being out of control. And just a few days ago, across the sea, a great naval battle was fought between the U.S. fleet and the Imperial Navy, the pride of the Empire. The result was defeat. According to preliminary research, they were evenly matched in strength, but by now, the gap between them was nearly three times greater.

“The reason for this is the betrayal of the Chinese fleet. And the trouble is, it had nothing to do with the home country’s intentions.”

Since the Chinese leadership didn’t know about it, there was no way for even our intelligence officers to know about it. By the time they found out, it was too late, and they had already caused a painful loss. But the defeat was not in vain.

“This information was brought to you by my apprentice, who risked his life for it. It was given to me by a man named Kondou who launched a suicide attack against the enemy fleet and dispersed with great fanfare before his death. The enemy commanders had been taken over by a demon.”

Gensei said that David Reagan, commander of the United States Grand South Sea Fleet, and Li Jinlong, commander of the U.S. Eastern Sea Fleet, had played Kondou with their unorthodox powers. Kondou realized that he was beyond his power and tried to gather information until the end. And then he lost contact with them. Gensei seriously said that he might have made his life ephemeral.

Hearing that, Velgrynd understands. The man in Gensei’s story is Lieutenant Kondou, whom Velgrynd knows well. That Kondou was fascinated by Rudra because he felt the same way about Emperor. Kondou instinctively knew that Rudra and Akira Sakura’s ‘soul’ were one and the same. And so, for the first time, Velgrynd felt a closeness to Kondou. Finally, she could believe that his loyalty had been genuine. And so, this is not only Rudra’s case, but also Kondou’s regrets.

I remember now that Kondou seemed to regret not being able to defend his country. That’s why he worked for Rudra, no matter what he had to do, to make sure he never went through that again.

After all this time, Velgrynd wonders if there is anything that she can do for Kondou. There is only one answer. There is only one way to get rid of Kondou’s regrets. With that in mind, Velgrynd switches her mind to listen more intently. Unknowingly, Minamoto continues to explain. The existence of an alien entity that has the ability to possess and control people was quickly

communicated to the world leaders. However, the leaders who were not on the scene had no way of knowing who was actually being controlled.

It was suspicious of those who deviated from the norm, but it was also difficult to recall the generals who were on the ground operations. There was even the possibility of going public with the truth, but that would have definitely caused a panic. There would be people who would wonder if their superiors were demons, and if that happened, even the chain of command could be destroyed. It could also lead to a domestic witch hunt. That must be stopped, so a secret investigation had been conducted. As a result, they learned that unlike most monsters, these creatures were organized. Moreover, they were active behind the scenes all over the world, with a clear intention to invade.

“Besides, they are strong. In our kingdom, we use a monster class ranking (Gai class)⁹ to describe the strength of monsters, but even the weakest of them are equal to the top monsters. They are so formidable that even the most advanced swordsmen and martial artists can’t stand up to them.”

“The six levels of the Gai class are, from the top to the bottom are: God/Buddha, Mythical/Dragon monsters, Heavenly monsters, Advanced monsters, Intermediate demons, and Lower monsters.¹⁰ The middle and lower levels are called the Chimimoryō¹¹ (Malevolent Spirits of Mountains and Rivers). The Advanced monsters to the Heavenly monsters, just before the Mythical/Dragon monsters, were called Evil Demon Rakshasa.¹²”

Even the weakest of the monsters that had appeared this time were of Heavenly Monster class. Kondou and his men had revealed their true identity when they attacked the enemy fleet. They were defeated by the ringleader when they passed on this information.

“Kondou-san believed that David and Li Jinlong’s ‘Gai-class’ were higher than the Mythical/Dragon class. I’m sure he was right in his assessment.”

“Why?”

“That’s because Kondou-san is one of the strongest men here in Hinomoto.”

Even at the time of the suicide attack, Kondou’s skill level was top-notch. His mastery of the Kifuo-ryu style (spirit fighting style), the secret of Oboro Shinmei-ryu, enabled him to attain a high level of fighting ability at the Mythical/Dragon level. Still, the reason why he was defeated was because there were two enemies.

“Yes, that man was indeed a good one.”

“—What?

“Huh?”

“Do you know Tatsuya?”

⁹Hiragana says 怪 (かい) which is pronounced as ‘Gai.’

¹⁰The translation for this was super confusing for me with MTL. I used the term “monster” instead of demon because I don’t think they are just talking about the demon race (like Diablo and the primordials), but either one can be considered the correct term for Youkai. Also, the Mythical/Dragon class can also be translated as demon dragon or ogre or mythical depending on the translation. Just take it all with a grain of salt.

¹¹The term 魁魅魍魎 translated to Chimimoryo, or Malevolent/Deceptive Spirits of Mountains and Rivers

¹²The term 惡鬼羅刹 also translated as “Evil-doers” “Devil’s Ramble” “Evil Demon Rama” “Akukirasetsu,” etc.

“Yes, Rudra. Kondou served you in the world I came from, too.”

“For me? Well, Rudra, or whoeve it is, has the same soul as I do.”

“That’s right. And Kondou fought and died proudly for you over there, too.”

“...”

The Emperor is speechless and dumbfounded. He was deeply disappointed in the death of a man who had been his loyal servant.

“Oh no, Kondou-san...”

Minamoto was incredulous as he muttered. Kondou was such an outstanding swordsman, and he wondered if he could have been the trump card against the demons had he still been alive. Now that he was confronted with the fact that he was dead, he didn’t know what to do.

“I was hoping that Kondou was still alive, but it’s a shame.”

Master Gensei remained calm as he said this, but inwardly he struggled to hide the sadness that had arisen from the small amount of hope he had lost.

It is out of the question to be distracted as someone in a responsible position. I have to calm myself down, he thought to himself.

Everyone believed Velgrynd. It was unusual, but strangely enough, they felt her words were true. Velgrynd let everyone hear the story of Kondou’s end. At the same time, she tried to figure out who the enemy was, given Kondou’s strength.

The only thing that matters is that Kondou could be defeated before he crossed over into the world. I think the word ‘demon’ refers to the phantom race, but if that’s the case then my enemy—no. I can’t be too sure. I don’t have any standards to conclude anything, so I guess I’ll just have to wait and see for now.

Velgrynd was a confident being, a True Dragon at her best, but her loss to Rimuru had made her cautious. Although she didn’t think it was the enemy, she would reserve her judgment until she had more information. In fact, her guess at this point was both right and wrong. The concentration of magic is so low in this world that there is no such thing as a remarkably strong monster. It was as if they had arrived from the other world and were so fierce that they were known as gods.

Even such individuals were no match for the violence of numbers, and through the cooperation of swordsmen and sorcerers, the numbers were reduced to an almost unseen level now. That’s why there was no magic element pooling occurring. Therefore, it was difficult for powerful monsters to occur naturally. Unlike Veldora, the current Velgrynd completes her own mana circulation. It does not need to be replenished from the atmosphere and does not leave her body.

This is a skill I learned when I crossed various worlds, that’s why I was unaware the concentration of monsters and magic in this world.

In the first place, crossing over worlds would normally be impossible. Even through the ‘Underworld Gate,’ you are limited by the size of the gate. A person like Velgrynd, who can use ‘Spacetime Leap’ without any restrictions, is outside the laws of the world. Thus, compared to Velgrynd’s magic-filled homeland, the standard of strength in this world was far inferior. That would soon be revealed.



With the help of the Emperor, Velgrynd was able to get a general idea of the situation. This world cannot be brought back to life and will soon fall into the hands of the invaders. The leaders of each country are aware of this fact, but they have allowed the military, which embodies the will of the people, to run amok to the point where there is no longer anything that they can do about it.

“So, what’s going on with your enemy’s movements?”

The enemy coalition fleet had defeated the Imperial Navy, of which Kondou belonged, but its subsequent movements are unknown. There were supposedly some remaining Imperial ships, but they had completely lost contact with them.

“Originally, they surrendered when their defeat was confirmed. That information should have reached the home country as well, but that is not the case.”

“As for our own judgment, we are guessing that they were captured by the demon. It is possible that the enemy is not bound by the rules of humanity and therefore did not allow them to surrender, but...”

“I’m also curious about Kondou’s words. Based on the expression that he was taken over, I wonder if the demons have a propensity to possess people. If so, the survivors are doomed.”

Someone was assigned to bring back information. And yet we haven’t heard from them. That explains the situation if they were all possessed by demons.

“There’s nowhere to run, on the Great South Sea. Each country has approached their fleets, but they haven’t responded. There’s no reason to lie here, so I think it’s safe to assume that our forces have been taken.”

It’s one of the possibilities, but if that’s true, the situation was bad. Even mankind’s greatest swordsman is no match for the enemy leader. Moreover, elite soldiers could be sacrificed to the enemy monsters. Moreover, the army won’t be able to intercept them. There was nothing they could do. That’s why Gensei and his team had decided to focus all their efforts on the defense of the Imperial Capital.

“It’s only a matter of buying time. You understand that, don’t you?”

“Of course. There’s only one thing we can do now. I’ve sent people we trust to find out what the enemy is doing. And then we will gather the world’s best forces to defeat the ringleader.”

“I know it’s a low success rate strategy, but it’s the only way to go... If only Kondou-san could have defeated one of them, we would have been able to defeat them! Because there were two Mythical/Dragon-class players, they wouldn’t even allow him to escape. So, if Master Araki, myself, plus Amari¹³ and all the other heroes from other countries teamed up, we might

¹³Text had あまり Ama – Ri so I just went with Amari.

even be able to defeat the demon leader!"

The man named Amari Masahiko¹⁴ was the brother of Minamoto, who was the only one to compete with Kondou. Moreover, this man had mastered not only swordsmanship but also the art of law. He excelled in espionage and still works in secret missions. Moreover, there was another strongman hidden here in Hinomoto. Although Emperor Akira never talks about it, there were other 'Emperor Guardians' besides Gensei.

In addition, there are also famous heroes in each country. Not only those who had infiltrated the surface of society, there were also those who were in the 'Gai class' and even higher than the Mythical/Dragon class in the underworld. The famous ones are the aforementioned Mystery Monk Pulcinella of the north, and Fist Saint Xianhua of China. Just from the stories passed down in the Empire's own people, they know that these two men are extremely powerful.

To confront this global threat, these heroes must work together. If they can't do so, they will be destroyed. But that was also a pipe dream, as Akira was keenly aware. And that wasn't the only problem.

"The problem is that there are more than just two ringleaders of the enemy. And, as much as I hate to think about it..."

"You feel like there will be trouble if you go further, do you?"

"Exactly."

To Velgrynd's point, Gensei nodded bitterly. In order to defeat the monster of the Mythical/Dragon class, he wanted to double the number of warriors of the same class or higher. But with the size of the enemy unknown, it was impossible for the heroes of the world to assemble together. The Empire, too, must protect its own dignitaries as the first priority.

The problems kept piling up. It would be best if they could lure the monsters of the mythical/dragon class individually. Even if that was not possible, they still have to fight only the number of monsters they can win against. If they were outnumbered, then they would be defeated. However, this is when things changed. Gensei was puzzled, but Velgrynd helped him.

"Hmm, you've got problems. Okay. I'll help you, so show me what you've got."

"What? What do you mean by that?"

"If you don't know your enemy, you can't make a plan. In order to do that, I need to know how strong these demons are."

"What are you talking about?"

"It's simple. You said it yourself Gensei, if you are Kondou's master, then you must be more than equal in strength, right? I'm new to this world, so I don't know what the standard of strength is. As such, you're going to have to..."

"I see, I understand. Kondou and I are both better at this level of skill. I have profound secrets that I have yet to show you, and I have supreme secrets that should only be told to the head family. However, that man's conviction was admirable. His spirit was fierce and his determination to win was extraordinary. You must leave it to chance if you are serious about

¹⁴Text said 天(あま)理(り)正(まさ)彦(ひこ). So Ama-Ri-Masa-Hiko? I could be wrong though because I'm not fluent in Japanese.

this.”

In short, it’s an even match. A little difference is an error for Velgrynd. It was good enough for the standard though, so she decided to try it out.



The location has changed… It’s the training grounds. Gensei excused Minamoto from the room because he couldn’t show his supreme inner secrets to him, so no one but the Emperor is here to witness the event.

Velgrynd remains poised and stares blankly at Gensei. Gensei shows slight hesitation, his favorite sword in hand. The silken robe doesn’t impede her movements, but it is unsuitable for combat by all accounts. And it wasn’t likely to have much defense. If Gensei were to make a serious move, it would be a deadly one. He was unlikely to win against the Velgrynd, but he thought it might hurt her. Gensei decided to ask Velgrynd.

“I want to ask you one question. I know this is rude, but are you sure you’re serious? You may not be safe when you’re dealing with the inner workings of our school.”

Velgrynd understands that this is a question out of concern to her. She could have ignored it, but decided to reassure Gensei. There is also a speculation that that person will be able to demonstrate his abilities.

“That’s nice of you. But don’t be alarmed. Your weapon, the sword? It looks pretty old and good quality, but I’m afraid it doesn’t work for me. So, don’t worry about it, just come at me and give it your best shot.”

In fact, Gensei’s sword was only less than unique-grade in performance. In this world where magic was weak, swords could not evolve. Then Gensei responded to Velgrynd’s challenge.

“Yeah!”

Concentrating his explosive fighting spirit, he unleashed the supreme profound effect of Oboro Shinmei-ryū, the Eightfold Sakura—the Eightfold Flower Flash. But alas, the flower did not bloom. The great technique was stopped by the tips of Velgrynd’s fingers.



A shapeshifting sword streak, but not a split. Even if it was too fast for an ordinary person to catch, it was too slow for Velgrynd.

“If you’re serious about that, that’s enough.”

“Kuh, I’m here...”

It was too late to put it to rest with words like ‘ability gap.’ There was an insurmountable gap between Gensei and Velgrynd, between heaven and earth, or even more so. This result made it clear. Thus, in exchange for Gensei’s disappointment, Velgrynd had obtained the correct information. Gensei’s Eight Flowers, an art that had been passed down only to the original family, had never been taught to Kondou. There is no doubt that it is the greatest and most powerful weapon in this world. Therefore, it was thought that just by looking at the amount of power it possessed, it could surpass the Mythical/Dragon class and even reach the divine God/Buddha class.

“Are you really a god?”

“Although it was my brother who created the world, he’s not a god.”

“Well...in our perception, we call it a god.”

“The concept of God is one that is perceived differently at different times and places. I don’t care what you think, but you have to remember that there are some beings that can destroy me...”

Velgrynd was reminded of a laid-back slime. It’s annoying to think that she lost to that thing, but there’s no doubt in her mind that she wouldn’t win another fight.

That doesn’t make Rimuru a god, does it? I guess the bottom line is that his category doesn’t exist, right?

And then Velgrynd thought about it. Honestly, thinking about it won’t give her an answer, so she switched her thinking immediately. What’s important is the enemy of this world. It’s about the demons.

“All right, thank you for your help. This made me realize how immature and small I am. I’ll use this experience as an inspiration to work harder in the future.”

Gensei just shrugs off such comments. And Velgrynd quickly put together a theory. Gensei and Kondou are roughly equal. However, his strength was far less powerful than Kondou’s was when they first met. Most of the humans in the material world die from the dense concentrations of magical elements once they cross the world. But a few were reborn by remodeling, transforming their bodies into powerful beings. These were the otherworlders of Velgrynd’s homeland.

That’s right, I’ve forgotten. This world is very low in magic. That’s why it’s harder to cast a spell, and the level physical strengthening is low. Their physical strength is innate, so it’s rather amazing that they can even be this powerful.

And so Velgrynd made her decision, remembering the shock she felt in her fingertips. Back home, it was as powerful as a rank A. She was impressed by what he can do with a rare-grade weapon. Now then, you can imagine the strength of the enemy.

I guess the demon class is about B rank to A-minus rank. The Mythical/Dragon rank is

about A-minus rank. If so, the demon must be a ‘phantom-race.’

The phantom-race is an Aggressor tribe, a half-mental life form. In the material world, it could only be active for a short time without incarnation. Particularly in this world where magic is scarce, its energy efficiency would have been too low if it had not possessed a human. Therefore, if it uses its true strength, its human body would not be able to withstand it.

He’s getting weaker. Well, this world isn’t protected by magical elements, so if you use too much power, it might destroy it. If they’re destroying it, or even invading it, do they control its power? That’s probably why Kondou’s current strength was so important in a fight.

If the phantom-race is serious, then the inhabitants of this world don’t stand a chance. Velgrynd concluded and smiled at her good fortune to be here now. Velgrynd was confident that with her, they could better manage to deal with the demon king Feldway, the leader of the phantom race. However, it was unlikely that Feldway would be sent to this invading region, so that concern was unnecessary.

In fact, it was just as Velgrynd had predicted. The men who were invading this world were an advance force of monsters under Cornu’s command. Also, the size of the Underworld Gate that spontaneously appeared in this world was so small that it was impossible for Cornu’s main body to appear. It was currently in the process of expansion, giving them a little more time to take over the world. She hadn’t been able to see that accurately, but it was enough for Velgrynd.



Gensei appears to be maintaining a sense of normalcy, but he is actually depressed. Naturally. It was as if his swordplay, which he believed to be the strongest, was completely useless against Velgrynd. Even his secret techniques couldn’t reach her. Even though he understood that they were on different levels, it was difficult to convince his emotions. Even so, Gensei used his well-honed mental strength to keep his mind from being disturbed. Velgrynd smiles at Gensei.

“You should be proud of yourself. In a world where there is little to no magic, few people can reach that level of strength. If you could have taken in some magic element and sublimated your body, you could have become not only an Immortal but a Saint. It’s too bad about that.”

“A Saint, that’s a far cry for me.”

“Not really, but yes. I’m going to reward you for helping me. Can you accept it?”

“A reward?”

“Yes. If you want, I’ll reforge your sword with my power.”

Velgrynd smiles at that. She could use ‘Matter Creation’ to create a mythical-grade weapon. In this case, she had poured magic into Gensei’s sword, hoping to encourage its evolution.

“You don’t mean that...”

Is it possible?

Gensei was confused, but then reminded himself that it was too late. Gensei was convinced that the Velgrynd was a heavenly being beyond his comprehension, and that if she said she could do it, then she could do it.

An ancestral heirloom...it would be fun to trust Velgrynd-dono with it.

With that resolve, Gensei bowed to Velgrynd and held out his beloved sword.

“Please...”

“Yes, let me take care of that.”

Velgrynd nodded widely and accepted the sword. Normally, she would casually create a blue dragon sword, but this time was different. Carefully, she assessed the composition of the sword and poured her magical elements into it, making delicate adjustments. Velgrynd’s work continues with a more serious expression than the one she had in battle. Then, about thirty minutes passed. With an old blacksmith’s skillful technique and the magic that Velgrynd controlled completely, together, they gave the sword a mythical glow.

“Finished.”

It was a weapon evolution that would normally take hundreds to thousands of years, but in such a short time, Velgrynd had forged Gensei’s beloved sword into a mythical-grade sword.

“Th-this is?!”

“This is the best weapon in the world now, isn’t it? Even so, you can’t possibly use it right now... Still, the sword has a will. If the sword approves, it will help you a bit. I don’t know if that will be you, or one of your descendants”

Velgrynd laughed. The smile was so beautiful that it bewitched Gensei’s heart.



The time was now evening. It was time to eat, so Akira went back to his room. Velgrynd was also invited to join. Since she was here, she decided to join. The maids of the palace are handpicked from a carefully selected group. They are well-trained and unaffected by anything. They prepared the meal as if it were a matter of course, without batting an eyelash at the sight of the Velgrynd. Minamoto is on guard duty outside the door, while Gensei stands behind Akira Sakura and waits. Only the two of them will take their seats.

“So, what do you plan to do now?”

“I will be by your side, and I’ll protect you.”

“I’m glad to hear that, but can I assume that you’ll be on my side?”

“Yes, you’re right.”

Velgrynd smiles in reply and is happy just to be by Rudra’s side. Confused by this Velgrynd, Akira Sakura asks

“Huhu, then you will eliminate conflict from this world and reassure me?”

Of course, that was a joke. And yet Velgrynd laughed and replied.

“All right.”

“If you want, I can give you this world. We’ll wipe out the countries you don’t want and silence the ones who complain. But first, we have to destroy the demons that are in our way.”

Everyone in the room was stunned to see Velgrynd answer with a very innocent smile. Even the maid servant who was on duty unintentionally spilled some of the soup. They all knew in their guts that she meant what she said. That doesn’t mean it’s true, or that it’s a big deal. The words would be laughed off if someone else had said them. But there was something about Velgrynd that made it so. And Gensei and others who know the essence of Velgrynd know it’s not a joke and that it’s possible. The same was true for Akira Sakura.

“Hahaha, I haven’t laughed this hard in a long time. You’ve done well to joke around so much that the maid servants take you seriously. Your joke was amusing, but I’ll just take it as a compliment.”

They managed to cover up the situation. It was clear now that Velgrynd was not an ordinary being, as the conversation at dinner made clear. Not only is she strong, but her train of thought is tricky. Akira finally understood that she would do anything for him. If she was ordered to destroy another country, Velgrynd would do it. To her, right and wrong were of secondary importance, and only Sakura’s will was what mattered.

To be honest, this was the first time in his life that Akira was so confused. He had been born as the next Emperor of the Empire and had lived a life of ease. But he didn’t have freedom either, he was taught from an early age that it was the duty of a king. He had everything he needed, but he had to give up what he really wanted. Love was an illusion and he had the duke’s daughter as his wife to back him up. It was like a contract and he couldn’t refuse her. The wise Akira knew it before he became a young man. Transience is the truth. The world is like a dream.

Because it is fleeting, you can strive to make your dreams come true with all your might.

On the other hand, it is beautiful to surrender to fate and accumulate the small amount of happiness that exists in those days. It was the latter that Akira Sakura chose. To do what you love is a luxury that never comes true, even for the Emperor who has everything. It was precisely because of such an Akira, that Velgrynd was a surprise to him. That freedom will not be bound by any man. And yet she is beholden to only one person, Akira. A strange woman. No, a goddess. Even if he was acting as Rudra, a simple favor is always better than a simple one. Feeling this way, Akira Sakura enjoyed a peaceful dinner for the first time in a long time.



It is now next morning after dawn. Today there will be a meeting by the Imperial Headquarters. The issue here is how to handle Velgrynd. As Akira declared, acting like a lover in front of a

third party is strictly forbidden. So, it was necessary to figure out how to explain Velgrynd's status first. Then there was the question of clothing. Exotic clothing is out of the question. One had to dress appropriately for their status. While all the best maids gathered to arrange the various costumes, Akira Sakura, with input from Gensei and Minamoto, pondered the question of Velgrynd's status.

“As for the maid...”

“A lady-in-waiting can't attend a meeting, you fool.”

Minamoto's idea is dismissed by Gensei before he can finish.

“The escort is going to be difficult too.”

“Your Majesty, I've considered that, but Velgrynd-dono's appearance is too eye-catching. By all appearances, she is a foreigner, so she will be suspected of being a spy.”

If she was Japanese, they wouldn't have to worry about it so much. But Velgrynd was too beautiful and seemingly of northern European descent to stand out in this country. Even if he wants to introduce her as a bodyguard or a spy, they'd be asked why they are using foreigners so heavily. That said, Velgrynd won't be happy if he asks her to stay at home. Besides, it was a shame to let Velgrynd's forces go to waste when she was supposed to be on their side. Just when he was wondering what to do, Velgrynd herself voiced her opinion.

“It can't be helped. I don't really like it, and I don't want to, but I'm going to change my look. Is that okay?”

And with that, Velgrynd's appearance changes. Dark hair and dark eyes. Her skin had become a pale yellow with just a hint of red.



“Wow, you can even do tricks like that!”

Minamoto was impressed with the tone of voice that was unexpected, and Gensei agreed that it wasn’t that strange.

“I guess I didn’t have to worry about it.”

And Akira Sakura was slightly distracted. Just by changing the arrangement of the coloring, the impression was very different. Although this still made her look less Japanese, it was not too much of a distraction. The uniform given to Velgrynd was the same as Gensei’s. In order to attend the meeting, Akira Sakura had assigned her ‘Personal Guard.’¹⁵

Incidentally, the Emperor’s Guard consists of three organizations. The first is the Imperial Guard Swordsman Corps. It is the only unit in the palace that is allowed to be armed. However, only the captain, Minamoto, is allowed to enter the Emperor’s quarters. The second is the Imperial Palace Guards. This unit magically protected the Emperor from magic and witchcraft. They maintained a spiritual guardian barrier and were inferior to the swordsmen in terms of individual combat ability alone. Only the captain has access to the Emperor, but he has been so busy defending the capital that he hasn’t been seen in the past few days. And the last organization was the Personal Guard, an individual group called the ‘Emperor’s Guardians.’

Not all of them, like Gensei, were well known to the public. There were those who lurked in the shadows, warding off evil. Those who had harbored supernatural powers. Those who have split from the imperial family so that they can play the part of the Emperor’s shadow warriors. These men of many purposes served in the shadows, guarding the Emperor. No wonder no one knew who they were. So now Akira decided to give Velgrynd a position as Emperor’s Guardians.’

“Velgrynd, I will appoint you as a ‘Guardian of the Emperor.’ With that title, it shall spare you the trouble of explaining to the others.”

“I accept. Then I will behave like a proper vessel in front of the others.”

Velgrynd, who wore a military uniform, replied flirtatiously. Everyone was worried about the situation, but there was no other plan. Even if something went wrong, it was nothing compared to the invaders, the demons. Under this judgment, preparations were being made.



One by one, people began to gather in the main conference hall. Akira was watching them from the waiting room. The Imperial Headquarters is the supreme commanding body that reports directly to Emperor. It is the army of the Emperor and is composed of both a Navy and an Army. At the top of both camps are the Minister of the Navy and the Minister of the Army.

¹⁵The word used is “Konoe” (近衛) which can mean near/personal guard, close defender, imperial guard, etc.

Both ministers were required to attend the Imperial General Meeting. Substitutes are allowed, but they are rarely present as it is considered a disrespect for the Emperor. As is customary in the past few days, most of the contents of the meeting are now reported. In the Great South Sea, the Imperial Navy was soundly defeated. Even the whereabouts of survivors are unknown, and each camp is pulling out all the stops to investigate. The army, however, seemed to be someone else's problem. They make excuses because they don't have the means to go to the sea, but Akira Sakura thinks that's because they don't really understand the threat.

You idiots. Now is not the time for our people to be competing with each other for credit.

But the Emperor is someone who cannot say that. Because his authority is too great, his words are too heavy. If it was in private that would be one thing, but in public, he has to be careful of what he says. Unaware of Akira Sakura's anguish, an officer in the army calls out,

"Who are you?! Who do you think you are?! This sacred headquarters is an outrageous place for a woman to enter!"

"Oh, so I knew it was going to be like that..." said Sakura Akira.

Those whose only have inflated pride are bothered by hierarchy and etiquette. So it was natural for this to happen, but if Akira Sakura had accompanied here, there would be more of a fuss. Since they all agreed on this, Gensei was given the responsibility for Velgrynd.

As I suspected, a man with a lot of blood on his hands is making things difficult. If he should offend her, he would not only destroy himself, but this city as well.

Letting out a big sigh, Akira Sakura let out a big sigh. Perhaps it was the fate of those with Rudra's soul to be pushed around by Velgrynd.

"Could you be talking to me?"

"Can't you even understand that, you fool?! This is why—Mogaa!"

Suddenly, the officer's ranting stopped. It was because Velgrynd had grabbed the man's chest in an unnoticeable move and plunged her pistol into his open mouth. With a thin smile, Velgrynd says

"I don't think it would have mattered whether you were a man or a woman in this day and age, when you could kill someone by pulling the trigger, if you fought with a sword or a spear in the olden days. What is important in today's warfare is the ability to analyze the situation and to make a calm and rational decision without emotion. You don't deserve to be here. I wonder if you are not qualified to be here, screaming like that?"

To begin with, he was no match for force, but seeing the violence of a gun, which anyone can understand, caused a commotion among the people in the hall.

"Keh, you! Let go of the Chief of Staff!"

"You can't have guns in here! Guards, someone call the guards!"

Velgrynd laughs mockingly.

"Silly you, fussing over a single toy! How can you be considered a glorious soldier of the Empire for that?"

Many faces turned red when they heard that, and many people looked at her angrily. Regardless, Velgrynd shoved the chief of staff aside. Then she pointed her toy gun and pulled the

trigger. A stream of water spurted out, wetting the Chief of Staff's crotch.

"Ufufu. It looks like you just wet your pants. Why don't you go home and change?"

"You, you sly..."

He was shaking with humiliation, but as soon as he looked into Velgrynd's eyes, he gulped down his words. It was a horrifying stare.

'I will kill you if you make any more noise unceremoniously...' the Chief of Staff felt as if he was being told that, and all at once the blood drained from his veins.

"Hahaha, excuse me. I guess I got a little too excited myself. I do miss the water pistol. I felt like a child again, and my head was cold."

"Well, that's good to hear. If you're going to be in the meeting, you're going to have to behave yourself a little better."

The Chief of Staff nodded coyly. He was short-tempered and a bit arrogant, but he was no fool. He had failed in their first encounter, but he hadn't made a mistake in his subsequent responses. If he had still growled at her, he would have had a heart attack from Velgrynd's fury. Rudra is the only thing that matters to Velgrynd. She was not amused by the idea of an incompetent man serving Rudra. So she tried to get rid of the incompetence, but she was just a little pending on the Chief of Staff's punishment. Just because he was short-tempered and misogynistic was not enough of a reason to eliminate him.

Phew, I'm getting nicer. Maybe it's because I've been through so much on this trip.

And so on and so forth, Velgrynd praises herself. Needless to say, it was an overestimate. She was just happy that Rudra is with her, otherwise the result would have been different. Each time she leapt for the pieces of his soul, there were times when she couldn't find her next goal. In such cases, she had to wait for the reincarnation of Rudra to be born, which could take years or decades.

For Velgrynd, that time after seeing her loved ones off was like torture. In her own mind, a man's fate was sealed if he came under her influence at such a time. The Chief of Staff had been lucky. When the scene had calmed down, the naval minister spoke up to change things up.

"So, Araki-dono. And who is this woman?"

The naval general looks at Gensei with a commanding gaze. He's in his fifties. Gensei also got in a word.

"Excuse me, I'm sorry I'm late in the introductions. She is a colleague of mine, and it has been decided that she will attend the Imperial Council meeting today, by permission of His Majesty."

"My name is 'Ryuo.' Please to make your acquaintance." Interrupting Gensei's introduction, Velgrynd nonchalantly took a false name. The name was a random combination of the character for dragon from 'True Dragon' and the character for phoenix from the divine beast that controlled the flame in this world—Ryuo (the phoenix).¹⁶ However, that was a big problem.

¹⁶"Ryuo." - She uses a pseudonym that combines '竜' from 'dragon' (pronounced Ryū in Japanese) and '凰' meaning 'phoenix.'

“Wait, phoenix for dragon?”

“Taking a dragon for a name is insolent. This is really insulting to the Emperor!”

“Or are you related to Your Majesty by any chance?”

They had calmed down now but there was now a great deal of confusion. Gensei regrets his mistake.

Did she do this on purpose? No, no. Velgrynd-dono doesn't care what we do. Since she even disguised herself, we should have considered a pseudonym...

It was his fault, Gensei reflected. Akira also let out a sigh in the other room. I've lived a long time, but this is the first time I've been pushed around this much. That's why I'm somewhat amused. Akira stood up and stepped into the chamber.

“This is a critical time. Isn't it strange to be disclosing our hand?”

He chuckled as he said this before those who noticed him stood up and hung their heads. Now that the lord had told them so, they have no choice but to accept it. Even if they had a complaint, they could not say it openly. Thus, Velgrynd in this world came to be known as Ryuo.



“Let's get started.”

With a word from Akira Sakura, the main conference began.

“Then I will give the report.”

That said, it was a naval intelligence officer who stood up. The last few days had been pretty much the same, but today was different.

“The enemy coalition fleet has made a port call at Atlantis.”

“Are you sure?”

“Yes, sir. The call came from a local intelligence officer, so there's no doubt about it.”

“It's still the largest military port among the several supply areas, you know. But how can you be sure it's not a deception?”

“As you say. There are several archipelagos in the Great South Sea. There was also a report that Azalea is setting up a secret base there. Have you sent agents there as well?”

The general asks, and the Minister of the Navy follows suit. The intelligence officer answers those questions without hesitation.

“There are too many of them to reach all the islands, sir. However, the number of enemy ships remaining in port at Atlantis matches the information we received prior to our sortie, and the possibility of a separate fleet has been eliminated. An Imperial Navy warship has been captured. They're planning to stay here and work on their maintenance, to frustrate our will to fight.”

The Imperial Navy's crushing defeat was already known to the Imperial Headquarters. So no one is surprised now, but they can't keep quiet when they hear that their ship has been captured.

"The enemy's movements were superimposed. And, um, have any of our ships succeeded in escaping?"

"No, of course not. If there was, they would have contacted us long ago."

The surprisingly brazen Chief of Staff pointed out. He seems to have cooled off, as he said he would, and his point is accurate.

"As you say, Mr. Chief of Staff, I believe it is safe to assume that every ship in our fleet has been captured."

"Tch! Then it's as if we've already increased the enemy's strength!"

"It can't be helped. We were dealing with an unknown enemy, a demon. Even if it were me in the room, the result would have been the same."

The Chief refutes the Army Minister's statement.

"Excuse me. I didn't mean to insult the Navy. It's just that I'm frustrated..."

"I accept your apology. We all have the same regrets."

The meeting was tense. They are in the tightest situation since the beginning of the Empire's history. The Imperial Fleet, which had prided itself on being the strongest in the world, had been defeated. Moreover, many ships, including the most advanced ones, have fallen into the hands of the enemy. Everyone was anxious and worried about the unprecedented danger. There was no point in complaining, but even a whine would still pop out. If the commander-in-chief hadn't acted like a grown-up, the situation would have been even bleaker. In a slightly relaxed atmosphere, Akira Sakura, not missing the opportunity, opens his mouth.

"So, are our soldiers still being held as prisoners of war?"

That question makes the naval participants tense. The safety of their comrades, their loved ones, is a cause for concern. Of course, they were important to the army as well, a matter of great importance to their comrades and also of great consequence for their future plans. If this were a normal war, the wartime agreement would have guaranteed the safety of the prisoners of war. But this time, that premise could be undermined by the involvement of an unknown invader. If it was the same as before, fine. If it wasn't...

His gaze fell on the intelligence officer.

"That is..."

"What's the matter? Get on with your answer!"

The stagnant intelligence officer stammered, but was urged by his superior officer to continue.

"According to eyewitness reports, a group of Imperial Navy generals were steering the captured vessel with their own hands. There were also enemy soldiers on board, but they were in very small numbers. There was no sign of gunfire, and it appeared as if they had turned over of their own volition."

It was natural to stammer, everyone thought. And the same was true of Akira. A proud

soldier of the Imperial Guard would never abandon his duties so easily. And moreover, it was unthinkable that he would turn over to the enemy.

“That wouldn’t make Kondou-san, who risked his life for it, any happier...”

Minamoto’s murmurings echoed through the silent chamber.

‘It is better to believe in the possibility of being controlled by a demon.’ That is the true feelings of everyone present. And Velgrynd cheerfully affirms that thought.

“Hmmm, silly. Don’t worry. None of your friends are going to betray you.”

It was Velgrynd. The naval officers could not believe that their comrades had betrayed them, and they were puzzled by the circumstantial evidence that suggested it. That’s why they found hope in Velgrynd’s statement.

“What do you mean by that, Ryu-dono?”

The Minister of the Navy asks on behalf of everyone. Velgrynd smiled and replied.

“It’s simple. Demons have the ability to possess people. They’re new and don’t have much power in our world, but by possessing people and taking their bodies, they can slowly become more and more powerful. They don’t have much magic element as a source of power, and it will take some time for them to fully assimilate, don’t you think?”

That was exactly the hope.

“I see. So they’re being controlled after all!”

“If it takes so long to assimilate, does that mean we can help them now?”

“We can’t allow them to mock our friends! We will destroy you, demons!”

“We must immediately launch a rescue mission—”

“Wait a minute, things aren’t that easy.”

The chamber was in an uproar. Some wondered how she knew so much about it, but then they reminded themselves that it was no surprise when she was Emperor’s trump card, and they accepted her word with open arms. Then they all agreed on rescuing their comrades, but then they remembered that it was a conundrum and regained their composure. To begin with, the empire has just lost the war for its own survival. A rescue mission is not something that comes easily to mind.

First of all, there weren’t enough ships left in the kingdom. Six aircraft carriers. Four battleships. Four heavy cruiser ships. Two light cruiser ships. Eighteen destroyer ships.

After losing so many ships, even if they could gather them from all over the Empire, they could only gather less than half of these ships. They would only need to assemble a single fleet. If they were sent to rescue everyone, then the defense of the mainland would become a challenge.

“But the world’s leaders are aware of the current situation. Shouldn’t we make peace in secret and concentrate on the true enemy, the phantoms?”

“Everyone knows that. This is impossible with the army in its grasp.”

“Other countries are not happy, but they are the same as us. We have not been able to keep track of the army troops we have sent to China.”

“And more importantly, we’ve just been robbed of our decisive force...”

Even if the leadership had made peace, it wouldn't have solved anything. There's no way to announce an end to the war if the military is still out of control. Therefore, the first step in resolving the situation is to deal with the demon. Before that, there was a concern that everyone was aware of, but couldn't say anything about. What was it?

"Is there anyone here in possession of the demon?"

It was the Minister of War who finally uttered it. From the way he stared at the naval participants, it was obvious what he was thinking.

"Huh! Do you doubt us?"

"No, no, I don't think that's what I said. But from what you've just told me, I'm sure you can't blame me for suspecting it."

"Don't be ridiculous! If you say that, then so does the army, they're running amok in China!"

"Nuh-uh, that's..."

The atmosphere in the chamber was almost engulfed in a terrible atmosphere, but it was interrupted by Akira Sakura.

"The good news is that our brave soldiers are safe. It is only natural that we should rescue them, but can we really achieve this by squabbling here? I'm sure you know the right answer, brave men."

"Yes, Your Majesty! I beg your pardon!" "

With those words, everyone became calm. It's a very dignified thing to say, but for Akira, he still felt like he was walking a tightrope. Simply being upset won't solve the situation, so there is no choice here but to strongly rebuke. He can understand the anxiety of the officers, but Akira Sakura also felt frustrated at his inability to do anything.

"Ryuo-dono, I understand the War Minister's concern, but are you able to distinguish between humans and demons?"

It was Gensei who asked this question. If they couldn't tell friend from foe apart, then they couldn't talk about anything. That's the premise for all of their countermeasures. It was quiet again in the chamber as everyone waited for Velgrynd's answer.

"There's no way any of them are. If there were, I would have told you first."

Everyone was relieved to hear that.

"Yes, that's right."

The same was true for Gensei. If a demon of the heavenly demon class had transformed into a human being, there was a chance they couldn't tell them apart. If even Velgrynd here couldn't do it, then there would have been nothing left to do but give up.

'There was still hope,' Gensei felt. But Velgrynd was different.

"I'm surprised. Can't you even tell if you're one of them or not? Demons, I call them phantoms, but they possess people because they have to. So that they can live in this world. And once they've fully assimilated, they can no longer be considered human."

If assimilation isn't complete, the 'Barrier' guarding this imperial city should be enough to see through it. They may be able to transform into humans, but their very nature is foreign. It's because of such instability that they won't go out until stable, Velgrynd explained.

“And you see, the lowest-ranking ‘grunts’ are wise, but not self-aware. They’re small fry who follow orders from their superiors, so you can figure them out with a quick questioning.”

The memory of a possessed person can be read, but it is only the surface level. If you ask about the deeper parts, they will not be able to answer and will get messed up. When Velgrynd explained this, the mood in the chamber was one of relief. The explanation continued further. It was until this time that the meeting was serious. From this point forward, Velgrynd was on her own.

“Since you don’t seem to know anything about it, I have to tell you that there is a definite hierarchy of ranks among the phantoms. That ‘soldier’ you just mentioned is a small fry. And since they’re only one level of strength away from being fully assimilated, they’re only as strong as the most advanced demon (youkai).”

It’s easy to say that it’s an advanced demon, but it’s a level of danger that requires a task force. However, the Velgrynd could not care less.

“R-Ryuo-dono, does that mean that if they fully assimilate, this ‘soldier’ will become a heavenly-class demon?”

The Minister of the Army asked, to which Velgrynd replied firmly.

“Clever man, you’re right.”

“Huh?!”

The Army Minister’s exclamation wasn’t because he felt ridiculed. He was speechless at the desperate situation of the lowest-ranked soldiers being the equivalent of the Heavenly Demon class. The temperature difference between him and Velgrynd was so great that it was pitiful. There was no one here who could laugh at the Army Minister. They all felt the same way.

“Why are you surprised? If that was the case, even Gensei can beat it. If you’re a ‘commander class’ who commands a group of soldiers, they may have a hard time, but they can’t beat him.”

The lower-ranked ‘commander’ class is equivalent to the A rank in strength in the other world—but until their possession is complete, they are only slightly stronger than the B rank. Once it was fully assimilated into the mythical/dragon class, it would be an inevitable struggle. But even so, Velgrynd decided that Gensei would be enough to defeat it.

“It pains me to say this,” he said, “but against two of them, even Kondou lost. I don’t want you to get your hopes up.”

“You shouldn’t be so weak. Kondou stuck to his beliefs until the end, you know.”

That reminds Gensei. He realized that he had been weak. Then, he realized how blind he had been. He could feel the heat of the sword at his side. That primed Gensei to regain his confidence.

“Yes, you’re right. If we act weak, we will lose battles that could have been won.”

“Right. Well, if you’re feeling weak, I’m here, so there’s no way you can lose.”

It was Velgrynd who ruined Gensei’s resolve.



Just like that, the flow of the main conference has changed. Velgrynd's explanation continued.

"The higher up they are, the stronger they are, but their energy is too high for them to come into our world. Maybe they're only here now up to the lower echelon, the 'general' level. So..."

"Wait, wait, wait!"

"What is it?"

The explanation was interrupted, and Velgrynd grimaced. Had it not been in front of Akira Sakura, she wouldn't have forgiven anyone for interrupting her.

"Well, the ranks of the phantom, are we to assume that they are the same as those of the military?"

"Are you doubting my language skills?"

"No, I don't mean to, but it does raise the question of whether there is a 'lieutenant' or 'colonel' rank between 'commander' and 'general'..."

It was the Minister of the Navy who heard about it, but this was on everyone's mind as well. It may be insignificant to Velgrynd, but to the inhabitants of this world, they are a desperate opponent.

"If Gensei-dono is going to have a hard time, would the 'commander' class be the equivalent of a mythical/dragon demon?"

"Yes, I think that's the same opponent that Kondou lost to, so it's almost certainly true."

"Then how strong is a 'general'?"

