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転生したら スライム

That Time I Got
Reincarnated as a SLIME

8







That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime

Volume 8

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We welcome all constructive feedback and suggestions for our work.

Translator's Note

Volume 8 is finally done, kept you waiting huh?

There're not many major note-worthy things in this volume, most of such will be annotated in the book. These include lines and phrases I'm not entirely sure of or explanation of phrase/term origin etc.

I've tried to proofread the volume as much as possible with the JP source this time, though it would be good to have a JP proofreader separately. Again, special thanks to Mimisan for his contribution in Volume 7 and 8 with the Japanese proofread.

There's one particular issue however I wish to address at the front, that is the issue with websites sharing our work. Since our work is totally free and available to anyone online, obviously there will be websites sharing our work, if you are not using them for any commercial means, we appreciate the sharing. However, I've come to notice some websites have published our work with edits of their own, whether it is a watermark of their own, changing the paragraph format or in some worse cases removing annotations.

There's really not much we can do to address this, but to whom it may concern, please do not downgrade the readers' experience by removing texts that are meant for clarification. If you somehow are able to convert the epub file back to word doc to edit our translation, do the readers a favour and either compile the footnotes into a different section or just leave them as they are... If you really would like to edit our work in some particular fashion, we strongly encourage you to reach out to us through either email or discord. And once again, I'll reiterate, any of our work should not be used in commercial means or ways that encourage commercial gain for an individual or group. Just putting this in the front for the you-know-who people to see...

By the way, this note will not appear in our Slime ReaderTM. What? You've never heard of [Slime ReaderTM](#)? Pfft, you know it's fun right? You can read all of our work online or on your phone with footnotes embedded. You can even select the translated phrase of your preference including names and terminologies

to read the entire volume with, read it and you can tell me if “Lord of Wisdom Raphael” sounds better than “Wisdom King Raphael” or not (it doesn’t). Not convinced yet? I’ll cut you a deal then, it’s available online for free, and that’s a great price. Visit our [blog](#) to get a [bonus tutorial](#) and extra uwu from its creator muggy.

Shameless plug over, hope you enjoy the volume.

Territorial Control

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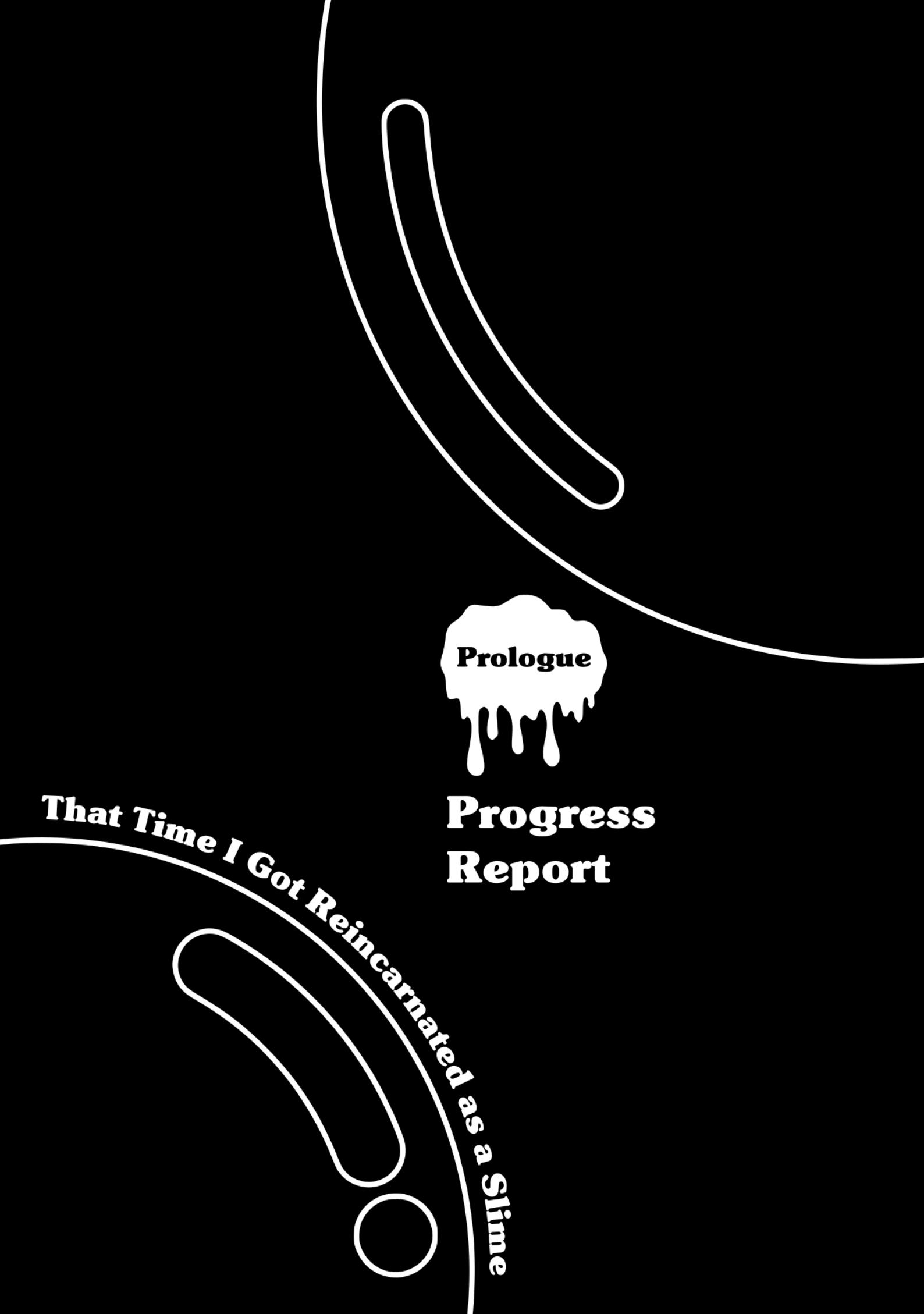
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Prologue