He's as strong as a mythical/dragon class or even a god/buddha class. Since it cannot be beat by humans, it is classified as a god/buddha class. If such an opponent attacked, any resistance was meaningless. One by one, their faces grew pale as they realized this.

"So perhaps Kondou had been defeated by this 'general.'

"Maybe so, but I'm not interested. I don't care either way."

It doesn't matter who you lose to, Velgrynd doesn't care. All that mattered was the fact that you had lost.

"Oh yeah, and since I remember, I should tell you that there are only two ways for a phantom to appear in this world. Either you go through the Underworld Gate, or you're summoned by a superior. I'm guessing he was summoned because there would be no 'gate' at sea."

"The General could have called in more than 10,000 of them," Velgrynd said in a light-hearted tone.

To the listeners' point of view, it was a hopeless number. Everyone could only stare at the Velgrynd in awe.

"Would Ryuo-dono, I mean, can you win?"

'That was the only hope,' the Minister of the Navy asked.

That's a ridiculous question, he thought to himself and started laughing. Even against an enemy general-level unit, this enemy would be powerful enough to destroy mankind. And now that it leads its subordinates, there is nothing they can do about it. No matter how strong the mysterious woman who called herself Ryu was, there was no way she could take on the Legion individually.

"Isn't the opponent an army of god class with unimaginable power? In all times and places, we have only heard of stories of man's victory over the gods in myths..."

"Isn't there no choice but to pray that the world will not be destroyed?"

The Chief of Staff and the Army Minister felt the same way as the Navy Minister, and so they followed suit. Velgrynd snickered.

"Silly you. If anyone could beat me, it would be only Feldway, the king of the phantoms, wouldn't it? But I don't intend to lose, and he won't be able to manifest himself over here."

Why do you know the name of the enemy king—and so many other questions. But no one was there to point them out. It occurred to them that this woman should be no different. There was one thing they had to make sure of.

"I don't doubt that you are strong, Ryu-sama. So I would like to ask you..."

It was the inspectorate general of education who had been silent the whole time and had watched the proceedings with great courage. He was one of the three Secretaries of the Army and a mediator in the event of a conflict. Velgrynd turned to the inspectorate general.

"What is it?"

"This country is on the verge of extinction, so will you then go out and take on the enemy?"

"No, I will not. Because I have only one life left."

Of course, that was a lie. With her 'Parallel Existence,' it is possible to defeat the enemy while protecting the Emperor. But there's no reason to tell them that. Velgrynd used her identity as the 'Guardian of the Emperor' as a shield and declared that she would devote herself to his protection. For one reason only. It's a calculated decision.

One cannot grow further if they only look to others for help in times of trouble. She doesn't think a country like that would have a future anyway. If that was the case, then it would be the same even if everyone died here. Velgrynd is affectionate and has not yet abandoned this country, or mankind. If this were Velzard, she would not have let those with such a feeble mind live. Before she set out on her journey, she would have thought that she would take care of everything until Rudra died, but anything after that was of no concern to Velgrynd. But now she can see the bigger picture. This, too, was a change that came about because of her encounter with Rimuru and his perspective.

All that mattered to Velgrynd now was Rudra and his beloved people. And to protect the bloodline that goes on and on. That's why, as always, she makes sure that the people left behind will be able to do something when she's gone. The words are harsh, but Velgrynd declares that she will not move out.

"But don't worry. Your Majesty will be safe with me. So I suggest you do the best you can."

In short, it was a matter of showing some guts.



Now that the strength of the enemy is known, the direction of the Congress will be shifted to future measures. With Velgrynd's help, the Emperor's safety was assured. The officers in the main camp are not stupid and they understand what Velgrynd is saying. That's why they decided to take care of it themselves first.

"Then keep a strict eye on the movements of the enemy fleet."

"Yes, sir. I'll double and triple my hands and give orders not to miss the movement."

"How much time do we have before the demon possesses a person and completely assimilates with them?"

"Well, if there are a lot of demons, it won't take more than a week, but over here, I think it'll take at least two months."

In front of Rudra, Velgrynd also answers honestly without hiding what is asked. As a result, the policy was set without hesitation.

"It will take at least a month for the enemy fleet to finish replenishment and maintenance and leave port. The timing is consistent, so can we assume that the enemy won't move until a month from now?"

"I'm not so sure about that. It may take some time to re-organize our freshly captured fleet, but with both the Azalea and Chinese fleets now in operation, wouldn't it be possible to launch them with just a refueling run?"

"If that's the case, then it would be less than two weeks from Atlantis to the Empire. It'll depend on the weather, but..."

"It won't be done. Weather control is so basic, so think of it as sailing at maximum ship speed."

"Huh... Yes!"

By this time, the officers had begun to grasp Velgrynd's personality. Although she had an arrogant attitude, she had a surprisingly caring side to her. She answers questions seriously and will give advice. She's a great ally. If there is no way to take advantage of it, the talented ones will ask questions everywhere. And as a result, they had developed a general plan of attack.

"Oh. We could intercept them on the mainland, but that would make it impossible for us to rescue our brave brothers and sisters who are being held captive. Perhaps we should strike out and destroy the enemy ringleaders."

"That's right. I agree with you, but there is the question of who should go."

"If Ryuudo-dono is protecting His Majesty, there will be no hindsight. I'll come with you."

"Oh, if Araki-dono will join us, it's a good thing."

“The entire swordsmanship squad, please join us!”

“Minamoto-kun, I’m counting on you!”

And so it seemed that the conversation was settled. That’s when Velgrynd interrupted.

“...Are you guys serious? Or are you just having suicidal thoughts?”

“What do you mean?”

The Army Minister looked at Velgrynd with a shine in his eye. He had hoped that maybe she would join them, but that was too sweet an idea.

“I’ll give you credit for showing that you are willing to work hard on your own, but that’s not enough. The enemy is powerful, so we have make sure to do our best.”

Most of them thought, *What are you talking about?* but some of them figured out the answer. One of them was the army’s Chief of Staff.

“Am I to understand that we need more than our own country?”

This was surprising to Velgrynd. He had been the first one to turn on her, so she was under the impression he was more impulsive.

Good thing I didn’t give up on him too soon.

Velgrynd nodded, disguising her true feelings.

“It is true that this is not the time to see this global crisis as an opportunity for nations to fight each other. We understand that, but as I have just explained, our military is in overdrive.”

The army chief of staff says that he is frustrated too. But then Minamoto says,

“As I thought, we should also get cooperation from other countries! If we’re only half-hearted, we’ll be defeated and possessed by demons. That’s why we’re taking on the challenge with only our own elite troops, so we have no choice but to ask other countries to send their elite troops as well.”

Hearing that, the others agree.

“It’s the only way to go. This isn’t a war anymore. We’re locked in a race for survival against monsters, so this is no time to choose our bets. Before the outcome of the war, we must drive the demon out first.”

“Right. This isn’t just an imperial matter anymore.”

“That’s right. We should contact you as soon as possible and keep in step.”

Just because it was the only way, he expressed his opinion.

“Correct. You guys are weak, and you need to use your brains more.”

Hearing this, Velgrynd smiled with satisfaction and replied. But from the office’s point of view, it was an absurd story.

“Please wait! I’m sure the world leaders understand that things aren’t going well. But that doesn’t mean they’ll join hands and cooperate.”

“Hmm, that would be difficult. No country is going to nod yes to an offer of a ceasefire out of the blue.”

“We don’t want that kind of suggestion in our country, do we?”

Those are very sensible opinions. Anything happens during the ceasefire is a disaster. For that to be possible, they need to at least get control of the military, which is out of control.

Besides, there are many other problems. Even the popular opinion of the people won't be convinced. Some countries might use this as an opportunity to plot. The doubts were endless. Some argued that they could not move forward with suspicion, but if those fears are not cleared, then it is impossible to go hand in hand. There is no such thing as a partnership in this situation, but Velgrynd smiled and said,

"Will you give up without trying? Well, that's okay, then. I'll protect His Majesty and this Imperial City, His Majesty's home."

When she says that like he's a fool, the diplomatic officer has no choice but to retort.

"Okay. Then I'll try to contact them. Let's show our utmost sincerity and at least arrange for a meeting!"

Although he was close to retorting, he was still successful in meeting Velgrynd's challenge.

"That's right. Either way, we must do it, or we will perish."

"It may destroy me if I try, but I'd like to show my determination anyway."

"That's right. Even if we lose, we're going to have to fight back with everything we've got."

"I'm sorry for my people and my family, but..."

"It can't be helped. I don't care if they're under agreement, the enemy is a demon. It's a race for survival. A loss means the end for our nation. We must do all we can right now or we'll regret it."

And all the officers were well agitated. Velgrynd is happy to have it her way.

That's fine. Act before you argue about whether or not you can do it. And if you make a mistake, I'll do something about it.

She whispered the words in her heart and smiled. Everyone knew what to do and acted accordingly. Thus began the last stand of the empire.



Atlantis continent. It is the smallest continent located at the eastern end of the United States of Azalea. The climate is of a tropical rainforest. Most of it was heavily forested and jungle-like. But this continent had a more significant characteristic. There were iron ore mines and oil-producing wells. By harnessing its rich reserves, it had become the largest military base in Azalea's sphere of influence. And that was the beginning of the misfortune.

There was an ancient ruin near the military base, but unluckily, there was also an 'Underworld Gate' that led to the other world. Long ago, there was a ceremony performed by the native tribes. They may have attempted to communicate with the gods, but as a result, a small rupture in space-time occurred. It was discovered by a phantom race and is now firmly anchored as a stable Underworld Gate. The phantoms welcomed the indigenous Azalean people as their

new targets for possession. They stole the military facilities they had built and used them as a foothold for their invasion.

A man in a reddish-brown military uniform in the national defense guard, commanded a multitude of men of various races. His black hair was brushed back. His thin, narrow eyes gleamed intelligently behind his glasses. He is Cornu's second in command from the heavenly realm. Before he mutated and became a phantom, he was active as a cherub. He didn't have a name, but he now calls himself Amari Masahiko. It was the name of the man whose body he incarnated when he appeared in this world.

Incidentally, the three phantom leaders may name their subordinates after themselves. Cornu didn't value the bond between the demons and their followers, which is why the demons in Cornu's group didn't have names. Race was of no concern to the Phantoms, but Amari Masahiko was Japanese. He was an agent who had come to explore Azalea's military facilities and was a rival to Kondou. He was a brilliant but unlucky man. There was no news of Kondou's defeat, and by the time he learned of the enemy's full extent, it was too late. He was outnumbered and defeated, and his body was taken over.

The body of Masahiko was strengthened by the 'Ki Fighting Method (Battlewill)' and was the best material for a phantom to use. More than a hundred days had passed since his manifestation, and the senior-ranked, second-in-command, had become fully capable of exerting his power even in this world. His unparalleled power could reach 10 million EP. This was the result of his own knowledge and skill level, and his power had increased greatly.

"Hurry up with the expansion work. The gate is too small for Cornu-sama to descend."

Originally, only those who had a magicule amount less than the size of the 'Underworld Gate' could fully manifest from the Otherworld. Those who did not had to leave their main body in the Otherworld and send out 'split bodies' linked by a 'Soul Corridor' to gradually regain their power. But...

The only ones who do not apply to this description are the Three Demons¹⁷. The power of the three demons is so great that an Underworld Gate wouldn't do them justice. It must be at least a million-level gate to make them appear. Incidentally, as long as the main body remained in the otherworld, they could be resurrected even if the alter ego died! However, because that gate hasn't fully manifested, they can only display a weakened power of less than half at most. Also, even if they were revived, only memories and experiences are inherited, and it is necessary to find another possessor.

There were advantages, but the disadvantages were greater. By expanding the 'Underworld Gate,' they could return to another world even if they are incarnated, so the phantoms were aiming for complete manifestation. The 'Underworld Gate' was expanding day by day, and it was expanding faster than Velgrynd had expected. It was about 100,000 in existence value, so a low-intermediate level 'lieutenant' would be able to fully manifest without any problems.

The mental-controlled captives were lined up in front of the Underworld Gate. One by one,

¹⁷San (three) Youkai (demons)

they are possessed by demons. The greatest advantage to the incarnation is that the phantoms can take their names. As half-mental life forms, they are unstable beings. By acquiring a body and a name, they established a strong sense of self. As a result of the knowledge they gain from the body they possess, even the lowest-ranking soldier had become useful in their own right.

“There’s no need to be so hasty Masahiko-sama. Our plan is on track. I’ve surveyed our world’s strength and found few who pose a threat.”

It was David Reagan who advised Masahiko to use the demon lord’s powers. The demon that possessed him was of the rank of General, one of the highest-ranking Demon Lord Seeds. He is one of the strongest demons to achieve full manifestation, with an existence value of up to six hundred thousand. No wonder Kondou couldn’t win. David’s opponent, Li Jinlong, is the one to complain about this.

“I told you many times. Do you remember, Fist Saint Xianhua is still here? The way I remember her, she’s as good a match as any officer could have.”

An ‘officer’ is a mid-range phantom rank. In the Otherworld, they are as powerful as Demon Lord Seeds and were the leaders of a thousand-man regiment that was the key to the invasion. Unlike the lower-ranked ones, they were a formidable force, and losing them would seriously affect their plans. Li Jinlong’s advice was right. But David laughs.

“It’s all right. That man, Pulcinella-sama, has been sent to take care of him. Xianhua is no match for him.”

Li Jinlong is surprised to hear this, but was convinced with a grin. Mystery Monk Pulcinella, one of mankind’s best hope for the future. He left the oracle behind and went on a quest to find out what happened. There he fought fierce battles with demons, but was cruelly defeated and captured. There was only one reason for this. The only reason he was taken prisoner was to have a demon of the same rank as Masahiko and his ‘chief strategist’ as an excellent retainer. That tragedy was fulfilled. He was now a demon of the same rank as Amari Masahiko.

“Seriously? I was going to go in there, but I was beaten to it. It’s easy enough to kill them, but we’d destroy them too. Well, Pulcinella-sama won’t have a problem with that.”

David agreed, if a little irreverently. Humans in this world were weak. In such a situation, Xianhua, who has outstanding strength, can withstand as a substitute, enough to stand in for their chief, Cornu. It’s because everyone thinks so that they are hesitant to leave it to the subordinates. They were too strong, even for their own rank, against humans. It wouldn’t be a fight if they tried, but it was hard to go easy on them in these unfamiliar bodies. Cornu’s lieutenants are on a different level, so they should be able to carry out the mission without difficulty. Because of their absolute trust, David laughed that Xianhua’s fate was as good as done.

“Well, if Cornu-sama doesn’t want a woman’s body, then we’ll find a replacement and I’ll take Xianhua’s place. The man who owned my body was very attached to her, and I couldn’t stop thinking about her.”

“Soft and tender. Cornu-sama won’t care about your gender, so you won’t have to worry about that.”

Thinking that the problem was already solved, Li Jinlong and David started a silly conver-

sation. As he listened to them, Masahiko couldn't help but feel uneasy. It's not that he was dissatisfied with the results at this point. He was not satisfied, but he could say that they have launched an invasion of this world. Under Cornu's command, the two top general counsels and the four generals have already been revealed. The expansion of the Underworld Gate was on track, and a replacement for Cornu was on the horizon. The machinations of Pulcinella and the two remaining generals have come to fruition and the world is on the verge of ruin. All that remains is to reveal Cornu to the world.

That should be the case. There's nothing to reverse from here. I haven't overlooked anything...

After calmly analyzing the situation, he had come to the conclusion that there was nothing wrong with it. However, the anxiety of Amari Masahiko was correct. It was impossible to assume that Velgrynd had appeared.

"Human resistance is insignificant, but we must not be caught off guard. There are still some finishing touches to be made. Everyone pull together and get to work."

As if to shake off his uneasiness, Masahiko ordered everyone to do so.



After the main conference was over, the first thing Velgrynd did was to go to the main library. It is no exaggeration to say that the library had a huge collection of books on its vast floor. The reason why she went there is because there was something that was said in the meeting that bothered her. It was the names of nations and some of the names of people. For example, the Holy Arcia Empire. This seems to have some connection to the Kingdom of Arcia she led. Or the name of the president of the United States of Azalea George Hayes, apparently, is the same one she had contact with before the space-time leap.

If Velgrynd's memory was correct, his father was the owner of a piece of Rudra's soul. His name was Laurent Hayes, and she was with him from his youth until he died a mortal death. There are many other things she was curious about, but she had to look into those matters. If they were in the same world, she could be sure that they were the same nation and the same person, but there are also similar worlds in other dimensions.

Since there are clear differences in the origins and laws of the world, it is concluded that it is not a parallel world, but for some reason the names are similar. Again, the possibility of this being a coincidence was undeniable, so Velgrynd decided to look into the history. The first thing she looked up was the origins of the Holy Arcia Empire, and the description of the Kingdom of Arcia was confirmed. She recognized the name of the king and his chief advisors, and she was convinced that this world was descended from the Kingdom of Arcia. Next, she looked up George Hayes

“Oh, that’s right. His father’s name was Laurent Hayes. He was the president seven generations ago, so that must be it. So...George-kun could have been president, too.”

Velgrynd smiles, remembering the respect George had for his father. He wanted to be a great president, just like his father. Laurent died at the age of 62, while George was only 27 then. Today’s George is fifty-two years old, so in this space-time leap, she appeared 25 years later in the same world. Twenty-five years ago, Akira Sakura would have been alive and well, so someone with a piece of Rudra’s soul must have existed at the same time. That is a very rare pattern, but since the soul reacts strongly to death, it was not absolutely certain. That is why, while doubting the possibility of another person, she went to the large library in this way.

By the way, Laurent was surrounded and almost killed by a gang. It was there that Velgrynd was called in to rescue him, which is how she got to know Laurent. Remembering that, Velgrynd feels nostalgic. She switches her mind and resumes her research.

“George-kun had a little boy, right?”

Velgrynd gave her blessing, so there’s no doubt about it. She checked the names in the book of names and found his son’s name was listed. Emile Hayes—she was convinced that it was no longer doubtful because it matched the name she remembered. Velgrynd nods with satisfaction. It was then that she discovered an entry in the Biographical Directory that bothered her.

“Eh?! Was it my fault that Laurent’s marriage was delayed?”

She grumbled in dissatisfaction.

Don’t be ridiculous, she thought. Laurent Hayes had a shadow of a beautiful woman who had always followed him around, and so on, according to the biographical data. It was true, but Velgrynd was neither aware nor malicious in heart. Therefore, she dissatisfied with this. She always said he was free to fall in love, and she never meant to hold Laurent back. But there are certainly not many women who would court a man with such a beautiful woman at his side. By all accounts, it was Velgrynd who was responsible for the considerable delay in Laurent’s marriage.

“I don’t know who wrote this, but I’d like to complain about it...”

The author was long dead, but that may have been fortunate in a way. Even after she had finished her research, Velgrynd was enjoying her free time. There was no one to stop her. The only one who could, was Akira, but he was the one who let Velgrynd do what she wanted. Because he instinctively knew that this would lead to the most benign outcome. Of course, there were those who would get involved with Velgrynd. Not the soldiers who knew her true nature, but their wives. The Empress, Akira’s wife, was one of them.

“What a mess. A woman who doesn’t know the bones of any horse approaches His Majesty before he knows it.”

It was a fight from the very beginning. The Empress, from the Duke’s family, was fifty years old. The Empress was still full of energy at this time when the average age was about 60 years old due to the development of medicine and magic. Nevertheless, for Velgrynd, she was still pretty. This had happened a lot during the long time she had spent with Rudra.

“Oh my, you’ll ruin your pretty face if you get so angry. I think even Akira Sakura would

want his wife to always be beautiful.”

And then she refused to fight with her. And then she even patted the Empress’ face. It was so fast that the empress didn’t even have time to try to escape, but lo and behold, her skin was instantly rejuvenated. Before long, the empress’s skin was regaining its freshness.

“See, you’re beautiful now. But it’s important to keep it that way. I’m going to teach you a breathing technique to regulate your energy, so you can practice it properly.”

“—What?”

The Empress was stunned. This is exactly what it means to be unable to speak. The wives of the high ranking officials who followed her are looking at her the same way. After all, the Empress had regained her beauty right before their eyes. They were right to be amazed.

“You don’t think...that’s the secret of rejuvenation?”

They muttered to no one, but Velgrynd laughed and denied it.

“That’s not rejuvenation. This is just a way to revitalize your cells and make you look better. It doesn’t change your race, and your lifespan remains finite.”

There is a finite lifespan. Velgrynd explained that she only activated the cells by manipulating the spirit of life, and thus could not extend their lifespan, but this was misleading. From the perspective of Velgrynd, it is a small margin of error, but the life is extended. It makes the body healthier and cures it of most diseases. The energy intake would be more efficient and one would have a perfect resistance to aging (anti-aging). As a result, the life expectancy of the Empress was more than doubled. If you learn and practice breathing techniques from Velgrynd, you will live a longer life.

“Ryuo-sama, I’m afraid I was wrong about you.”

The Empress instantly fell in love with Velgrynd. Of course, the same was true of her attendants.

“Me too!”

“I as well!”

“I’d love for you to teach us how to breathe!”

They shouted out tried desperately to regain their youth.



It has been a few days since Velgrynd arrived in this world. Teaching the ladies breathing techniques and enjoying tea times, Velgrynd was gracefully at ease. The military, on the other hand, has been busy. Discussions with the leaders of each country were difficult, and the prospects for meetings were unclear. Due to lack of progress, the main conference has been canceled. Instead of wasting time on useless meetings, it has been decided that the effort should be focused on something constructive.

Akira Sakura has given his permission. So Velgrynd has no complaints. But the frustration is growing. They were losing valuable time. Even while doing this, it seems that the demons are ready, so if they don't do it early, they will not be able to hold international meetings. In that case, they would have to leave before humanity could come together.

Well, okay. If that happens, the war won't end even if we do something about the phantoms...

That would be a problem, Velgrynd thought melancholy. So she decided to help out a bit. After all, Velgrynd is a very caring person.

“Are the negotiations going well?”

While asking that question, she rushed into the Foreign Ministry's intelligence office. It's a quiet time in the afternoon, but the intelligence office is a scene of chaos. The bureaucrats are in a panic because of the intrusion. But Velgrynd was unconcerned.

“You're not supposed to be here. This is a restricted area...”

“Shut up. It's been three days now, and I wonder if any country has agreed to meet with you yet?”

“Well, I don't think so...”

The person in charge opens his mouth heavily. The reply from China was a conditional acceptance on the condition that the other nations would join. The same was true of the Great Roziam Dynasty, which was synonymous with reluctant refusal. This is because the United States of Azalea and the Holy Arcia Empire responded that this was not the case. Under these circumstances, it is out of the question for the leaders to go abroad. Even if they were holding a communications conference, they could not afford to do so, that was the truth of the matter.

“We are patiently trying to persuade them to do so.”

And the person in charge sounds annoyed. Hearing this, Velgrynd is puzzled.

“That will take a long time. It can't be helped, so let me help you with that a little bit.”

From the point of view of Masayuki and others, it was the very definition of tsundere. But the hard-headed and proud bureaucrats are not convinced.

“But—”

“If you listen silently, you'll be fine! I agree that you're strong and beautiful, but information strategy is our domain. I wish you'd keep your mouth shut.”

Even though he was angry, he had to admit that Velgrynd was beautiful. It was understandable that such a high official didn't want to be interfered with by amateurs, but this was a bad reaction.

“If it's left up to you, we won't be able to make a move in time for the enemy to come to us!”

And well, it made Velgrynd grumpy.

‘Just switch seats,’ Velgrynd said, and took her place in front of the communications equipment. She knows how to use it with a quick glance. She can easily make the connection to Azalea's U.S. intelligence in one motion.

〈You hear me, don't you?〉

Velgrynd calls out from above without even checking the other party. The other party won't

have to answer, but it responds uncomfortably.

〈You are persistent. I've told my superiors what your country wants, but the President is busy. Please understand that there is no time for negotiations.〉

Although it's an enemy country, it was the same in that they were used by demons. That's why they didn't despise them, and they handled it well. But they still couldn't get to the meeting because of the turmoil within the United States. The Imperial side knew that, too, and that's why they couldn't push it through. But that was none of Velgrynd's business.

〈Come on, call your president, George-kun.〉

〈I don't understand you. And it's not polite to mention the president's name so casually. You know he is busy here—〉

〈If you tell him that Velgrynd is calling, I'm sure he'll listen to you.〉

〈What did you say?〉

There was a hint of confusion on the other end, but Velgrynd cut the communication. Since the alleged enemy president of the United States of Azalea is acquainted with her, there is no way to take advantage of that. The rest is up to them. If she can get a message to President George, then they can move quickly. Otherwise, she would be going to go to them herself. That is where she was twenty-five years ago, so she has the coordinates for George's country. The space-time lapse was also reflected in the coordinates, so 'Spatial Transportation' could be performed without any problem.

If I don't hear from him after a day of waiting, I'll go to him.

So Velgrynd decided to approach the Holy Arcia Empire this time. She had an idea of how to handle those negotiations as well. She precisely manipulated their magical communication circuits and connected them to the channel in an instant. She called up the number and made her demands unilaterally.

〈Tell the emperor that he must do as I ask. Then I will provide you with another sacred artifact. Sword, spear, bow, whatever you wish. I, Velgrynd, will make you a promise so you should move quickly.〉

The person being told is puzzled. They don't remember being obliged to obey a woman who calls herself Velgrynd, but the call is on a formal international line. There was no option to ignore it. However, there was no way he could see the Emperor as a communications officer, even if he wanted to. The real intention was not to make a mess. But he still reported to his superiors. The reason being the word 'sacred artifact.'

In the Holy Arcia Empire, there was a fighting group that was well known in other lands. As a national force, they are known as the Seven Sacred Vessels. These seven possess abilities beyond human knowledge...but it is their weapons that are the most famous. Only when they are chosen to be owners of the weapons can they call themselves one of the Seven Vessels. This story has been handed down since the beginning of the nation's history and is known to all of Arcia's people. Of course, others knew it, but it was a great sin to speak of it so casually.

That's more than one man would ever say in a conversation on the phone between nations.

Since the contents of the communication were recorded as evidence, it was no wonder the war had escalated because of it. That is why there was no choice but to tell them. Anticipating this, Velgrynd's negotiating skills were evident. But it was awful for those who were listening.

"You! It was enough with the United States of Azalea. No, it's not good, but I would argue that you're not the only one responsible. But there's no excuse for the Holy Arcia Empire!"

"Yes, that's right! Moreover, using an alias is a brazen thing to do. It'll be found out, and we'll be in big trouble!"

Velgrynd had no intention of using a false name, but to an uninformed person it seemed like she was trying to deceive them. It was a misunderstanding, but Velgrynd was too lazy to explain, so she let it slide. Either way, it's up to them. There was no point in making a fuss here.



That's how Velgrynd finished her preparations. Ignore the complaints. Gracefully, She prepared a cup of tea and enjoyed it while waiting for word. The Ministry of Foreign Affair's chief of intelligence fell silent, looking furious. Depending on how the other side responds, he'd do whatever it took to blame Velgrynd.

I'll give you credit for being strong, girl. But I'm not fooled. I kept silent because I was in front of His Majesty, but I imagine that she has a mind to deceive us with her grandiose lies while everyone's minds are weak.

He was engulfed in fumes during the main conference, but in retrospect, Velgrynd's story is too wild to be true. If they are true, there is no hope left for mankind. No matter how powerful Velgrynd is, they are no match for the mythical army. With that in mind, the official's hostility toward the Velgrynd was growing. It was the flip side of his fear, but he was unaware of it. He just drowned his fears in anger. And then he waits for a while.

«Velgrynd? It's me, Velgrynd!»

The call was from the United States of Azalea. This is surprisingly fast compared to usual. And there's no doubt in her mind who the caller is...

«Oh, George-kun, right? I hear that you're the president now? I wish Laurent could have seen you as a grown-up.»

It was President George himself.

«Oh, you really are Velgrynd! I'm so glad. I didn't think I'd ever hear from you again.»

Those who were listening to the conversation were amazed beyond words.

Ah?! Wasn't 'Velgrynd' a fake name? No, that's not important. I seriously don't understand how Ryuo-dono could know the President...

The senior official was also confused. He was about to dismiss her as an insolent liar, and now he's developed respect for her. Velgrynd didn't care what people thought.

«So, George-kun. I'm sorry, but we have to get to the important stuff first and can catch up later. Do you understand the situation?»

«Yes, you're right. I've got something I want to talk to you about too. Can you listen to me after this matter?»

«Of course. You're Laurent's pride and joy, so you're like a child to me too.»

«Thank you. That's a relief to hear. So, it's quite a situation, but I think we'll have to reconcile it.»

«I agree. So, then, can you agree to what we ask of you?»

«Not a problem. When will the meeting take place?»

«I'll check with Rudra—the Emperor—and get back to you.»

«Well, so there was another one at the same time as my father, wasn't there? All right. I can't wait right here, but I'll make arrangements to be available at any time.»

And so, the call ended. Velgrynd had successfully made an appointment with the President. It wasn't long before word from Arcia arrived.

«Is Velgrynd-sama there?»

«It's me.»

«Excuse me. I am Bright, First Chair of the Seven Vessels of the Holy Arcia Empire. I have the honor of speaking with Velgrynd-sama, but I would like to confirm one point.»

«...What is it?»

«Is it true that you are the Goddess herself?»

«What? What's the point of that question?»

He was talking about how he was going to find out if Velgrynd's words were true or false.

«Or is there anyone still alive who can judge the truth of my words?»

«No, that's not...»

«In the first place, I didn't think the king wouldn't respond to my name when I mentioned it. It's pathetic. Shin's descendants have become so small.»

«Shin? You mean, His Majesty Shin, the Emperor? You are insulting the Imperial Family of Arcia—»

«And I've been wondering, why are you called the Seven Sacred Vessels? I left you twelve mythical-grade vessels. I don't think it's true, but were they lost or stolen? I mean, what makes you think that there isn't someone out there who's qualified to be a mastermind?»

Bright's anger fizzled out. The chief of the Seven Vessels was convinced at this point. The woman who answered his questions, the one who claimed to be Velgrynd, was undoubtedly the true goddess.

I remember hearing from my master that there were twelve sacred artifacts. This is a true story that has only survived by oral tradition, so the one who knows this must be the real one.

There used to be twelve sacred artifacts. Because they were a national asset and trump card, it was stipulated that only seven would be disclosed. But that doesn't mean there are twelve owners of the artifacts. As Velgrynd pointed out, there were only eight of them at the moment. In the more than four thousand years of history of the Holy Arcia Empire, three of

its sacred artifacts had been lost. One betrayal and two non-returnees. Now there are only nine artifacts left in Arcia's possession. And now there is only one secret member of the emperor's secret army, and one masterless artifact still languishing in a treasure trove of dead treasure.

The fact that Velgrynd had guessed so well upset Bright. But that's not the only reason. All Bright had to do was to hear Velgrynd's voice and he was overwhelmed. It was more that he sensed that Velgrynd's voice was real. So, regardless of what Velgrynd said, Bright bowed down to the communications equipment. It didn't matter if he didn't see her or not. It was his respect for Velgrynd that made him do it.

«I'm sorry, Goddess. I will immediately send a message to Emperor Arcia and inform him of your request!»

«...Oh, really? Well in that case, it's okay to entrust it to you, so move quickly.»

«Haha!»

Velgrynd wasn't quite ready to complain yet, but she allowed Bright to go ahead with her goal. Thus, the Holy Arcia Empire agreed to her request.



“Well then, next is the Great Roziam Dynasty.”

With that muttered, Velgrynd once again turned on the communications equipment and channeled it to the Foreign Intelligence Agency of the Great Roziam Dynasty. However, the signal that was supposed to connect was blocked by some kind of interference.

“That's odd. You there, when was the last time you contacted the Great Roziam Dynasty?”

The designated representative replies hastily.

“In the early hours of the morning today! We've been in regular contact six times a day, day and night.”

Since it was wartime, the window was open regardless of time difference. This is an action in accordance with the agreement of each country, and it is a measure to negotiate quickly according to the war situation. Normally they would negotiate a ceasefire, but this time they are using it to share information on the common enemy, the demon. Since both sides were in a position to allow the military to run amok, they were also trying to understand the current situation when considering the timings to explain to the people.

“There was nothing unusual in that case, was there?”

“Yes, not particularly...”

There was no progress, but there was nothing unusual. The person in charge replied, puzzled. Now is just the time for a regular lunchtime call. It's unlikely that the other party is not at home, and since the communication facility is not in one place, it's unlikely that the machine is malfunctioning. Certainly, there was a high probability that something out of the ordinary

had occurred, even the person in charge had come to the conclusion. Under such circumstances, Velgrynd is operating normally.

Magical interference is just not on this world's level. In other words, it's safe to assume that the demon has done something. But they're still unlucky to have done it when I'm on to them. No. It's different. Rudra's luck must be working. That's my Rudra!

She was responding with happy thoughts. Well, magic and witchcraft are the norm in this world, and it is difficult to use magic that can interfere with the laws of the world. So Velgrynd's guess was indeed correct. However, complimenting Rudra here was an overestimate. This is because the current Akira Sakura does not have such power, so this situation was just a coincidence. In other words, the phantoms were unlucky. The plan for the invasion was guaranteed to fall apart once Velgrynd intervened in earnest.

Velgrynd quickly manipulated the communication equipment and drew a precise magic circle in the air. Two magic circles no larger than thirty centimeters in diameter illuminated the communications equipment with a mysterious glow. Velgrynd's magic was transformed into radio waves that are delivered to the land of the Great Roziam Dynasty at a distance. There it became an interference wave again, instantly destroying the sabotage the phantom was attempting to create. To an ordinary person—No, even to the master-level sorcerers of this world—this was a feat beyond comprehension.

«Is there someone here? Please tell me if there is anyone to reply...»

«We're connected! Help, a demon has invaded the royal palace! They cut off all means of communication to the outside world, and we were at a loss!»

«Don't panic, fool. We belong to the Great Japanese Empire. I'm not saying that we won't cooperate, but we can't just have you asking for help out of the blue.»

It was a valid argument. The Great Roziam soldiers have regained their composure after hearing Velgrynd's response. There was a brief pause, as if they were consulting. Then they were replaced by a calmer voice and the conversation resumed.

«I'm sorry about earlier. I am Sergei, Director of Foreign Intelligence of the Grand Roziam Dynasty. At the risk of sounding disgraceful, we need your support. We are sending out a series of dispatches to the various Great Roziam locations, but nobody is responding. Will your country please contact us?»

If she was willing, Sergei will give an encryption code that will lead to various military bases. The resistance in the royal palace continues, but the power of the demon was overwhelming. They're hiding out for now, but it's clear that if they don't do something, they'll be traced back to their refuge. She knows that if that happens, she won't be able to protect the royals he took out. That's why Sergei has decided to send for reinforcements from all over the country to help escape from the demons in the chaos. Now, the fate of the Great Roziam Dynasty rested on the Empire's response. And yet...

«I told you, I don't want you to make arbitrary demands.»

«Wait, if you help us—»

«Calm down. I don't care about your situation. All you have to do is nod to my request.»

She doesn't listen to people's requests, but rather conveys her requests. Moreover, Velgrynd says she only accepts consent. That attitude was very Velgrynd-like.

«What's the matter with you...»

«I will convey your request. I will hold an international conference to ascertain the will of the world, and you will bring royalty or someone in command to it. If you do, I will help you.»

A question should have been asked about this, but for some reason Sergei believed it. He glanced around the room and saw the noblemen who huddled there, needing to be protected.

It's my job to protect these men. Now—

Sergei understood that there was no other way. Trusting the word of a stranger is a folly he would never normally take. But now, even if he was deceived by those words, he still had no time to waste.

In terms of risk, it's no different, whether I believe it or not. Then in the end, it's fun to dream of hope. I apologize if I implicate the noblemen of the realm in my own stupidity.

But Sergei is prepared to do so.

«Forgive me, I know you think this is a stupid time to ask, but it is requested that we hold an international meeting. Would it be possible for His Majesty to participate?»

«I will.»

It was the highest authority in the room who answered that.

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Emperor Magellan of the Great Russian Dynasty, 35 years old. Although still young, he has been on the throne for ten years. He was so ambitious that he decided to invade China to take over the northern continent as absolute ruler. Of course, there were objections from the military, but there were also many bellicose opinions, and the war began with Magellan's will be taking precedence...

Magellan also suffered a major setback here. He was tormented by a sense of helplessness in the face of an enemy that could not be measured by human common sense. After all this time, Magellan regrets his decision. He had launched a campaign against China, but it had led to political instability. Magellan had a penchant for luxury, but not for misrule. The people would not object to the emperor living a noble life if their lives were relieved.

But the war had changed the situation. It would deprive their people of their rich granaries. They want to take an ice-free harbor for national defense. What began as a policy of only looking out for their own interests turned into a disaster when the Holy Arcia Empire invaded the Great Roziam Dynasty. They were caught between a rock and a hard place. By the time the demon's plan had worked, the situation was already too chaotic to recover from.

It was so foolish when I think about it now. I shouldn't have listened to his words at that time...

It was true that the words of his confidant at the time had turned Magellan's attention to the war. It was later revealed that his confidant was taken over by a demon. Demons are mys-

terious beings who tend to enjoy causing humanity to fight each other and leading the world to destruction rather than destroying it with their own hands. That's why Magellan is still alive.

That demon was fearsome. We can't win. Even with Pulcinella, we would still be defeated.

Magellan shuddered as he remembered the smiling demon with a confused look on his face. Even Mystery Monk Pulcinella, their lifeline, was now in the hands of the enemy. That's why there are riots in the capital. It's true that it is wartime now and there's unrest among the people. But the country hadn't been exposed to the fire, and the food supply hadn't been cut off. The situation was not quite rioting, but it was getting worse. It was a Phantom who encouraged the followers of Pulcinella. Now it was no longer possible for the Imperial Guard to protect the palace alone. With the danger outside the palace, it seemed only a matter of time before they were caught. So Magellan had no choice but to nod in agreement with the enemy's offer without hope.

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“Understood!”

Sergei saluted at Magellan's words. Then he turned to the communications equipment and resumed his conversation with Velgrynd.

«I approve of everything. But unfortunately—»

The Great Roziam Dynasty is in the middle of an emergency. Even if he wanted to, he couldn't go...and Sergei tried to tell her. They will help if they accept the meeting, so they will send reinforcements. If the Empire moves quickly to rescue them, there's a chance they can get out of this themselves. No, Sergei did not want to risk his own life...but he knew that the imperial family, the symbol of the dynasty, must be saved at all costs. But then a surprising thing happens. Velgrynd said she would help. If so, it was bound to be a fixed future.

«Good. I'm glad to see that you're not an idiot. Okay, a gate will appear there, so please go through it and come over here immediately.»

As soon as Velgrynd finished speaking, the space in front of Sergei's eyes became distorted. And on the other side of that chasm was the place where Velgrynd sat. This was the 'Spacetime Connection,' a supernatural phenomenon that connected two different spatial coordinates without regard for distance.

“ “ “No way!” ” ”

That was the moment when the hearts of everyone there, except for Velgrynd, became one. There was no hierarchy of who was the best. They all understood that this woman—Velgrynd—was the only one who absolutely could not be made an enemy.



“I mean, what? Why are the Great Roziam people here?”

“No, no, no, no, is this a dream? I mean, it hurts...”

Some of those who could not acknowledge reality even tried to pinch their own cheeks.

“Unbelievable. According to the literature, there are some people in the God/Buddha class who handle transference spells, but...”

There were those who tried their best to analyze the phenomenon that had just occurred, but their understanding was not up to par. It couldn’t be helped since it was an unimaginable supernatural power, such as connecting spaces separated by a distance.

“In the blink of an eye, the three countries...”

The best of them may have been the ones who shifted their thinking in a practical direction. Anyway...

“Goddess, you are indeed a goddess!”

The bureaucrats in the Foreign Ministry’s Intelligence Bureau were stunned by Velgrynd’s skill and ability. At this point, no one could go against Velgrynd. The dignitaries have carefully cultivated the respect they’ve developed for Velgrynd and are now turning themselves to her. They are ready to be loyal dogs.

“The only one left is the Chinese, but now that the three countries have agreed to meet, the terms have been fulfilled, right?”

“Oh, yes, that’s right!”

“So now you guys can negotiate on your own.”

“ “ “Of course!” ” ”

Of course, no one is foolish enough to refuse here. The bureaucrats are proud of themselves and promise to negotiate a successful deal with the Chinese. Velgrynd nodded. Then she turned her gaze to the stunned Great Roziam party.

“Well, is that everyone? I’m sorry, but if you’re asking me to rescue anyone other than the ones in that room, that’s outside the contract. But hey, if we can destroy the demons in a short period of time, I think we can get them all out.”

Those from the camp could only nod in agreement. It’s true that there were others in the palace who hadn’t escaped. But they were the first to give up on rescuing them. They couldn’t be so foolish as to pass the blame on to Velgrynd now.

“Thank you for your help.”

Quickly recovering from the chaos, Sergei thanked her. Magellan hears this, and also thinks it’s time to thank her.

“I thank you as well. And when all this is over, I promise to reward you as you wish.”

Hearing this, Velgrynd snorted disinterestedly. Even if it was the Great Emperor, Velgrynd was arrogant.

“I don’t want it. You can’t give me what I want, anyway. More importantly, I hope you’ll cooperate well with me on future missions.”

“That’s...no, of course.”

Magellan was miffed when someone laughed at him for not wanting a reward. But he didn’t

have the temper to be angry here. Over here, the status of the Emperor of the Great Roziam Dynasty does not mean much. He understood that he was only helped because he was useful.

“Can you at least tell me your name, my benefactor?”

“You can call me Ryuo.”

“Okay. Ryuo-dono please continue to look after us.”

“Yes, nice to meet you. Well then, I’ll have you contact me when the date for the meeting is set, so you can rest easy until then.”

Velgrynd tells them so. That attitude is exactly like an Empress. In this place, she was the law. Quickly, a bureaucrat rises and leaves the room. He’s gone to get a room ready for the unexpected guests. Another bowed to Magellan and gave him directions. They were to wait in the parlor until the rooms were ready. Even though they hadn’t had any meetings, the roles were divided up fluidly. Such coordination is a great thing. For once, Velgrynd took a moment to review the Foreign Ministry’s intelligence officers. Moreover, at that time...

Sensitive to see the opportunity, the most prominent official gives tea to Velgrynd.

“Ryuo-dono, there’s not only black tea, but also green tea here!”

He didn’t waste time waiting for a reply from the Chinese group and was intent on appealing to her.

“Oh, you’re so witty.”

“Thank you! For me, Yamamoto Kanji¹⁸, your words alone are enough to fill me up!”

The high ranking official, Yamamoto continued to flirt with her with all his might. It was also a talent, so much so that his subordinates were impressed by it.

“It’s delicious. It has a sweet, fluffy aroma, but it has a refreshing aftertaste.”

“I ordered it from my favorite store, and I’m very proud of it.”

“I like it.”

“In that case, you might enjoy the tea sweets here along with other items.”

Yamamoto took out an elegantly sweet raw chocolate fondant. In this wartime era, it was an extremely luxurious item. Yamamoto had to ask for money and power to prepare it for himself, but he offered it to Velgrynd. It was very good, so Velgrynd was satisfied.

“Yamamoto Kanji, wasn’t it? I’ll remember that name.”

“Haha! I thankfully and happily accept!”

It was Velgrynd who remembered Yamamoto’s name, even though she didn’t care about anyone who wasn’t interesting. She had a surprising weakness for bribes. But money would not have been the motive, so it could be said that Yamamoto’s tact was a quick win. And so, it took a while to wait.

“China is responding! They are willing to accept the meeting.”

The long-awaited reply was an acceptance. And now, the meeting of the five heads of state was to take place.

¹⁸山本莞爾 = やまもとかんじ = Yamamoto Kanji.



“What, is that the truth?”

“Yes. I wouldn’t tell you a lie.”

Akira Sakura was astonished to receive the report from Velgrynd. A meeting between the two leaders, which was thought to be impossible, turned out to be a simple affair.

As usual, unfathomable. We are fortunate to have this woman on our side, but relationships built on favor are far too distorted to be reliable.

Depending on Velgrynd’s mood, a good relationship could change. Akira Sakura thought that was scary. A relationship of trust is an accumulation. If you do too much, the other person will be angry, or even forgiven, and so on. It is the same between nations, and if you do not share certain values, it is difficult to get along. If the opponent is an invader such as the phantoms, a conversation will not be established, so they will be recognized as an enemy without any questions. It’s a shame that an intelligent life form has to resort to violence, but they have to draw the line at some point. However, in the case of Velgrynd...

“Good for you, Rudra. I’ll set up the meeting as well, so what time would be convenient for you?”

It’s obvious that Velgrynd has full confidence in him, and that’s why Akira Sakura feels he has to brace himself. A favor for a favor. That’s the conclusion Akira Sakura came to. He has no choice but to believe in Velgrynd, so there is no need to hesitate. He can only return the gratitude he feels with all his might. That’s the only way to repay Velgrynd, Akira Sakura thought.

“Thank you, Velgrynd. I hope you will continue to help us.”

“Ufufu. It’s okay, don’t worry about it.”

Velgrynd smiles and looks truly happy. To her, Rudra’s happiness is her own, so Akira Sakura’s response was the right thing to do. The date and time of the meeting is set for the next day, after lunch. Since measures against demons need to be made as soon as possible, there is no time to make extensive adjustments. Therefore, it was Akira Sakura’s decision to prioritize efficiency.

He doesn’t care about the time difference, or even the convenience of the other side. He told the other nations that this was the case and obtained their approval. It was hard on the Foreign Ministry’s intelligence department, but Velgrynd couldn’t have cared less.

“It was Yamamoto. Good work.”

You could say that he was giving it the utmost consideration, just because he labored so hard. However, it’s not Yamamoto who worked hard, it’s the bureaucrats who are really poor...

As if it’s just their job, and they shouldn’t complain, Velgrynd announces her next request.

“Then make sure the hall is ready by tomorrow morning. Be solemn, so as not to embarrass

His Majesty.”

“Yes, I’d be happy to!”

Velgrynd pretends to be quite unreasonable, but Yamamoto had no choice but to accept. On the contrary, he even seemed slightly pleased. It may have opened a strange door, but that was also not Velgrynd’s concern.

“Oh yeah, just move a set of communication equipment to a slightly larger room.”

“What do you mean?”

Since the meeting was to be held by correspondence, Yamamoto had planned to prepare it in the first conference room instead of the larger room. He couldn’t read the intent of Velgrynd’s statement and couldn’t help but ask back.

“Asking the others to come here, just like you invited the Great Roziam party. Wouldn’t that save us a lot of effort and waste?”

“Huh?”

It wasn’t a matter of opinion, but rather an unorthodox suggestion. That’s what Yamamoto thinks, but he understands somewhere in his reasoning that it’s better if it’s possible.

“What, do you have a problem with that?”

“No, no! I’ll have it ready to go right away!”

“Yeah? Well, good luck with that.”

Velgrynd recovered, smiled, and left. The remaining Yamamoto looked around at the bureaucrats.

“What do we do now?”

“Idiot! Of course, we’ll do as we’re told! We’ll review the settings.”

“Understood!”

“And in parallel, move all the communication equipment to Conference Room 2!”

“Yes, sir!”

The long night at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Intelligence had begun.



It was the fateful day for the survival of mankind. In Conference Room 2, which had changed overnight, Velgrynd nodded with satisfaction. In front of her was a set of communication equipment and a plush chair. Soft cushions were provided for her comfort. The spacious room had been cleared of extraneous equipment and was ready to receive the visiting heads of state. Snacks and beverages are available near the wall, and there are several waiters standing in line. The furnishings were elegant and carefully considered so as not to diminish the dignity of the kingdom.

“I like it. You did well, Yamamoto.”

“Hah! Thank you. Just to hear you say that, I, Yamamoto, feel like I’m in heaven!”

A man who specializes in brown-nosing. Yamamoto Kanji. Through the supervision of a once-in-a-lifetime supervisor, he succeeded in gaining recognition from Velgrynd. Incidentally, this is truly an achievement, since Velgrynd's eyes are unusually discerning. Even the military officials who came to check on the situation were impressed by how well he managed to do this in just one night. Even the subordinates who had responded to Yamamoto's recklessness were beaming with pride.

"Well, we're running out of time, so let's get started."

Velgrynd sits in the chair. With the grace of a dominatrix, yet still swift. She handled the communication equipment. The first caller is the United States of Azalea.

«George-kun, how are you?»

«Oh, yeah. It's good to hear from you, how nostalgic. Everything is as usual, so it's a mess. But I'm relieved that you haven't changed, if that's strange to say.»

President George is understandably confused. After all, he was coming to the Empire through the 'Spacetime Connection' without even bothering to say hello on the phone. Even the Azalean government ministers who came with him can't believe their eyes.

"Ufufu. I couldn't have changed. It may have been twenty-five years for you, but for me, we just parted ways a few days ago."

"Oh, I see."

Velgrynd and George are chatting about the past. Yamamoto moves so as not to interrupt their conversation. With a casual glance, the servers begin to work. Even the confused Azaleans seemed to take a breather and their heads start to spin. Beside them, Velgrynd was having a lively conversation.

"It's been a long time ago. Thanks to that man, I didn't have to be bored every day."

"I heard that you always went along with my dad's big legalities."

"Yeah. The day before the typhoon, 'It'll clear up tomorrow' was a big deal."

"I know, that story. He told me that story over and over. Thanks to you, you really made it better."

"Well. There was a baseball game that day, and the neighborhood kids were looking forward to it. He was always teasing them and lying about it all the time. Maybe that's why. 'Wouldn't it be nice if my words came true once in a while?' he said. You know, I was really surprised how it made me work."

Everyone was struck by the story that the typhoon had disappeared.

"You're kidding..."

"You don't even want to hide that you're not normal."

Some couldn't hide their surprise. Without realizing it, or even if they did, they didn't care, the conversation between Velgrynd and the President continued.

"Is that so? All Dad said was that 'the kids were freaked out and it was super funny,' so I never knew that was the reason..."

"Uh-huh. The kids were so excited, too. The players got all worked up that day, and we had an oversized home run."

“I’m sure that’s true. My kids love baseball, too.”

At this point, Velgrynd noticed that George’s expression had become cloudy. It was a subtle change that a normal person wouldn’t notice, but Velgrynd noticed it because she could read other people’s emotions from their thoughts.

“Speaking of which, how is Emile-chan doing?”

Emile Hayes, the name of George’s son. Velgrynd deduces from her conversation with George that Emile is the reason for George’s anxiety. So she decided to use his name as a sounding board for George to talk to.

“That’s amazing, Velgrynd. I’m no match for you, you know everything...”

“That’s not true. I’m just worried about you, you’re like my son.”

“Fufu, thanks. I guess I’m not a good person to talk to about this kind of thing, as a representative of the state. Still, you’re the only person I know who can help me. Can you help me?”

“Of course. Because you’re the son of my beloved Laurent Hayes, the genius scammer.”

George bursts into tears when he hears this. Then, after muttering to help his son, he started talking about the situation. Things have gotten pretty ugly, from what is heard. The US Department of Defense is already aware that the US military in Azalea has been hijacked by the Phantom. Worst of all, Fleet Commander-in-Chief: David Reagan has sent a messenger with a demand to the government. The demand is that the United States government accept the demon’s control. The demon’s goal is not to end humanity. They want to rule this world and build their own paradise. That’s why they thought that if they destroyed the organization that governed the nation, it would be too much trouble to deal with afterwards.

“—That’s why they told us to follow them. That way, they wouldn’t take away the government officials’ free will, and they’d continue to guarantee our safety.”

“Hmm. And what if you don’t give in to the demands?”

“They’re going to send the Grand South Sea Fleet to attack the capital of the United States. And at the same time, they’re going to tell the people exactly what’s happening. That will destroy the prestige of the government and cause uncontrollable panic. The truth is that we have no idea what to do.”

Given the choices, the opinions are divided. But whichever choice they make, the phantom has the advantage. Besides, thinks Velgrynd. The demons’ goal is to enslave mankind. They want to keep bodies to replace their own in case their numbers grow. It would be better to have slaves under control, but there are five spheres of influence in this world. The destruction of one of them would only serve as an example to the rest of the world. Compared to the total number of phantoms, there are more humans than there are phantoms. Even if the human race was reduced to less than a tenth, there would still be enough dependents.

“I see. China must be in a similar situation, and the Great Roziam Dynasty must have stubbornly stuck to its demands, and the royal family is even in danger of extinction due to the riots. In this way, the Empire was in a relatively better situation.”

“It’s only a matter of time. The combined fleet of our country and the Chinese will be here soon, won’t they?”

“Yeah, I’m here, so it’s not a problem. I’d rather hear about Emile-chan.”

When Velgrynd let the subject of the Grand Fleet slide, Yamamoto and the rest of the Imperial Bureaucracy and Azalea’s government ministers made ridiculous expressions. But no one interrupted them as they waited for George to speak. They were afraid to interrupt, lest they might offend Velgrynd. At this point everyone knew that Velgrynd was a woman not to be crossed.

“The messenger who came was Emile. He had the same face as my son, the same knowledge, but he had a very evil look on his face...”

Emile had grown up and become a soldier. And unfortunately, he had been sent to the fleet.

“It’s okay, George. Calm down. What did I tell you?”

Velgrynd smiles when she hears the story, saying it’s okay. It was a perfect, unflappable, ladylike smile. That smile apparently had a calming effect on the viewer’s mind.

“Haha, always so soothing, right?—I remember that, Velgrynd.”

As soon as George regained his composure, he remembered his duties as president.

“Good job. Rest assured, Emile-chan will be safe with me. And I’ll protect the honor of the United States as well.”

“Thank you—if you say that, I can be relieved. Please, save the United States...and my son.”

“Leave it to me. We’ve got a couple of months until the demon is fully assimilated into human form. Emile-chan will be fine. And by the way, so will the other generals.”

“It makes me feel better to hear that. But it’s been three weeks since I was dispatched, so I don’t have a lot of days left until the grace period...”

“It’s okay. That’s why we’re meeting today.”

George nodded widely.

“All right. I promise to cooperate to the best of my ability. Let’s hope the meetings will be fruitful.”

With that, George stands up. The Azalea government ministers who had been watching in silence followed suit. The discussion is over. Yamamoto gave the signal and an usher immediately opened the door.

“Then, I will show you to your waiting room.”

Everyone seemed relieved to hear Velgrynd’s strong words. With words of thanks, they left the room as they were led away.



Velgrynd's next call was from the Holy Arcia Empire. An incomprehensible 'Spacetime Connection' had brought them across the sea. If you imagine their feelings, it's impossible not to get confused.

"It's a secret place that only a few people know, so how can...why..."

One of the ministers muttered. Velgrynd, overhearing this, snorts boringly.

"If you don't want to be located, use 'Isolation' or 'Barrier' whenever possible to cut off all contact with the outside world. Even then, air currents and such will leak out, so it's probably impossible for you to hide."

"Communicating with the outside world... Do you mean you traced a radio signal to the location where we were hiding?"

One of the young men spoke up. Because he was carrying a mythical-grade bow, Velgrynd realized that he must be one of the Seven Vessels. But she's not particularly interested, so she just says, "That's right."

The Arcia crowd is in an uproar, but it's not Velgrynd who has to deal with it. It's like a joke to her, so she doesn't make a fuss about it. And there was another who was arrogant.

"So you're Velgrynd. I am Zang, The Emperor of Arcia of this world. You're the one who claims to be Caldina, the goddess who gave blessings to Emperor Shin, my grandfather, right?"

A handsome young man in his early 20s with blond hair and blue eyes and a well-proportioned body. He was Zang Yulan Dorte Arcia, the apex emperor of the Holy Arcia Empire.

"Caldina? Oh, that's what I was called. I've heard it said that it's awe-inspiring to call me by my true name, or something like that, but I didn't think that the nickname was more established...maybe my real name isn't in the records?"

"You still won't admit it? How laughable! Or did you think that your good looks would absolve you of your delusion?"

He chalked up Velgrynd's statement as a lie and refused to listen to it. That attitude was a big problem. If the top brass made a mistake, an apology often wouldn't suffice. If this was a subordinate's outburst, then that person alone could be held responsible. Or the higher-ups might be able to get away with an apology. But if the chief executive makes a wrong choice, the consequences may be irreversible.

Bright, the first seat of the Seventh God Vessel, almost cried when he heard Zang's words.

You idiot! After all the explanations I've given you, you have no idea how crazy Velgrynd-sama is? Before that, if you were to see a supernatural phenomenon that had just occurred in front of you, you should know that it was obviously God's work!

He was in a panic. Velgrynd's 'Spacetime Connection' is obviously impossible for a normal person. If not a goddess, then it's no doubt the closest thing to one who is able to do it. What was the point of offending such an opponent? There was one more person who was troubled by this situation. It was Yamamoto Kanji.

Oh my god, the Lord of Arcia is an unbelievable jerk! What should we do now? If nothing is done, the fearsome Ryuo-dono will become angry...

Since it was not just another person's affair, Yamamoto racked his brain frantically. The first thing he did was to send a message to his aides.

"Bring His Majesty to me as soon as possible."

"But that's not—"

"Fool! I know this is impolite, but only His Majesty can stop Ryuо-dono!"

That was so true that even his aides are struck dumb by his opinion.

"Yes!"

As soon as he whispered his approval, the aide scurried away. Yamamoto Kanji, normally a pompous buffoon, but he had a real talent for spotting people who should not be crossed. He used this ability without regret to prepare for this crisis. While everyone around him felt threatened, one man was at ease in making that statement.

"Kukku-kukku, are you speechless, knowing that I'm not so easily fooled? Well, that's just as well. A scammer like you might not know this, but I'm not like the rest of the foolish ones. I, too, have been approved by the gods! The seventh seat of the Seven Sacred Vessels. That is the one you've been trying to take in! The true identity of the person who did it!!"

Zang said proudly. These words were true, and at Zang's waist hung a shining mythical-grade sword. Of course, Velgrynd also knows. She was just too dumbfounded to speak before that.

"—You're lying, right? How could you react like that even when you see me... Did Shin's descendants really give birth to such an idiot?"

At the same time as she lamented, it occurred to Velgrynd that she hadn't responded to his call. This Zang didn't trust Velgrynd when she didn't respond to his call. Of course, a king should be skeptical, so she wouldn't complain about that. But she can only say it's a shame in more ways than one if he doubts his opponent when told something only he knows. If you were told a secret and you still didn't believe it, then you were out of the question. If you believe the secret was leaked, then your ability to maintain confidentiality must be questioned. Either way, you're out. Lack of cognitive ability was a bigger problem than being small for a king.

"Idiot? Did you mean me?"

"It's a pity you can't understand such things. But it sounds like you've got more than 4,000 years of history behind you, so I suppose it's no wonder your bloodline has deteriorated."

Velgrynd chuckles. She was appalled by Zang's outburst, but she was not so narrow-minded as to be offended by it. But Zang was furious.

"Hmph, you still haven't stopped acting, and even taunted me. Foolishness. Then I will ask you! You not only deceive the goddess's name with impudence, but you claim to be able to recreate her deeds, don't you? If you say you can make the sacred artifacts, let's see it. However...prepare yourself. And if you fail to do so, that's when your disguise will come undone!"

"That's so troublesome!"

"Hmph! I don't want excuses. You spoke of something impossible, and you will pay for it. What? I'm not going to kill you. It seems that you are good at what you do, and have some

ability. You can rest assured that you will be kept as my companion.”

Zang talks stupid nonsense all the way. Everyone aside from Velgrynd and Zang watched with bated breath to see what would happen. Although Zang’s words and actions were clearly wrong, they saw a glimmer of hope in the patience of Velgrynd, who was quick to anger. Everyone looks at Velgrynd, praying that this story will be settled.

“You can’t do it anyway—”

“There’s a lot to say, but oh well. It was promised, so I’ll prepare it for you.”

As if to interrupt Zang’s words, Velgrynd made a blue dragon sword appear. It was created with ‘Matter Creation’ by solidifying her own magic element.

“This is fine. You guys may not be able to handle it anyway, but it has unmistakable mythical-grade capabilities.”

“Wha—?!”

Zang received it unexpectedly and was mesmerized by the brilliance of the Blue Dragon Sword. He didn’t need to doubt Velgrynd’s words, it had a real glow to it. As a king, Zang was not entirely incompetent. Although he is arrogant, he is not a tyrant and has the decency to listen to his subordinates. Since this was the first summit meeting of the five great powers, he was more stubborn than usual to avoid being stepped on. It was his revenge. It was only then that Zang realized his mistake.

Really? No way. But that’s crazy, right? How could a mythical character from thousands of years ago exist in the real world?!

And much to his consternation, Zang is confused. Perhaps because he was related to the man who was Rudra, Velgrynd had a soft spot in her heart for Zang. If this were an unrelated person, the negotiations would have been over long ago. It was more than likely that blood would have been spilled. And yet, Zang didn’t realize his good fortune. On the contrary—

—Wait, what? If the mythical goddess is real, then she deserves me! Yes, yes, that’s right. If I can have the goddess, all of my problems will be over!

As if he had just come up with a brilliant plan of recovery, he did something outrageous.

“Kukkukku, is that so! O goddess, Velgrynd! Have you crossed time and space to meet me? Love me? Very well. I will return the feeling. I will take you as my wife and swear that I will love you!”

In front of the crowd, he burst into multiple misunderstandings. This confuses Velgrynd.

“Huh? What kind of joke are you making?”

“Don’t be embarrassed. It’s wartime now. I can’t show you now, but when everything’s settled, I’ll make you my queen. I heard the emperor didn’t have any children with the goddess, but do you think she’ll have any with me? If we can bring in the blood of the goddess, Arcia will be ready for a time of further development!”

Velgrynd was speechless at the astonishingly rapid pace in which he was running. She had never been so insulted before and was at a loss for words. It’s not that she can’t keep up with it, or that she didn’t want to understand it...

It was proof that even a person who was good at calculation could lose their heads. Aside

from Velgrynd, the audience's reactions were mixed. It was the people of the 'Seven Sacred Vessels' who paled.

Stop, stop it, Your Majesty—!!

One wanted to scream at him, but held back and signaled to the ministers with his eyes. He instinctively knew that this was going to be a terrible thing if nothing was done. How could a man hope to bend the goddess to his will? Zang must be silenced before the goddess' punishment was doled out. And yet the ministers wouldn't act. Or, rather, they couldn't. The blank expression on Velgrynd's face made her good looks stand out.

And it felt very scary. It was because his heart was dependent on his own actions. He couldn't expect the ministers to do anymore. The Seven Sacred Vessels grew impatient and turned to their leader. And so Bright is left to bemoan his misfortune. The Empire was no stranger to this. The bureaucrats of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' intelligence department, who were nervous before the meeting, thought that the Emperor of Arcia would not be such a fool. That was gutsy of him, but if Velgrynd got angry, everyone would be collateral damage. They all agreed that they didn't want that to happen.

"What do you think? It's a wonderful proposal! Even if you spend the rest of your life, you won't be loved much by an old man who doesn't have much life left in him. I, on the other hand, would spend every night..."

"What?"

The air in the room froze. Everyone realized that what they had feared had come true. Velgrynd's anger was taken seriously and Zang went rigid. He realizes his stupidity, but couldn't swallow the words he was saying.

What?! What the hell is this divine energy?! Mythical Goddess—this is even more than I imagined. How could I have imagined such a supernatural existence being my queen?

Incoherent thoughts flashed through Zang's brain. Then he realized the stupidity of his folly. Taking in the blood of the goddess seemed like a really great idea. That may be true in and of itself, but there are things you can do and things you can't do. Even the god emperor, who was said to be loved by the goddess, was no match for the goddess to give birth to a son. Even his descendant, Zang, was not even worthy of the goddess' favor. And the Goddess's character as described in the literature was, even as rumored, quite harsh. She even tried to destroy the country when she someone she loved was insulted.

Excavations in the region, following the literature, had uncovered traces of the city's existence in the buried strata. The outer walls of the excavated buildings are reported to have been melted by the ultra-high temperature and turned into glass. For some reason, Zang remembered such information only now. Zang paled as he saw a future where the nations of Arcia would be consumed by the fiery flames. Perhaps he had violated the greatest ban on war, but that's behind him. It would have been Zang's complete ruin, but someone made a move.

It was Yamamoto! If he allowed Velgrynd to run amok, he would be held fully responsible. Their lives were at stake before that, but that was of secondary importance to Yamamoto. Yamamoto was not normally a pompous and hardworking man, but he wasn't so corrupt that he

would run away from his responsibilities when the time came. Rather, he knew that someone had to take the blame when the war broke out, and he thought it was his role to do so. It was precisely because of Yamamoto that he was able to act before anyone else when he heard Zang's statement.

"You idiot! You insult our Emperor! War may be inevitable if things go wrong, but how shall I respond!"

Before Velgrynd could say anything, he jumped out and shouted, "No!"

People have a tendency to cool off when others are angry before they are. This also applied to the True Dragon, Velgrynd, and prevented her from bursting into anger. That was the biggest fine play of the day, Yamamoto Kanji. And here's the other thing that comes into play.

"What are you making so much noise about?"

The Emperor, who had profusely been asked for help, arrived just in time.

"Your Majesty..."

"Oh, Ryuo, don't let the young man's words deceive you. Zang-dono must have tried it to see if you're really worthy of trust."

When Sakura Akira arrived, he called out to Velgrynd in a calm manner. He was inwardly impatient, and this was the first time in decades that he had run down the corridor, but he showed no sign of that. He really was a majestic champion. Seeing such an Akira Sakura, Velgrynd forgot her anger. She regained her composure and examined the words she was told.

"I dared to find out how much anger I would have to get angry, by caressing my emotions against me—"

"Uh-huh. Isn't that right?"

Anyway, it was Akira Sakura who wanted to convince Velgrynd. He thought it didn't matter that he was insulted if he could mend the situation. For all that, his wish came true.

"Oh, so that's what happened. I didn't want to think Shin's descendants were that stupid, so that makes sense."

Velgrynd nodded widely and smiled. It was so beautiful and gentle, that it relieved Akira Sakura.

"Now, since the Arcia people are probably tired, you may show them to the waiting room."

When the moment arises, Akira gives the instructions. Normally, the Emperor wouldn't do this himself, but this was a time where he had no choice. As if the magic was broken, everyone started to work together and the great danger had subsided. Incidentally, in a later version of Arcia...

There are many pro-Japanese families, but the Yamamoto surname in particular has become immensely popular. He is even listed in history textbooks as the man who saved Arcia from the crisis. He is described as the friend who admonished the then king Zang...though Yamamoto never knew about it himself.



With Arcia and her team gone, the atmosphere in the room settles down. Emperor had gone back to his room to take some stomach pills, so Velgrynd decided to resume her work.

“Well, it’s been a long time since anyone’s tested me. Zang, is it? It’s just like Shin’s descendants, you’ve grown up in an interesting way.”

“Yes, you’re right. Haha, I’m surprised too.”

You’ve got to be kidding me, thinks Yamamoto, but he’s not bad. He’s gaining the trust of his subordinates, so he’s just hoping they’ll put up with it.

“Well, now, the only thing left is—”

“We are a nation of harmony.”

“Yes, that’s right.”

It is an ally of the Empire and has finally agreed to participate on the condition that other nations join the talks. Velgrynd does not know much about them, as she has not negotiated directly with them. This time they have invited the President of the People’s Republic, several leaders of the government, plus their personal bodyguards. They confronted Velgrynd with a stunned stare. Turning his gaze sharply to Velgrynd, the President of the People’s Republic opens his mouth.

“My name is Wang Longren. Are you Ryu-dono?”

“Yes, I am.”

“Hmph! It looks just like a human. But we won’t be fooled. Demon, have we entered the empire of your allies? Or is it just a trick to make us think so?”

Wang Longren called out Velgrynd with hostility. The bureaucrats are puzzled by this, while Velgrynd herself thinks, *Not again.*

From Wang Longren’s reaction, it was clear that something was up. Until she finds out, Velgrynd decides it’s best not to speak out.

“I don’t know where this is, but I dared to jump into the tiger’s den. Don’t grow up and think your plan worked, demon!”

As soon as Wang Longren shouted this, the guards from China moved in. They were dressed in white robes that looked easy to move in. It was clear from their refined movements that they were experts in the martial arts. But that didn’t matter to Velgrynd.

“I recognize your formidable power, demon. But I will not permit you to speak that name!”

“Exactly! The very name of the man who supposedly guided Long-sama, the founder of Dragon Fist, is not worthy of being spoken by a demon!”

The warriors shouted in a fiery rage. But...

The reaction from the empire was somewhat cold. Everyone was left thinking,

Here we go again.

It's definitely her; the bureaucrats all thought. And so did Velgrynd.

"Long? You know, that guy named his technique as 'Dragon Fist.' Well, Long lived in this world too. So you guys are Long's disciples and have inherited his mastery of the art? That's nice."

Velgrynd had studied the history of this world, but of course she did not know all of the historical figures. It is impossible for the Empire to have information on the secrets of kung fu that other countries keep. It's no wonder Velgrynd was unaware of Long's, the Dragon Fist founder's, existence. But for the Chinese, this is a situation that they can't understand.

"What are you pretending to be convinced of?"

"Are you trying to cheat? But that's not very nice. We're the best of the best, and we will destroy you here and crush your ambitions!"

"After all, you were first. You who deceived us with your precious name, let us destroy you and regain the pride of our country!"

Shouting this, the warriors took up a battle position. Seeing this, Velgrynd smiled happily.

"Oh my, for a human from this world, your fighting spirit is very skilled. You've been training hard and improving yourself. I'm glad to see that you are learning Long's teachings so well."

The way Velgrynd looked at the warriors was no longer the same as the way she looked at her enemies, but rather a master's gaze on their beloved disciple. That temperature difference was causing the warriors to grow angry.

"Do you think you can fool us?"

"It's okay. If this happens, then all at once—"

The warriors tried to rely on force, but someone stopped them. Only one of them was a small figure wearing a black long robe with a dragon embroidered on it.

"Stop it! I'm the only match for her."

The person with a transparent and clear voice was a beautiful dark-haired, dark-eyed girl.

"Xia-Xianhua-sama!"

"But..."

The warriors were about to argue in anger, but when they saw that person—Fist Saint Xianhua—they kept their mouths shut. This was because the strongest Fist Saint, who was always calm and collected and looked cool no matter what kind of enemy she was facing, was sweating and nervous.

"I'll take care of it."

Once she said that, there was no one to talk back.

"So, you're the heir. That's an impressive display of fighting spirit, I'll give you that."

"Yes. I am the Fist Saint who has inherited the spirit from the Fist Saint of old. If you are indeed the Dragon Phoenix-sama (Ryuo), will you give me the honor of your guidance?"

"Of course. I'll do you the honor of coaching you."

With that, the story suddenly came together.



It was decided to watch the outcome of the battle without any chance for the others to interrupt.

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Needless to say, the result was an overwhelming victory for Velgrynd. Or rather, it wasn't even a match, but only Xianhua knew that it was. In the eyes of the others, it looked like Xianhua was attacking unilaterally. Even those who were studying Dragon Fist felt that Xianhua, with her fists and feet, had cornered Velgrynd. The Dragon Fist was not a bloodline, and all the profound secrets would be passed down to the one with the highest skill among the disciples.

The most important skill to be inherited was the one Xianhua spoke of—spirit. This was a forbidden ritual that required one to record every move they learned and pass it on to his successor. Moreover, a portion of his spirit was also inherited, so the quality and quantity of the fighting spirit was increased rapidly! It was not always possible for the successor to learn all of the powers and techniques, but as long as spirit was passed down, there was hope for the next generation. And so Long retired, hoping that one day the strongest fist fighter would be born. Such is the history that led to the birth of Xianhua, the Fist Saint who deserves the name of the strongest fighter in the world.

She had completely fused her inherited spirit and her own vitality to bring all her skills and power to herself. As a result, she had reached a level of strength that was foreign to this world. More than 100,000 in existence value. In the Cardinal World, where Velgrynd was born, she was an overwhelmingly powerful human, even to the point of being classified as an Immortal. In this world, she was unmatched, but this time, it was just too bad. Xianhua was easily beaten by Velgrynd and suffered a defeat.

“I’m here...”

“Uh-huh. That was a great strength. Definitely stronger than Gensei, and in this world, you would have beaten Kondou as well.”

Even though she was defeated, Xianhua still felt refreshed. She could forget her doubts about Velgrynd and admit that she was the real thing. And Velgrynd was also extremely happy to know that her beloved Long's wishes had been carried on. She has very fond feelings for Long's disciples, led by Xianhua. Now she is willing to give them a mythical-grade or two unconditionally. It never happened, but there was no doubt that Velgrynd was pleased.



A lot had happened, but now the heads of state are all here. All the leaders from China, except President Wang Longren, were substitutes who were disguised as fists. They thought it was a

demon's trap, so the Imperialists thought it was inevitable. They've been replaced by the real ones now. But if you ask about their situation, it's a common story.

They're hostages. Only on a national scale. The phantoms in China began their activities by going after the leaders' children. By building relationships, making connections, reaching out to targets. Then they brainwashed them and took them back to their base. Teachers, co-workers, superiors, family members. Little by little, they possessed them and achieved 70 percent of the goal. That is why the invasion of the United States of Azalea was unanimously approved by the National People's Congress.

"I don't think an apology will suffice, but I hope you understand that it was not our intention either."

And Wang Longren bows. To which George responds.

"That's okay. I understand that each country has its own set of circumstances. I have a son that got taken away. When I put my family and my country on a scale, there's only one choice. And it's my responsibility as president, but I'm not going to give up until the end."

"Hm. I'm sorry for your loss."

George and Wang Longren nodded at each other.

"If you say so, I apologize too."

So says Magellan, the Great Roziam Emperor. The military is out of control and invading China. There is nothing to stop this, Magellan himself has admitted.

"In that case, that makes me guilty too. Our invasion of the Great Roziam Dynasty, a fool's errand of the devil's own making. I can now admit as much."

It was an uncharacteristic attitude of the Emperor Zang. After Zang was saved by Yamamoto and Akira Sakura, he calmed down in the waiting room. When he calmed down, he realized how dangerous what he had done was. Zang is not incompetent. He had the presence of mind to acknowledge the situation. And he had consulted with the other Seven Vessels. The Emperor's sword is now the fourth seat.

"One of the Seven had never returned from his incursion into Roziam. That's why it has come to our attention."

The one who went missing was a woman who, eager to do battle, submitted a plan of action and moved her troops on her own without waiting for a decision from headquarters. This was a clear violation of military discipline.

"The national war potential of the Seven Sacred Vessels invading another country without waiting for Emperor's order is an unavoidable problem."

She had always been against starting a war. But lately, she showed a sudden change of heart. Her attitude had puzzled everyone involved and was reason enough to be suspicious. The fact that she was acting on her own, and despite the fact that she was a heroic member of the 'seven vessels,' she was the target of the investigation. Even so, they still hadn't found conclusive evidence that the demon had taken over, but they had come to the conclusion that they had no choice but to admit it.

They were convinced because their pride was broken. The match between Velgrynd and

Xianhua took place in the courtyard, but it was clearly visible from the waiting room. Velgrynd had treated Xianhua like a baby, as if she couldn't win even with all the Seven Vessels working together. When the Seven Vessels saw this, they saw no point in being overbearing. So did Zang, who had given up on his ambition to unify the world through the Holy Arcia Empire.

Huh, now I remember. Whoever has the goddess's blessing will be king of the world. If that is the truth...then the ruler of our time is Lord Akira Sakura.

Because Zang understood that, he became fully compliant. Just like that, there was an apology battle by the nations.

“I, too...”

“No, no, no, no, no, I understand the position of the empire.”

“Yes, that's right. And as for the United States, I regret that we were forced to make a choice.”

Akira Sakura tried to join in, but he was cut off by Wang Longren and George, who cut him off immediately. Yamamoto and others who had been standing upright by the wall observing the meeting were able to understand what the leaders were thinking.

Well, if they say His Majesty is to be blamed here, I'm sure his people will be displeased.

Yamamoto glanced at Velgrynd, thinking that she would make the same judgment. When the apology battle was over, the scene is redrawn. In earnest, a strategy for the demons was being planned, but all eyes were on Velgrynd.

“So, Ryu-dono, what kind of strategy do you think is effective against demons?”

That was the Army Minister's statement. It's a shameful question. As a military leader who protects the empire, there should be no other power application. However...

This time, no one was blaming him. On the contrary, the other leaders were ready to wait for Velgrynd's answer. That was inevitable. They are powerless against an enemy beyond human understanding. While all eyes are on Velgrynd, their only hope, she is at ease. As if to say, ‘Well, it can't be helped,’ she turned to the speaker.

“You understand that sending an army out is pointless, don't you?”

“Reluctantly, of course. It makes sense in terms of keeping the fleet off the mainland, but there's no such thing as a fleet battle. Even if each ship is manned by people gathered here, it will be impossible to resist the demons.”

The Army Minister was right. If they came close to the mainland, the cities would be targeted by gunfire. It makes sense to build a maritime defense line to stop them, but it would be useless if they had no chance to win anyway. Whether or not the demon will destroy the city is also unknown. If they have the power to possess humanity, there's a good chance they'll use the city as is. Then there would be no reason to challenge the fleet. Velgrynd nodded and replied.

“That's right. Firearms don't work against demons, and ordinary soldiers aren't much help. So, we are left with two choices.”

“What is that?”

“Either you leave it all up to me, or you can try to do a little bit of work on your own.”

Velgrynd's statement was humiliating to the proud soldiers. But the truth is, they couldn't even argue with that. The brave men and women gathered here look at each other for a reaction. And by the keenness of their eyes, they had come to the same conclusion. The imperial swordsman, Araki Gensei, and Minamoto Saburo, broke the ice.

"This is our problem, you know. I have no desire to speak of poor pride...but relying on Ryuudo-dono all the time is shameful. If there's anything I can do, I'll challenge him with my life."

"I feel the same way."

Arcia's seven sacred vessels follow suit.

"We don't want it to be just the men of the Empire. We wish to join you on this mission."

"His Majesty Zang is out of the question. I want us to handle it."

"That's right. His Majesty can only do his duty if he survives. Leave it to us!"

Leaving Zang behind, six men have declared for war. In addition, Chinese Fist Saint Xianhua announced her decision.

"If you protect mankind, Ryuudo-sama, we will fear no man. Even if we are defeated, you have promised us a great victory. Please give us the opportunity to grow, even though we are so small."

Xianhua bowed reverently. Nine warriors came forward, but there was also one more person who came forward at the end.

"Ah, may I come along with you?"

That was interrupted by Billy, the head of the U.S. Secret Service. He is a combat professional who came to the scene as George's bodyguard. He is a young man of twenty-eight, with a scar on his cheek. He is also proficient in magic and uses his own special gun bullets. But he was inferior to these nine men. Not to mention his physical prowess...his weapons were also not too much to talk about.

"I'm better than others who have given up on their own, but when it comes to being an asset, I'm not that good."

Billy, aware of this, waits nervously for an answer from Velgrynd. George joins in.

"Billy is a very good man to be my bodyguard. He's saved my life a lot of times, and I miss Emile. I'll give up if it's too much trouble, but you can take him with you if you want."

Without a good bodyguard, he was more likely to be in danger. But doing nothing was not an option when humanity's survival was at stake. Billy could go head-to-head with the lower-ranked demons. Believing that, he offered to increase their strength. They will gather all of humanity's strength to attack the demon's stronghold. They would destroy what Velgrynd called the Underworld Gates and remove the threat of the invaders from the root. And everyone was prepared to die for it. And yet, Velgrynd laughs serenely.

"If you chose to leave it up to me here, I was only going to protect what I wanted to protect. But it's great that you're all willing to do it. I'll give you a little help with that resolve."

In fact, Velgrynd had seriously planned to abandon humanity if the former was the answer to this question. She was even willing to emigrate to another world, taking only Akira and George

with her. Goddesses are fickle. The representatives of humanity made the right choice. And so, Velgrynd responded to that.

“Billy. I’ll allow you to join us. I can’t say no to that. And you’re just as strong as everyone else in there. With those weapons, you’ll have plenty of strength to add to your arsenal.”

Velgrynd ordered Minamoto and Billy to produce their weapons, a sword and a Smith & Wesson Model 27 (Magnum Revolver), respectively. Velgrynd took them and, without a second thought, transformed them into mythical-grade weapons.

“...?”

“Th-this is...”

Minamoto and Billy were stupefied when their beloved weapons were returned to them, which had gotten visibly more dangerous. Gensei had experienced it once, so he wasn’t as surprised. He just nodded with a nonchalant look on his face. The others, however, were not the same, and were stunned by the fact that the Seven Vessels, who knew what they were, could not understand how such a weapon could be so easily transported to another country! But it’s true that their strength was also reliable. This was not the time to ask Velgrynd to carry their weight, so Sakura Akira could only watch.

“It will be better if you use it. But I want you to keep in mind that only Xianhua is really an asset. You are called Bright, right?”

“Yes!”

“Yes, you. You’re the best at what you do, but you still haven’t drawn three percent of the mythical-grade weapon’s power. The others are out of the question. They’re only at one to two percent, and they can do better if they try their best.”

If they could truly harness the power of the mythical-grade weapons, they would be able to awaken as a spirit life form and defeat most demons. But with their current strength, this awakening was impossible. Velgrynd only made the artifacts available to those of Shin’s blood when she created them. They could be used, but they were nowhere near as powerful as they should be. But there’s no need to be ashamed of that. This world is weak in magic and fragile in every way. If they could cross the realm and have their bodies reshaped, they would be able to rise above Sage. As for Xianhua, there is a strong possibility that she will awaken as Saint. So that’s why the warriors are now ready. And with this, the great counterattack has begun.



The phantom Delia strolls through the Great Roziam Palace.

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As a human, Delia was the fourth seat of the Seven Vessels. That day, Delia was assigned an important mission. A demon calling himself Emile was behind the sabotage and she was on a mission to stop him. But it was a trap set by Emile. Even the intelligence officer had fallen into Emile's hands, and his goal was to lure Delia out. Delia was defeated by Emile. Fully armed, Delia tried, but Emile, who had a rough appearance, played her, and beat her to a pulp. It was humiliating. But more than that—

For the first time in her life, Delia, the strongest of mankind, was terrified. Putting aside her shame and ignorance, Delia begged for her life. Emile smiled softly and said, "Of course."

But she didn't know what that meant until it was too late. Delia has been stripped of her knowledge, her position, and even her name, and is now completely reborn as a demon. Delia's rank was the same as Li Jinlong and David, the 'general' rank. She went to war at the same time as the Arcia invasion of the Great Roziam and was involved in the mission to destroy it. The first objective of the demon invasion was to secure the territory. And the second objective was to enslave mankind. This was to ensure their dependents would possess the families.

Not just anyone, but a body strong enough to withstand the changes caused by the magical element. This is where selection is important. As half-mental life forms, demons do not need to eat even if they possess people. It's not that they can't eat, or that they can get sustenance from food, but it's okay if they don't. But the greater the body to be possessed, the better. So they sought a way to control humanity from the ground up. A plan was devised to destroy the five great powers whose conditions were the most unfavorable.

That was Roziam. Most of its land was unsuitable for development. Harsh conditions have made their soldiers strong, but the land was no longer needed for the state. The reason for leaving the royal family in the territory is to entrust the management of the land and the people. But with Great Roziam no longer needed, there is no longer any sense in preserving the lineage of the Roziam dynasty. The demon does not intend to kill all of Great Roziam's people. She believes that destroying the Great Roziam Royals will bring down the existing system of state. This is why Mystery Monk Pulcinella is encouraging his people to stage a coup and Delia is following suit.

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Walking around the palace, Delia let out a sickening sigh. She looked everywhere and saw no sign of Great Roziam's royalty. The Roziam Emperor and his family. The same goes for the government officials and their families. In addition to the knights who worked in the palace, their maidservants and attendants have disappeared. She searched everywhere for hidden passageways, but found no evidence of them. She possessed one of the men to read the memories of those who know the castle, but there was no sign of them. In this situation, there was no choice but to assume that they had disappeared.

"What about you?"

That is said by Delia's colleague, Emile. Now that they were on a par with each other, the

banter was casual.

“I don’t know. I have no idea where the Roziam Emperor has gone.”

“Well, we’re in trouble. I don’t think they can do ‘Spatial Manipulation’ as well as we can...”

“Pfft, they can’t. That is an act of God for the mortals in this world. None of the Seven could have teleported them.”

Delia affirmed that. Her memories of being a strong being in this world make her sure of that. Magic is scarce, so no one knows how to use it, and there is no elemental magic in this world. There is the Extra Skill ‘Spatial Movement’ that Delia now has access to, but only a few people can dive the portal at the same time. There is no way they could have escaped from a palace that was completely surrounded by them. It was supposed to be impossible. Because Emile was the most physically gifted among those gathered recently, he had been given the rank of ‘general’ demon. He is too weak to be the strongest man in the world, Delia guessed, and has no knowledge of such things. His body is stronger and his knowledge of this world is greater than hers. Remembering that, Delia feels a little bit better.

“Then there was a hole in the siege, but my gut tells me that’s not the case. It’s like I’m overlooking something very important, you know?”

Saying this thoughtfully, Emile turns to Delia’s spear. The spear, which is said to have been created by a goddess, is the origin of the name ‘Seven Sacred Vessels.’ For some reason, the sight of the spear made Emile feel nostalgic. He has no idea what the reason was, but he thought the answer might be in his memory. Demons can read the memories of possessed humans. However, aside from important knowledge, things that were repeated on a daily basis, such as an ordinary conversation, were too voluminous and took too long to scrutinize. Most of it was usually ignored because they couldn’t spend the effort on something that didn’t mean much.