Progress Report

“Talk about being mischievous, Granbell-sama. You almost got me killed out there.”

“Surely you jest. Didn’t you already flee before getting affected at all?”

“Can that really be helped? Have you not received the report from my subordinate?”

“I guess I did—”

“That demon was a monster beyond my imagination. It won’t matter even if the Empire sends out their regular army. And judging from my knowledge, there wouldn’t be a chance to win without using the Emperor’s Royal Guard. By the way—”

Damrada and Granbell exchanged these lines. Sitting on chairs opposite each other, the two casually tried to pry into each other’s minds.

Damrada, noticing that the battle plan had failed, decided to distance himself from the Rosso family until the tide settled. Negotiation could have been more favorable for him had the plan been a success. Yet now that it had failed, the Rosso may deliberately use this as an excuse to place obstacles before him. That’s why Damrada wanted to bail out and start over.

However, the situation had changed. When Damrada was on his way to Tempest Federation, someone reported to him through ‘Magic Communication.’

“Hinata was defeated. And she seemed to have made peace with the demon lord.”

Among the many outcomes he had predicted, this was the worst possible scenario. Hinata was still alive and the Western Nations were still under the influence of the Western Holy Church. It would be far more difficult to do business there now. Moreover, since Hinata had made peace with Demon Lord Rimuru, it would be challenging to instigate Rimuru into trying to kill her again. Damrada only initiated the plan because his interests aligned with Granbell’s, yet at that moment he could conclude that the plan had completely failed.

But considering this from another perspective, it may be beneficial.

Although the plan had failed, it didn’t cause any grave loss to Damrada. While he may have lost a venue for business in the Western Nations, there were still other channels for making profits. Cerberus was a huge underground organization and had several trade unions as its cover.

Besides, Damrada had no interest in whether Hinata lived or not. That's why he wasn't that angry at Granbell's miscalculation. His goal here, in fact, was to exploit the outcome to secure a favorable position for himself in future negotiations.

Coming to that conclusion, Damrada changed his plan on the spot and decided to drop by to greet Granbell.