Emile was no exception; he knew his status, his skills, his relationships at work, and his duties, but he ignored the memories of his childhood. That’s why he could only remember the word ‘Gryn-nee chan’ about the beautiful woman beside his grandfather. If he had known it was Velgrynd, he would have decided that this was the most important thing and would have advised to rethink the entire operation.

That spear is really bothering me. Maybe Emile, whose body I was in, had something to do with that spear. I’m going to have to search my memory.

Emile is worried about the uneasiness that won’t go away. Even though he doesn’t think it had anything to do with the escape of the Roziam Emperor and the others, he began to search his memory to relieve his fears. In contrast to Emile, Delia is confident.

“Oh well. It’s no use caring about the people who got away. They can’t win against us anyway, so let’s just ignore them and go on with our plan.”

“...Yeah.”

“The plan was to hold the royal family hostage and call in the elite of this country, but...let’s scrap that. Instead, how about we let this palace go up in flames and make the demise of the Great Roziam Dynasty known?”

Originally, they would have announced the public execution of the royal family, thus accelerating the madness of the people of Roziam. They had hoped to lure the heroes to stop them and replace them with their own people. And if possible, they wanted to secure Fist Saint Xianhua, who was considered to be the strongest in the world, not just in China. Because of the difference in countries, whether Xianhua would move or not was a gamble. So the failure of this strategy wasn't too bad of a blow. If the Great Roziam Dynasty was in chaos, the next target was China. Xianhua would come out when the time came anyway, so it was not a problem if they went for Xianhua. Once Xianhua was secured, this world would be under control. Delia smirked. It was that simple.

—But then. Mystery Monk Pulcinella sent an urgent telepathic message.

〈Can you hear me?〉

〈Is this Pulcinella-sama? Did you take the trouble to contact me?〉

〈Yes. There was a mysterious report from one of my men who had sent me to China first. I had them look for the Chinese leaders, but none of them could be found.〉

〈What did you say?! You think the humans can deceive us?〉

〈—No, I think not. I thought it might be some kind of magic trick that only exists in this world, but I don't think it would work against a high-ranking officer.〉

〈I agree with you. The low-level people of this world are of no threat to us, no matter how much they try.〉

Delia couldn't believe that she had been misled, and that it was the same for her subordinates as well. Judging from her memories of her time as a human, even the Seventh Sacred Vessel level was only at the lower middle level. It was unthinkable for Xianhua to fall behind the others. However, Pulcinella chided Delia.

〈Don't flatter yourself, Delia! This is the material world. You don't know what kind of change you can cause by giving one magic. I feel my strength growing every day. This is proof that this body is superior. Only in this body can we demons attain perfection. Don't you dare to forget that!〉

Angered, Delia was reminded of the truth. This is a lesser world in terms of strength alone, but that's because the laws of the world are different. Delia cautioned her mind that she must not forget her position until the invasion was complete.

〈I beg your pardon, sir. A reprimand, I am well aware of that.〉

〈Then it's good.〉

〈Haha! So, we're going to get started, but there's actually a problem on our end as well...〉

Now is the time for Delia to give her report. They were going to capture the royalty, but no one was there. It was the same situation in China that Pulcinella had told her about, and she couldn't shake the feeling.

〈What, you think it's the same phenomenon in Roziam? I can see the palace from my vantage point, but I don't see anything unusual. Or is this an oversight? I don't know, but something bad has happened...〉

〈What shall we do?〉

Delia agrees with the idea that something bad is happening. Emile, who was standing next to her listening to the telepathic message, looked just as nervous as Delia.

〈Wait a moment. I will discuss this with Amari Masahiko.〉

Pulcinella avoided drawing conclusions on his own. It's a miracle that the sharpest man in Cornu's camp, the Chief of Staff, is now in the hands of one of the best minds in the world. It was only natural for Pulcinella, who was also a member of the 'chief of staff,' to hear an opinion from such a man. And the conclusion he comes to is...

"It is a withdrawal. If something unforeseen occurs, all operational actions must be frozen. We will rendezvous on the Atlantis continent to formulate a more careful plan. Do you have any objections?"

"No, sir."

Delia answers immediately. There is no doubt to Emile Thus, the demons had to abort their mission and gather at their home base.



When Amari Mashiko received the report from Pulcinella, he understood that the situation was not looking good. They were invincible. Not only as phantoms, but from the knowledge and power they had gained when they were human, they should have been one step closer to taking over this world. After conquering mankind, they will reveal Cornu to the world. After doing so, they plan to modify the planet and use it as a stepping-stone for further invasions.

The universe is vast, but not as vast as the other worlds. They thought that if they had gained a relying spirit and incarnated themselves, they could completely conquer this space-time within a few thousand to tens of thousands of years. At the same time, they had developed the Underworld Gate, which leads to other dimensions, and had their sights set on a further invasion. But then, an unforeseen event occurred. There was a definite element of uncertainty, judged Amari Masahiko.

"Well, what shall we do now?"

Li Jinlong and David responded as he uttered that.

"What is it?"

"There seems to be a lot on your mind. I thought everything was fine, is there a problem?"

Looking at the pair, Masahiko looks at them and explains the situation. The Roziam royalty and the leaders from China have gone into hiding. The cause is unknown, and some forces are suspected to have intervened.

"Wahaha, don't you think that's overthinking it?"

"Hmmm, there are definitely some uncertainties, but is it enough that we have to interrupt the operation?"

Li Jinlong laughed without a problem. David also thought that this was a bit too weak. But that doesn't change Amari Masahiko's mind.

"Sure, we're strong, but we're not all-powerful. Be aware that the slightest carelessness can derail the entire strategy. Now is the time to gather all the information we can. Contact those remaining in the three countries and assess the situation. Find out thoroughly what the other top brass are doing in the other countries."

With that order, the place was dismissed. After they left, Amari Masahiko surrendered to the chair in his office and was lost in thought.

"Arcia doesn't have any of the seven vassals below the emperor's clan."

"This is the United States. We've lost contact with the president and his entourage. I have no record of them going out, but there is no sign of them in the White House."

"Although it is an empire, security is high. We tried to break into the place of administration, including the imperial palace, but it was impossible."

Even before David and the others were ordered to do so, he was already working with his handlers. Whenever there was something on his mind, he would act immediately. Then what he heard was, of course, what he needed to hear.

Forget the United States and Arcia, I'm interested in the Empire. We have the lieutenant in charge of our intelligence. Gensei might be able to handle him...no, he couldn't. Anyway, he's not that adept at covert action.

Gensei is the master of Amari Mssahiko, and his swordsmanship is top-notch. But as a sorcerer, he is a novice, and without him, the Royal Guard Corps would have a difficult time dealing with the demon's dark activities. The demon was discovered in a forcible infiltration attempt. It would be understandable if a battle ensued. This isn't the case. If they couldn't even break in, then this was a very unusual situation.

"Well, let's see what we can do about it."

He asked Pulcinella and the others to come back as soon as they've dealt with the situation, so they'll teleport back. By then, David and his team will know what's going on, and they'll discuss the future strategy. But...

It was not about such matters that troubled Masahiko.

Who am I?

The human-born Amari Masahiko was possessed by a 'mastermind' level demon. His assimilation rate isn't perfect, but he can use his powers to their fullest extent. No. That's not the case. He was a rival to Kondou. They were best friends and rival—so it's no wonder his spirit was strong enough to reach the ultimate goal. It is precisely because of this that Masahiko thinks about his own existence. Is he really a demon? Or perhaps...

Humans in this world do not have the aid of a universal substance called magic. That's why they are vulnerable, but their minds are free and their spirits are infinitely strong. Phantoms, on the other hand, are often called angels who used to serve seraphim. They were like machines that only did what they were told, such as angels of the dominion class and below. That's why their egos are so thin, and that's why they can't afford to be taken over by others.

If the human will breaks the phantom's ego, the order will be lost.

It was precisely because Masahiko anticipates this that he was troubled. As a demon, he believes that resurrecting Cornu is the best thing for him. He should do his best for that and get rid of all obstacles. However, the current Amari Masahiko had a different opinion, instead contemplating postponement on the expansion of the Underworld Gate.

Once it's destroyed, am I the king? No, kings are a pain in the ass, so I can leave it to Pulcinella. Isn't it better for us humans to rule this world, rather than allowing demons and other invaders to rule it?

He had that grandiose idea in his mind. He wonders if this phenomenon was only happening to him. A high-ranking general class demon remembers that he was originally a cherub. He was born to the god Veldanava, the Star King Dragon, to serve Cornu. And yet, even though he was comparable to an Awakened Demon Lord in the Otherworld, he was now wavering about his own existence. As long as he was an example of himself, Amari Masahiko, he couldn't let his guard down. He must assume that the others were as well. If that's the case, then who is an ally and who is an enemy...

How is it best to organize them and how is it best to act? Whether or not Pulcinella is the right choice for the king is also an unanswerable question. There is not enough material to make a decision. Masahiko reserved his conclusion. At that moment, the report came in that everyone was present.



“So, as it turns out, all the heads of state and government have disappeared?”

“To be exact, it would appear that some of them are still around.”

“It's not worth considering. Seeing that the people who are in charge of determining national policy have gathered in the Imperial State, we should consider that humanity is also showing a full-fledged counter-offensive attitude.”

“Mm. I won't argue with you.”

If the two apex men agreed that that was the answer.

“Then shall we move our fleet toward the Empire?”

It's an open secret that there is an outpost here on the Atlantis continent. The humans know this too, and that's why they've been lured here. Soldiers are better suited to take the place of demons than civilians. Instead of kidnapping them, it's better to have them come to them. That was the plan. But now that there is unrest in the land, that's a different story. It seemed to be reasonably effective to launch a grand offensive and wait and see what happens...but Masahiko felt uneasy as if he had overlooked some important factor. This world is within reach and the reason for that is that there are no strong men. But was that really the case? If this assumption

was wrong, then the strategy would need to be reexamined from the ground up.

“I want to reiterate. I want each of you to mobilize all your knowledge and make sure. Are there really no other powerful beings in this world?”

When Masahiko asks that question, Li Jinlong replies with a laugh.

“There’s no doubt about it. The only one who is a threat is Xianhua!”

With that assertion, he became even more worried.

“Wait. Then who trained this Xianhua?”

“That’s...”

“According to my research, Xianhua has learned the Dragon Fist, a martial art that is passed down from one generation to the next. She is said to have inherited a skill that is unknown to the world.”

“Yeah, that’s it! That’s why she’s stronger than ordinary people.”

“How did that martial art come about? The founder is said to be a man named Long. Do you have any information about this man?”

When asked that, Li Jinlong recalls. Although he was not chosen as the successor, he was one of the best members who studied the Dragon Fist. That’s why he had been drilled with knowledge of the Founder.

“I believe the book of secrets states that a woman named the Dragon Phoenix (Ryuo) guided our Founder, but it’s only a biography of an oral history. I don’t see any point in that.”

“...Hmm.”

Masahiko had a bad feeling about this. Normally he shouldn’t be misled by such a vague biography...but he can’t help but feel uneasy.

“Now that you mention it...”

Delia says what she’s remembered.

“Arcia also had a myth of a goddess who guided the Emperor’s ancestors...”

Hearing that, Masahiko felt uneasy. Delia’s face paled and she was sweating from the nervousness. Since she became a demon, Delia hadn’t been affected by her emotions like a human, but the enormity of what she remembered frightened her.

“What is this goddess’ name?”

“Caldina—”

“...”

“—It is believed that she took the name Cardinal, which means crimson, but it was said that ‘Caldina’ was established as a nickname.”

The word ‘Cardinal’ sounded familiar. Scorch Dragon Velgrynd used to call herself that because of the color of her aura, and Masahiko had found that out from his knowledge of the demons.

It’s a coincidence. ‘The Scorch Dragon Velgrynd,’ like Feldway-sama, is supposed to be in the Cardinal World. I hear that she was with Emperor Rudra and has no idea of our true purpose. She couldn’t possibly be in this world.

He hadn’t had a chance to talk to the Phantom King Feldway, even though he was Cornu’s

chief of staff. So, from hearsay, the operation in the ‘Cardinal World’ was going well.

“The Scorch Dragon Velgrynd is at Rudra’s beck and call, and I can assure you that she will never leave Rudra’s side. So it is unthinkable that she would be in this world.”

And yet, the doubt of whether it is true can’t get out of his mind. Delia’s pallor also suggested that the story didn’t end there.

“Hmm, is that all?”

That’s what he asked. The answer was Delia’s spear.

“This is a divine object supposedly created by the goddess. It contains a terrifying amount of power, but even I can’t use it now...”

“ “...!!” ”

That statement not only upset Amari Masahiko...but the others as well. It is only natural that a demon general should be able to use a Legendary-grade weapon as well as a limb. If they can’t do that, it proves that their weapons are mythical-grade weapons.

“In this world where magic is scarce, how can a mythical-grade weapon be created? Moreover, it is said that there is not just one mythical-grade tools, but twelve in the beginning. I’m familiar with the sacred artifacts of my former colleagues, and I feel that they were the equivalent of my spear.”

“So that means there are twelve mythical-grade tools, right?”

“Yes... But I don’t think those guys could get more than a few percent of the performance out of it!”

He’d like to say out loud that that’s not the problem. However, that would not be a solution, so Amari Masahiko told them something else.

“What matters is the fact that there was a being that could create mythical-grade weapons.”

“No way! It’s really a mythical-grade?!?”

“You’re a fool. You should think twice before you speak. How dare you stand in front of physical evidence and refuse to consider it!”

“I beg your pardon!”

With Delia’s panicked apology at his side, Masahiko was convinced. The goddess Caldina is the Scorch Dragon Velgrynd. If the coincidences keep coming up again and again, it was inevitable. That’s why he can’t help but mutter,

“Never thought Velgrynd would be in this world.”

And...

And that’s what led to the dramatic effect it had on a certain someone.

“...Velgrynd? Even Velgrynd?!?”

“What’s going on, Emile?”

Emile, who was always aloof and easygoing, was behaving strangely. He seemed to be oblivious to his surroundings and began mumbling to himself. This was not the action of a demon, but a human being, and it was an instinct of Emile’s. The others, who didn’t realize it, watched with bated breath to see if Emile was onto something.

“Yes, that’s right. She’s here, she’s in this world! If that’s the case, then we’re going to have

to—”

Emile's mind is filled with pure fear. That's the emotion the demon feels. And the other is subterfuge.

—It was Emile, the grandson of Laurent Hayes, showing his true colors by continuing to deceive the demons by pretending to be dominated. The demon's domination was shattered by the fear that Velgrynd might turn against him. Seizing the opportunity, Emile, as a human, fought back desperately. The memory of the smile of a beautiful woman who loved him like a grandmother, like a mother, like a sister, haunts his mind. It is the memory of an embrace that gives him absolute security. The name of the woman, who held his young self to her breast, was Velgrynd. And so Emile called her name. To ask for all the help he could get.

“Help me, Gryn nee-chan—!”

Emile's exclamation was the key to the sudden change.



“You called me, Emile-chan. I'm here to help you.”

As he said this, a figure appeared out of nowhere. It was unreasonable as it happened in the demon's high vigilance stronghold. The one who was there was Velgrynd. The demons' ‘barrier’ was nothing compared to her ability to destroy even the Labyrinth of Ramiris. No wonder the demons were stunned. Even the cool-headed and collected Amari Masahiko was not expecting this. He was certain of Velgrynd's existence, but he never thought that he would have an encounter before he had time to deal with it.

“Velgrynd, why are you here?”

“You know my name.”

“Of course. Aren't you supposed to be working with our king, Feldway-sama, to help Emperor Rudra achieve supremacy?”

“Oh. If you're connected to the Cardinal World, you should be able to synchronize the timelines.”

“What?”

“That's the story I'm talking about. I'd rather just get this over with, you know?”

Amari Masahiko was confused. And yet, the calm part of him continued to think. If he'd been aware of Velgrynd's existence earlier, he would have been able to deal with it. But he never imagined she'd be in this world.

It's a shame. But why? There's no way a being like her can move between dimensions. Even the Underworld Gate, which we've been working so hard to expand, still can't call Cornu-sama.

The existence of Velgrynd is equal to or greater than Cornu's. It holds an enormous amount of magicules that cannot be seen through normal eyes. So how did she come to this world? And

he didn't know what her purpose was and was at a loss for words. If he could, he would want to avoid hostility at this point. But, however...

“What do you want?”

“It's a simple proposal. End your invasion of this world and retreat to the other side. And I'll let you off the hook just this once.”

“...”

Velgrynd smiles, but her words hide her anger. Velgrynd hates those who try to hurt her loved ones. And Amari Masahiko accurately perceives that feeling.

That's too bad, I guess we're already enemies. But I don't understand. I thought they were allies of Feldway-sama...no, wait? A timeline synchronization?

The formidable mind of Masahiko spins at high speed. And from the edges of the words Velgrynd leaked, he was able to come up with the correct answer.

So, this person is from a different timeline. She seemed unaware of our situation, but she did not seem surprised by Feldway-sama and Emperor Rudra's story. So I can assume that she knows what we know so far. Judging from the lack of change in orders from Cornu-sama, something must have happened in the future. So perhaps...

She jumped from the Cardinal World to this world's past. This was the reasoning that Amari Masahiko gave. It was a brilliant mind to admire. It was just a shame there wasn't time to put it to use.

“There will be no bargaining. It's too much work.”

This is the reason why he must make a decision. Velgrynd is at ease, holding out her hand to Emile, whom she had drawn in. It was obvious what she was doing. She is carefully separating Emile from the demon that was on the verge of complete assimilation. The demon is fighting back, but it is only a matter of time. Then he'd just have to make the most of that time. That's what Masahiko decided.

“Our desire is for demons and humanity to coexist and prosper together. It's a shame you can't understand that.”

“You know, intelligent life forms don't understand what they want one way or the other.”

“Huh, no doubt. But we can't give up.”

“So that's your answer?”

“That's right!!”

Velgrynd laughs.

“You're a fool. Then—it's time to go, guys!”

The final battle was about to begin.



The demons' eyes widened at the sudden appearance of the humans. However, the same can be said for those who have appeared. The human race's greatest warriors were even more confused than the demons were.

"I'm being summoned."

"What?"

"I have to go. And we have to help him."

And then Velgrynd suddenly disappeared. Just as they were wondering, they, too, were suddenly summoned to a strange place. And this is the scene. None of them realized that they had shifted through space. After all, they didn't even go through the portal, they just suddenly changed scenery.

It could be summed up in one word, 'Instantaneous Movement.' It could normally only be done by ten people, and it was an unimaginable supernatural power. To humanity, led by Gensei and the others, it was an act of God that was incomprehensible. In such a situation, even if you are told, 'It's your turn, you guys!', It's a hard to know what to do. It is important to find out what you can do when you are in trouble like this. This is also applicable to work, and if you take what you can understand as a starting point, you can work your way through it. In this case, it was just a lucky thing that they had an acquaintance.

Each of them found their own face and began to negotiate with one another. In Gensei's case, he turned to his apprentice and trusted companion, the man who had been his disciple and companion, Amari Masahiko.

"Masahiko, you are not a weak man to be dominated by a demon. His Majesty is grieving too. Pick yourself up and get back here."

Gensei called out to him and decided to take a look at him. With his hand on the hilt of his sword, he takes a ready-made stance and waits for an answer. Minamoto follows suit, naturally lining up beside him.

"Don't lose, Masahiko-san, please don't lose! Don't lose sight of your own heart!"

Like Gensei, he took the same strategy to call out to them. He was betting on the possibility that they might still have the ego, and hoped that he could overcome the demon...

The person who was called out to was Amari Masahiko, but it was surprisingly effective. After all, he himself didn't have an answer as to whether he was a demon or a human.

"I'm..."

And that's when he started to worry. Even for Masahiko, this development was too unexpected. The problem is the presence of Velgrynd here. It wasn't because he thought he could win that he rejected Velgrynd's proposal in the first place. On the contrary, he broke off the negotiations to embolden his comrades because he knew he was going to lose. To be frank, Velgrynd's presence was on another level. This is not a battleground of who can or cannot win, but a dead end when one is against them.

Then, the best thing to do would be to withdraw from this place. The alternative is to accept the offer, but that was rejected. If he gives in to her demands, the entire strategy is broken, and the operation is over. In that case, the blame would fall on himself and Pulcinella, but Masahiko

wasn't straightforward enough to think that was a good thing. Rather, he felt comfortable with the demon's defeat.

If anything, his human side was stronger. That's why Masahiko was shaken by Gensei's call. His human heart was telling him to go back to Gensei's side. The demon's intellect cries out, unwilling to admit defeat. Human reason tells him that there is no point in running away now. Every demonic instinct was afraid of the threat of Velgrynd. These various pieces of information conflicted with each other and tormented Masahiko.

I see...the demon's greatest weakness is its lack of self-awareness. At least if he'd been given a name, he would have established a firm sense of self. No. That's exactly why I've conquered the demon. Yes. I am Amari Masahiko. I am not a demon.

Amari Masahiko was in agony. The way he looked was just like a human being. Seeing that, Gensei and the others decided that it was okay.

"Remember, Masahiko! To whom did you give your loyalty? Who did you hone your sword skills for? Strength is nothing but violence unless it is properly understood. Have you forgotten that lesson?"

Amari Masahiko remembers. He remembered that he had pledged his allegiance to the Emperor. He remembered that his sword should be wielded to protect the weak.

"Masahiko-san and Kondou-san also fought valiantly to the end and lost their battle. I admired the two of you so much that it was almost dazzling to me. And yet...the reason Kondou-san died was because of a demon! Are you going to be one of them?!"

It wasn't the demon's fault, but that's how Velgrynd explained it, so everyone believed it. No one interfered and it wasn't a complete lie, so the story was true. So even Masahiko believed it.

That's unforgivable...and his heart burned. Somewhere inside his mind, he heard a cracking sound. He stopped thinking and listened to his heart's desire.



In Xianhua's case, the demon side called out.

"It's been a while. It's been a long time since we've met here. We don't need words between you and me. Let's fight each other."

Li Jinlong smiled wryly and held up his fist. It was hard to believe that he was in his fifties. Now that he was merged with the demon, he seemed to have regained his youthfulness. More ferociously, he was obsessed with Xianhua.

"You're a persistent man. How many times do I have to beat you to get you to admit defeat?"

"Unless you kill me, I'll never admit defeat. You were better than me, sure, but that's in the past. I will keep challenging you to a fight until I win."

He wanted to take over the position of the Dragon Fist's rightful successor. Even though Li Jinlong had become a demon, he still couldn't give up his ambition.

"Your persistence is the only thing that's admirable."

"Stop laughing. If I win by any means, it is justice."

As soon as he finished, Li Jinlong let loose with a thrust. He was half-armed and slid across the floor, closing the distance in one fluid motion. His front right fist is like a missile. The energy generated by his toes rode the momentum of his hip's rotation and converged into a well-honed fist. With the addition of the demon's power, it was so powerful that an ordinary person would be reduced to a crumbling mess. Xianhua would have been done for if he took it properly, but he danced like a leaf to shrug off the power. That's not all.

Xianhua's hands are wrapped in purple lightning and her left hand is snugly attached to the approaching fist. Grabbing the fist to take advantage of the power of the thrust, she dodges a front leg and takes Li Jinlong's back. She pushes Li Jinlong back, knocks him to the floor, and then strikes with her free right fist, aiming for the back of his head and the root of his neck. A brilliant move that was stunning.

Li Jinlong, in the midst of his divine speed thrusts and in a released fist position, could not help but do as he was forced. In addition to the impact that ripped through his body, he was also hit on the vital point. It wasn't safe for Li Jinlong. But the demon general Li Jinlong still did a great job. Xianhua's fighting spirit was so strong that an ordinary demon would have been obliterated in an instant, but he was still able to stand up.

"That hurt. My subordinates would've died."

"You're still as tough as ever."

"Of course. You won't enjoy it if it's over after one shot. This is just the beginning."

Laughing fiercely at Li Jinlong, Xianhua clicked her tongue.

"You're a vulgar guy."

"You're wrong! You know what I mean."

Li Jinlong was more innocent than expected, but Xianhua was unconcerned and resumed the onslaught.



The more moderate pairing would be United States Secret Service Representative Billy, and David Reagan, the Commander of the United States of Azalea Grand South Sea Fleet.

"My lord, you have been charged with treason. I would advise you to prove your innocence in court."

"Let me tell you, I'm not like the rest of humanity. I cannot be judged by the laws of men."

"Then I will be forcibly restraining you. If you resist, I will be permitted to shoot, and I will

not hesitate to do so.”

“Don’t make me laugh. I’m over the limits of humanity now, and I don’t think that kind of toy is going to work!”

As David laughed, Billy pulled the trigger without hesitation. Aiming at the enemy is a basic tactic, naturally. He fired his bullets with all his fighting spirit. One shot a day, specially made to give it everything he’s got.

They only lasted a week, so there were seven rounds in stock. A Smith & Wesson Model 27 had six rounds of ammunition, each one packing lethal force. Not to mention that the gun had been transformed by Velgrynd into a mythical-grade weapon. The power of the bullets had been greatly increased, enough to penetrate David’s defensive wards.

“Guhaal!”

David was stunned as the first bullet shot through his heart. He had let his guard. Aside from Velgrynd, he had thought the others posed no threat.

This is bad. What’s going on?

He can’t help but wonder why he’s in such a state of shock. David thought being a demon freed him from his fear of death. There’s no escaping pain and sickness if you’re human. But as a demon, David thought he would have nothing to do with it. And yet, Billy’s gun was a danger to himself. That realization frightened David. The weakness of the human heart had overridden the demon’s will. This was an unexpected miscalculation for the demon that possessed David.

Because David’s mind was so weak, possession was easy. But now that weakness had become his own weakness. Looking next to him, Li Jinlong also struggled against Xianhua. David was confused by this nonsense.

“Have you changed your perspective?”

Billy goes on. It’s not a fight that can be won. He catches the opponent off guard, upsets him, makes him think he has the advantage. He knows that only by gaining an advantage will he be able to win. He has six bullets left. However, one shot needs to be loaded, and he doesn’t think his opponent will allow it. If he doesn’t finish him off within the remaining five shots, Billy’s defeat will be decided right then and there. It was precisely because he was thinking this that he hesitated to fire all of his rounds. At that moment—

Both men thought at the same time that if they didn’t get the fight going, they would lose. The stalemate came to an unexpected halt.



Some of the confrontations were unreasonable combinations. The demon Delia and the six warriors against her. Delia was furious.

“Hey, why are there six of them coming only to me?!”

It was the last thing she wanted to hear. As if that wasn't enough, Delia urged further.

"Scatter. Help those who look more in trouble!"

But her voice was ignored.

"We've come here to help you!"

Cried Bright, the leader of the Seven Vessels.

"Then put that sword away!"

Delia shouts back, sending the slash away from Bright's slash. And then a arrow fly in for the opportunity.

"Watch out! You're still so cunning! What do I do if it pierces me?"

Because of her heightened ability to sense danger, Delia was able to evade. She complains to the Bowman, but the gringo-looking young Bowman is out of the picture.

"Delia, I'm sorry, but can you please calm down and be caught? I know you're in a bad way right now, and we're all in mortal danger."

The whip-handler hunts Delia down languidly but precisely. The archer responds with more attacks.

"If you're going to help, why don't you at least try to talk?"

Delia complained, desperately avoiding those attacks. One against six. Normally, the aggressor would have the advantage. But the truth was, Delia was on the winning side. If Delia had her way, those six warriors would have sunk in a pool of blood. She didn't because she wasn't willing to. Delia's human self was coming back to life as well. The demon's strategy was perfect but stealing the human name had thrown a wrench in the works. Even without the appearance of Velgrynd, it would have failed somewhere along the line. To the viewer, it was a clear situation.



The strategy room in the demon stronghold has been thrown into chaos by the battle with the intruders. Only Velgrynd, who was healing Emile, and Mystery Monk Pulcinella, who was folding his arms, were at ease. Despite being called a saint, he is evil in nature. And he was so cunning that no one would ever know. Now, too, he sees the situation and seeks what is best for him. It is the very essence of human desire.

The demon's ego was eaten long ago. But that doesn't mean assimilation was complete. Pulcinella's priority was to absorb power, and the demon's knowledge took a back seat. He thought that as long as he had his power, he could handle the rest. Still, he had accumulated a little bit of knowledge, but he couldn't bring himself to study it intentionally. 'Thought Acceleration' would take an enormous amount of time to acquire memories that would span millions of years. Besides, absorbing unnecessary knowledge may affect your ego. This was Pulcinella's

misfortune.

It was unfortunate for Pulcinella, because he lacked knowledge of Velgrynd. So Pulcinella made a fatal mistake here. Instead of dealing with Velgrynd, he let his own desires take precedence.

Amari Masahiko is a cunning man. He must know that if we break the Underworld Gate, we can become kings. That's why I was right to pretend not to notice. That's why he trusts me. I'll use these intruders to my advantage!

Pulcinella will use the opportunity to break the Underworld Gate and kill Masahiko. He planned to become king, but he saw the chaos as an opportunity. The demon that possessed Pulcinella had always fought on the front lines as Cornu's 'chief strategist.' Thus, he had earned the Extra Skill of 'Life Drain.' Unlike Luminas' 'Energy Drain' and Yuki's 'Steal Life'¹⁹, this Skill allows you to harness the energy of a dead enemy. However, it can only take less than 10 percent of your magicule at most. And since it can't be used in battle, it isn't that useful. Still, the advantage was that the more you fought, the stronger you became. However—

Pulcinella's desire had sublimated his authority. This was the Unique Skill 'Mitasumono (Instant Buddha)'²⁰ It gives the authority to take away as much power as your body is satisfied from an unconsciously weakened opponent. It's also difficult to use in battle, but it can come alive during melee. And here, in this place, there were some pretty good fighters.

Kekeke. If I play my cards right, I could double their strength. Then Masahiko and even others will be no match for me. From now on, it will not be Cornu. From now on he will serve as my second in command.

He could only see his own desires and even called out his lord Cornu. Pulcinella kept watching the situation. He has been observing the situation and has identified a prime target. The battle between Xianhua and Li Jinlong was closer than expected, even though Xianhua had the upper hand. Both sides are exhausted, but the battle is still not over.

It's a good thing to take from the weak, but that would make me wary of the strong. In that respect, Xianhua is the best!

Originally, Xianhua thought that Pulcinella was his prey. This situation had come about before he went to China, but in the end, he gloated that it was all planned. Then, he took aim at the moment Xianhua and Li Jinlong collided and bared his fangs.



¹⁹奪命掌 can also mean 'deadly palm' but the katakana (スティールライフ or sutīruraifu) looks like 'still life.'

Alternatively, 'sutīruraifu' might also be 'steal life,' or 'steel life.' I wasn't sure.

²⁰I could be wrong here, but 即身仏 (Sokushinbutsu) means 'instant buddha.' The katakana part said ミタスモノ which sounds like 'Mitasumono'

Xianhua and Li Jinlong exchange fists, but there is a smile on each other's faces.

"I'm glad, Xianhua. I've been a no match for you for so long, and now I'm fighting you like this."

Li Jinlong, who had been wearing armor and sleeves until now, was happy to be able to fight Xianhua. Xianhua was his dream. She was so loved so much that she could not just be described as a genius. Li Jinlong's heart for her was complicated. If it wasn't for Xianhua, he would have been the heir apparent. But seeing Xianhua's brilliance when she was just a little girl, he also wanted to see how far the girl could go. At that moment, Li Jinlong must have admitted that he had lost.

"Humph! There's no point in asking for help from others instead of elevating yourself."

"You talk like you know what you're talking about. I'd do anything to surpass you."

"I know. I'm not fighting on my own, either."

"What?"

"It's a fact that only the successors know, but it's not a secret, so I'll tell you. The spirit contains the knowledge and experience of each of previous successors. So, it's only natural that one should be stronger than their predecessors. Our founder's dream was to be the strongest in the world. It is precisely because he pursued such an impossible dream that he has created a way to pass it on to the next generation."

That reminds Li Jinlong too. Rumor has it that the successor will always be stronger than the predecessor. Now he understands why. And he realizes that Xianhua's power isn't just hers, it's the power of so many great people.

"You have the power of others..."

"Yes. That's why I can't lose."

Man is a creature that creates a new path based on the accumulated knowledge of his predecessors. The philosophy of the Dragon Fist is the same. Without a strong foundation, a building will tilt. They had to raise themselves to embrace the power of others.

"So you're saying that I haven't trained enough?!"

"Yes. The power you have is useless if you can't master it."

"Tch!"

Li Jinlong was humiliated, but he knew it to be true. If you only compared the strength, she was better than him. He was still at a disadvantage and there was no excuse. His high spirits were dampened, but he still enjoyed the situation. He's not at an advantage, but there is the feeling that victory is within reach. The desperate exchange of life made Li Jinlong's blood boil. The demon's ego urges him to restrain himself, but he has no intention of listening to it.

More! More! Faster and stronger, I'm going to win!

His sense of inferiority to Xianhua disappears and the desire to win only grows. Correspondingly, even the demon's ego began to help Li Jinlong. It's a sign of complete assimilation. Make each other's desires their own and the boundary between their hearts will be dissolved. Li Jinlong is convinced that he can defeat Xianhua. It was at that time. As they collided again, Pulcinella is standing behind Xianhua.

“Nnngh!”

Pulcinella’s sword plunged into Xianhua’s back in a moment that didn’t even take a blink of an eye.

“Kahahaha!”

Fresh blood splattered from Xianhua’s mouth as she collapsed on the spot. Only because Xianhua had trained her body to the utmost limit and stepped into the semi-spiritual life form as a Sage, was she able to avoid instant death. But Pulcinella had cut out Xianhua’s heart. At this rate, Xianhua’s death was only a matter of time. Pulcinella is elated. He had devoured Xianhua’s heart and invoked his Unique Skill.

“Delicious. This will greatly increase my power!”

True to his words, Pulcinella was filled with energy. His subordinate Li Jinlong was enraged by this. Ignoring the absolute hierarchy as a demon, the human part of him screams from his heart.

“Bastard! You’ve not only sabotaged our game, but you’ve sabotaged my dreams! If you’re the strongest, you’ll have to beat me fair and square!”

That’s what he shouted as he threw a kick. But it doesn’t work. It was a desperate right-sided kick, but it was easily stopped by Pulcinella’s outstretched left hand.

“Vulnerable! And there is no need for subordinates to oppose. You will be my food, too.”

Since he hadn’t fully captured Xianhua’s power yet, even if he ate it now, it would only be able to provide a small amount of power. Nevertheless, Pulcinella smiled lecherously and destroyed Li Jinlong’s leg.

“Guaah—!”

Although this demon had no sense of pain, Li Jinlong’s human consciousness was so strong that it caused him to feel phantom pain. Pulcinella laughs at that.

“Stop laughing! You are a fool who doesn’t even know how to use the power of a demon and what it means to transcend the species of a human!”

If he had understood his characteristics as a demon, he would have been able to make use of his power more fully. If so, he would have been able to defeat Xianhua! Pulcinella laughed and thought about how he should educate his subordinates. If they were still demons, it wouldn’t be a problem, but if they had developed a human identity, it would be tricky. There are advantages and disadvantages. Being flexible was an advantage, but the possibility of betrayal was a disadvantage. Demons have an absolute hierarchy, but depending on their desires, some will put their ego ahead of that. This is certain since that is what Pulcinella is doing now. In terms of strengthening his own forces, he should let Li Jinlong be the example and make him understand his own power:....

It would be troublesome if he betrayed. After all, I should leave things as they are until we build a ruling system that does not allow for betrayal.

And he has set the policy. He now thinks he’s become a king. Besides, there are few executives left. Li Jinlong will take matters into his own hands and Emile is protected by Velgrynd. That leaves Delia, David, and the questionable Amari Masahiko. Masahiko is a tricky man, but

he would swear to be a confidant if he showed him the overwhelming difference in strength.

He's not stupid. If he realizes he can't win, he'll cooperate. So the question is, who's that Velgrynd? That woman will be sacrificed as a test of my strength.

He was very happy to draw a future forecast, but that cannot be a reality. After a moment of happy fantasy, Pulcinella clenched his fist as he was about to strike a blow to Li Jinlong. An evil aura surrounds him, as he attempts to crush Li Jinlong's head...

"Get out of the way."

The moment he heard the voice, an intense pain that he never imagined ran all over his body. The pain was so great that Pulcinella was rolling around and was not laughing at Li Jinlong. Li Jinlong could not help but laugh.

"Xianhua, I won't let you die. If you die here, Long's dream will also die."

As usual, Velgrynd does not give a damn about the convenience of others. This is the best way to deal with a dying being. Xianhua, who had been waiting to die, felt like she wanted to talk back.

"Yes, but..."

"Regeneration. Also healing for recovery of physical strength. How's that?"

Velgrynd healed Xianhua with a powerful spell of regeneration of the heart and then regained her strength on top of that. Velgrynd had learned holy magic from her travels in various worlds. She did not need it at all, but did it mainly for the benefit of Rudra's reincarnations. In the meantime, people really worshiped in her, but they didn't know much about her. It was an act of God in this world, but, well, it didn't matter.

"Uhh... I'm healed. I'm not in any pain at all, and I feel fine."

There are people like Hinata who have a high resistance to magic. But 'God's Miracle,' interfering with the spiritron had no problem making it work.

"That's right. God's Miracle.' I thought 'Resurrection' was an overreaction. That's good."

"Yes..."

That's right, there was even more magic than that—muttered Xianhua in her mind. Now, she was back in shape, but that didn't solve the problem. What Pulcinella had taken was Xianhua's spirit. The knowledge and experience that had been entrusted to her for generations was still there, but most of her power is gone. Unless something is done about this, Xianhua will remain weakened. This would normally be a big problem—but Velgrynd was here.

"Let me help you. It's dragon's energy, so it's a good substitute."

Far from being a substitute, it will be stronger than ever. But that was only on a human scale. From Velgrynd's point of view, it was only a margin of error, so she didn't hesitate to send the dragon energy into Xianhua. The power stabilizing dragon qi strengthened Xianhua's body. Although not quite a Saint, Xianhua had fully awakened as a Sage.

"So this is...the power of Ryuo-sama, which was only given to the Founder!"

Li Jinlong, who had been stunned and left behind in the situation, nodded his head in satisfaction for some reason. His expression was just like he had been when he was a human.

"Kekeke, after all, that kid should be like this. It's only when you're at a high level that you

can be motivated this way.”

He was again one-sidedly looking at Xianhua as a rival, muttering something like. Even in the eyes of Demon General Li Jinlong, she was getting stronger. And although a jubilant Xianhua didn’t realize it, her life has been greatly extended now that she had become Sage. She would rise to heights that even Long could not reach and would live as the ruler of this world as a ‘Dragon Fist Master.’ But that’s another story.



Blown away by Velgrynd, Pulcinella could not understand what had happened to him. Although he was inferior to Cornu, he should have had absolute power. And yet, he was left with unbearable pain.

What? Why am I feeling such pain like a human being?

The reason is simple... The crimson cardinal aura of Velgrynd will burn anyone it touches. However, this time, she didn’t intend to kill him, so she was holding back as best she could...

Had he realized that, Pulcinella would not have repeated his folly any further. But he was more intoxicated with himself as a king than he had ever imagined. That’s why he was so blind to reality and went into things he shouldn’t have.

“Surprising or petty.”

This is the speech of a wretched little man who can’t even understand the gap between them. Even Velgrynd had no idea it was directed at her. So she didn’t care and moved on to the next person. She stood behind David, who was staring at Billy, and smacked him on the head with her palm. The cardinal aura destroyed the demon in one blow. It was an impressive feat of strength, but it was just like Velgrynd. Meanwhile, Pulcinella also moved in. He didn’t like what he saw and sent orders to Delia.

“Give me that spear!”

“What?”

“You cannot bring out the spear’s true value. That spear will be more valuable to me than its disappointing owner.”

Pulcinella stole Delia’s spear. He senses its power and smiles, thinking he can win. Meanwhile, as Delia is pushed away, her former comrades rush in.

“You okay?”

Bright calls out on behalf of the others. Hearing that, tears start to fall down Delia’s cheeks.

“You’re stupid. I’m not human. I’m a demon that has invaded this world.”

“But you’re crying. Those tears are the proof that you’re still human.”

“Bright...”

“In general, your memory is intact, right?”

“Let’s get rid of the demon, you know.”

“You’re so brazen, you can’t lose to a demon.”

At that moment, Delia was sure she heard the sound of something crunching somewhere in her mind.

“Hey Catalina, if you’re going to comfort me, you should comfort me properly! What do you mean I’m brazen?”

“That’s what I meant. I had faith that you’d come back to me.”

Catalina hugs Delia, crying. And the others too. No more words are needed. Delia laughed from the bottom of her heart as her friends shouted in joy one by one.

Seeing Delia and her friends, Pulcinella snorted unpleasantly.

“Good grief. That’s why humans...”

Even David has come to his senses at the hands of Velgrynd. Delia was his only loyal subordinate, but it seems that her human ego has won out. If that’s the case, then he can’t expect to get Masahiko as well. It seemed that his human ego had begun to win, and he should have thought that a joint struggle was impossible. But he sees no problem. Because Pulcinella now has the most powerful weapon in the world.

This performance is mythical-grade! It still refuses to believe that I’m the master, but it’s strong enough. It can handle that damned Velgrynd.

And he was doing the math. He was a helplessly unrefined man. But somewhere inside, alarm bells were ringing. He had found information about Velgrynd from the missing demon’s knowledge. If he had scrutinized it carefully, he would have been able to find out more...

“I’m the only one I can rely on, right? Very well. I will take care of you myself!”

“Do you think he’s talking to me?”

“You’re really a stupid woman! There’s no other—Buberaaa—?!”

He announced his intention to kill her openly, but it was a bad move. Until now, he had been overlooked because she was not interested in him, but now he was recognized as an enemy. Still, Velgrynd thought there was a chance that Pulcinella could turn back from a demon to a human, and was taking it easy on Pulcinella to keep him from dying. What’s really annoying is that since Pulcinella had only taken over the demon’s consciousness, his ‘heart’ was still intact. With this blow, it was shattered.

“So, our mission is over. This man has conquered the demon on his own, so there are no more demons to be taken over.”

Velgrynd declared radiantly. The six phantom leaders were present. David and Emile had been stripped of their demon powers by Velgrynd and are now normal human beings again. Li Jinlong and Delia, as well as Amari Masahiko, have reclaimed themselves. The demon’s power remains, but that didn’t bother Velgrynd. And Pulcinella had shattered the demon’s core, but something was wrong.

“Kekeke! Thank you very much! The damned seal that warned me of my power has been

broken!"

The demon's power had been fully absorbed and even its form had begun to mutate. His skin had turned pale and his eyes were red. He was different from the lower-ranked ones...he even had wings like an angel. The robe he wears is a modified version of the armor the demon used to wear. Of course, because it had been in existence for so long, it boasted a considerably high performance in the legendary class. The spear in his hand, which he had taken from Delia, had also been transformed into a scepter. In other words, it had now accepted Pulcinella as its owner. Pulcinella's own magicules are insufficient to fully free him. But still, Pulcinella feels as if his energy has doubled. Pulcinella is in a frenzy of euphoria, and he is at his peak. He was foolishly growing to think that no one could rival him now. At that, Velgrynd snorted.

Could it be that he's a real idiot?

But she lets Pulcinella do as he pleases. She's the absolute strongest in the world and she's not going to panic. Unknowingly, Pulcinella, in his full form, is smiling broadly.

"This is a wonderfully comforting feeling. This is a power so great it could beat Cornusama."

Pulcinella's omnipotence was so great that he could even say so boastfully. In fact, his power had risen to the level of an Awakened Demon Lord, and Pulcinella felt that he had surpassed his limits. However, this was only the idea of someone with a small measure of knowledge.

"That's impossible. There's no way you're going to win the game when there's a difference of more than ten times."

It was such a ridiculous misunderstanding that Velgrynd couldn't help but poke fun at it. And yet Pulcinella is furious when it is pointed out to him.

"Oh dear, what a pity it is to be a fool who does not know reason!"

Everyone but himself thought that it was him. Velgrynd finally realized that Pulcinella seemed to be undermining her. But she didn't know why. He seems to think he can beat Velgrynd, but she has no idea what he's basing this on. She's known demons for a long time, so she didn't expect someone who didn't know her. But if he's a minor phantom, it's no surprise that he doesn't know her. But a former angel of the Three Marshals would have trembled just at the mention of Velgrynd's name. It was a natural reaction when faced with the powerful True Dragon. Yet, Pulcinella's reaction was very unnatural. That was why Velgrynd was confused, wondering if he might be mistaken.

"It's been bothering me for a while now, but you're pretty rude. You didn't mean me when you said the word 'fool' now, did you?"

After a long journey, Velgrynd has become surprisingly patient. In her own estimation, she's full of charity, if not a bit more compassionate, than she was before. That's why she asked that instead of getting angry, but Pulcinella didn't get the picture.

"I don't know. Apparently, you're a little strong, but most of the time I'm confident. There is a whole world out there with more to come..."

Oh, he really doesn't know—Velgrynd realized. He had overcome the phantom ego and was acting by Pulcinella's will. And at the same time, she pitied Pulcinella, who was possessed by

a demon and only wanted power, as opposed to Masahiko, who was possessed by a demon and prioritized knowledge.

That's why this guy has grown to this point without knowing the important things.

She was so convinced that she was more amazed than angry. Velgrynd ignored Pulcinella, who was making some kind of speech, and asked Gensei and the others.

“What is the right thing to do with this man? I shattered the demon’s core, but its power is still intact. Even I can’t help him in this situation.”

That means you can’t take the power away. But Pulcinella misunderstood.

“Kekeke, of course! It’s too late to be afraid now!”

He mistakenly understood that Velgrynd had declared to be no match for him. He was a man of infinitely happy thought processes.

“For the spirit of a being who so frankly admits defeat, you may now join as my subordinate. I thank you for your mercy and invite you to join me at the head of the household...?”

“Shut up!”

Another slap from Velgrynd. Unable to react to this, Pulcinella now realizes that this is crazy.

Could I be mistaken?

Thinking so, he tries to decipher the memories he’s been searching for. But he couldn’t do it. When the demon’s heart was shattered by Velgrynd, all memory information was lost.

This is not good!!

Without knowing why, Pulcinella became agitated. Leaving Pulcinella alone, Velgrynd resumes her conversation with Gensei.

“It’s going to be too much trouble for you guys to keep this man alive. I think it’s better to kill him, what do you think?”

Velgrynd doesn’t care if Pulcinella lives or dies. But she can’t leave him unattended. As long as Akira Sakura is alive, everything’s all right with Velgrynd. But after that, she doesn’t know what will happen. Velgrynd has no intention of taking responsibility and will always travel to find the next piece of soul. In that case, there will be no one left to stop Pulcinella. Besides, she knows that Rudra’s reincarnation had happened many times in this world, and his bloodline had been passed down. It was no fun for Velgrynd to let Pulcinella do as he pleased. It was obvious that Gensei’s people couldn’t handle it, and that was why it would be quicker to take care of it him.

“That’s certainly true, but...”

No one from Roziam was here. When only your own heroes are killed, there will always be some lingering effects. Even if you realize that it was a fair decision, it won’t be fun. Velgrynd is worried about that and asks what to do. In other words, it’s not the kindness of Velgrynd that keeps Pulcinella alive. She simply concludes that he might cause trouble for Akira if she kills him on her own. That’s why she left the decision to someone else. Since everyone is from another country, they will be hard to judge. After consulting with all of them, she decided that if they chose to let Pulcinella go here, that was fine. Aside from Masahiko, the others could also

read Velgrynd's intentions. So they felt free to speak their minds.

"There's no other choice but to get rid of him. Tell them he was possessed by a demon and that I did it. If Roziam demands my custody, you can give it to me without a care in the world."

When Masahiko said this, Gensei had a hard time with it.

"No, I agree to take care of it, but you won't be a victim. I'll explain the situation and ask them to understand."

It's Azalea's people who are on board with this.

"That's right. If you didn't understand what was going on, then you can put pressure on them. We at Azalea will help you."

"I'm afraid I have a problem with that statement, Commander. But I agree with the idea of getting rid of it."

"Too much power brings bad luck. That's what my grandfather used to say. I think Pulcinella-san's unhappiness is partly to blame."

Billy and Emile also expressed their approval, remonstrating David's remarks. Incidentally, Laurent Hayes, Emile's grandfather, would only turn to Velgrynd for really trivial matters. Remembering this, Velgrynd smiled as an afterthought. The Chinese are silent in a tolerant stance. They don't have good feelings because of Roziam attacking the land. That is why they refrain from speaking. The last were those of Arcia, but they were ready to kill.

"It doesn't matter why. Let's kill him."

"That's right. He pushed Delia away and even took away her weapon. I'd kill him with my own hands if I could."

"Well, that's right. I see no reason to disagree."

"Same to the right."

"..."

And, well, they were angry that their friends had been hurt, and the comments continued with no weight. Pulcinella heard this and knew that his situation was very dangerous.

This woman, Velgrynd, is going to kill me. But before that happens—

He thought to come up with a plan to come back to life. Secretly, he put all my heart and soul into this plan. And with his back to Velgrynd, he aimed for a sneak attack. He had abandoned his pride as a saint. Chivalry is useless when you're between life and death.

"You will die! Take this...my soulful blow!"

It was a mystical art in the holy spirit world where evil spirits are destroyed with the help of the gods and Buddha. Add to this the power of demons and you have an immense rush of energy that has never before been observed in this world. The aftermath alone was devastating. The earth trembled and the sky shook. The base that had been rebuilt as a demon stronghold couldn't withstand the impact and began to collapse. Not only had it survived a bombing, but it was stronger than a nuclear shelter. The distance that lies between Pulcinella and Velgrynd will be filled in less than a second. That much damage was done in that instant. It was clear how tremendous the attack was.

I won! No life form could withstand this power. Now I will be the ruler of this world!

Pulcinella witnessed this moment, trying to prove his victory. Velgrynd's defenseless back was pierced by this energy in the shape of a spear. And yet—Velgrynd was unharmed.

It didn't work. It couldn't work. It couldn't work because the other party Velgrynd. The energy that could even wipe out this entire continent in an instant was instantly dissipated.

"I'll get to the bottom of this in a moment, so sit tight and wait."

As soon as she said this as if it was nothing, Pulcinella could not help but realize that he would never win. He would never be able to beat Velgrynd. Maybe things would have turned out differently if he'd given up then. But it makes no sense to assume that. Pulcinella had done something he shouldn't have done, at the wrong time.



"What a relief! I had misjudged that there was someone in this world I couldn't beat. But you can't touch me."

"Why is that?"

"I am very cautious. I have always played the good guy because I was careful not to incur any resentment. But you stopped playing the good guy because you were sure of victory. But my victory is assured. I already have a plan."

"It's confusing. Just get to the point."

"Kekeke, you're an impatient one. Okay, let me tell you. In Azalea, Roziam and Arcia, these three countries have developed new bombs. The methods are different, but the principle is the same, well, that doesn't matter—what matters is the power."

"You don't think you can kill me with that bomb, can you?"

"No, I don't think so. I'm confident that I can handle it, so I'm sure you won't get through to him."

"Yeah? Then why do you keep bringing up the bombs?"

"Don't be in a hurry. Well, I can understand why you'd be nervous."

By rushing the conversation, Pulcinella irritated Velgrynd. Understanding that it was the right thing to do, Velgrynd continued to go along. Pulcinella is the kind of coward who aims for a sudden attack while they are discussing whether or not to make use of him. It would have been better to kill him quickly, but Velgrynd decided to listen to him. The reason is simple—to avoid trouble later. If he's going to tell me about the deviousness, she thinks it's only polite to listen. In addition, one of the reasons was that she had absolute confidence that she'd be fine no matter what he did to them. So far, Velgrynd had been listening to Pulcinella's story in a relatively relaxed manner, but her smile fades when she hears his next comment.

"What is my plan, exactly? I'm going to steal those bombs and detonate them over each country's capitals. I've already got a hand in place. It's too late to panic!"

The damned thing had already been exposed.

“What nonsense! If you do this, innocent people will be killed!”

“Don’t be ridiculous, bastard! Without leadership, the order in the country will collapse as well!”

“I thought the basic plan of the demon’s plan was to raise humanity as your dependents, what the hell do you think you’re doing?!”

Looking around at the people who were shouting, Pulcinella gave a twisted smile of amusement.

“How delightful. Yes, of course. I’m also at a loss. As Masahiko says, it’s best to cultivate humans. But the sheer number of them outweighs the demons. They’ll live through this war-torn age, so it doesn’t affect us. All we have to do is slowly gather the survivors and breed them!”

Pulcinella boasted that there was no problem, although the plan was delayed. The theory was ridiculous, but it wasn’t wrong. Realizing this, even Amari Masahiko stopped talking. Gensei also paled and looked at Velgrynd. If Pulcinella was going on explaining for so long, it means he was stalling. That means the plan is currently in progress. There was no way for Gensei and his team to get out of this situation. They’d have to rely on ‘Instantaneous Movement,’ which only Velgrynd can perform. There would be many casualties, but they must still let the world leaders alone. Fortunately, now that they had all taken refuge in the Empire, Gensei thought that Velgrynd would be able to get them out. That’s why he watched Velgrynd but regretted not seeing it. Because right there was an angry goddess. Pulcinella’s plan was an offense to Velgrynd.

“It pains me that innocent lives must be sacrificed. If it were possible, I would prefer not to inflict that kind of sacrifice. How about it? Shall you leave me alone? If we don’t interfere with each other, I’ll give you the empire—no, half the world, if that’s what you want!”

Pulcinella didn’t take a chance and offered Velgrynd a deal. He thought he had a good chance with the bomb threat. But he had been too naive.

“You’re a lowlife. I would have let you get away with any underhanded move against me, but I won’t let you get away with anything that involves that person. I won’t let you go back to the Wheel of Reincarnation. I’ll break your soul and give you eternal suffering.”

Velgrynd’s true nature is fierce. She’s powerful, so she can afford to be, but at the flip of a switch, she’ll snap at the drop of a hat.

“Well, wait! That’s why I don’t want to be a part of this—wait! If I don’t tell them to stop, my men will detonate the bombs! They’re already over the capitals of five countries. Let’s not be so rude.”

“Shut up. I took care of that a long time ago.”

“What?”

What was said was incomprehensible to Pulcinella. It wasn’t just Pulcinella, but none of the people there could understand what Velgrynd had said. They didn’t think she was bluffing, either, but it felt like she was telling the truth. But it would be impossible for her to be here and protect five countries at once. That was a narrow-minded assessment. Velgrynd has ‘Parallel

Existence' so that can be dealt with without difficulty. Velgrynd would never leave Akira's side, so the kingdom was secure. And if she'd been somewhere before, she can get there in a flash. Azalea, Arcia, Roziam and China. All of these places had been visited by Velgrynd. All problems were cleared. The 'Parallel Existence' was separated from Velgrynd beside Akira and scattered to the nations. They then sought out the hidden demons and blew away the new bombs.

"That's impossible! How is that possible?!"

He tried desperately to contact his men, but they were long dead and he never heard from them. Pulcinella's face contorted in horror as he faced that reality. He finally realized just how dangerous this beautiful woman in front of him was.

"Forgive me, please forgive me..."

"No good."



There's nothing scarier than an angry, beautiful woman's smile. Everyone in the room understood that this was the case.

"No, no—"

"Schorch Dragon Cardinal Acceleration."

A flash of supernova-like light flares up behind Pulcinella as he tries to escape. Surrounded by the heat, Pulcinella's soul shatters and disappears. The damage didn't stop there. Velgrynd had intended to keep it on a very small scale, but it was enough to wipe out a third of the continent. The survivors could not help but be stunned. The goddess standing before them seemed both beautiful and terrifying. As an aside, Velgrynd's 'Schorch Dragon Cardinal Acceleration' had caused damage in places unrelated to this world. Beyond dimensions, the aftermath of the 'Spacetime Continuous Attack' had even reached Cornu, the master of the demon possessed by Pulcinella. His attempt to open the Underworld Gate had taken a toll on him, and he had lost his entire army and was injured so badly that it would take him decades to recover. The damage was horrific, but to Velgrynd, it was just another story.



"Well, a goddess would have been that way since ancient times. It would be obvious that it's the fault of humanity for offending her."

—Is what Akira Sakura said after the whole situation was explained to him.

"I'm sorry. I thought I had held back quite a bit, but I guess I had more power than I thought."

It was no use saying cute things, but there was no one to rush in. The same is true of Akira. There is no choice but to forgive Velgrynd for what she did. Fortunately, although the damage was far worse than usual, Pulcinella was the only one who died. The demons had disappeared completely from the Azalea Naval Base, which was their base, all the way to the hidden cove including the military port. In the aftermath, the seas were rough and tempest-like, and various phenomena occurred, but Velgrynd calmed them. Evaporated seawater created a storm, but her weather control saved the day. The lost cove had turned into magma, but that too had been taken care of. There were lost plantations and such, but through an unintelligible act of divine grace, a new environment was born that day, thanks to a high healing of the earth. Well, as a result...

Although the terrain had changed, the impact was minimal. Thus, the crisis of humanity's invasion by demons was safely solved with the help of a capricious goddess.



A few years later...

Velgrynd never again interfered in human history. It was because Akira Sakura didn't want it. Her power was transcendent. In this world without magic, everything would be a farce if Velgrynd traveled. So, she entrusted it to him. She told him that there would be failures, but that it was for the good of humanity to experience them. Spending a peaceful time beside Akira, the goddess watched over the lives of men. Eventually the end would come. Akira Sakura's life was coming to an end.

Velgrynd and everyone who cares about him, not to mention Akira's family and close confidants, are all gathered there. Meanwhile, while he was asleep, Akira woke up.

"I am happy. I had the good fortune of being loved by the goddess and have enjoyed peace. But I fear for those I will leave behind...do not allow them to fight for me. Always seek dialogue. Keep in mind. Conflicts are boring..."

Those were Akira Sakura's last words. Conflict can be put up with when it's for one's own sake. But when it's for the ones you love...it's something you should reject. Not only for your honor, but for the honor of those you love. Or, conversely, you could erase their fear by inciting it, but that is an unacceptable act for a nation or a religion to preside over.

It sounds good when you say it's for someone else's sake, but that is also an act of placing the blame on others. One must take responsibility for their own actions, that's what Akira Sakura tried to convey. At the mercy of the turbulent times, Akira Sakura had a desire to aim for a world without conflict. He didn't know how to make it come true, but he kept thinking about the answer. Always being responsible for your own actions. Always striving to understand the other and seeking mutual understanding through dialogue. With these two things, Akira Sakura passed away. His face was filled with peace, and there was no doubt that he had passed away.

"You did your best. I'm really proud of you."

Velgrynd gently caressed the dead face of Akira Sakura. Then his body began to glow. The light became a small crystal and was absorbed into the shining piece of soul and disappeared. Holding it to her heart, Velgrynd cried lovingly and sadly.



Now that Rudra's reincarnation, Akira Sakura, was gone, there was no reason for Velgrynd to

remain there.

“Well then, I’ll be going, but you guys take care of yourselves.”

‘I’m sure we won’t see each other again, but...’ Velgrynd swallowed her words and greeted them. It seems that feelings can be conveyed without saying anything.

“Ryuo-sama, I would like to follow you.”

“You can’t do that.”

“Maybe. But I’d rather have hope than give up here.”

“Well...it seems like I’ve been to this world a lot, and there are no absolutes in the world, you know. So good luck with that.”

“Yes!”

Xianhua replied happily. Some of the people who were listening to that conversation had similar dreams. They, too, were fascinated. When faced with a real goddess, they couldn’t help but admire her. And just like Xianhua, they had a secret desire to meet Velgrynd again one day.

“Then I’ll see you somewhere else...”

The words of exchange from Amari Masahiko represented everyone’s feelings at that moment. Velgrynd smiled slightly. It was unclear what she thought at that moment. But that smile captivated the hearts of all who saw it.

“Yeah, I’ll see you around.”

Velgrynd said this happily and leapt from there.



Decades have passed since Velgrynd left. Mankind was once again enjoying peace. There were nations with ambitions, but their noses were broken by the riots. Several generations would be, and war was unlikely in the foreseeable future. George returned to the United States of Azalea to complete his term as president. Then he would support his son Emile. But Emile had set up an entertainment agency. He wanted to bring some light to a world made heavy by war and famine.

For Emile, who had inherited the talent of the genius scammer, it was his calling. Through his work, the world was slowly getting brighter. He was assisted by Amari Masahiko. He had resigned from the army after the peace treaty was signed. He took full responsibility for the war and asked for his resignation. Akira Sakura, who was still alive at the time, allowed him to do so. He gave a secret order to Masahiko and released him from the empire.

Now freed, Masahiko joined up with Emile and provided financial support. He also used his vast network of contacts to rapidly grow the entertainment agency to the point where it was a major player in the industry within a few years. It is rumored too, that they had taken horribly malicious measures. He seems to have lived a life that never saw the light of day, with several

mafia groups in tow. Nevertheless, the two remained close, and when something went wrong, Emile turned to Amari Masahiko for help. This is how Emile's entertainment agency would grow into a major corporation that would be known not only in the United States of Azalea, but all over the world. On a different note, there is an interesting rumor about this entertainment agency.

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In Emile's office, a beautiful girl named Long Hua²¹ is the main attraction. She had retired and then resumed her career after a few years. Naturally, she was replaced by her substitutes, but it is well known that her true face remained shrouded in mystery. However, according to the rumors, her real name is Xianhua. Strangely enough, all of Long Hua's real names are the same. This was a dream come true. It's not true that all of them are the same person, but it makes them think so, and it's all about the fans.

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Such topics are often mentioned in weekly magazines, but it goes without saying that they are really the same person. Xianhua had gained an immortal body by taking in Velgrynd's dragon energy. She relied on Amari Masahiko because it would be difficult to live in a human society as it was. Xianhua was not the only one. Others, such as Li Jinlong and Delia, had defeated the demons on their own and took on the power of a Sage. There were others who had also done that. Most of the soldiers possessed by the demons had been freed by Velgrynd. However, some of them were awakened as a Sage.

Such people also gathered under the leadership of Amari Masahiko. It was then that Araki Gensei and Minamoto Saburo-san taught these men the Oboro Shinmei Ryu, the sword that wards off evil. This is how the next generation of strong men would grow up. A supranational anti-demon organization would be born from these men. Their battle would not end until the promised day.

²¹Might also be 'Long Fa' but I went with Long Hua to match with Xianhua

That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime

Chapter 3

The Turbulent Days

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The Turbulent Days

My name is Calgurio. I was the captain of the Armored Corps, the most powerful force in the Eastern Empire. I was just plain stupid at the time. I said I was doing this for Rudra, but all I had cared about was my own personal glory. Now I understand what a career is worth.

That's right...forty years ago, a commander in chief of a corps from a lowly nobleman's family—that's a big promotion. The baron of a married family was a trivial thing from the corps commander's point of view, but I think it's understandable that I've grown up, although it is still no excuse. Of course, I'm still reflecting on it now.

I was kicked out of my married house. I was born a knight and was chosen to be the son-in-law of a baron's daughter, who was of the main family at the time. Well, I was happy. I was happy, until she left me after she cheated on me.

My wife—well, my ex-wife, was an irreplaceable existence to me at the time. I thought she was the most beautiful woman in the world, and I thought I was the luckiest man in the empire. I thought she felt the same way, and that's why she chose me, but I was wrong. It was my own selfishness. A year later, when my father-in-law died, she left me. I still remember that. Sometimes I have nightmares, but I'll never forget the look on her face and the lines she said.

'Didn't you have a good dream? You were a poor knight, and now you were able to imitate a nobleman. But that's over. I was forced to marry you at your father's behest, and now I'm free too. But it's your fault. Because you won't have offspring.'

I was so desperate I wanted to scream. I didn't know what she was talking about when she told me, but then I saw the bottle she was holding, like she was trying to show me, and it hit me. She must have drugged me. I could have complained and taken her to court. But the Baron family was an enemy. It's bad enough that my ex-wife had a merchant lover who had money. The Baron's servants had already been bought off. The merchant was an aristocrat. The ex-wife was able to live in the lap of luxury. My father-in-law always told me to be frugal and proud of my aristocratic ways...

I guess she didn't like that either. Well, it's a little late for that. At that time, I had no idea that I would ever complain to the main family who took care of me as a close relative. Besides,

my parents had died in an accident when I was a kid, so there was no one to argue with. So, well, I had no choice but to leave the baronial family and be driven out. Looking back, that was the impetus.

Betrayed by someone I loved, and the anger and hatred that drove me on. I was going to move up and show them all off someday. I was young, just in my 20s. I used the resentment as energy, and I worked my ass off. I went through deadlines and took great pride in my work. I wasn't afraid to get dirty, and I got really good at subterfuge. I got to know some merchants and helped them as much as I could with my authority. I accepted back taxes and turned them over to the nobility to make connections. I worked my way up to the rank of colonel by my mid-20s.

I had graduated from knight's school, so I started out as an adjutant. In other words, I was on track to be promoted within a year or two. That was pretty fast, but it worked because power was everything in the Empire. By then, I had taken control of the military and started forming my own faction. That's when I met Minits.

Minits was an aristocrat, but he was a freak who loved to fight. He was better than me back home and yet he dared to go to war. But there was no doubt he was capable, so I took advantage of him. I wasn't expecting him to like me or respect me, so I had him ask for money without batting an eye. Minits was a funny guy, so he took it upon himself to obey orders. Well, he was a guy who probably also took advantage of me, so it was mutual. It was only a consensus of interests, but it was also clear that I trusted him. As long as I was fighting for my career, I'd always be looking for the battlefield. I knew that if Minits used me like that, I would follow any order.

Because wherever I die, I would die with no family, so I was able to do it without fear. And so Minits and I formed a strange bond of trust. And then Kansas joined in. A man who was known to be a problem for the military, but for me, it was only a matter of time before he was available for use. He passed. And apparently it was the same for Kansas.

Kansas liked me because I was willing to go along with any plan. Although he was a devastating force at the time, he had a low reputation in the military. He often violated orders and ran amok on the battlefield. I think he was transferred to me because he was too difficult to deal with, but he was good to me. Not only did I know how to use Minits, I knew how to use Kansas as well. I was able to plan and execute strategies that ordinary people would have hesitated to do. And by doing so, I gained a position where no one could complain about me.



I worked my way up to general by my early 30s. By then, I was out on the front lines less and less. The poisoning I'd gotten as a young man had blinded me in my left eye. That didn't diminish my powers, though. With the newfound power of science at that time, it was easy to

make an elaborate prosthetic eye.

However, to throw the opponents off guard, I covered my left eye with an eye patch. I thought my powers would fade with age, but I became more and more energetic. I looked like I was suitable for my age, but inside I was bubbling with energy. I was always in my prime and that's why I wasn't afraid of anything. I was interested in fighting the pecking order, but I preferred to control the military.

The generals' position was within reach. I thought that would give me more power than becoming an Imperial Knight of His Majesty. I was adding to my own faction. I used Master Gadra to help bolster the Armored Corps' war effort. I got my merchants to provide money for modernization efforts. I was steadily making preparations and building up my resume, and at the age of just over thirty I was appointed as one of the three great generals of the Empire. The springtime of my life was just around the corner.

So perhaps that's why I was reminded of it during breaks in my work. I wondered what the people who kicked me out were doing. When I had people look into it, I found that I was behind on the ropes for nothing. I didn't have to wonder why...but I had an answer. At the time, I had the power to destroy them. And it was too much. It was well known that they had kicked me out, so my men did what they had to do even though I didn't do anything.

They didn't do anything directly. They just quietly talked to their clients about the situation. I wondered if they were still associating with the people who did that to me. That being said, the purveyors would have had no choice but to discover. I was blasting my way up the ladder at a breakneck pace.

To begin with, unlike the west, the empire's economic system did not allow for a free economy. Officially, only the nobility and the military were allowed to do business. The nobles have the right to have their merchants do business on their behalf. These hired traders were hired to do business for them and get paid from the profits. That's why the man who took my wife away from me wanted a position of nobility. He worked for a high lord and allowed his sons and daughters to join him. This way he could legitimately acquire the rights to do business the old-fashioned way.

Well, it's a good thing I became a baron, but I guess I made a miscalculation in my rise to power. The man who was laughed at and dismissed, was indeed, a general. There's a huge budget allocated to the military, so they can buy and sell goods. And the generals have the right to let the merchants operate it. Generals are in charge of one of the three major legions, as one should know. But this power was even greater than that of the earl. There's no reason to compete with a barony, and business was slowing down as clients were turning their backs on him.

I remember feeling hollow when I heard that. I wanted to avenge him myself, but without my knowledge, it was already being accomplished. But I knew that was not the way to go about it. I'd been betrayed once. Showing a sweet response here will draw in more people to come after me. One of the reasons I had risen to the rank of general is that I had no offspring. When you advance in the army, you get a noble title when you leave. The position rises according to

the rank. And I don't have children, and I never will. No matter how high they give, it's only for one generation. It's no threat to other noblemen.

Aristocrats hate it when military men have wealth, just as the military hates it when noblemen have private armies. Gold for the aristocrats, armed forces for the military. This division of labor is what matters. It was taboo for them to interfere in each other's domain. That's why many of the senior military personnel are unmarried. There was also the reason that those who do not have a family can stand on the battlefield, but the struggle for power with the nobility was more important.

Thinking about that, it occurred to me. Those who betrayed me were destitute but not destroyed, weren't they? And then I had an epiphany. I still had some work to do. They could live on because they were noblemen. Although they are low-ranking nobles, they have the status of a baron, and can live off of a salary. Then, I must seize that position and destroy it once and for all. And there are others who must be purged as well.

That man's father and the count who had his father working for him. If it weren't for these men, I wouldn't be in this misery. I have to destroy my enemies, or I'll get hurt. But if I was to destroy the count, I would have needed to grow stronger. From that moment on...

I wanted to aim higher...to gain the power to surpass any person.



"And then I was just so selfless from then on. It was like I didn't understand but couldn't see how low and dirty the means of what I was doing was."

"Well, yeah. You weren't exactly pleasant to watch back then."

"Then you should have abandoned me. If you had, you would have been the generals."

"It wasn't my thing. And I didn't hate you. Like Kansas, I just wanted to hang out with guys I liked, good guys or bad, you know?"

"Hmm! You're a strange guy."

"I'm aware of that, but I don't want to be told that by you."

With that said, the men were laughing at each other. A scrawny soldier in his forties and a man in a nice suit—Calgurio and Minit. They are talking in the labyrinth at the 'elf's shop' which is reserved for special members only. They are having a private meeting there while enjoying a variety of drinks. The shop was originally only open to a select clientele. They could only enter it on their own or after a background check and payment of the required fee.

It wasn't open to two people, but since the summit meeting, it had been open to the Imperial leadership. It was Rimuru's intention to put the war behind them and build a better relationship for the future. Of course, they both understood that. That's why they were taking advantage of him like this without reservation.

“Well, then, as you know, I took control of the army and planned to take over the world. And then we were defeated by this country, and here we are.”

“‘Defeated’ is a mild way of putting it. ‘Not even being a match’ is a more accurate description.”

“Huh, no doubt.”

“I’m happy, too. Because I’ve seen firsthand that there are other unimaginably powerful people in this world besides His Majesty Rudra and Marshal—Velgrynd-sama.”

“I don’t understand the hobby, but I suppose it would have been nice if you were satisfied. So, are you going to make peace with your younger brother?”

Calgurio asked, and Minitis smiled grimly and nodded.

“I’ll have to. He’s the marquis that unites the nobility. As long as Masayuki-sama is crowned as the new emperor, it’s our job to support him to the best of our ability.”

Minitis was from a marquis family. He joined the army because he wanted to compete on his own resourcefulness alone, and he has risen to his current position. But there is no doubt that at the level of the Marquis family, their influence was tremendous and they were heavily favored. Nevertheless, Minitis was capable, and no one ever made fun of him. Anyone who did would have seen the foolishness with their own eyes. Minitis’ family is the current Marquis, succeeded by his younger brother. His brother has a lot of resentment towards him for the trouble he’s caused. Calgurio was relieved to hear that the two sides would reconcile.

Well, in my case, reconciliation is out of the question.

Calgurio thinks that it is better than his own situation. Minitis is fortunate in that he is able to use the family’s financial resources as he pleases. He’s been overlooked because he’s good enough to deserve it, but if he’s incompetent, then the prodigal brother is also a good place. In fact, Calgurio and others don’t like that all that much...

They heard that he was complaining about his brother being a cheat—but all they could come up with was that anyone would think so. It is probably a man like Minitis who is allowed to do that. That’s why Calgurio also nags this irresponsible man.

“Right. It will be a pleasure to work with you, new Prime Minister.”

Although Minitis escaped from his duties as an aristocrat, he was appointed to the position of the Prime Minister, who has the highest authority in the empire. It was under the new system with Masayuki as the emperor.

“We were in a meeting before, and I said that for the sake of air...but after thinking it over, it’s impossible for me to be an Emperor! I’ve never studied politics or anything like that—no, I learned about it in a high school class, but I only did a little research on the scope of the test for that!”

“Hahaha, you can’t take it back now, okay?”

“After all?!”

“Of course! I’m getting by myself, so you can do it too!”

“You’re too optimistic, Rimuru-san! I’m not joking, don’t be so irresponsible!”

“Hahaha, it’s okay. Everyone will help you too.”

“Those eyes say that it’s definitely someone else’s affair, right? I mean, you’re looking happy to have more friends!”

“That’s not true. Besides, you have a partner that you can rely on. Like that Minit-san over there. I think he’s pretty reliable.”

This was the conversation between Masayuki and Rimuru.

Minit was also there and his eyes met with Rimuru’s, which was a mistake. It was probably on a whim of Rimuru’s, but it was not good to stand out in the meeting. It seems that Rimuru was perceived as a capable man, and he was appointed as a consultant to Masayuki. And the result was the prime minister position. Minit can’t help but laugh at that. It was a consultation that he couldn’t say that he didn’t like, as Masayuki had asked him to assist properly. It was partly because of the fear of Velgrynd’s gaze, and partly because Minit had grown to like Masayuki, after all.

The problem here is the current Prime Minister, and Minit thinks that he will be his assistant. Since only the Emperor has the right to appoint the Prime Minister, it would be unreasonable for the current Prime Minister to complain. He might complain, but that was of no concern to Minit. It was enough to say that he knew of a scarier being, so he just needed to convince him first.

So, well, there’s something to be said for that.

He had more than enough education as a nobleman and heir to the marquis family. Although he wasn’t aware of it, his grades were not bad either. He might struggle a bit, but it was Minit’s self-assessment that he was good enough to be able to practice. So Minit turns around and asks Calgurio.

“Don’t make me laugh, Minister of Military Affairs. You’re the only one left of the three major corps leaders, so your responsibility is heavy.”

Under Emperor Masayuki’s new regime, the military was going to be significantly reformed. If Minutes becomes the Prime Minister, the current one will be the Deputy Prime Minister. Side by side with him would be the minister of the military. The military should be led by a politician, according to Masayuki’s superficial knowledge. He put it into words and reflected it in the new system. However, Masayuki only asked, “Does the minister control the army?”

He did not mean to suggest that they should do so, and he did not advocate civilian control to more accurately select ministers from the civilian population to control the military. Thus, it was perceived as a misguided system in which ministers of the military were chosen from amongst the military personnel. In other words, Calgurio was to serve as both a military general and minister of the military. Calgurio laughs and replies to Minit’s question.

“You don’t need to worry about that. We won’t be going to war for a while, and to begin with, as long as I’m at the head of the army, I won’t be carrying a sword pointed at a foreign country.”

It was an honest feeling, mixed with some resignation. In fact, given the geography of the empire, from now on, there would be no neighboring countries where war could be waged.

The Jura-Tempest Federation and the realm controlled by Demon Lord Milim were out of the question, but the Armed Nation of Dwargon was also impossible. If they are to have their support, they must build a friendly relationship with them from now on. An invasion of the Western Nations by airship would be possible, but it was unlikely that Demon Lord Rimuru would allow it. In other words, there was nowhere to turn. There was still a chance that a great nobleman who controlled the local military could rebel without knowing what to do with himself.

“We’ve already sent word to the country. It’s about time for the nobles to react, but what’s the word from Krishna-dono?”

“So far, nothing significant has happened. Your younger brother’s faction has pledged their loyalty to the new Emperor. Perhaps that’s why the others haven’t been able to get around.”

“We’re talking about a move, though. But at least I don’t think the former sons of His Majesty the Emperor and the families with blood relatives are going to remain silent.”

“Well. Since you’re going to advertise that His Majesty Rudra has fallen, some will think it’s your turn. And for that, we need Velgrynd-sama’s approval...”

“I would argue that there is no point in saying that the corpse of the Emperor’s room is meaningless. The fools will not even realize making that statement is to make an enemy of Velgrynd-sama.”

Calgurio thinks that Minitis is right, too. Honestly, they weren’t afraid of the aristocrats being hostile. There is no doubt that Calgurio and his men would win, but the problem would be the decline in national power. Emperor Rudra’s impostor, or rather Calgurio’s real one since he had been in service with him for so long, was planning to bring chaos to the world with invading races called Aggressors.

In fact, it is precisely because Calgurio and the others who have opposed the entity that calls itself Cornu that they understand this threat so well. It was a good thing that Velgrynd had come, or else they would have been wiped out. The being who was Emperor Rudra wanted to become a god himself. The possibility that the emperor’s subjects would be used as pawns in his quest could not be ruled out. However, no one knew the Emperor’s face, so if someone claimed he was Emperor Rudra, they could just stab him in the back. Perhaps the enemy would not do such a thing. This is because the Emperor Rudra that Calgurio knew was a hard-hearted man who would not tolerate discussion.

“We don’t have time for quarrels amongst ourselves, though.”

“You’re right. Well, I’ll be rooting around.”

“Please do. I’ll gather the surviving Imperial Knights on my end and reorganize the Imperial Guardians as soon as possible.”

This will be Calgurio’s first job as Minister of Military Affairs, but it would be harder than he expected. After all, he has to start by finding out how many survivors there still are. To begin with, Calgurio doesn’t know about the missions of all the Imperial Knights. He doesn’t know

where they are, so he needs to start by contacting them. Besides, some will even try to leave the army. In fact, Krishna was one of them.

He worships Demon Lord Rimuru like a god and was willing to say that he was retiring and moving to the monster country. Calgurio had asked him to stay until the situation was settled, but he was reluctant to do so. It was Adalmann whom Calgurio consulted for advice, and he said to Krishna, ‘Never leave a stone unturned. If the empire remains in turmoil, Rimuru-sama will be saddened.’ With that, he convinced him. Hearing this, Krishna said, ‘As you wish! You are right, Adalmann-sama, what a wonderful speech. I only wanted to be saved. I have to deliver Rimuru-sama’s compassion to the innocent subjects of the empire too!’ He was saying something different from what Caliglio thought, but it was good to know that it worked.

They say if you care too much, you will lose. Krishna wasn’t the only one who had expressed a desire to change sides. Some of the Imperial Guard have begun to say they want to stay here in Tempest. He could understand why they wanted to stay, so he didn’t want to impose on them. But that would mean a decline in their forces, and that’s why he had to figure out what to do. Many of their men died in this battle. This was not a matter to be rehashed, since they had it coming, but there was also no reason not to think about how to deal with it. There were only two survivors of the ‘Single Digits,’ Bernie and Jiwu.

From now on, however, they would be under the control of Masayuki, acting as his bodyguards. It is more than enough to have Velgrynd, but they would be useful for consulting and for other small tasks, which was why they were able to fulfill Masayuki’s request. Calgurio intended to take this opportunity to reform the Emperor’s Imperial Guard Knights. It would depend on how many survivors there are, but he would not settle for a hundred. He was going to abolish the hierarchy and stop giving meaning to numbers.

A certain amount of strength and loyalty to Emperor are two prerequisites, but Calgurio plans to widen the door a bit in the future. He was going to send them in groups of three to various provincial cities to fortify the Empire’s defense. With three men, even if they couldn’t compete with the top Aggressors, they could buy some time. Ideally, they should be able to respond flexibly, such as by rushing to their aid. There are more than a hundred cities in the empire, so their numbers are not sufficient at this point in time. There are still some provincial armies left intact, so they’d get by for the time being by coordinating with others. At any rate...he was prepared to focus on those who had reached the Sage class...

“It’s tough on us both...”

“Yeah. But it’s been strangely rewarding.”

When Minitis muttered this to himself as he popped his drink, Calgurio nodded his head in agreement. And so, the words spilled out, but they were surprisingly Calgurio’s true feelings. The feeling of working for the Empire had brought Calgurio more fulfilling days than when he had only thought about move up in the military.

“Besides, now that we have heard of His Majesty Rimuru’s plans, it is imperative to restore security and political stability to the Empire. If we don’t get on board, we will be left behind in the future world.”

With Rimuru and Masayuki's approval, construction of the railroad begins. Perhaps in less than a few years, they could see a future in which the transportation network would be completed in the empire. The stories he'd been told at the meeting alone were shuddering, but there was more to the story.

"And that thing. Plans to control the skies of the world, right? That man is outrageous. I know he said it over drinks, but I'm told he doesn't get drunk. So that means he meant what he said."

"Hmm. Zamud seemed to have been inspired by it, too, since he volunteered to help. Well, he's more of an engineer than a soldier, so that's what he's really all about."

"Is it possible to connect countries with a magitrain on the ground and mass-produce airspace in the sky to stabilize the sales channels? It's a frightening idea, but it will be realized. After all, the only thing they asked for in compensation for this defeat was 'airspace rights.' And rather than not needing anything else, he even provided us support. How can we refuse them?"

"It doesn't matter, since His Majesty Masayuki approved. What's important is the future."

With that said, Calgurio thinks. This country is weird. The remarks of Demon Lord Rimuru, who says that he has an idea, would be put into a feasible plan the very next day, if not within the same day. The plan to mass-produce the airships had been planned from the moment he learned that the Empire owned it, but it was still unusual for them to prepare a development base for it so easily.

A floor in the labyrinth has now become a place to improve the airships. Zamud works there happily, and he says every day that this is where heaven was found because he can get as much material as he wants without worrying about the budget. The excitement of being back from the dead seems to have added to that.

Calgurio envies Zamud for being so obedient to his own desires, but he can only wish Zamud good luck in maintaining the friendship between Tempest and the Empire. Aside from Zamud, the important things is the future.

In Demon Lord Rimuru's vision, it seemed that he would be willing to help with maintenance within the Empire as well. Now that the Empire's power has declined, there was no choice but to take advantage of this. The Empire could provide the labor as well, so he doesn't intend to make it a relationship where they can only rely on them. In that regard, Calgurio thinks very differently from the Western Nations.

He is an intelligent man capable of making calm judgment as long as he is not blinded by lust. And so, he came to the conclusion that domestic stabilization was the priority when considering what was needed. The empire is not in shambles at present. However, the details of the defeat would undoubtedly unsettle the subjects. A fallen family would see Demon Lord Rimuru as an enemy to be reckoned with. Krishna and others are taking steps to prevent this from happening, but Calgurio must also take action.

Also, as Minitis is wary of, the movements of the higher nobles are a cause for concern. If they are to grow, they must welcome the Tempest forces into the empire to ensure that they don't

run into the wrong people. There are a lot of problems.

“That’s a big responsibility.”

“Yeah. But Calgurio...”

“What?”

“Don’t you think it’s His Majesty Rimuru who has it harder than we do?”

“Hmm?”

That’s true, Calgurio thought. When asked about their plans for future development, they had desperately started to move accordingly.

But that’s only natural. Restoring their country’s security and developing it is not a job that they have been ordered to do. It is a job that they should work hard at every day while wishing for the betterment of their own country. A conflict with Aggressors are inevitable in the near future. And yet, they have realized that they feel little concern about it. It’s all because they had been given so much to do. Buried in them, the anxiety was dispersed.

“I see. He just didn’t want us to worry...”

“I suppose so, but maybe that’s not all there is to it. Maybe His Majesty Rimuru intends to take care of the Aggressors on his own. Or maybe he doesn’t think of them as much of a problem, but...”

It was bound to be a big deal. And yet Lord Rimuru spoke more about future developments than the aforementioned subject. Calgurio and the Minitis were impressed by his noble imposing attitude. Perhaps it was the same with King Gazel as well. To Demon Lord Rimuru, Aggressors were nothing more than a trivial matter. Was that vanity or genuineness? Minitis thinks it’s Rimuru’s way of saying he doesn’t want Calgurio and the others to be worried. But Calgurio can’t help but think the same way as Minitis.

If he really wants to deal with the Aggressors on his own, then we should find something we can do to help. At the very least, we must stop anyone from causing a civil war and dragging us down.

Calgurio is ready to go. Calgurio and Minitis left the restaurant after drinking for about an hour. The next day, they left for home after setting up Masayuki as a portable shrine.



Back in the Imperial Capital, Calgurio has a busy day ahead of him. There are some damaged areas around the capital, but there was no need to do anything right now to rebuild. That’s because it was going to be done by collaboration with Rimuru and his team. So, the first priority was to reorganize the military.

The generals who survived—those who all came back to life—are all back home, and have been given a new mission. In any case, the first priority was to keep the peace, and taking into

account the report from Krishna, he sent his troops to the unsettled provinces to warn them. Fortunately, the 700,000 soldiers were loyal to Calgurio. Even those who wanted to settle in the monster country were cooperative this time. That was because Demon Lord Rimuru had promised to hire them after the turmoil was over.

“Well, you can think it over instead of just deciding right away.”

He gathered the soldiers in the arena and gave a speech. After Rigurd had explained the detailed conditions of settlement, Rimuru had told them himself. By the way, Rimuru didn’t try to persuade anyone, but he did leave it up to the individual’s will, and about 200,000 people who heard his speech were motivated to move on.

“Aggressor races, huh? I’m going to beat them to a pulp!”

And, well, the fighting spirit was growing. Although they lost their ‘soul’ power, their bodies were still altered. Even now, some of them can rival A-ranked players and are a force to be reckoned with. This is how Calgurio wants to somehow stabilize the imperial capital. But here, an even bigger problem arose. The real trouble was the nobles.

There was no end to the number of nobles seeking to meet with them, and this was putting a strain on Calgurio’s work. Even if he wanted to decline, there were some big names that might be useful in the future. Minit’s lobbying and Krishna’s persuasion helped, and no major disruptions occurred, but it was certainly a drain on their spirits.

Then Demon Lord Rimuru dispatched a helping hand. It was Testarossa, the beautiful white (Blanc) demon. The first thing Testarossa did was deliver a speech to control the people. Completely ignoring the nobles, she appeased the subjects who had not yet come to terms with the shock of defeat. It seemed like a task unsuitable for these fearmongering demons. However, it wasn’t surprising. Demons feed on emotions, so they were perfect for relieving the fear and anxiety of the subjects.

“I’m surprised. I never thought that the White Primordial (Blanc)—Testarossa-dono, who once tormented the empire, would care so much about the people.”

“Of course. It is my job that I have been given by our king, Rimuru-sama.”

“That’s true, but it’s more, pardon me, rough, because I didn’t expect such measures to be adopted.”

Calgurio gives his thoughts as he sheds greasy sweat. He regretted it right after he said it, thinking it was too straightforward, but Testarossa let it slide without a second thought.

“We can’t let bad publicity get in the way of Rimuru-sama, in any unlikely event. We can be cautious, but that wouldn’t be as effective. And it’s hard to adjust? Eating up all the emotions can have a detrimental effect on you.”

Calgurio paled in thought, but Testarossa would never make such a mistake. She told Moss to control her subordinates, and success was guaranteed. But her words were also true. It is difficult to control people’s emotions with moderate methods alone. The deaths of their relatives and the transfer of the throne from Rudra to Masayuki confused the subjects. Not all the sorrow of the subjects has disappeared, and there are still seeds of anxiety and dissatisfaction. In that regard, Calgurio’s deployment of security forces in various locations had prevented riots and

skirmishes from occurring.

“If you don’t like it, it’s easier to kill everyone in your family if you want.”

“Ha, ha, ha, ha. You’ve got to be kidding me.”

It’s not a joke, Calgurio thought. He knew that the White Primordial (Blanc) was trouble. This strengthened his respect for Rimuru who can control Testarossa.

The subjects have calmed down to some extent, and fortunately no one was foolish enough to rise up in arms. Relieved at this point, Testarossa had the next move in mind. They decided to unveil the new Emperor Masayuki as the quickest and most effective way to provide mental care for the people. The point is, it was a coronation ceremony for him. Testarossa thought that if Masayuki gave a speech on the occasion, his subjects would feel that a new era had arrived.

“What, me?!”

“Is there a problem?”

“No...nothing...”

He was willing to accept it. There were tears in his eyes, but they were worthless in front of Testarossa’s smile.

“Oh my, how dare you make Masayuki cry?”

Velgrynd interrupted. To which Testarossa replied flatly.

“I’m sorry, but I have no taste for such things.”

Two beautiful women looking at each other with smiles on their faces. Their gazes clash, and a terrible pressure was being exerted. It is mainly Masayuki and Calgurio who suffer the damage. Praying to go back home, Masayuki passes it by. Calgurio overcame the crisis by emptying his mind.

Anyway, Masayuki’s coronation became a reality. Countless subjects filled the square in front of the Imperial Castle. Looking down on them, Masayuki stood on a balcony in the upper part of the castle. He came to the empire with Velgrynd’s ‘Transfer,’ so this is practically his first appearance as the Emperor. With his appearance as an Emperor, he may seem dignified if he doesn’t say anything. At the appointed time, Calgurio delivers a speech. Then Minit, as the new Prime Minister, gives an explanation. The war was a great defeat.

As a result, Rudra, the former emperor, had died. The ‘Chosen Hero’ Masayuki was crowned as the new Emperor. Masayuki’s intercession has established peace with the monster kingdom, and he would seek to improve the relationship between the two sides in the future. Along with this, diplomatic relations have been established with the Dwarven Kingdom. And so on.

In order to shut down Michael’s ‘Castle Guard,’ they needed to convince the subjects that Rudra was the source of all evil. Pretend he was dead, and the number of people who believe in Rudra would be reduced. Then he introduced Masayuki as the new emperor, but many people were confused as to how that could be possible without any blood relation. To convince them, Velgrynd steps forward.

“Calm yourselves, fools. My name is Velgrynd, the ‘Scorch Dragon.’”

The subjects were upset when they were told the same name as the Empire’s guardian

dragon.

No way—was what was going through everyone’s minds.

“In accordance with the Imperial Code of Ethics, I hereby appoint Chosen Hero Masayuki as the new Emperor!”

With that declaration, Velgrynd visibly unleashed her overwhelming supremacy. A divine crimson cardinal aura is visible to all. In addition, she held out her hand in a certain direction and called out to the subjects.

“Behold. A salute to the new Emperor!”

As she finished, the Flaming God Mountain erupted into flames. This massive eruption was clearly visible from the Imperial Capital. What would be too horrific to even call a cannonball was no less than a joke to Velgrynd. But the astonishment of the subjects who saw it was beyond words. No one doubted it.

One might say it was a premeditated situation and triggered to erupt with magic or bombs—but the volcano was god’s mountain. One had no idea what kind of anger they might incur if they did so without asking permission from the mountain’s resident Scorch Dragon.

No one in the Imperial City would dare to act so recklessly. That’s not all. Several volcanic bombs had landed on the imperial city, but they were all flung off by an invisible barrier. That was truly the true nature of the guardian dragon!

“A-a god...”

“It’s real! The real dragon god!”

“The guardian dragon of the empire has appeared in front of us!”

They were very excited. Over time, they also began to understand the gravity of the situation. Velgrynd confirmed it. The subjects finally understand that Chosen Hero Masayuki has truly become an emperor. At the same time...

Masayuki was well known in the Eastern Empire, though not as well-known in the Western Nations.

“Oh my gosh, really?!”

“Don’t tell me it’s ‘Shining Masayuki’!”

“Isn’t he the greatest Chosen Hero in the world? Of course, even Demon Lord Rimuru can’t resist!”

The impression that was heard somewhere flies around, as if members of a theater company were spreading it. That is the quality of Masayuki. He is famous everywhere. And this time, Masayuki’s power has been enhanced. The effect was far-reaching and had a huge impact on those who knew him. As a result, there was the usual cheers.

“Ma-sa-yu-ki! Ma-sa-yu-kii!!”

The cheers were so harmonious that it seemed as if the voices of the subjects were united. Velgrynd and others said, “Fools. It’s so impolite to call the Emperor by his name” they thought, but Masayuki himself was not angry, so he acquiesced.

It was Testarossa who was the most upset. The empire’s subjects misunderstood that Demon Lord Rimuru couldn’t resist Masayuki, and she had the feeling that she would boil over if this

continued, but this was a plan drawn by Testarossa herself. There was no one to complain about, so she had to put up with it.

And so, it was very easy for Masayuki to be accepted by his subjects in the Empire. And on that day, he was proclaimed to the nations of the world as ‘Emperor’ of the Eastern Empire, the Nasca Namrium Ulmeria United Eastern Empire.



The subjects of the Imperial City have been revitalized by the newfound hope. The grief of those who have lost their loved ones would not heal quickly, but they have begun to move forward. Their daily lives are returning to normal. Calgurio knew it was all the more gratifying. However, the days of true rest were far from over.

A troublesome opponent, the nobility, was on the move now that the new Emperor had been officially appointed. With Minitis in charge, he’d like to leave the highborn to their own devices, but it was for Calgurio’s convenience, and the nobles don’t care who is in charge of the new emperor. That’s why the requests for visits are always coming in. When he looked at Testarossa for help, she said without a care in the world,

“These are the noblemen of this country, but I’m sure most of them won’t be a problem.”

Calgurio had no idea what that meant, but he understood that Testarossa was behind it. Since Minitis was working on his job, Calgurio decided to focus on what he could do. Then, within days, the requests for visits began to dwindle.

“Excuse me sir, but Testarossa-dono, but, well...”

Calgurio wondered if she had threatened them, but he couldn’t say it out loud. The lady sipping her tea elegantly in front of him was the White Primordial (Blanc), long feared by the Empire. It’s hard to believe even if told, but it’s an undeniable fact. That’s why it was no surprise that she was using some terrifying method.

“Oh, excuse me. Why do you look at me with such terror? I’ve never done anything wrong.”

That’s what all bad people think. But saying it was different. It was impossible for Calgurio, who felt so cramped in his own office, to tell the queen-like Testarossa what he really thought of her, *it’s unavoidable*.

“No, hahahaha, I’m not doubting you. I’m grateful every day that you’ve been such a great help. And so, I’m just wondering how you managed to keep the noblemen quiet.”

“I wish you wouldn’t have to worry about that and just go about your business.”

Testarossa sipped her tea. Then she let out one elegant sigh.

“Well, all right. I’ll feel awkward taking credit for it, so I’ll let you know. As I told you before, the nobles weren’t much of a problem.”

“So, why is that?”

“First of all, the nobles of this empire were divided into three major factions. Of course, you knew that, didn’t you?”

“Yes. The warlord aristocracy, led by the Marquis family, Minit’s family, was the central figure of the Emperor faction. The rest are the local nobility.”

The military, a powerful organization, was the cornerstone of the empire. There were many nobles who joined its steadfast authority, and the warlord nobles boasted great power. The marquis, the second highest-ranking nobleman, was the head of this faction, which meant that few high-ranking nobles participated in it. In contrast, the aristocracy was dominated by those with ties to the Emperor. This faction symbolizes the authority of the aristocracy, in that they must be at least an earl or higher to have a say in the matter. The provincial aristocracy is the least coherent faction. They are made up of nobles who individually have no voice in the opinions that suit them. It could be said that they are only one faction because their interests are aligned. At Calgurio’s explanation, Testarossa nodded lightly.

“That’s right. The warlord aristocracy first, but this was like the Minit’s were in control of it, wasn’t it?”

“No, no, Minit and his younger brother don’t get along...”

“No. That thing was, you know, just sulking.”

“What?”

“You were almost overwhelmed by the sense of responsibility when your respected brother gave the marquis house. So, by rebelling and showing it, he was telling himself that he could protect his physical appearance while still being able to convince himself.”

‘Well, that sounds like a weak human story’—and Testarossa replied with a laugh.

“Is that true? I mean, how did you find out that it was...?”

“Seee-cret. You’ve heard the saying, ‘Ignorance is bliss,’ haven’t you?”

That fact was investigated by Moss overnight. Moss is overworked by Testarossa and has no time to rest. Perhaps the worst victim in Tempest is Moss, the demon noble known as the ‘King of Ashes.’ However, he can’t complain about that and is quietly working his way through the dark environment. Moss sneaked into the Marquis’ house and read the diary hidden in the master’s office. He reported this secret to Testarossa.



Even with the strict security of the marquis' house, there was no way to pull one over Moss. He also found out other information that would improve relations and casually told Minitis about it. It would normally be a crime, but...for those who were unaware that they had done something wrong, this was nothing bad.

"Hahaha, that's right. Of course, I believe in Testarossa-dono. It's a wild thing to ask any more questions."

Calgurio ran away. It was a very wise decision. Despite the odds, the relationship between Minitis and his brother were on the mend. Then, if it was all good, he decided to just let the results speak for themselves.

"I'm convinced about the warlord nobility, but how are the other factions doing?"

"Well, the provincial aristocrats have expressed their willingness to return."

"What? When did it happen?"

"They were the first to fall. Because the most important thing to those guys was that the people of the territory didn't go hungry. The stabilization of the countryside had been accomplished, so the rest of them were still worried about future politics."

"Hah..."

"By the way, do you know what the local noblemen's financial resources are?"

"It's mainly from the crops that are harvested in each fiefdom. They pay taxes after they get enough to meet their needs. The surplus is then sold to their merchants. Those sales are what I understand to be the source of income for the local lords."

"Well, you're generally right, but you're partly wrong."

Calgurio felt strange. How was he, at the pinnacle of the Imperial Army, being lectured on economics by the demon that had once afflicted the Empire? He couldn't figure it out, and was perplexed.

How can a demon know so much about human economic activities? I'm from a lowly provincial aristocracy so I knew, but I don't think that even your average high ranking soldier knows that...

Moreover, his answer is not a perfect score. There are other local crafts and specialties that can be done by hand, but he doesn't think that's the right answer. Calgurio doesn't think she's the kind of person to make such a fuss, and praises Testarossa.

"What is the right answer, then?"

"It's black-market trade."

"What?"

Calgurio answers unintentionally. There is no such thing as a black market in this empire. Just believing that, he was astonished by the imposing answer.

"Oh, is it strange?"

"Of course it is! The Empire, under the authority of His Majesty, stands for equality for all. Noblemen, of course, are exempt, but even commoners have a chance at promotion in the military."

"I know. I'm not talking about the surface of it, but the practical side of it. The black market

is essential. Do you know why?"

Even if you say it's mandatory, he knows that Testarossa is serious. But Calgurio couldn't help but be disbelieving. If the traitorousness of the Emperor's black market is so widespread, the Imperial Intelligence could not have been ignorant of it. It would not have gone unnoticed by the late Lieutenant Kondou, for that matter. He was even called an 'intelligence monster,' a man who was feared. And he couldn't help but feel that the injustice therein had been left unchecked.

"Unbelievable. Kondou-dono missed the wrongdoing?"

He muttered to himself, and Testarossa looked at Calgurio in dismay.

"You're so stiff. You missed it because it wasn't a bad thing."

"Well, what's that supposed to mean?"

"It sounds nice to be a nobleman's maid, but power relationship is determined by the rank of the employer. Do you think a merchant of a lower class can compete with a merchant of a higher class?"

"Ah..."

"The answer is, it's impossible. When you're powerful, you have to do as you're told. That's where the black market comes in. The reason 'Echidna' and its successor, 'Cerberus,' the Imperial underworld societies, existed, is because there was a need for them."

"..."

It was an eye-opener for Calgurio.

'A merchant must be free,' Testarossa says. A fixed salary is not enough to really pursue profit. To bind them by force would only provoke a rebellion, and that would get the people into trouble before that. It is because he understood that, that Kondou did not seriously interfere in the underworld.

So was human trafficking, which is officially banned. When famine or other famine-hit villages are unable to eat, they must be reduced in size. Legally, it's considered evil, but if they don't do it, many will die. In such cases, selling to the black market was more likely to increase the chances of survival than killing. That's an extreme example, but it's a fact that this had been done several times in the history of the Empire. There were many other inconvenient realities that had been overlooked as open secrets.

Some of the larger issues include foreign trade. As long as the empire does not tolerate the existence of other countries, trade and the like are publicly forbidden. But that's the problem with the economy. That is why 'Cerberus' and the like had their roots in the Western Nations. Testarossa explains these facts matter-of-factly. Hearing this, Calgurio wonders how the demon knows so much, and also feels sad because he feels like an idiot.

"Thank you for the detailed explanation. It helped."

"Good. Well, that's why the local nobles were so easy. When I explained to them that free trade would be allowed from now on, they agreed with me in an assortment of ways. Besides, if Rimuru-sama's project proceeds, there will be railroads between the provincial cities as well. They promised me that they would support Emperor Masayuki to the fullest because the wealth

will be distributed to the regions instead of being centralized.”

Testarossa concluded. Calgurio is understandably convinced. The empire is also a highly developed scientific civilization, but it does not have the luxury of connecting all the urban areas. The reason for this is obvious—most of the budget is used for development and military spending. The transportation of food and supplies is also important, but it can only be provided in the cities around the capital. Goods were brought in from distant regions by magic and airships.

Even those regions that were on the back burner would be included in the development plan. If they had been told, it would have been easy to make the local lords happy. The negotiations were based on the premise of enormous financial and labor forces, but it was Demon Lord Rimuru and Testarossa who made it possible. Investigate the other party’s circumstances and make negotiations advantageous. Although it was faithful to the basics, Calgurio was deeply impressed with how amazing it was when thoroughly implemented. He vowed to rethink the way he had been doing things.

“Then, the only factions left are the nobles families.”

“That’s right.”

“And since it’s Testarossa-dono, I assume you already know what they’re up to?”

At this point, Calgurio has full confidence in Testarossa. He doesn’t know what kind of plan they have up their sleeves, but if it’s Testarossa, then there won’t be a problem.

“Pardon me. To begin with, there weren’t any fools in the Empire these days who were doing bad things. The stagnant air has been swept away in the last few decades, but it turns out it was Kondou’s doing.”

In other words, the real villains have already been purged. Testarossa has been with the Empire for a long time, but lately Calgurio feels that the people are more stable than ever before. Now he sees why. The spiteful evil-doers were gone. The only ones left now were the secret societies that were considered a necessary evil and the petty villains that could be left alone.

“Then, how do you suggest them to persuade the nobles?”

“There is a meeting this afternoon. That’s how we’re going to settle this, so I hope you’ll join us.”

It was definitely an order. Originally, he was supposed to be a collaborator, but Calgurio had no complaints. He nodded at Testarossa’s words in the face of a clear difference in ability.



Only four people meet in the reception room. The host, Prime Minister Minits. Calgurio, the Minister of Military Affairs. A diplomatic officer and future ally from the monster kingdom, Testarossa, will be present.

And the last of these is the negotiator, Duke Mithra Hillmenard with his faction of noblemen.

He was still young in his early 30s, and one might think he would be too young to be the head of a faction. But that doesn't apply to Mithra.

He is a person who has everything. Mithra's mother was once the emperor's queen. She was, in fact, Rudra's birth mother. The imperial family has a special system in place that does not have an empress who is to be called the emperor's wife. That position was reserved for Velgrynd alone. Instead, some women vied for supremacy in the palace's back rooms as empresses. These were daughters voluntarily given by the nobility, whose bloodline was unmistakably noble. Whoever carries the Emperor's child will be crowned the victor and will be named Queen. After all, the child is sure to become the next Emperor.

Incidentally, as a digression, there were also several queens in Rudra's palace, but Rudra does not recognize them. It was the arbitrary decision of the noblemen who wanted their daughters to be queen, and this time it was dissolved. There was an idea that the new Emperor would take over it, but it was judged to be unnecessary for Masayuki. Who made that decision will forever remain a mystery...

Back to the topic at hand. Mithra's mother was the winner. She had fulfilled the great task of giving birth to Rudra and had achieved great fame. As a reward, she was given two choices. She could remain in the palace and allow Rudra to grow into a man of her own choosing, or she could marry into a family of her choice with an enormous sum of money.

The Emperor's treatment of his birth mother is of the highest order. She had a great deal of say in the matter and would not be despised even if she had left the palace. So she did not hesitate to leave the palace and marry the former Duke Hillmenard. And the one who was born between them was Mithra Hillmenard.

He is the half-brother of Emperor Rudra. His unwavering authority alone was enough to bring all around him to their knees. A mask of cruelty intimidates all who see it. With no eyebrows and a horrifying gaze that would have been frightening to anyone who saw it, any desire to rebel was diminished. He is neither fat nor thin. He's not tall, but his intimidation is impressive. This guy must be doing bad things behind the scenes.

'Not good.' 'He's one we should not cross...'

...And so on. Many of the higher nobles felt that way. That's exactly why he was the right man to be the head of the nobles. A man with a dignity no one could resist, that was Duke Mithra Hillmenard.

If it was only strength alone, Calgurio would win without a doubt. There was no doubt about that, even before he awakened. But the world does not live by strength alone. If there is no one to provide food, clothing, and shelter, there can be no comfort. If one defied Mithra, they were bound to lose it.

He's an extremely troublesome opponent. I wanted to be at the top of the army, too, but when it comes right down to it, it's a hard thing to live with. I'm going to have to bargain with this monster.

He thought to himself, without saying it out loud. Maybe with Minits there, he could work something out, but he wouldn't have been able to negotiate one-on-one. But this time, he has a

reliable helper.

Testarossa-dono is a fearsome being, but she's encouraging as an ally. Knowing that she's the fearsome White Primordial, makes me feel that we can't lose.

Mithra was scary in front of Calgurio, but Testarossa was even scarier. With that in mind, he was able to regain his composure. Calgurio regained his composure and remembered the words of Testarossa.

Wait? Testarossa-dono had said that most of the nobles wouldn't be a problem. So was Mithra-dono the problematic aristocrat? No, that's a strange story too... Kondou would not have tolerated the Emperor's half-brother. Could it be that Mithra-dono has done nothing wrong?

No way. That's a bit of a stretch.

'It's not likely,' says Calgurio, denying his own beliefs. Mithra is feared by all because he is untouchable and evil. A man who makes one think they are a nuisance cannot be an ordinary person. Then the hands of the clock struck the hour. A loud ringing of the bell sounded. It was the signal for the meeting to begin.



"The rogues who seek to usurp the throne. Shall I ask you why you have summoned me?"

That magnificent question belongs to Mithra. Minits takes it softly.

"Please wait, my lord. That's a misunderstanding."

"What is this misunderstanding. Isn't it true?"

"We have followed the official procedure according to the Imperial Code of Ethics. Therefore, I would ask you to withdraw the word 'usurpation.'"

"I will vomit. Don't let it go to your head just because you've got Velgrynd-sama on your side!"

"No way!"

Minits denied it out loud. Even the calm Minits couldn't help but be overlooked. Yes, it's really outrageous, and even Calgurio is upset. Certainly, to an outsider, it would seem that Velgrynd has sided with them. But that's a big misunderstanding. Rather, it's the opposite. He is only keeping the peace by currying favor with Velgrynd. Words and deeds can get one killed, but that's no longer the case with Velgrynd. This country might really disappear. It's not an exaggeration or anything, but it really could disappear from the world. It all depended on Masayuki's mood. It's a good thing that Masayuki was a kind person, but he shuddered to think of what he would have done if he had been a selfish person.

"Mithra-dono, Minits is correct. Although Velgrynd-Sama is an ally of His Majesty, she is not an ally of the Empire. If it is His Majesty's wish, she would have no hesitation in destroying the Empire."

“That’s right. That one actually said that if it would be a burden His Majesty Masayuki, then she’d let the country be burnt to the ground. We must never offend her!”

“You expect me to believe that?”

“No, it’s no wonder you can’t believe it, so we would like to hear your opinion.”

“Kekeke, are you ruling over the Empire, or are you hostile?”

“That’s wrong.”

“What?”

Mithra asks irreverently, and Minitis denies it immediately. Then he goes on to say what he really thinks.

“Okay? I don’t want this to come out, but I want you to know what I’m really thinking, sir. That’s why I’m telling you.”

“You’re going around in circles. If you want my opinion, then just tell me.”

“Then, let’s start with the question first. Mithra, my lord, do you want to rule the Empire? Or do you want to work hand in hand with us?”

“...What?”

The question from Minitis was unexpected, even for Mithra. Just as he had been bracing himself for the kind of negotiations that were about to unfold, it sounded as if they were willing to surrender control of the Empire to Mithra. In fact, that perception was correct. Minitis himself had been forced to accept the position of Prime Minister by chance. If Mithra wishes it here, he was willing to give it up. His first priority was to stabilize the empire. And now that this was largely accomplished, it was Minitis’ opinion that there was still room for change in terms of how the political system would be structured in the future. Calgurio is also aware of Minitis’ thought process.

Indeed, he is willing to help unite the Imperial nobility. If I turned it over to Mithra-dono here, he would not have made a mistake, but that would be unfair, wouldn’t it, Minitis?

‘That’s why his younger brother will resent him,’ Calgurio thought to himself, gritting his teeth.

“You’d even give up your position as Prime Minister for me?”

“Thank you for being so quick to understand. Now, may I tell you what I think?”

“...I’m listening.”

Mithra, perhaps sensing a lack of information, reluctantly nodded his head. In response, Minitis began to speak. The basic premise is that Masayuki himself did not want the position of Emperor. But if he left the empire unattended here, political unrest could cause a great deal of confusion. There was also an unknown enemy and leaving that unattended would put everyone in trouble. Therefore, the Monster Kingdom and the Dwarven Kingdom welcomed Masayuki to become the Emperor.

Velgrynd only obeys the will of Masayuki. It means that if Masayuki does not become Emperor, she will easily abandon the Empire. Even without Velgrynd’s help, the loss of the dragon guardian’s blessing is a big problem. If that was the case, then it was in the best interest of the people of the Empire to have Masayuki on the throne at all costs.

“As I said before, His Majesty Masayuki himself feels that the imperial throne is a burden. I’m sure he wouldn’t mind having someone else to do the honors for him, rather he would be welcome to it.”

Minitis concluded.

‘I see’... and Mithra was convinced. He understood that all that mattered was Velgrynd’s mood. If he does not keep Masayuki on the throne, even Velgrynd will leave the Empire. If so, it certainly doesn’t matter who is in politics. Rather, it is in the Empire’s best interest to not bind Masayuki.

“It is Demon Lord Rimuru-sama’s intention to build a good relationship with Masayuki-sama. If Masayuki-sama is to be Emperor, he will provide as much support as possible. So, I hope you understand that saying ‘usurpation of the throne’ is out of line.”

With a bewitching smile, Testarossa also joined in. Of course, this information was already known to Mithra. It is also known that Demon Lord Rimuru did not demand great reparations from the empire that was defeated in the war. Demon Lord Rimuru’s goal is also to ensure future friendship. If so, Mithra himself thought that there was no room for doubt in Testarossa’s statement. Then what was the right thing to do?

There were two options. But he doesn’t necessarily have to choose one or the other. If there’s another way, he’s free to choose it. However—Mithra seems to have given up halfway, thinking that it would be difficult to win...



Will Mithra lead the government as Prime Minister or will he appoint Minitis to lead the nobles? Actually, this was of no interest to Mithra. All Mithra really wanted to do was stay at home and paint as he pleases. With his noble lineage and the authority of the Duke family, Mithra was considered a born ruler. But that was a great misunderstanding.

To begin with, Mithra’s mother had good looks that made her beloved by the Emperor. She had a vague resemblance to Velgrynd and was a strong woman. However, that was just on the outside. Her appearance might have been misleading, but she was in fact a quiet woman. Otherwise, when she gave birth to Rudra, she would have been the empress in her own right.

It was a luxury allowed to a mother for a short time while Rudra grew up. She must have been quite an eccentric, because she chose not to do so and instead wished for her freedom. But then she was discovered by Duke Balsa Hillmenard, Mithra’s father. Balsa was a handsome man. So it is generally believed that Mithra’s mother made a pass at him. Perhaps he was pushed aside by the queen’s selfishness. But that’s not true. Truthfully, it was Balsa who made the passive overture. They loved each other and Mithra was born. They are still in love today, but that’s beside the point.

I don't want to do politics, either. I'm tired of these suckers. But...

To Mithra's dismay, he was surprisingly popular. On top of that, he's smart and has never been caught up in a conspiracy before. That's why Mithra has so many followers, and they sometimes get ahead of themselves in things he does not want them to do. The worst was the downfall of a count.

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That day, Mithra's shoulder bumped into the Count's. It was a careless accident, but the Count didn't apologize. Mithra was still in his early 20s and the other man must have taken him for a fool. Maybe if he'd known Mithra was Duke's son, he might have reacted differently, but it was too late.

"You! I'm a Count! Don't you have any sense of propriety?!"

He remembers watching the man calmly as he shouted at him. He was reminded of a story he had heard from a friend from another world, saying that this person might not have enough calcium to get so angry at such a thing. And then Mithra muttered, "I'm in trouble."

Mithra had not yet succeeded to the Duke's seat, and the current Count was in a superior position. However, he had been taught never to bow to a lower-ranked person, and he was wondering what to do in this situation.

"I'm in trouble"—With that one sentence, it would develop into a really troublesome case.

"Mithra-sama is in trouble."

"How dare the Count embarrass Mithra-sama. Oh, dear. What a horrible mistake."

And then Mithra's friends got into a frenzy. He didn't know where they had been hiding, but immediately after that, knights in black showed up in a hurry. And several of them restrained the Count.

"Ah, ah..."

Only then did the panicked Count realize who Mithra was. But it was already too late. The captain bowed to Mithra and told him,

"Please leave this person's disposal to us."

"Yes, I'll leave it to you"—It was Mithra who had no choice but to say so.

The next day's newspapers laid out the evidence of the Count's deceit. Whether it was a true crime or a fabricated one, Mithra would never know. All that is certain is that the Count had been arrested and his title was vacated. Needless to say, the fear of Mithra from those around him had grown. One bump on the shoulder can destroy an opponent. It was an incident that Mithra would never forget, as he realized he had the power to do just that. There had been similar incidents since then, and despite having no intention of doing so, Mithra had come to reign as a fearsome nobleman.

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Because of that, Mithra knows how to speak up for himself. That's why it became so quiet. And now this. According to the investigation of the best agents under the Duke's, it seems that Rudra's disappearance is certain. Whether he was dead or ran away doesn't matter. What mattered was that Velgrynd, the Empire's guardian dragon, had endorsed Chosen Hero Masayuki as the new Emperor.

—It is assumed that the mysterious Marshal is actually Scorch Dragon Velgrynd-sama. And it is likely that the man to whom she is attached to is the true successor of Rudra-sama's soul—

That was what the report stated. Anyone with even a modicum of intelligence to think against this would understand that it's impossible. The Empire's succession to the throne is different from others in that it doesn't place much importance on bloodlines. No, it may be considered important to the public, but to the truly noble ones, Rudra's soul was what was most important. The Duke, Mithra, naturally understood this.

This...if things go wrong, not only will it destroy me, it will destroy everything. It's not safe for my men to be out of control. I must make up my mind and make my move.

It was only natural for the wise Mithra to make this decision. Ideally, he would have wanted to stay out of politics and still keep his influence over the nobles. If his current title is secured in the future, then he wouldn't have to struggle financially. Even if he didn't force himself to participate in politics, he could still dream of taking a stipend and living a life of painting.

If this is the best thing that could happen, the next best thing would be to stay in the countryside. It would be better to manage the estate and live as a provincial lord. That would keep him busy for a bit but still leave him time to paint. He wouldn't have to socialize too much, so it was a good place to start. The worst thing that could happen would be to touch Velgrynd's reverse scale. But that would be useless.

Now is the time to prevent that from happening. Mithra decides to make a plan here. He wants to use his bad reputation and aim for his expulsion from the capital. If he acts arrogant, or rather, if he speaks as he normally would, his opponents would find Mithra troubling. Then after it's all over, he can just reason about what he's doing, pretend to be angry about it all, and leave. Negotiations would break down. But Mithra would realize his disadvantage and slip away from the capital to the provinces. That was the story he had planned to tell. And yet, Minit gave him two incomprehensible choices.

“Do you want to control the Empire? Or do you want to work hand in hand with us?”

The answer is to refuse both. But that wouldn't be nice to say. Mithra ponders. The conversation of Minit continued. Even Testarossa, a diplomat from the monster country, has joined them to prove their legitimacy. He knows this without being told. Knowing all the facts was the basis of the negotiations.

Now, what can I do? Those are two choices, and I don't want to take either one. Being in politics in this country as it stands now is a straight line to death. If I work any more hours, I won't have time to paint or play with my beloved daughter!

Mithra has a daughter whom he loves. She is only three years old. So cute. He also has a newborn son. What he was wondering about was his wife, who couldn't even look at Mithra

after his son was born. The daughter of the Marquis family, whom Mithra had fallen in love with at first sight. A woman who came to live with him the day after he asked her to be his wife. She who had become of a thoughtful wife, has been a source of anxiety for Mithra as of late. Although she had been distant from the beginning of their marriage, he thought it couldn't be helped since they had just begun to get used to each other. Their daughter was born smoothly and they were expecting a boy. He was hoping they would slowly grow in love with each other at this rate...

Yes. I have to say no, or I'd lose the time to talk to my wife. I don't care what happens to the empire, but I have to prevent my family from becoming unhappy!

Mithra again made up his mind. He had planned to settle the matter amicably today, but a little turbulence was inevitable. And now he has his 'answer.'



"It's ridiculous. Isn't this a usurpation of the throne? Sleep when you talk in your sleep. And Testarossa-dono, was it? What right do you have to meddle in the domestic affairs of our Empire? It's true that the Empire was defeated in a war. But by renouncing the airspace rights and making a treaty between nations, you have established peace between the Empire and your country. Now that you've established diplomatic relations, are you saying that you have the right to interfere with the sovereignty of a friendly nation?"

It was a dangerous gamble. And yet, Mithra decided to take the plunge. He has trapped a demon lord's diplomat with formidable power. She is the Demon Lord's plenipotentiary abroad and there is no denying the possibility of another war if she is offended. Mithra knows that she is the White Primordial (Blanc). He knows that he is speaking outrageously against the great demon feared by the Empire.

"Oh my, did I go too far in my imitation?"

"Humph! I won't ask you to leave this room. I'm sure your master would like to know what the friendly country's future plans are."

"I appreciate your concern, sir."

Come on, get angry! He wished that she would but was so confused that she easily swept it along.

I thought if I told them that, they would move to exclude me...but what do they think?

He was wondering what he should do if she was enraged, but this calmness is confusing. Too much anger and he'd lose his life. Since he felt his life was about to be cut short even with that comment, it was unthinkable to make any more aggressive comments.

What do I say? Do I want to take it another step further?

That step was scary to no end. Therefore, he would turn the tables on them.

“I am the great Rudra’s half-brother. Now that the life or death of my older half-brother is unknown, you would shamelessly ask for my help by choosing to welcome a new emperor, a man from nowhere named Masayuki? I have no idea what you’re thinking!”

Mithra burst into a rush just a little more emphatically than usual. Depending on this reaction, the situation would be changed promptly. This is where the real fight begins. But unfortunately—

—Mithra’s gamble turned out in the worst possible way.

“Oh my, do you disagree with my decision? If you think you’re going to be overlooked just because you’re related to Rudra, I’m going to have to tell you that you’re too naive.”

Gah, geez, Velgrynd-sama—?

An unspeakable scream erupted from Mithra’s heart. Mithra was so shocked that his soul felt as if it was going to slip out of his mouth. The odds were no longer stacked against him, but rather were completely against him. For some reason, Mithra felt refreshed that it was over for him. Maybe that’s why he felt like it was the time to say what he wanted to say.

“Marshal-dono—no, it’s Velgrynd-sama, the guardian dragon of the empire, isn’t it? I was not told that you would be attending today’s meeting, but it is a pleasure to meet you.”

First of all, the appeal is not that big a deal? He really wanted to run away, but was enlightened by the fact that it was impossible anyway.

“Oh, I’m sorry. I really don’t think being the Emperor is a party, either. But when I think about the people who live in the Empire, I think it’s best for me to be the Emperor...”

Following Velgrynd, who opened the door without a sound and entered the room, Masayuki also appeared. For Mithra, it was completely unexpected. Judging from the situation, he had no choice but to realize that his fate was completely sealed. However, there was one thing that bothered him.

“Huh? Your Majesty doesn’t seem quite confident about this. Do you think that makes you a better person than my half-brother?”

He asked with a sarcastic tone, but was half truthful. If they’re going to get rid of him anyway, he should have called their bluff more openly.

“Hahaha, I was just a student a while ago, you know? I never imagined that I would be an emperor, confident or not.”

“Humph, you’re pathetic. You think you can walk with supremacy just like that?”

“Hmm, I’m sorry. But I wasn’t really planning on supremacy, you know?”

But...Huh? Isn’t that a strange thing to say? I hadn’t noticed from the reactions of Minits and Calgurio, but this doesn’t seem to be consistent with the information my subordinates have been finding out.

Mithra’s own intelligence services had reported that the new Emperor was a man of great strength. His popularity among the people was so great that even Demon Lord Rimuru, who had never given the Empire a second thought, looked up to him. And yet the smiling boy in front of him didn’t really fit his image.

What’s going on?

Mithra couldn't help but look at him again.

"No...to tell you the truth, I really want you to forgive me for the supremacy."

"What?"

A voice spilled out of Mithra's mouth. And it wasn't just Mithra.

"Hey, Your Majesty! I asked you to be more dignified here!"

"That's right. Whether or not we can get Mithra-dono on board here will have a great impact on the future course of the Empire's governance. For my sake and that of Minitis, we need a companion to share our struggles with."

Minitis and Calgurio were pleading with him at the same time.

It's too late now that I saw it in front of me. And now that I overheard the conversation, I don't want to be asked to join them...

To be honest, he's getting the feeling that he'd absolutely hate it. However, he also thinks it's better to just survive than to be disposed of like this. Mithra wasn't stupid, so he knew perfectly well that he had no initiative left.

"You fools. You haven't forgotten your promise not to coerce Masayuki, have you?"

"No, no, Velgrynd-san?! It's okay—I'm fine!"

"Masayuki-sama!"

"Your Majesty!"

Masayuki hurriedly hushes a slightly grumpy Velgrynd. Seeing this, Minitis and Calgurio are impressed.

"Oh my, Masayuki. I've been thinking about it for a while now, but I wish you'd call me by my nickname, Gryn, or whatever you want to call me."

"Oh, yes. Um, so, Gryn-san, then?"

"Ufufu, that's nice to hear, Masayuki. Unlike Rudra, you're a straight-shooter. If you don't mind Calgurio and the others, it's none of my business. Good for you, both of you."

"Yes, thank you!"

"His Majesty's gratitude, I will remember it for the rest of my life!"

Velgrynd's mood seemed to have improved and he was relieved. Watching the whole process, Mithra realized from the bottom of his heart that he was in trouble.

I see. I suppose the only reason they want to involve me is not just to stabilize the situation. They really want to have a friend to help diffuse the anger from Velgrynd-sama. But then again, what about that boy, Masayuki?

Mithra wondered if he was the same as him. And Mithra wasn't the only one who felt that way.

"By the way, it was Mithra-san, correct?"

"I don't recognize you, but it seems you're the Emperor. You can call me whatever you like."

"Then I'll take you up on your offer. What do you think of me, Mithra-san? I mean, I don't know, maybe I just seem like a normal young man to you?"

"What do you mean? You're the Emperor. There's nothing normal about you."

“No, no, that’s not what I’m talking about, I just want you to calm down and give me an honest answer.”

“So, what are you talking about?”

Mithra couldn’t understand what Masayuki was trying to say. But the outcome of this response would determine Mithra’s fate.

“Mithra-san thinks I’m mediocre, right?”

“Do you mean to imply that I am disrespectful? Then I must confess that you are nowhere near as good as my older brother. Emperor, you don’t seem capable of rising above the rest of us.”

If I say this, I’ll be ruined.

Mithra thought so, but he was in a desperate mood. If he was going to be done in by the hands of Velgrynd anyway, he wanted not to suffer. He thought that even Velgrynd, who was driven by passion, would fulfill such a wish. But the response he got was much more than that. It wasn’t from Velgrynd, but from Masayuki.

“Mithra-san! You’re awesome! I needed someone like you!!”

“Huh?”

He didn’t know what he meant, but when he asked him, Masayuki responded passionately.

“You know, because of my authority, other people always think I’m this great guy.”

Masayuki shouts. No one else could imagine how much trouble he had suffered because of the Unique Skill ‘Chosen One’ he acquired. And now, the Unique Skill had evolved into the Ultimate Skill ‘King of Heroes.’ The power was tremendous, and even though anyone could understand that it was a bad idea to leave politics to amateurs, he had been treated as an exception.

“What, you mean...?”

“So, that’s why I’m so happy to have someone like Mithra-san who understands the real me!”

Wet droplets spill out of Mithra’s eyes.

“Masayuki-kun—no, Your Majesty!”

Masayuki’s hardships were no stranger to the world. But Mithra could understand them as if they were his own. That is not all. If he was the one who understood Masayuki, he felt that the opposite was also possible.

“Hey, now that you understand me, you don’t have to call me Your Majesty!”

“Yes, that’s right. I understand, I understand. I’ve had the same kind of pain in my heart.”

“What?”

“I want you to listen. At the worst time, a person was arrested just because I had whispered, ‘I’m in trouble.’ Honestly, I almost thought to stop opening my mouth at all. It was impossible, but it was hard not to be able to speak my mind.”

“I understand! In my case, even when I speak my mind, it doesn’t come through. It’s interpreted by others, and my reputation just goes up. Seriously, give me a break! And the next thing I knew I was an Emperor, you know?”

“That’s scary too.”

“Right! I’m really scared. My buddy Jinrai-san was horrible at the beginning. He is understanding now, but he used to fight with Rimuru-san all the time! I can’t tell you how many times I wish he’d stop mentioning my name...”

“I can understand that. That’s why I didn’t bring a chaperone with me this time. I was afraid of what they might say.”

Negotiations broke down over one person’s comments as if it was a common story in the past. Only this time, he couldn’t afford to make such a mistake.

“That’s a common story. No, well, I thought it was just me.”

“Hahaha, it’s been hard on both of us.”

“It’s no laughing matter, seriously.”

Masayuki and Mithra talked with each other, forgetting about everyone else’s existence. They had smiles on their faces. And before long, a friendship had blossomed.

“...Yes, I was immunized by my mother because she had Rudra in her body. I’ve been alive for a long time but I’ve never seen this happen before.”

Even Velgrynd was surprised. But for now, to celebrate their friendship, they watched in silence.



Now that Masayuki and Mithra had become good friends, all the problems were cleared up. Therefore, Mithra agreed to help. However, instead of being directly involved in politics, he decided to bundle up the aristocrats of his family and support them from behind the scenes. He has a true desire to spend more time on his own, but he decided after a discussion that this would be more convenient for him.

“I will keep things the way they are and unite those noblemen who are unhappy with the current situation. However, I’ll also try to persuade the more capable ones to cooperate with you.”

“Thank you. We are seriously short on staff.”

“It would be better for the military as well. A poor rebellion would only lead to a loss of personnel. If Mithra-dono is willing to work with us, we can take the rebels in overtime.”

And so, the situation was wrapped up nicely. The meeting had ended and the venue was dismissed.

“One moment, please.”

Testarossa spoke to Mithra as he stood up.

“Mithra-dono, can you give me a moment of your time?”

Mithra was shocked. He remembered exactly what he had said to Testarossa. He was

relieved that the situation had been cleared, but maybe he had been naive.

“What is it?”

He sat back in the chair, trying hard not to let his voice tremble.

“No, it’s just something I was wondering about earlier, so I had to do some digging. You have a hidden Skill, don’t you?”

“What? I’m just a guy who—”

Mithra tried to deny it, thinking that the cloud had shifted, but he was interrupted by Testarossa. Interrupting him, Testarossa continued to speak.

“Oh, don’t get me wrong. It’s an unconsciousness type, that’s right, the Unique Skill ‘Villain’²² right? It’s sort of like it’s been handed down from generation to generation. Maybe it’s your father’s side? Are you scared by me?”

“...”

He was terrified. Mithra had been taught that it was the fate of the eldest son of the Hillmeard Dukes.

“If you realize that, I’m sure you’ll be able to take advantage of negotiations better in the future.”

It was uncharacteristic of Testarossa to tell him that. It’s not often that Testarossa was nice to someone she likes.

“Wow, that kind of power...”

“It’s true. I’m not going to tell you how to use it, but I’m going to tell you one more thing, as a great service.”

“Mm?”

“You’re scared for your wife too.”

“No way. My wife is so shy, we’ve never had a fight. Not once have I ever yelled at her.”

‘How stupid’ Mithra laughs. Testarossa smiles bitterly.

“I’m pretty sure that’s the information I got to help you negotiate this deal. Your mother was immune to it, so it probably wouldn’t have been a problem, but your wife...”

“No way...”

“Still, it’s family. You understand Mithra-dono, don’t you?”

“That’s right. You just had a second child, didn’t you? If so, I’m sure your wife loves Mithra-dono, too.”

An upset Mithra. Calgurio and Minitis talk to Mithra as if to console him. But it is Velgrynd who shatters that atmosphere. But it was also a word of truth.

“You’re an idiot. You’ve been waiting for your first son, haven’t you? Maybe your wife thinks that since she bore you an heir as a nobleman’s wife, she’s done her duty. Did you ever tell your wife how you felt in the first place?”

“Do you mean...?”

²²The word used was ‘悪人面’ which can mean many things like villain, wickedness, bad guy, etc. The katakana also said ‘コワイヒト’ which can translate to ‘kowaihito’ or ‘scary person.’ I am just going with ‘Villain’ for now.

“Have you ever told her you love her? Have you ever thanked her for giving birth to your child?”

Mithra realized that he had never said such a thing. He realized his stupidity and his face paled at once.

“Expressing your feelings in words is surprisingly a very important part of keeping your affections together. Shouldn’t you take this opportunity to tell your wife how you feel?”

Testarossa told him and Mithra nodded his head.

“I’m sorry for this!”

And with that, he ran away as fast as he could. When Mithra returned home, he saw his wife, who was just about to leave the house. He had arrived just in time. Mithra had correctly understood and acted on the advice of Velgrynd and Testarossa. As a result, he had avoided the worst situation of divorce. From that day forward, Mithra never forgot his gratitude. He energetically cooperated with the new Emperor, Masayuki, and supported the empire behind the scenes. Thus, all three major factions of the Imperial aristocracy fell under the command of the new Emperor Masayuki. The stabilization of the ruling system, which was expected to take years, was accomplished in a matter of months.



The night of the day Mithra-dono became a friend.

“It was exactly as Testarossa-dono had said, huh?”

“Well, yes. There was a lot of luck, though, with the help of Demon Lord Rimuru-sama and Velgrynd-sama.”

Minits and I were having a toast at a restaurant in the Imperial City. Now that the nobles’ problem was solved, the only problem left was the Aggressors. We were sending agents to every corner of the Empire to check for signs of trouble. If anything is happening, there will be reports, and we would have the reorganized Imperial Knights stationed in the provincial cities. We can’t be too careful, but we can at least allow ourselves some breathing room.

That’s why he planned to drink to his heart’s content tonight. They’d talk about their struggles and our hopes for the future of the empire. Come to think of it, he never thought he’d be so close to Minits. He was a good soldier, but he never would have let him in. Now he is a dear friend. And together they are the best supporters of His Majesty. They drank more drinks, and he became drunk enough. Then Minits came in with a topic.

“So, changing the subject, how does it feel to have power over most people?”

I think about that question again. And then I answer.

“It’s a hollow feeling. Like I’ve lost sight of my goal.”

“Then you don’t need this anymore, do you?”

With that, Minitis held out an envelope to me. I wonder if there was a stack of papers in it. It had some kind of thickness.

“What is this?”

“Don’t open it here.”

Minitis slurred his words and paused to gulp down his glass. Then he put down his empty glass and stood up.

“Hey, are you going home?”

“Oh. That’s the report I had you look at years ago, just to give me a bargaining chip against you. I don’t need it anymore, and I’ll do it. There was something that was bothering me, so I’m letting you take a look at it. I’m a little surprised myself, so you might even be happier not knowing.”

“Hm?”

“If you’re not interested in your past, don’t read it, and burn it.”

There was no further explanation from Minitis. He just waved his hand and left without answering my questions, not even looking back. I was left alone, but I didn’t feel like drinking any more. I was more interested in what Minitis had to say. There was no doubt that this material was about me. And it was my weakness? I don’t have a family. I’m not saying that I wasn’t dirty, but I was never part of any wrongdoing that merited punishment. I’m sure Minitis knew that too...

All I can think of is that it involved the woman who was my wife. Is it my past? Come to think of it, my vengeance wasn’t complete. It would be pretty easy for me to destroy the Count or anyone else. That’s why I was so proud that I could do it at any time, and I let my revenge go unchecked.

“Well, maybe it’s a good idea to face the past to bring closure here.”

I muttered to myself and left the restaurant. I returned to my mansion in the imperial capital and went into my room. I took the material from the envelope Minitis gave me and read it.

“Ridiculous...”

What was written there was so shocking that I couldn’t help but mutter to myself. When I saw the description ‘Count Balduff,’ I realized I had forgotten the name of the object of my revenge. That’s fine, but it was hard to believe what happens next. The Count Balduff is said to have put together a sect of local aristocrats. But it was at a level easy to ignore.

Not to mention the name of the baron with the woman who was my ex-wife, all of the lower aristocrats, such as the Viscount and the Baron, follow. If the scale was large enough, they would be noticeable, but with a force of less than ten, they were probably overlooked. However, there was a description that I could not overlook.

“—It’s a noble family who follows, but there is a high possibility that the reign has been hijacked, right?”

What does that mean? I rushed to read the rest of the report. The houses that followed were said to have had honorable men in their families. They didn’t care about dealing with black marketers, and they ruled their lands legitimately. That’s why it was so easy to push him into a

corner.

“It appears that Balduff has been saddled with debts by the hired traders and is being made to do their bidding.”

That was stated in the report. My mind was racing with information. If this is true, then I can’t forgive Count Balduff. No, it’s more than that—

“Mamiya!”

I yelled to myself. About me, my wife might really...

When it occurred to me, I couldn’t sit still any longer. I hurriedly headed for the door.

“Hey, sir! Are you going out this late?”

“I’ve got to go. Get my personal guard up on the airfield. Also, tell your intelligence officer to send his men there as well.”

“...!! Right away!”

My head butler is a capable man. He could tell from my mood that this was no ordinary situation. He didn’t ask any further questions, but carried out my orders quickly.



We’ve solidified the evidence during the night. The report was accurate, and there was no excuse for it. Only one person screamed and refused to admit the reality.

“You’re a dead man.”

“You! Who do you think I am? I’m Balduff! With what authority do you have to arrest me, one of the eight princes who unite the provincial lords?”

The foolish man had refused to admit his guilt in this case. Well, there is certainly a reason for Balduff to scream. Because in our empire, just because they are aristocrats, they have non-arrest privileges. A noble can only be arrested if the Emperor has issued a warrant for his arrest. However, all Imperial Knights of the Imperial Guardians are eligible, as are certain members of the Intelligence Community. Which means—

“Count Balduff, the charges against you have been confirmed. The victims have testified, and I hope you will understand that there is no longer any excuse for this.”

Of course, I have the right to arrest him based on what the information bureau staff brought. I know how important it is to arrest a highborn Count. I’d like to execute him myself, but I’m afraid that would be above my pay grade. If I put my hand down, I could kill him without causing much pain. I can’t bring myself to show that kind of mercy to this man.

“Don’t be a fool! What authority do you have?!”

“Shut up, Balduff. Have you forgotten my face?”

I stared Balduff squarely in the eye so he could see my left eye patch.

“You’re not really His Excellency Calgurio, are you?!”

“You know me?”

“Of course! Your exploits have been passed down throughout the Empire. I hear you were narrowly defeated by the filthy monster nation, but I believe that Your Excellency will surely be able to make up for it!”

This man is misunderstanding everything. His fate would be even worse if Testarossa-dono could hear what he has to say. If I tell her... No, I’m not going to tell her. Let’s not get angry and get too involved.

“I don’t like the way you talk about me. I suppose you laughed at me being kicked out of the baronial household.”

“...!! It’s a misunderstanding!”

I haven’t even explained to him yet, and that statement was already an admission of guilt.

“Don’t speak. I’ll let the Imperial High Council decide your fate, so be prepared for that. Unlike me, the torture officers are not so kind.”

I told him without changing my expression. Balduff paled and shouted.

“Wait! Please wait! Calgurio-dono! I apologize. I apologize, and admit my sins.”

“Take him away.”

On my signal, the knights take Balduff away. Balduff’s laxity is appalling. The Imperial High Council is not an institution to clarify the crimes. It is designed to trap and deprive political enemies of their positions. That’s why it doesn’t matter whether he pleads guilty or not. The torturers don’t ask for the testimony of the guilty. They make a living depriving them of their dignity and subjugating them.

“At best, you’ll suffer and feel the resentment of the victims, including myself.”

I whispered softly to Balduff’s back, which was now quite small.



After sending the knights back in the airship, I took my personal magic motorcycle (aura bike) to a small town in the outskirts. After a short ride, I saw a familiar sight before my eyes. Beyond the hill, I saw a mansion that had been left intact. I used to think it was big, but now it seems quite small. It was less than half the size of my mansion in the imperial capital. But still, it was an important place to me.

“It’s been a long time. It’s like this place hasn’t changed at all.”

I don’t know why I said that. I guess I’m just nervous. After all, the woman I was about to meet was the one who abandoned me—no, no it’s not.

I already knew that it was a mistake. All I need is courage. It was late afternoon. I remember my ex-wife relaxing in the front yard at this hour. I scolded myself and rang the doorbell of the house.

“Yes, who is it?”

A familiar voice. It was the voice of the house’s assistant butler, who was about ten years older than me.

“It’s Calgurio. I didn’t plan on coming back, but I’ve got a matter of importance to attend to. I’m sorry, but Mamiya—do you think you could send for Mrs. Heath?”

There was a pause for breath. After a beat, there was a reply saying “Yes, sir.”

I was ushered into the parlor and waited for Mamiya to arrive. All that was left to do was tell her what I really thought before that man came back. That man is Baron Nest Heath, the man who drove me out and took over the Heath household. And now he’s in the next town over, where he’s supposed to be staying at his cousin’s beck and call, Viscount Zhuk.

The reason I know this is because I made the arrangements. Balduff’s people had their knights arrest him last night. I told him to let Viscount Zhuk see the opportunity.

Of course, it was on purpose. Since we’ve already investigated that Viscount Zhuk is Nest’s superior, I thought he would try to contact me once he heard about Balduff’s arrest and the disquieting situation. I knew that Nest was moving, just as I had hoped. It would take at least half a day to fly a horse to and from here to the next town and back. I heard he left early in the morning, so he shouldn’t be back until later in the evening. That’s why I have to finish this before then.

“I’m sorry to have kept you waiting, Your Excellency Calgurio. Is it okay to say that it’s been a long time?”

I haven’t heard Mamiya’s voice in a long time, and my heart flutters. I sit up and lock eyes with her.

“There’s no need for honorifics between you and me. How are you?”

Mamiya was thin. She had makeup on, but it didn’t disguise the white that was starting to bleed into her hair. I realized that she didn’t have the money to spend on beauty. It was definitely an unexpected visit, but still, as a noblewoman, I think it’s normal for a noblewoman to pay more attention to her appearance. Although to me, Mamiya is Mamiya, no matter what she looks like…

It was reported that Nest was not valued because of its spending habits. That was irresistibly annoying.

“Such a waste of words. I’m so relieved to hear that His Excellency Calgurio is looking well.”

Mamiya’s attitude remained stiff. She doesn’t know why I’m here, and is nervous. Sure enough.

“So, is the purpose of your visit today to punish me?”

It is a disposition to say such a thing.

“What do you mean?”

“Huh, my husband left in the morning, in a hurry. I knew he was up to no good, so you have proof of the wrongdoing, don’t you? I am the woman who betrayed you. I can’t think of any reason for you to be grateful to me alone.”

Mamiya's eyes looked tired and hopeless as she said this. It's been twenty years since we parted. I had been through a lot, and so had Mamiya. I don't know if I'm qualified to hear it, but I still have to resolve the misunderstanding.

"There is a reason you were my wife. And that love is as strong now as it was back then."

"Joking—"

"It's not a joke."

Mamiya's eyes wavered as I assured her.

"What do you mean—I'm a stupid woman. I'm no better than a dog and no better than a person who doesn't deserve to be remembered by you. Because I've committed an unforgivable, mortal sin. I committed an irrevocable sin against you."

At a loss for words, tears fell from Mamiya's eyes. She had acted stoutly, but her words reminded her of her crimes. Now I remember. How could I have forgotten the most important things and resented Mamiya...

My father-in-law, who had been a baron, was a fine man and my esteemed master. What a fool I had been, even though he entrusted me with his precious daughter...

"You're not guilty of anything. I was a fool. I didn't even notice that man's trickery, and I hurt the one I swore to protect."

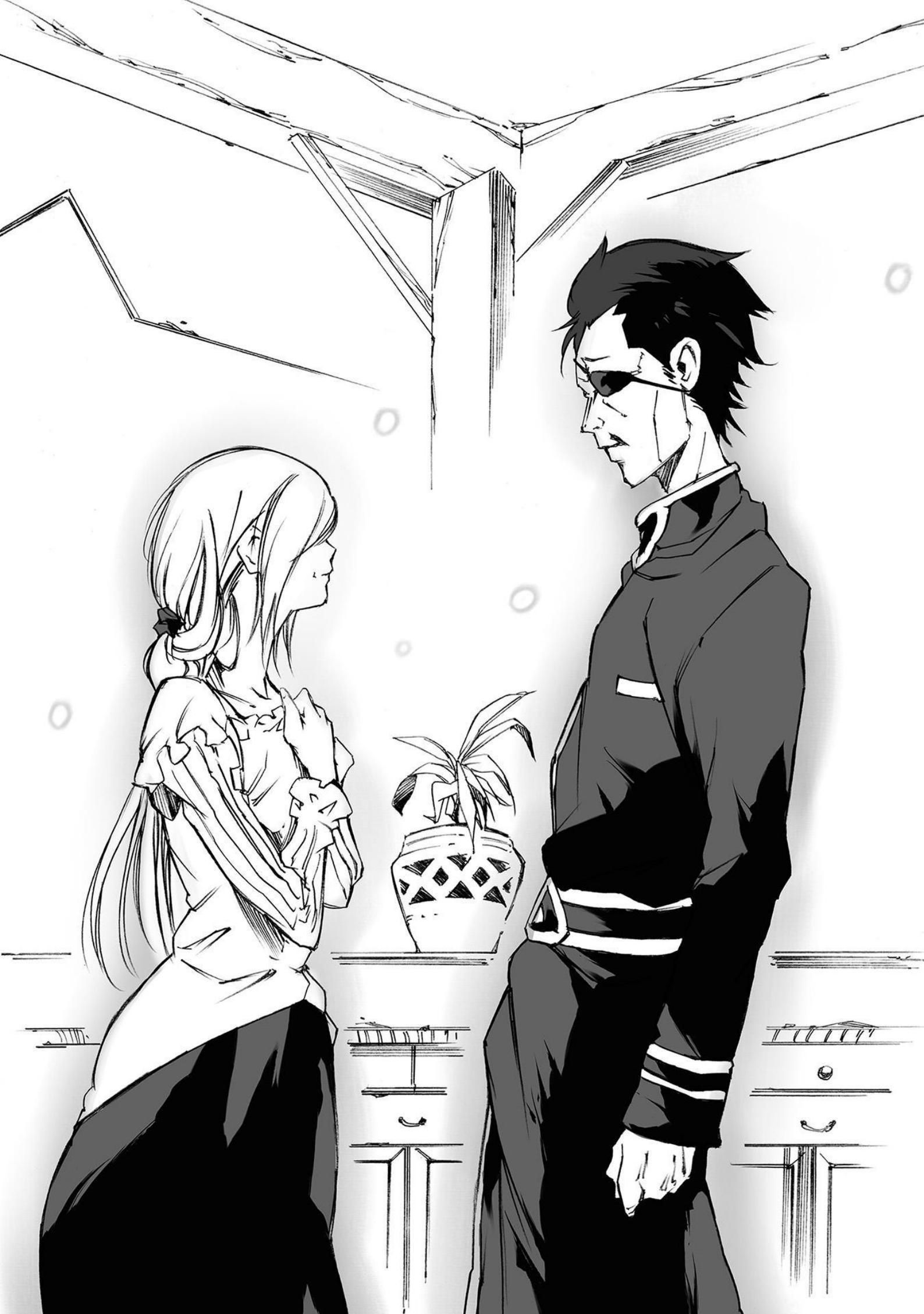
I said slowly, as if to remind myself. When Mamiya heard that, she looked at me in surprise. Now she's listening to me. I took this opportunity to say more.

"I don't know why I didn't believe in you, it's such a shame—I understand the circumstances of the Heath family. Will you believe me again?"

"What are you talking about?! Again, I'm not someone who deserves it. Do you not have the right to punish us?"

"I'm the one who doesn't have the right—It's my fault for abandoning you. It's ended up like this, even though I swore to be the knight to protect you."

So, give me another chance. With that wish, I kept staring at Mamiya, hoping that she would give me another chance.



“Can I trust you?”

Mamiya’s tears wouldn’t stop. I scooped them up with my fingers and then nodded vigorously.

“I will never abandon you again.”

I accepted Mamiya gently as she jumped into my chest, and swore from the bottom of my heart.



The servants of the Heath household were gathered and interviewed. Everyone who worked for the house at the time worked together to protect Mamiya. The person who had drugged me was still here, so I had no trouble gathering evidence.

“I wish you would have consulted with me.”

When I said that, the man who had replaced my late father as the official head butler told me on behalf of everyone,

“They were threatening me. They were paying off our family’s debts, and they were going to divert their rights to the black market. If that happened, not only your wife’s life but also yours would be in danger. I had no choice but to cooperate with the conspiracy he suggested. I’m so sorry. It’s all because of our cowardice!”

Well, that was exactly what the report said. I wasn’t as strong back then as I am now. I guess I was a good knight...but I had only been a B rank at best. It would have been impossible for me to defend this house alone.

“It’s all over now. What matters is what happens from now on.”

“...Indeed, you’re right. I will take care of all the punishments, so please be lenient with the members of the house.”

When the head butler said this while bowing low, the other servants also apologized. That scene was a representation of my father-in-law’s humanity.

“Don’t be mistaken. I was wrong too, so I don’t want to put all the blame on you guys. So please continue to support us well.”

I tell them that. We were all in the same boat. So I wanted them to join me on the joint responsibility.

“Calgurio-sama!!”

Tears welled up in the butler’s eyes. However, right after that, he tilts his head as if he’s noticed something.

“Hmm? It’s natural to support your wife, of course, but are you supporting us?”

He found out.

“Um, Calgurio...sama? What do you mean by that?”

Even Mamiya wonders. This is the moment of truth. I'm truly afraid of what would happen if they rejected me, but I gather my courage and tell them.

"What? It's true. We were all wrong. I mean, the fact that we were divorced was wrong, too, so we should just pretend that it never happened. Do you think so too?"

Unlike my inner heart, I appeared calm. Honestly, that logic is hard to push through. Not only did Mamiya and I file for divorce, but Nest and Mamiya's remarriage vows were duly filed and accepted long ago by the Imperial Court. It would normally be impossible to overturn this, but I was confident that Minit would do something about it.

"So, you mean, we're going to be married again?"

"Yes, I do, but do you want that?"

I think my heart is pounding.

"Are you sure you want to go through with this? I want you to—"

"I hope so. I hope you'll accept it."

"But the drugs..."

She may be talking about drugging me that time, but that was settled too. His Majesty Rimuru revived this body. He said it was fertile, so I'm certain that any effects of the poison have vanished.

"You don't have to worry about that. Maybe, but it's okay. So, can you and I start our marriage over again?"

It was a confession of the whole body. I thought one marriage proposal was enough, but I never thought I'd get to do it again with the same woman. But if I didn't pull this off, I was likely to remain empty for the rest of my life. I waited for Mamiya's response, more nervous than preparing for a fight. Mamiya's eyes lit up...and a smile came to her face. Beautiful. In this moment, Mamiya had regained a beauty that had been lost over the past twenty years.

"With pleasure,"

My blank heart was filled with joy. And at the same time, The servants cheered us on with blessings. I had served my purpose. The small matter of Nest remains, but the fact that he was the head of the Baron Heath will be blotted out, so he's probably doomed anyway. Nest's status will return to that of a merchant. Unlike a nobleman, the privilege of immunity from arrest does not apply to him as a merchant. Any crimes he commits will be imputed to him and he'll never see the light of day again. Criminal acts against noblemen means he'll have to take it against his own people. It will destroy his father.

"This worked out well. I don't care if I have to arrest him now."

"Yes, sir. Well then, I'll capture both Viscount Zhuk and dispose of them here."

"Yes, then please."

I pushed the miscellaneous things to my subordinates. The case was closed. Thus, I was reunited with Mamiya and became the head of the Heath family once again.



“Congratulations on your marriage, if I may say so?”

“It’s not a new marriage, and yet it’s not a remarriage, though.”

Me and Minits were once again exchanging drinks at the Imperial City’s restaurant.

“Hmm. Well, whatever it is, I wish you well with your wife.”

“Thank you. And also, it helped me with the process.”

“Yeah, that was a tough one. If you brought up the statute of limitations, it was impossible to turn it over. I’m sorry, but I had to resort to the hardball approach.”

“I hear you had a hard time.”

“Well, yeah. But I don’t mind. Just think of it as a congratulatory gift.”

Then Minits laughed.

“Thank you.”

I replied and smiled shyly.

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Then he asked me to dig into my marriage.

“Don’t be so ecstatic!”

“It’s all right. Come on. Marriage is good! You should stop being a bachelor and find a woman to be your partner for life!”

“Shut up. Don’t try to interfere in my private life.”

“Wahahahaha! That’s why I was so brave at the time!”

“I’ve already heard that. For the fifth time.”

“It can’t be helped. If you want to listen to me so badly, I’ll make you listen to me as many times as you want.”

“You’re looking pretty drunk, man. I didn’t expect you to get so tangled up in it.”

...I can’t help but feel like he asked me, or that I just spoke on my own. Well, that’s not the point, so if I care about it too much, it’s my loss.

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After a certain amount of rambling, he finally got down to business.

“So, about that file...”

“Was it useful?”

“What did you mean when you said it was a bargaining chip for me?”

“...Did you notice?”

“Of course. It was twenty years ago. From the time you said you did your research, that’s more than a decade ago. So how is it that the information on each individual is so comprehensive. With an investigation that detailed, even the Intelligence Bureau would be unable to do it!”

“Hmph, that’s a really sober point, if you’re drunk.”

Now that Minitis has confirmed it, I’m sure of it.

“Testarossa-dono?”

“That’s right. She gave me something I thought might be useful to you.”

“That’s scary.”

“Yeah, totally.”

Honestly, I’m really scared. I don’t know how they would have the resources to investigate in such detail. The White Primordial—a demon long feared in the Empire. It is said she was sealed by the Kings Guard in the ‘Lakeshore Dyed in Scarlet’ incident. But now that was a bit of a mystery. She was sealed on purpose. Or rather, the seal was meaningless. Testarossa-dono’s strength is her brain. I’m told that she caused Velgrynd-sama problems despite their overwhelming difference in ability. That fact was a true testament to her fearfulness.

“From our point of view as a military department, if we have to deal with Testarossa-dono, we’ll lose on the strategic side. In other words, it’s a no-win situation. I hope you will keep that in mind as you consider your future dealings with the monster kingdom.”

“Idiot! You don’t have to tell me to understand that. I’m going to have to taste the bitterness of all those negotiations, before the war. I respect His Majesty Rimuru’s wisdom because he put her in the diplomatic service.”

Well, it seems that it was unnecessary advice. Minitis and I are in agreement, and this is a great relief to me. There would be continued cooperation with the monster kingdom in the future. At least for now, while Minitis and I are alive. But it’s a question of what happens after that. The Monster Kingdom—It’s like the leaders of the Jura Tempest Federation have no lifespan. By contrast, in our empire, replacements will inevitably occur. Velgrynd-sama is indifferent to politics. She would complain about giving advice, but I feared for those who would replace others. Becoming husband and wife with Mamiya has given me back my respect for my family. That’s why I fear for the future of the empire. We have to come up with a system that prevents us from getting into conflict with the monster kingdom. And it’s for our children’s sake that we should educate them to keep it that way.

“We have a lot of work to do now.”

“Yeah. We’ve got a lot of work to do.”

I guess Minitis had come to the same conclusion. I smiled and tipped my cup with a grin.

That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime

**Chapter
4**

**The Blue
Demon's
Monologue**

Chapter 4

The Blue Demon's Monologue

Nice to meet you all, my name is Raine. Huh? Don't know me? Come on, cut the crap, or do I need to slap some sense into you? Go back to school and study again!

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Whoops, sorry. I guess I just snapped a little. I'm usually a ladylike person, but I do go wild sometimes. I mean *sometimes*. Anyway, since you don't know me, I guess I should introduce myself to you. Like I said before, my name is Raine. I'm a servant—no, a faithful maid of the Demon Lord Guy Crimson-sama.

I've known Guy-sama for a long, long time, even before the creation of heaven and earth maybe? How long ago was that? Who knows? I mean, do you even remember exactly the time you were born? No? That's it. These mundane questions are a pain in the ass, just ignore them. Back to the topic. I am invincible because I was derived from the Great Spirit of Darkness...or so I thought. I'm not going to deny I got a little carried away because of that. I made a huge mistake. I teamed up with a like-minded person and attacked whoever looked stronger than I was. Looking back now, I was such a dumbass. That one bastard was too strong. I thought I could beat him two-on-one, but he just wiped the floor with both of us. That guy who beat us was Rogue, the Red Primordial a.k.a. Demon Lord Guy Crimson-sama. By the way, it was Vert, the Green Primordial or Mizeri, who challenged Guy-sama with me. We are very good friends. My job is Mizeri's and Mizeri's salary is mine.

"Raine! Stop slacking and get your cleaning done!"

Tsk. I was introducing you to her but she's being an annoying bitch.

"What did you say?"

"N-no, nothing."

"No? You better not."

Pew, that was a close one. Mizeri is very perceptive. She always catches me slacking off and it's difficult to pull one over on her. I'll just keep on cleaning before she gets mad at me.

So, yeah, I still haven't finished my introduction. Mizeri and I lost to Guy-sama, but this revealed one important fact. A demon will be extinguished when its heart core is shattered. However, we, the Primordials, can recover from any condition!

I heard that the True Dragons inherit memories while losing their personalities upon death, but in our case, our personalities remained intact. Guy-sama's partner, Frost Dragon Velzardsama, used to re-educate her younger brother by resetting his personality, but that doesn't apply to us Primordials. Seriously, isn't that amazing?

I would love to brag about it, but unfortunately there are some drawbacks. First, it takes a long time to recover, but you know, that's the least of the problems. What's important is the other one. Immortality is nice and all, but among demons, the loser must become subservient. In our cases, that was to Guy-sama. This revelation had thrown a wrench into the balance of power among the demons, creating a distorted equilibrium.

Is it because of our fault or our help? It's hard to say. What was that? Mizeri's opinion was the former, and mine was the latter, huh? You knew that? You...you're not prejudiced against me, are you? Stop looking at *me* like I'm a problem child. Well, that's beside the point. I'll tell you some secret information about demons, or rather, how to kill one.

The Primordials cannot be destroyed, but they can be made subservient. However, since that is not as enforceable as servitude, it is not quite an absolute obedience. We can also disobey Guy-sama if we want to. I don't, though, and to a certain extent, he has the power to force us to do so. It's a hassle to go against it.

Moving on to the Primordials' direct descendants. Normally, except for that idiot Noir the Black Primordial, Primordials spawn many dependents. They are useful as maidservants because they obey every order from their superiors of the same color. Well, "spawning" may not be the most accurate term here. It's too complicated to explain in detail, so I'll give you a quick explanation.

A newborn lesser demon is colorless. It has knowledge but no ego, and it is weak. Most of them are typically summoned by humans, and are called "servant types." When these demons have their egos developed, they're called "autonomous types." When one evolves into a greater demon, it is characterized by its nature and personality, and the color of its lineage can be easily identified.

Sometimes, the higher-ups would scout them out and bring them to their factions. In fact, this is probably the usual way to do it. Mizeri, for example, is diligent and very good at managing her own faction. They've even infiltrated human society and run several groups, such as the Apostles of Verte.

Me? Nah, I'm good. I'll pass on that hassle. What? I'm just like Black? Hey! Stop messing around. Are you kidding me?! I have my own faction! Black pisses me off, so don't ever think anything stupid again! Dammit.

Back to the topic at hand, most newborn demons don't have factions, but by the time they evolve into greater demons, they're color-coded and assigned to a faction. Some of them are

born with colors, but those usually are reincarnated demons.

Since demons are immortal, they will reincarnate after they die. Demons are stubborn and can resurrect even with their souls shattered, especially the close associates of the original colors. Even so, these dependents will disappear if their heart cores are shattered. So, if you're lucky enough to beat one, you'd have to crush the core if you want it *gone*.

As a side note, you don't need to be as careful with those weak-willed, newborn "servant types." Those are small fry that only have knowledge of battle but no experience. So, they might "die" just by destroying the body. Well, don't worry about that.

Well, that was our secret. Since we figured this out, at least we can get something out of our defeat. If anything, I'd say we did a good job there.



So we served Guy-sama out of altruism, and that's a lot more fun than it seemed. Guy-sama has apparently decided to leave the struggle for supremacy in the underworld and work on earth. Guy-sama is ostensibly a very disciplined person, so we were with him.

"You can do whatever you want with your life, too," he said, but I don't care about that. I want to be on the winning side all the time. Since Guy-sama can't be defeated, I think the position I'm in is the best. Well, if Guy-sama ever loses, then that would be interesting.

"No. My mission is to be of service to you." That's what I said at that time. What do you think? It's almost like a perfect maid, don't you think? You won't find a maid as loyal as me anywhere else—at least I thought so...

"That's right. You are the king. We are your subjects. That is the eternal and immortal truth."

Mizeri...you acted so well! No, she's probably being honest here. This is bad. I guess this rival of mine is not so easy to deal with after all. While I've been living my life with a selfish sense of rivalry, Mizeri seemed to trust me, so I had to stop showing her things. Oh well, what can I do? And so continued the rotten relationship between Mizeri and I.

We wandered from place to place and settled in our current base. It's the most frigid place a creature could ever live in, but I'm a demon, so I don't mind—no, I do. When I was trying to wash the clothes, they just froze over. Then I got angry and poked at them just a bit and they just shattered to pieces! That just pissed me off.

Well, I'm fine, despite those failures.

"You ought to be more careful about what you do!"

"Raine, I think you should be a little concerned about that, don't you?"

Guy-sama warned me about this, so I started to care a little bit. That's where the servants came in. I have them do their best to make it easy on me! So, I haven't failed once since then.

I have grown up, too. And so, our job is no longer only washing clothes. We are so good that we are rumored to be the all-purpose maids in town. We also do cooking, singing, dancing, playing musical instruments, and fine arts to meet Guy-sama's needs. Well, there may have been some failures in cooking and laundry. But we all learn from our mistakes, just like other demons do. So let's put the past where it belongs.

My specialty, frankly, is painting. I love abstract painting. I painted Mizeri as a model the other day and she was moved to tears.

"I was furious."

"Then it was a great success!"

"You're such a..."

Mizeri was exasperated, but I didn't care. Her rage means that her emotions were in turmoil. That's a big deal to a demon, a spiritual life form. I was scared of my talent. Needless to say, when I paint Guy-sama or Velzard-sama, I have to choose a concrete painting. It's always a big hit because they're so perfect.

"I knew it. You really can draw if you put your mind to it. That's why I'm even more annoyed..." Mizeri mumbled something, but as always, I'll just let it slide.

By the way, let me tell you about one of my hobbies. The extreme cold is so harsh and inhospitable, there's literally a snowstorm outside. With such an all-white backdrop, the inside of the 'Barrier' is in everlasting summer mode. We even changed the terrain to create a lake and a white sandy beach. I would then put chairs on the beach, lie down, and let the dependents serve me food and drinks. It was the best kind of entertainment.

I wonder how much energy is spent on my hobby. I can't stop smiling just thinking about it. This is also very popular with Guy-sama.

"Raine is the best when it's about getting people to think about these things."

"I admit it. I knew you were great, Raine."

Ufufu, Mizeri also gave me a compliment. At this rate, I think I will continue to put my hobby to good use at work!



Oh yeah, I have an important job, not to forget. Occasionally, I am a guide for the Walpurgis—the banquet of the demon lords. What is it, you ask? In the early days, as the name suggests, the three demon lords got together to enjoy a meal. Guy-sama and Milim-sama, oh and also

Ramiris-sama.

Milim-sama is the niece of Velzard-sama and her power is immense. There was a time when she lost control and went on a rampage, and it was beyond description. We could have joined the battle because we would not die, but doing so would have destroyed the planet itself, so in the end, Velzard-sama, Mizeri and I were tasked with containing the aftermath of the battle.

We're not going to do it again. If Ramiris-sama hadn't helped us, we would have fallen before the battle was over. So that's why we love Ramiris-sama as well as Guy-sama. Of course, we respect Milim-sama, so we are very excited to have all three of them together.

The definition of "Walpurgis" has changed over the years. The number of demon lords is on the rise. Guy-sama's job was to keep mankind from dying out, but he's been recruiting more people to help him do it.

The first person to become the fourth demon lord was Dagruel-sama. Actually, he was the one who suffered the most when Guy-sama and Milim-sama fought. He also helped us prevent the earth from being affected. Even so, Dagruel-sama's dominion has turned into a barren land...well, that doesn't matter, not my problem. He's managed to live with magic, but it didn't stop the desert from expanding. It's all settled now, but it seems to have been harder back then. I just said good luck and cheered from afar.

The next demon lord was Luminas-sama, the "Queen of Nightmares." She is the only daughter of the vampire ancestor, and is very strong, but I think we should start speaking of the ancestor itself.

It was supposed to be the ancestor of the divine humans created by Veldanava-sama. Veldanava-sama sought a wise being to speak to him. With the birth of angels and demons, his need was satisfied. That's why he tried to bring civilization to earth, and it seems that the ancestor was expected to play that role.

Well, that was a failure. Maybe because it was immortal and didn't need to produce any offspring. Maybe like us demons, the ancestors didn't have a gender. So it seems it had to wait for tens of thousands of years or more for a race to be born that could thrive on earth. I heard it all before, but the ancestor didn't give up.

It kept running these forbidden experiments to fulfill Veldanava-sama's expectations. That bastard loved experiments more than the prosperity of its descendants. Whether that was a good thing or a bad thing is difficult for me to say, but I can tell you this—it was an annoying asshole! I don't know how many times the human race nearly went extinct because of that idiot's experiments!

However, it's also true that because of that idiot's experiments, true human beings, the high humans, were born. Although the eternal divine humans could not be created, it contributed to the birth of mankind.

You don't believe that, do you? That's right, I didn't see it with my own eyes, so I don't believe it either. I heard that the ancestor created two races by analyzing its own body. They

were the high humans and the vampires. It's not the way they were supposed to be born, but it's just as well they were born. By the time Guy-sama was summoned to earth, the human race had already spread all over the place. The high humans built a huge nation, larger than the human beings today.

However, it seems that both races had their strengths and weaknesses. Although the high humans inherited strong magical power, their spirits had problems. As you can see from the stupidity of summoning Guy-sama, they thought that they were the best of the best. There's a saying in other worlds that "Those who are arrogant have not been around long enough" and that's exactly what happened. They were destroyed in the blink of an eye.

And as for the vampires, they had their own problems. Perhaps that's a good thing, because they're still around until this day. Possessing a strong body and powerful magic, high immortality, and a mature mind, it's a good thing they had all these things, but they were always vulnerable to being out in the sun. They couldn't truly be the supreme rulers of the earth.

That ancestor asshole continued to experiment. Well, I was there at the time, so I can generally remember what it was doing. At that time, spirits from the Great Spirit of each attribute had already split off and filled the earth with the four major elements. Those spirits took in magical elements and materialized, rather, incarnated. In other words, it was the ancestor who helped those spirits materialize.

From the "earth" attribute, the earth spirits, High Dwarves, were born. From the "water" attribute, the water spirits, Sirens, were born. From the "fire" attribute, the fire spirits, Enki, were born. And from the "wind" attribute, the wind spirits, High Elves, were born.

Up to this point, it was still within a semblance of reason, but from here, the ancestor's recklessness really kicked off. That asshole experimented with breeding these races and gave birth to various species. To be honest, for a lady like me, it was quite a shock. The result was the birth of various species such as dwarves, ogres and beastmen, which were successful examples. There were many failures that faded into obscurity and later deteriorated into goblin-like monsters.

Guy-sama was also worried that this couldn't be left alone. But as long as Veldanava was left alone, we couldn't punish the Ancestor. As a result of its experiments, the diversity had certainly increased. One might say that the world had become more complicated, but it had also become more interesting. Not my problem, but *his* problem.

"I don't suppose you enjoy watching me get in trouble, do you?"

"No way, no way! That's a misunderstanding, Guy-sama. I'm Guy-sama's faithful maid," I said with an elegant curtsy. The fact that I was able to get away with it must be the result of my daily training.

Well, I was troubled by the Ancestor as I survived such a critical situation. However, its experiments led to its downfall.

"Ah! My daughter! You are my masterpiece—"

"It is time for judgment 'Disintegration'!"

Having its own body turned into dust by its own daughter like that, I guess it had it coming,

huh? Between you and me, this is the secret episode of the fifth demon lord, Luminas-sama.

After that, the sixth one to become demon lord was Dino-sama. By the way, can I be frank with you? What? I already am? Well then, guess I don't need to be shy. Here goes. I don't like honoring Dino with "-sama." Why? Because he's a lazy turd. He just doesn't work. He's the perfect example of depravity. I could have forgiven him if he was merely lazy, but no, he also makes *me* do *more* work! That is unacceptable.

I can't let him keep getting away with this. If he's going to do this, he should just go to Mizeri, and I will forgive him in a heartbeat. And when I asked him that, do you know what that guy said?

"No, because I'll get in trouble if I ask Mizeri, right?"

Of course! Screw this! This is not just pissing me off, this is also like saying that Mizeri is scarier than me. Well, I get pissed off a lot, too, but not that I don't have bad things to say about Mizeri...

What? Similarity? Are you stupid? Do you think you can handle a Primordial? Here are Raine's words of advice: In this world, there are things that are permissible to say and things that are not. People who don't understand that deserve to get beaten to death.



In this way, six people became demon lords, and the Walpurgis started to become more like a business debriefing session. Before I knew it, what was supposed to be a mere tea party had turned into a business meeting. It sounds cumbersome, so I'll pass.

"Raine!"

Uh, I was kidding. I will do my duty as a guide. Everyone seems to be very busy, except maybe that one person who's been slacking off all the time. If you look closely, there are a lot of people working, but that important task of managing the human race hasn't diminished at all, has it?

First of all, Guy-sama. What a madhouse he is already in. Except for Walpurgis, Mizeri was also helping desperately. I have to support her. I ended up taking care of the cooking and laundry, unwillingly, mind you.

Next, Milim-sama. Here, too, she is also more serious than you might think. If there are skirmishes between nations, she would go to them and teach them both harsh lessons. If a country is under attack by a large magic beast, she would go there to help people. She doesn't always act like a demon lord, but that's typical of Milim-sama.

And then we have Ramiris-sama, the social recluse. She doesn't come out of the labyrinth

of her own making, but that's okay. I owe Ramiris-sama a debt of gratitude, so I can forgive anything. Dagruel-sama is in the same situation. After all, it seems to be a huge mess to clean up after that carnage. He doesn't have time for anything else, just slowing down the desertification would already be a great help.

The amazing one is Luminas-sama. She's exemplary, a far cry from that Ancestor. Before I knew it, she had complete control over the vampire forces. On top of that, she is protecting the humans who have lost their strength. The vampires who used to see humans as prey, now follow Luminas-sama's orders to protect the human race. No point mincing words, how is that even possible? That's seriously a great accomplishment.

And next, in contrast to Luminas-sama, is that piece of crap.

"Dino-sama, why don't you work a little harder?"

"I don't need you to tell me that!"

I don't understand. Was there ever a greater insult than this? No, I guess that's why Dino is a natural enemy of mine. In any case, under the circumstances, six people wasn't enough. Therefore, I started to recruit more people.

But then Luminas-sama retired. The reason for this was that the new recruits were too stupid to read the room. Many tried to pick on Luminas-sama and Ramiris-sama. Finally, they went on a rampage to show them what they were made of, but by then she had run out of patience with them.

Luminas-sama is a beautiful girl, and those small fry that failed to see her true strength would think she was beneath them. In order to break through this situation, she may have decided that it would be more advantageous to have a more dangerous looking being as the demon lord. As such, Roy was instated as Luminas-sama's substitute.

"I shall now go behind the scenes to support everyone," she said. "I'll put Roy in the front as the demon lord, is that all right with you all?"

If this were Dino's statement, he would have been accused by everyone of trying to slack off. However, this is Luminas-sama, the trusted and proven leader. With things being what they were, everyone accepted it willingly. So that started a new era where powerful majins began to rise in prominence as demon lords. By then, anyone would become eligible simply by acquiring the Demon Lord Seed. Having fulfilled this requirement, ambitious majins, such as Kazalim, became demon lords.

Once again, the purpose of Walpurgis changed. It was decided that a meeting would be held with the endorsement of three people to make a treaty or an agreement between the demon lords. It was also decided that it would be at this meeting where new demon lords would be approved or not.

Personally, that was a funny development. But, well, Guy-sama seemed to have no complaints about it, because it served its purpose. If Guy-sama didn't mind it, then I cannot complain either. Therefore, a new system was established.



While looking after Guy-sama's personal matters, I served as a guide for the occasional Walpurgis banquets. A number of demon lords have come and gone. Before long, the name of the Ten Great Demon Lords began to stick among the populace. And then that slime came onto the scene—Demon Lord Rimuru-sama.

I first saw him in the Walpurgis started by Demon Lord Clayman. Oh, I still miss Clayman, kind of. Even though he was weaker than me, I can admit that he had quite the courage to call himself a demon lord. Besides, he was good at coordinating and was surprisingly useful. If I pushed him a little, he'd take care of the troublesome work too, how convenient. Oh dear, I wonder where he went wrong...

I guess he picked a fight with the wrong person, what a shame. Mizeri, who went to pick up Rimuru-sama, came back and said "Clayman's luck is running out," and that's exactly how it turned out. I was the host of the meeting, but once I gave the floor to Rimuru-sama, it became a one-sided affair.

It was refreshing to watch, but there was one thing that bothered me. It wasn't so much related to Rimuru-sama, but rather, Ramiris-sama's servant.

"Isn't that one from the black lineage?"

"Right. I felt his presence when I picked up Rimuru-sama, so I'm sure of it."

"No way. He's so free-spirited and selfish, how could one possibly follow someone like that?"

"Well, I don't know, do you? I don't know what he's thinking, and I don't want to know or care what he thinks, but..."

Well, that's right. I think it's as Mizeri says, that Noir the Black Primordial is both selfish and whimsical. He's one of us Primordials, but honestly, I don't want to get involved with him. Why? Because he tied with Guy-sama! Even if Mizeri and I challenged him together, we would have had a difficult time. That fact made me feel a sense of weakness, even though I had never fought him in person. No, that's giving ourselves a little too much credit. Not just having a difficult time against him, I honestly believe that both of us can't win together against him.

Guy-sama and Black weren't serious at all. The two of them were just playing with each other, but the battle was in a realm we couldn't follow. Well, I have my pride as a Primordial, so I won't ever admit it. If possible, I really don't want to get into trouble with Black.



This is the worst. I'm going to fight with Black. What did I do... I had always been a good girl, I wonder why. Maybe they found out that I stole Mizeri's treats? No, I chalked it up to one of my archdemon's doing. So why? I wonder, but stuff happens.

I decided that this was an opportunity, because I don't like him. He doesn't have any factions, he does things on his own, and he's willing to stand in Guy-sama's way. He could incarnate if he wanted to, but I'm annoyed that he wasn't interested in it. In other words, I was pissed off that he didn't evolve and remained an archdemon for a long time, as if he had no interest in the world.

By the looks of it, those three colors are still locked in a stalemate. That too was probably Black's handiwork agitating them. If he's any bit a demon, then he should follow the rules and aim for the future of evolution!

Indeed, I gotta give him a good beat-down. He's strong, yeah, but so am I. I don't think I could win, but *maybe* I can win. Fighting is also about compatibility. Black doesn't know what I'm capable of, so I think he might let his guard down. So, if I go for it, there's a chance. Positivity is one thing I have going for me.

Fully armed with theoretical backing, I was ready for the battle with Black.

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"I could feel such a fierce killing intent, it's just that I couldn't withdraw myself for a few minutes until now. By the way, I'd prefer you call me Diablo, Bleu—excuse me, you've already gotten the name Raine."

I was a little happy to hear that. I thought he wasn't interested in other people, but now he even remembers my name. Hehe, maybe I should rethink that a little.

"Yes. My name is Raine. It was given to me by the great Guy-sama the Red Primordial, the strongest of our Primordial breed. Not like you, who was named by some demon lord mutt of some unknown species."

I felt a little better and tried to rile him up a little. So, I called Rimuru-sama a mutt. Personally, I like the slime because he's cute, and Rimuru-sama seems to be a good demon lord, so I thought it would be a good tactic against Black—I mean, Diablo.

Well...now that was a *bad* idea.

"Huh? Do you have a death wish? Actually, you are asking to disappear from this world, no? Kufufufufu, allow me to grant you your wish."

Wow, he looked really serious. What a surprise. You know, Diablo wasn't the type to let

everyone know what he's thinking. I didn't expect him to get *that* pissed off and show *that* much emotion.

"Let's fight, Diablo! Oh, I'm looking forward to it. I've been wanting to fight you ever since I've sensed you fighting the White Primordial in the east."

What a relief it was that I was using the Skill 'Mist.' Since I split up my body beforehand, I could come back even if one of me died. Otherwise, I would never want to fight an opponent that I might not be able to beat.

By the way, I was indeed really interested in the battle between Diablo and Blanc the White Primordial, because I had also fought her. The reason was, you know, jealousy. For some reason, Diablo had respect for the White Primordial. I wanted to see what that power was like.

As I recall, I was able to bring the fight with Blanc to a draw thanks to 'Mist.' To put it the other way around, that was a loss—no, it was still a tie. A **tie**. Only to Guy-sama can I admit defeat, because I'm a capable girl.

As I was thinking all this, the battle began to heat up. Maybe I was too serious as I hunted down Diablo with everything I had. In terms of magicules, we're evenly matched in quantity, I may even have more than him—not. I'm not stupid enough to be so careless. Diablo said that he didn't need to be serious against me. It's frustrating, but I think he meant what he said.

"Are you a sore loser? I know you just incarnated and can't give it your all, but that's no excuse, okay?"

I tried to tell him that, but deep down, I really know. I know that this pervert is not that stupid. He's one of the top two guys I thought were trouble. He would never make the kind of mistakes that some small fry would make. However, what happened next was beyond what I expected.

Before I knew it, a stacked magic circle painted with glowing spells had appeared around me. Wait, what? Isn't that spell holy magic, which demons are not good at? Luminas-sama's signature 'Disintegration' spell was aimed at me from all directions. It was at that moment I knew, I ~~fucked up~~ might have lost.

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Now you must be worried. Of course I'm fine. Didn't I just say that I have the 'Mist' Skill to be safe? Girls will hate you for that kind of nitpicking. Don't think, but feel. Just sympathize with them and they'll be happy. Same goes for me!

That Diablo guy is beyond rude. He took it upon himself to bring up another person in the middle of a battle. Testarossa? Who is that? You gotta bring her here. I was so indignant, but I was surprised to find out later that he was talking about the White Primordial. I mean, what? Let's calm down for a minute. Wait a minute, why *does* Blanc have a name?

I was still trying to set up Diablo, though I knew he would see through my act. I thought that would happen, because he's been a very tricky character since he was the Black Primordial. It

pisses me off, though. Even the multi-stage ‘Disintegration’ wasn’t a secret to him. If it weren’t for this guy, I would have laughed at him for being a sore loser.

For now, the Testarossa case is more important. This is a very serious situation indeed. Not just for me, but also for Guy-sama who was hiding with me at that time. For a while now, Diablo has been proudly talking about Demon Lord Rimuru. It was annoying with all the *Rimuru-sama* this and *Rimuru-sama* that and so on and so forth. It’s too much of a distraction to talk about important topics. What annoys me is that he’s doing it for real.

Guy-sama seems to be annoyed, but I have to put up with it because he is my partner. I managed to get out the shocking story of how Demon Lord Rimuru has taken on other Primordials as his subordinates. I don’t want to believe it. As soon as you are made to believe that, you have strategically lost the battle. Unfortunately, it seems to be true.

This is the worst.

The White Primordial Blanc is Testarossa. The Purple Primordial Violet is Ultima. The Yellow Primordial Jaune is Carrera.

Until now, we’ve had all of the powers hanging in balance for the longest time, but now it’s collapsing in an instant. This kind of change is something I would like to see happen over the next few decades or centuries, but the reality is cruel. I sometimes think that living freely without constraints is the right way for a demon...but shouldn’t we be competing with each other? No matter how you look at it, isn’t it wrong to be united by a single force? Then one side is too strong, and there would be no competition.

He had done it, hadn’t he...Demon Lord Rimuru? I think he’s dangerous from the bottom of my heart. Until now, the Ancestor asshole and the annoying Noir—I mean, Diablo—have been the top two on my list of problems. But today, right now, Demon Lord Rimuru has taken the top spot by a landslide.

He is the one I should be worried about at all costs. Hostility should be avoided, even if it means rubbing salt in the wound. Unlike Guy-sama, I’m a good girl. I would never want to offend him, and I will go with the flow and call him “Rimuru-sama” like I really mean it. I decided in my mind that it was the way to go.



We pulled back, leaving things to chance. This was very unusual, because Guy-sama’s real purpose was to deal with the very serious force he sensed being activated on the spot.

“Yes. No matter what happens here, Rimuru-sama will take care of it.”

Diablo was boasting, but I can’t believe that Guy-sama accepted it. However, as his maid, it is out of the question for me to question Guy-sama’s decision. In the end, I left the situation

to Rimuru-sama, and I was relieved that it turned out to be the right decision.

Guy-sama was worried about Luminas-sama. Her control of Western Nations has made Guy-sama's job much easier. Of course, he should be worried about it. The same goes for me. There's no way I'm going to take over. Anyway, I'm glad to hear that everything worked out fine. It's a shame that Mizeri failed her mission, but what can you do when you're dealing with Testarossa the White Primordial.

“Was she strong?”

“I didn't fight her, but she looked nasty. Having a name and a body made her a demon peer. She's a lot stronger than a third-rate demon lord.”

Yeah, I guess. Even when I fought her, she was already giving me a hard time. Now that she's evolved, she might be too much to handle. In the first place, she didn't care much about winning or losing. She's willing to accept tactical defeats as long as she can get the result she wants. That's why that woman is unfazed by defeat.

She was number three on my top secret troublemaker list—now number four. Oh, actually, she's still number three because the Ancestor was vaporized. Wow, looking at it this way, the top members of the trouble squad are all in Rimuru-sama forces. Carrera is also dangerous, and Ultima is a landmine if handled incorrectly. I have a lot of respect for him, controlling those guys.

“Let's try not to pick a fight with Rimuru-sama.”

“I'd like to say something all of a sudden, but I understand what you mean and I agree with you. Rather, that's the line I also wanted to say to you.”

“How rude. I'm not going to cross that troublesome guy, either.”

“Really? You're the one who wanted to challenge Guy-sama to a fight. That's unbelievable.”

That was, well, a youthful indiscretion. I'm growing up and I won't make the same mistake. And so, that's how we came to look at Rimuru-sama.



This is bad, This is bad! Rimuru-sama, he's really bad! It's the first time I met him, but he's seriously dangerous! What? I already met him at Walpurgis? Shut up. I'm telling you that Rimuru-sama is so bad that it doesn't matter! All I can say is, “Oh, no!” but so would everyone in my shoes. Why? Listen to me, Rimuru-sama evolved us as well!

Unbelievable, isn't it? But it's true. Even though I'm a demon, I'm a good girl who tells the truth. But with this, I can be of service to Guy-sama now. In terms of strength, I had barely been acknowledged by Guy-sama. In fact, if I had to take on the Octagram guys, there wasn't a

single one among them that I could beat.

But now that I think about it, the current demon lords are impeccable. I think I could beat Ramiris-sama, but I'm a bit iffy on that. If she gained her true form, I'd be looking at a loss. I want to hurt that jerk Dino, but if I do, I'll end up being the one who cries. That's why I'll forgive him, and want him to be thankful for my generosity. Oops, but I digress.

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It all started when Diablo called Guy-sama. That's why we came to visit Rimuru-sama's country, but Guy-sama was not happy because he was pushed around by Diablo. I thought, "wow, I'm going to be dragged into this, and I want to stay at home..." but no dice. However, it was the right decision to be there.

Rimuru-sama hadn't met Velzard-sama before and they were exchanging greetings. Afterwards, he greeted me very politely, *soooo charming*. I thought about pretending to be a misunderstood girl and going for him. Of course, I'm not so dense as to not be able to read the room. I'm pretty sure it would have been over for me if I did that, and I was right in the end.

And then, the friendly tea party began. I had been observing him behind Guy-sama. Surprisingly, Rimuru-sama somehow seems to be similar to Guy-sama. I saw that they reacted the same way and had a hard time with Diablo. I saw him and Guy-sama having the same reactions. Needless to say, it made me like him a lot more. But there were other things that bothered me, too.

First, Rimuru-sama's servant. That one seems to be called Benimaru, but why does he look stronger than some demon lords? The other one is Shion-san. She's become much stronger since the last time we met! I can somehow feel a hint of evil in her. Does she have an advantage over a demon?

What is this? Can I even win if I fight seriously? However, for me to admit my defeat would be to lose the meaning of my existence. No, that's not going to happen. I had no choice but to keep a cool face. But you know, that's easier said than done, because those two are not the only ones with those hints of strength.

Wait a sec, these aren't coming from Testarossa and the others. Then there must be at least three or four other people here besides them. Why are there so many demon lord class subordinates under a single demon lord's command? I thought that it was only possible for Guy-sama to do that, but it seems I need to change my mind.

As I was making up my mind, the aroma of tea wafted through the air.

Is it break time? As the maids, it's bad manners for us to have tea together with everybody else. It's unfortunate, I guess we'll have to pass on this. We were whisked away to another room, which, to my surprise, had a cake prepared for us. Now that's what I'm talking about, Rimuru-sama! Just look at this attention to detail! I have to admit that he's more than qualified to be a king!

And then, we got our opportunity to taste it. Is this a strawberry shortcake? I may not look the part, but I am a professional chef. I even captured a head cook from a top-class hotel to learn his skills, so I'm proud to say that my cooking skills are second to none. In other words, I will not be satisfied with half-baked efforts.

“It’s so good!”

Are you kidding me?! This is so good! It looks simple on the outside, but it’s a complex harmony of flavors. There are several layers with different kinds of cream in between. Hold on, aren’t these the kind of things that take a lot of time and effort to make? The fact that the flavors are so evenly distributed shows that all the ingredients have been carefully planned out.

“So wonderful...”

Mizeri was also impressed. Our specialty has always been fresh fruitcakes and sugary pancakes that rely on high quality ingredients. I didn’t expect to see so much technology being used in a single cake.

“Is this technology from the otherworld?” I asked absent-mindedly.

“That’s right,” Shion-san answered. “This is a strawberry shortcake made with three kinds of cream, developed by Mr. Yoshida and Shuna-sama during the competition. It also contains a small amount of black rice powder, which is very popular among monsters.”

Yoshida-san is an otherworlder, isn’t he? I knew who Shuna-sama was. She is the person who showed us around and even served us. With her smooth, refined movements and an unassuming, yet imposing demeanor, even a “perfect maid” like me couldn’t resist rating her highly for her excellent customer service. On top of that, her cooking skills were also quite impressive.

While enjoying the cake, I talked to that damned Diablo.

“By the way, aren’t you stronger from the last time I fought you?”

I had been wondering. I had always wondered if he had gotten stronger since the last time I fought him. I couldn’t ask him in front of Guy-sama, but now I could ask him in person. I can’t miss this opportunity. Because ever since we evolved into demon peers, we haven’t been able to gain any more strength.

We are getting stronger because we are gaining experience, right? Well, yes, but that’s not what I’m talking about. I’m talking about the existence itself that could not evolve. And yet, this Diablo guy did so easily...

“Kufufu, you’re as clueless as ever, aren’t you?” he chuckled.

What is this annoying feeling? I wonder why... Can I just give him a good smack? Yeah, sure—and my inner conscience is all for it. I think I should just go for it. Just as I was about to act on that idea, Diablo interrupted me again.

“Kufufufu. It is all thanks to my lord, Rimuru-sama. He has rewarded me for my services!” Damn this bastard! What a showoff! I get it, I gotta respond in kind, then.

“Oh, I see. So then you’re not much better off either. I agree with you that Rimuru-sama is great and all that, no doubt about it, but that’s beside the point. *You* are relying on Rimuru-sama, aren’t you?”

Well, that was my comeback for him. What do you think? It’s only because of Rimuru-sama

that he had evolved, so his own skills are not that big of a deal! However...

“Yes. That’s right, want to make something of it?”

This Diablo bastard just nonchalantly admitted it. What’s more, he’s happily looking at me with eyes like, “You know that too!” Argh, this is *sooo* annoying. I don’t even know who’s the idiot at this point.

“Raine, don’t do it. I don’t think even Guy-sama would be able to win an argument with him. You’re not going to make him cry, either,” Mizeri chided me.

Unfortunately, she really did have a point. I stared at Diablo in frustration. Then something unexpected happened. Shion-san smacked Diablo on the head, making a nice thwacking sound. That made me *so* happy, you don’t even know. Moreover, she even preached to him.

“You’re being cheeky, Tea-boy! You are not to be rude to our guests.”

When I heard that, I couldn’t help but pump my fist. Glancing to the side, I saw Mizeri smiling happily. Of course she did. This is just too funny not to laugh! Then, leaving us alone, Diablo and Shion-san started fighting, which continued until Shuna-sama came onto the scene.

Shuna-sama. I have no qualms in adding the “-sama” for her anymore. While Shion-san quarreling with Diablo is already amazing, Shuna-sama, who can yell at both Shion-san and Diablo at the same time, was the most wonderful, in my point of view. There’s a lot to learn from her. By the way, the “fight” between Diablo and Shion-san really was just a verbal fight, which surprised both Mizeri and me.

Shuna-sama then came to call us, so we obeyed quietly. She told us that she would teach us the recipe for the cake. We were very grateful. I must tell her how I feel when I am shown into the parlor where Rimuru-sama is.

“As expected of Demon Lord Rimuru-sama, the cake was wonderful.”

I also expressed my gratitude while being flustered by Mizeri stealing my thunder.

“I am deeply moved that you have been so generous in teaching me your recipe.”

Then Rimuru-sama laughed and said it was no big deal.

“Thank you. I would be glad if we could continue working together in the future.”

Did he just call that cooperation when we only received it unilaterally? That’s very generous of him. However, it seemed like my recognition was still insufficient.

“You guys, Rimuru will grant you strength. You should be more grateful,” Guy-sama suddenly told me...that Mizeri and I were given the honor of evolving into Devil Lords.

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See? That’s dangerous, right? Really, just what is Rimuru-sama? Looking back on it now, all I can think of is that he’s dangerous. We will make effective use of the power he’s given us, and if he’s ever in trouble, we’ll be happy to help him. The amount of magicules is increasing day by day, and we can be of more help to Guy-sama than ever before. We owe it all to Rimuru-sama, and it is only natural that we should return the favor. However, there is Testarossa in his

country, so I doubt there will be a day that requires my help...

That's enough self-deprecation now. It's time for today's mock battle with Mizeri. We have to train every day to get used to our own strength. Well then, to the training grounds—oh? I'm afraid I'm not in the mood for such joking around at this hour.

“Raine! Someone just broke into the ‘Barrier.’”

“I know, I know. But this is—”

This is no longer a time for mock battles, let alone for idle chatter. That's it for me. I look forward to seeing you all again.

That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime

Chapter 5

Special Collections: Vesta's Consultation

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Special Collections: Vesta's Consultation

My name is Vesta. It was my dream to serve the great Hero King Gazel, to do research that would benefit the people. Although my dream was broken, but I followed in my father's footsteps and became Minister of the Armed Nation of Dwargon. Well, 'was' is more accurate. I lost that position due to my own stupid jealousy...

At that time, in my own engineering unit, there was a development of a new weapon in collaboration with the elven technicians. This top-secret project was called the 'Armored Soldier Project,' and a man named Kaijin was chosen to lead its development.

He came from a commoner's family of blacksmiths, but his knowledge was extensive. He was a hard worker and trusted by his subordinates. He was a bit too hot-headed but there was no doubt he was an excellent boss. But I didn't like Kaijin for the life of me.

It wasn't because he was a commoner. Kaijin's skills were already worthy of being called a master craftsman. That's why I was so jealous of him. Kaijin had made a name for himself in his family's business and was successful in his research. I, on the other hand, was a man whose only vocation was research.

My family came from the Marquis family, and I was destined to become a minister. I could have served in the military and studied while my father was alive, but that was only allowed to be my hobby. I resented that.

I had no political talent. I didn't have the coldness of my father or the charisma of King Gazel. But the servants of the marquis family are still very good and were ready for the world of politics without me having to do anything. Besides, there were multiple ministerial positions.

King Gazel and his elders set the tone for the state, so it didn't matter if I was there or not. I'll never be able to help King Gazel no matter how hard I try. I was convinced at the time that I would never be recognized. That's why I rebelled against Kaijin. Then I could serve the king as a blacksmith. I have only research, but it was unfair. Besides, I didn't have time to do my research leisurely.

My father fell ill. He was getting worse, and the day was fast approaching when I would become master of the Marquis house. If I didn't produce results soon, I would go unnoticed

by King Gazel for the rest of my life. That was the one thing I couldn't stand. So I ignored Kaijin's insistence that I should proceed steadily with my research, and pushed the experiment forward. As a result, the keystone of the project, the spirit demon nucleus, went haywire, and the experiment ended in failure. And the project itself was also thrown out of existence.

I was stunned, but my family worked behind the scenes to make things happen. Before I knew it, Kaijin took the blame for everything and left the army. And next thing I knew, I was working as a minister. There was no way to apologize. I had led a life of boredom, living only to harass Kaijin.



"I'm sorry about that time."

Suddenly, I remembered and apologized to Kaijin. Then Kaijin looked at me with a puzzled expression on his face, wondering what I was talking about.

"What are you talking about? Didn't Rimuru give you a budget for increased model production?"

"No, the matter has already been approved. His Majesty managed to coerce Myourmiles-dono into giving him plenty of money for the project."

"Then, what's your apology for?"

"Oh, it's for a long time ago. Kicking you out of the troops and harassing you. Half the time it wasn't just me, but my subordinates who did my bidding. After all this time, I just remembered that I hadn't apologized yet."

"It's really too late now. I mean, that's, like, you already apologized to me."

Kaijin smiles at that. Certainly, I said I was sorry when I came to this country. That was undoubtedly my intention, but I still wanted to make another formal apology.

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Every day in this country was a series of amazing things. I know it's just an excuse, but I'm going to say it. I dare say we were too busy to do anything about it! King Gazel is no different, but Rimuru's freewheeling behavior is even more so. He relies on someone like me for important tasks.

The first challenge was to educate the monsters. When he asked me to teach them to read and write and use the abacus, I wondered with disrespect if this guy was serious. By the way, the abacus is a very useful calculator that was also used by Dwargon. His Majesty Rimuru made a prototype and it was adopted without any problem because the usage was almost the same. It's not just the basics that I teach. As a practical matter, I have also been entrusted with etiquette

training for the monsters. Manners for monsters. What is this guy talking about? It's no wonder I thought that, right? I asked His Majesty Rimuru what his purpose was, to which he replied with a smile,

“Well, I want to interact with humans in the future.”

I thought it sounded crazy, but I didn't have the right to refuse. So I nodded right then and there to say yes. But the job turned out to be more interesting than I thought. The goblinas, led by Shuna-sama, were eager to learn the etiquette. The men were also not to be outdone, and were learning to be polite and courteous in order to lessen their vicious appearances. The monsters were more inquisitive and motivated than expected, and I enjoyed teaching them. I enjoy teaching them even now. Even though we had agreed to continue until the research facility was set up, I still hold regular seminars.

In the meantime, a research facility was built in the place called the Sealed Cave. I had only the bare minimum of equipment, but I was still excited to know that I could work on my research again. It was there that I met Gabil-dono the dragonewt, and became a good friend of like-minded people. His unconventional ideas were a great stimulus to my forgotten spirit of inquiry. I was not sure what to expect when I was brought here, but now I have nothing but gratitude for King Gazel. I can now say that I am happy. However...

...That doesn't mean there are no problems. I came to Kaijin today to talk about it.

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Now that I've conveyed my apology I had been thinking about, I could get down to business.

“Well, thank you for saying that.”

“That's good. Now I think it's more important to get to the main point, don't you?”

“Oh, was I that obvious to you?”

“Attaboy. You've always had a tendency to put off the awkward stuff and start talking about the most random of topics.”

Come to think of it, that's true. When I think about it, I've known Kaijin for a long time now and we know each other well. I don't think there's any reason to be shy about anything now, so I decided to get to the point.

“To tell you the truth, I had some business to discuss with you.”

“A consultation? If the budget passed, isn't it an important case?”

The budget is certainly important, but that's not this case.

“This is important. Much more important than the budget.”

“...Huh?”

I never thought I'd have to worry about something more important than the budget, but...okay. I'm sure Kaijin will have an answer for this challenge.

“To tell you the truth, I was in His Majesty Rimuru's lab—”

“Wait, wait a minute! That's the stuff the boss was working on in his secret labs, isn't it? Isn't that something you shouldn't talk about lightly?”

It's not good. I fully understand that without being told. But I can't just keep my mouth shut! After all, hundreds of demons have been incarnated there! Some of them were archdemons. They were of the ruling class. Such a fearsome existence was incarnating right before my eyes. And I hope you can imagine how I felt when I saw that they had been given names. I understand that there is a duty of confidentiality, but I think that this has to be communicated to King Gazel as well...

To tell the truth, it's not like I'm being kept silent by His Majesty Rimuru. As long as we have a technical agreement, I have no problem sharing my work with Dwargon. But what...?

"Then I'll ask you abstractly, sparing specific statements. Do you think we should tell King Gazel that we have created a force capable of take the world?"

Kaijin had a good point, so I wrapped my question in an oath. But Kaijin's response was even more intense than I had expected.

"Wait, wait, wait, wait! Vesta, what are you talking about all of a sudden?!"

"Mm? Was it hard to understand? Was it too wrapped up in an affectionate manner?"

"Asshole! It's not. Besides, you didn't wrap up any of your remarks!"

That's impossible. I was still hiding important details.

"Hahaha. That's okay, if you ask for specifics, even Kaijin-dono's will get a headache. So, please just tell me your honest opinion."

"That's okay, right?"

Kaijin has been rude, saying that I have a habit of escaping reality when I have a problem. But I've got bigger things to worry about now, so I can't listen to such complaints.

"So, what do you think I should do?"

Should I keep it to myself or should I tell King Gazel as well? Meeting my question squarely, Kaijin scratches his head and gives his answer.

"Vesta, you're tired. Why don't you go home and have a drink and relax?"

Kaijin said and smiled. Oh, this guy. He ran away...

"That's not an answer to my question!"

"You idiot! Don't involve me in such a serious matter!"

That's a fair point, but I can't just retreat here.

"Don't say that, I thought you'd help me!"

"No, no, no, I'm out of the country, you know? I'm not in a position of responsibility like Vesta-san, the marquis of Dwargon."

"What rubbish. To me, Kaijin-dono is still a respected boss! More than a title, a position. I've been saying that for a long time and obeyed your subordinates!"

"Ah, you bastard! Is that why you apologized just now? You've got a lot of nerve..."

This is how the battle between Kaijin and I continued for a while. I want to get involved and Kaijin wants to get away. However, the victory or defeat is already visible. Kaijin has a strong sense of responsibility...he would never run away irresponsibly after hearing all this.

"Okay. Tell me the details."

"I was hoping you'd say that."

Just as I had expected, Kaijin finally agreed to consult with me. I was satisfied with that and smiled.



We moved to a high-class tavern in the labyrinth. Speaking for a dwarf, I'm a drinker. Even though I look more like an elf than a dwarf, I still love to drink. And we have a great selection of booze in this country. Moreover, the employees are under a strict obligation of confidentiality and will not give out any secret information if they overhear you talking about something secret. This is a place where such security is guaranteed. It was the perfect place to talk about secrets.

“So, what do you want to do about it?”

Kaijin asks, so I'm going to speak my mind.

“If I keep silent, we'll have problems if something goes wrong. As long as I'm not being kept quiet, I think I have an obligation to report it.”

Hearing my response, Kaijin nodded with a huff.

“Well, yeah. As we agreed from the beginning, that wouldn't be considered an announcement. Besides, you're still officially the marquis of Dwargon, right?”

I was. I'd almost forgotten the fact that my title has not been erased from my country, nor has it been returned by me. In fact, I was stunned at my family home when before I knew it, King Gazel had kidnapped me and delivered me to His Majesty Rimuru. At that time, I had no time to worry about my position in my homeland. Dwargon's nobles owned no lands of their own. All the land belonged to the Dwarf King and was administered by the nobility in the form of leases. In fact, compared to other nations, the concept of territory is different.

There are only three major cities in Dwargon: the center, east and west. The rest is made up of manor houses at the foot of the mountains and tunnel dwellings in natural caves. The manor houses were divided into sections and administered by the nobility. It's what Rimuru calls housekeeping. A nobleman was expected to take care of the inhabitants of his territory and collect taxes from them. Depending on the rank, the number of family registers was different. I'm a marquis, so I actually have a good income. I disappointed King Gazel after all my blunders, so I thought the title would be taken away.

But even to this day, I have been treated as a marquis. In other words, there's a normal amount of tax revenue each year. The good family orders that have supported me since the last generation have taken care of all the troublesome things. The salaries are paid normally, and since I was not expelled from my home country, I am able to return to my home and live normally. But I don't want to do that, and I have no plans to do so. After all, this life is more interesting.

And there are servants who came after me, living in greater luxury than when I was at

Dwargon. The food is delicious and the drinks are excellent. I can research as much as I want, and this life is like a paradise. Myourmiles-dono's purse is a bit tight-lipped, but I digress.

"Yes, you're right. Well, I suppose, from the standpoint of a Marquis, I can't just betray King Gazel."

"I don't think keeping quiet is a betrayal, but I'm pretty sure it's your duty to report it."

That's right...

I understand that even if he doesn't tell me. But the question is how to report it.

"So then, how to say it straight? We're growing a force that can take down the world."

"Hey, hey, I've had too much to drink, but are you sure it's really that big of a deal?"

Mmm, this sake tastes great. There's no stopping it, it's mellow on the palate. It's crisp and fragrant, with a rich flavor that seems to lift me out of my funk. But it does.

"You know Miss Ultima and Carrera-chan?"

"Oh, oh? I don't mean to be blunt, but are you drunk? Don't change the subject so fast."

"No, I haven't changed the subject, and I can't say this stuff unless I get drunk."

"Oh, come on, then maybe..."

"That's right. In fact, those girls are part of that force, too."

"I see. Now that you mention it, it's no wonder the police are so strong in cracking down on the adventurers. I didn't see the faces of the security force, so I figured they must have been a secret unit that was trained somewhere..."

It seems that Kaijin has realized the gravity of the situation. Here in Tempest, no one goes wild against the police. Also, no one has appealed the ruling in court. That's because they were cracking down on criminals with an unparalleled force. By all accounts, their fighting ability was so great that it was clear to everyone. By an adventurer's standards, even a lowly police officer could be considered over rank A.

"What? Ehhh? A police force that has the strength to fight the world?"

"Mm. It's the perfect camouflage, don't you think?"

"No, even if you ask me that, what?"

A confused look appears on Kaijin's face. I can understand why he's puzzled. A demon that could destroy the world is now a police officer (hero) protecting its citizens.

"And if I report it to King Gazel... How do you think he'd react?"

"Oh, yeah. Well...that's...that's a tough one to report."

"Right? I'm absolutely not going to be believed. On the contrary, he'll say I'm mad and disgraceful. King Gazel would believe me, but I'm sure the stone-heads in charge would doubt my words."

"Sure,"

Kaijin muttered and gulped down the cup of sake.

"You got me into this," he said, his eyes complaining to me.

That's why I grinned and asked,

"What do you think I should do?"

"Well... I guess... I don't think it's a good idea to report it honestly. This one bothers me

too...”

Then there was silence for a while. The cup is empty and new wine is poured into it. Kaijin and I wracked our brains, wondering what the right thing to do was. It was Dino-sama, who came to get me, who saved us.

“Hey, hey, Vesta-san! We’re the only ones cheating. Call me over. And buy me a drink. And then I’ll give you a drink, all right?”

Dino-sama said with a very nice smile. Seeing that smile, I asked him.

“So, what do you think I should do, Dino-sama?”

I was drunk. And I had forgotten. This man is one of the demon lords.

“Let’s just throw it. Let’s throw the blame on somebody else!”

Dino-sama gave me a thumbs-up and assured me that if that was going to make me upset, it was just bad luck.

“No, no, that’s not...”

Kaijin was about to say something to him, as if he were in trouble.

“It’s fine, it’s fine! To be honest, I’ve been asked to report everything, but I just skipped it all. And then he got really pissed off, so I thought I’d do it right the next time. But who I report to is up to me, right? I just make sure to report it to the right person, and that is the right call. He’s the one who gets pissed off, and I can be proud of the work I’m doing. It’ll give me a clean slate to go about my day, I recommend it!”

After saying that, Dino-sama ordered a drink of his own accord and began to drink it. Apparently, that’s the end of the consultation. And it goes without saying that I would be the one to pay for that expensive drink. Huh, I feel like an idiot for worrying about it.

“All right, I’m going to adopt that strategy!”

“Hey, Vesta?!”

“Oh, that’s what Vesta-san is all about. You’re my boss after all!”

It’s strange to hear that from Dino-sama, a Demon Lord, and it makes me feel a little proud.

“You’re definitely drunk. He’s the wrong person to be taking such advice from. Think again!”

Kaijin’s ranting and raving sounds comforting.

“Let’s drink! Today it’s my treat. We’ll drink as much as we want!”

“Oh, that’s the spirit!”

“Oh, come on, you don’t want to be doing this, do you? You know how much they pay for this place, even the executives.”

“All right, let’s not nitpick the details, okay? Let’s shut up, old man, and be goofy here.”

“You just want to drink!”

“Yeah, but, I mean, what’s the problem?”

“Yeah, no problem! Kaijin-dono, let’s celebrate. Let’s just have a party, shall we?”

I said with a big heart. And so, the binge-drinking began. Please let’s hope that tomorrow’s troubles will not increase. With that hope, I had Kaijin and Dino-sama toast a glass full of sake.



“Vesta-dono, you are tired.”

That’s what the guy in charge said to me when I reported to him. I guess he didn’t believe me after all. As expected, I have no regrets now. Because I’d exhausted all my regret when I saw the payment bill delivered to me after I sobered up.

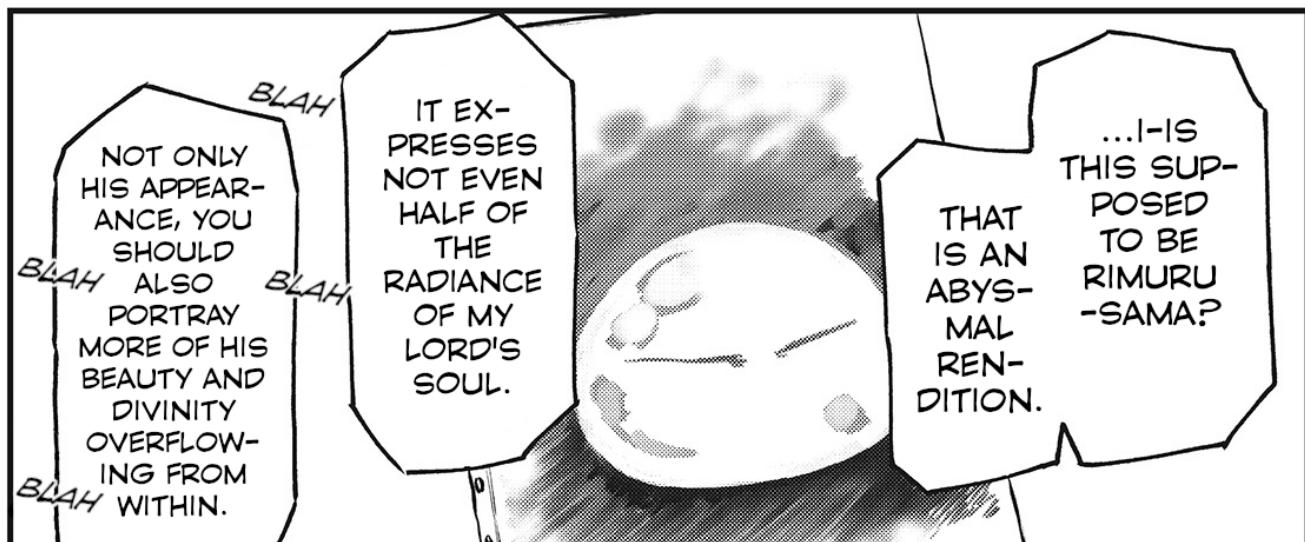
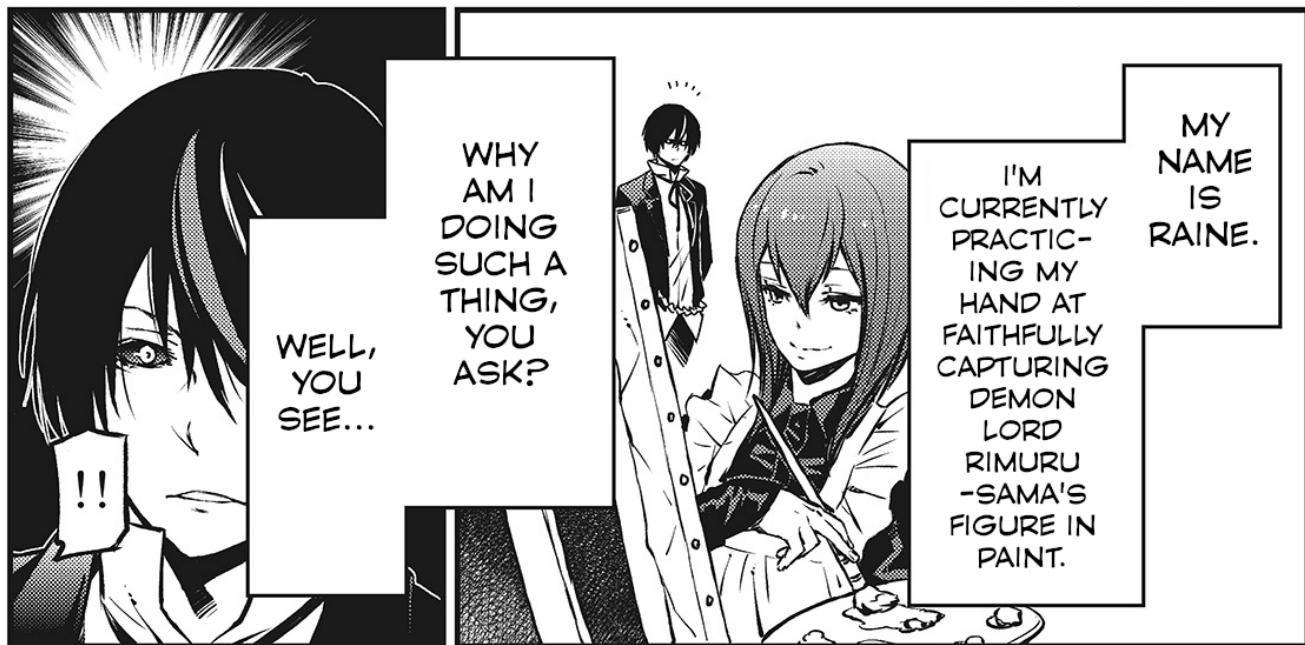
“That’s probably true,ahaha. But I’ve certainly told you.”

With that, I ended the scheduled call. And then...

It turned out that my report was true, but there were no accusations against me. Apparently, there were, but Magic Communication’s records showed that a nameless person was fully responsible for the incident. Dino-sama was right—I was glad that I consulted him.

The Era of Blue

Art by Taiki Kawakami



17

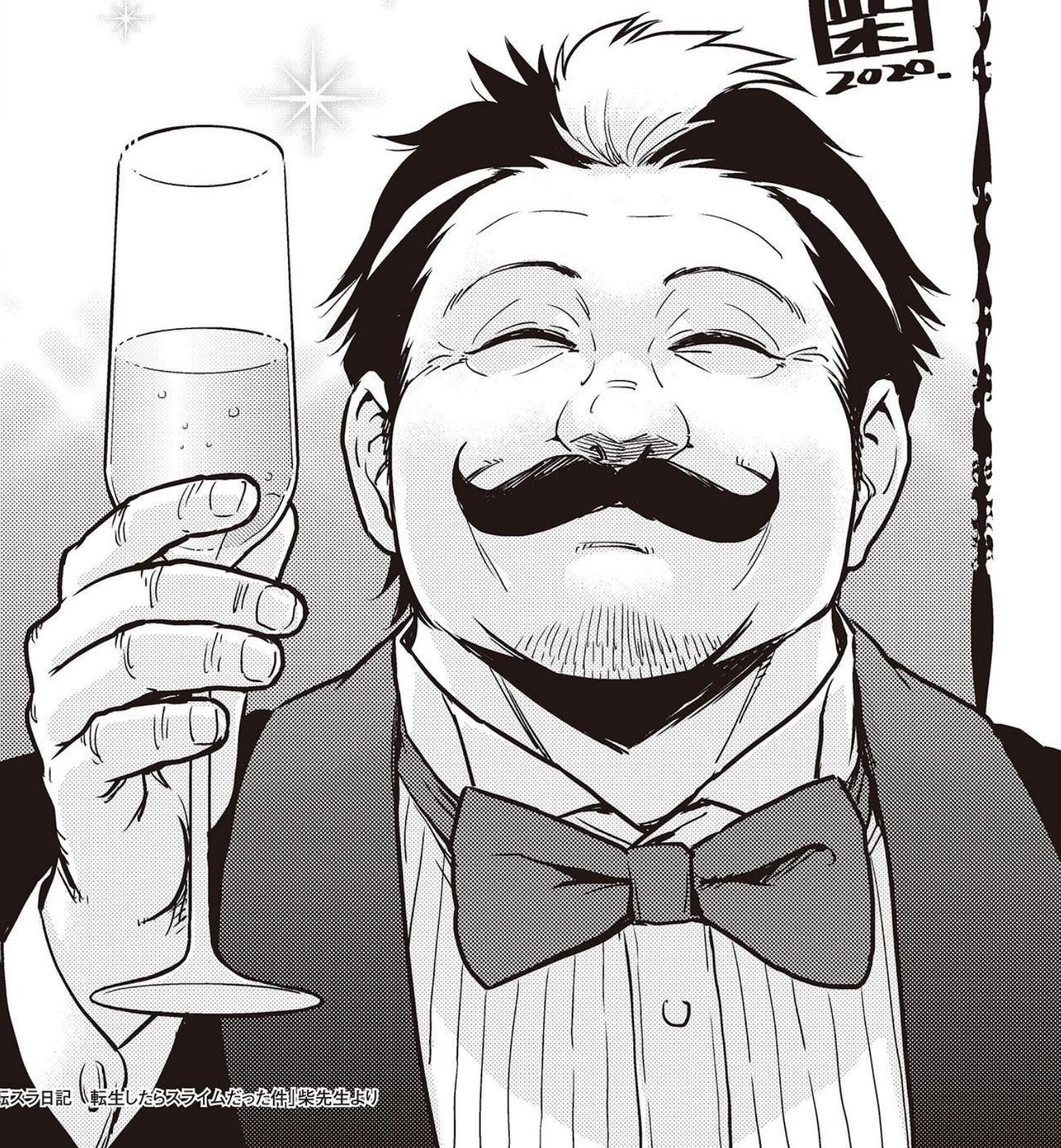
二の二人の物語
大好きですー!!

祝
17巻

伏瀬先生
おめでとうございます！

SHIBA

山田
2020.



伏瀬先生

四巻 ああでどう ござります!

この盛り上がりも
たまりません
最終章も
短編も
楽しめます！
この服
やっぱいいよ？！
あっほー
先生！





**Regarding
Reincarnated to Slime 17**
Story by Fuse, Illustration by Mitz Vah