“—Granbell-sama’s plan did sound a lot better in theory. While failing to take care of Hinata is one thing, allowing her to build a friendly relationship with Demon Lord Rimuru is another issue altogether...” Damrada reasoned, avoiding taking responsibility and shifting the blame upon Granbell’s group.

However, Granbell had seen this coming.

“Right, I can’t deny that,” Granbell unapologetically agreed with Damrada’s accusation, and continued to point out his perceptions of the situation. “This upset in the balance of power can’t be reversed at this point in time. The great historic kingdom of Farmus will eventually fall, and a new kingdom will be built on its ruins. It will be all according to Demon Lord Rimuru’s wishes, also meaning that your plan is a goner.”

Damrada’s silence was his response, agreeing with Granbell’s views.

“What do you plan to do next then?”

“In regard to what exactly?”

“Demon Lord Rimuru’s goal seems to be to turn the Jura Great Forest into an economic hub. It is something that us Rosso will not permit.”

“Mmm-hmm...”

Damrada began to consider Granbell’s words as he finished. He wasn’t planning on being hostile with the Rosso either. It was in their mutual interest to let go of any resentment between them.

Granbell was of the same mind. Moreover, he seemed to be looking farther into the future than Damrada.

“Do we stand to gain anything with this in-fighting? Right now, we simply don’t have the strength to make a blatant move against Demon Lord Rimuru or Hinata the Saint. Don’t you agree?” Granbell continued, seemingly seeing through Damrada’s thoughts.

“Hehehe. I’ve been totally bested, Granbell-sama. Yes indeed, there’s no value in arguing as to who is to blame. We will continue our friendly relationship with the gentlemen of the Five Elders as always. Here’s where I stand—though it may be true that we didn’t profit from the war, that’s a whole different story. As long as we live, we are left with opportunities.”

“As expected of Damrada-dono; it’s great that you are so reasonable. Then let’s unite to prevent the emergence of a new trade bloc on that land.”

There was no need for further explanation of Granbell’s intent. He was trying to safeguard the power he wielded in the Western Nations. Granbell’s trump card, Mariabell, had foreseen the birth of a new trade bloc centered around the Jura Great Forest. If left undealt, the influence of the Rosso would no doubt be diminished.

How could Granbell allow such a flaw after spending more than a thousand years building

up this system of domination? For this reason, Granbell planned to crush this flaw by interfering with Demon Lord Rimuru. Right now, he was no longer part of the Seven Luminary Clerics and could no longer act under the name of the God Luminas. That's why, no matter what, he would require the aid of the organization Damrada's party belonged to—Cerberus.

Granbell's kin—the five other elders from his family—also supported this proposal. They each secretly influenced the Western State Council to prolong the aftermath of the civil unrest in Farmus. Even though they couldn't stop the enthronement of the new Farmus king, they at least tried to stall for as much time as possible.

There were some other "Aces" that the Rosso have hidden, but it was still too early to show their hand yet. With that being the case, it was only wise to properly make use of Cerberus.

This was the ideal plan on Granbell's mind.

However—

"Well, hold on just one sec."

Damrada didn't intend to follow through with Granbell's proposal. The Rosso and the Five Elders leading them—these people were amazing business partners—he'd be lying if he claimed to not want to maintain a tie with them. But they were gravely mistaken if they thought that Damrada would listen to everything they said.

Damrada was a businessman after all. He got paid to do things, and his thoughts were ever-changing. There were trade blocs in both the East and the West. Cerberus was able to accumulate great wealth by getting hold of these trade routes, so it was more beneficial for Cerberus to have as many different trading partners as they could. Thus, it wouldn't matter to Damrada even if the influence of the Five Elders dropped in the Western Nations.

"—I speak from my heart when I say that I hope we remain on good terms in the future," Damrada said, looking Granbell in the eye. "But I can't help but disagree with what Granbell-sama just said. After all, we have no reason to antagonize Demon Lord Rimuru."

"Damn brat..."

"Hehehe, this is but my respectful response to your proposal. Hinata had already found me to be suspicious, so it won't be that simple to continue our activities in the Western Nations. I will have to return to my homeland and send a replacement for myself."

Had you eliminated Hinata as promised, I wouldn't be tied up like this—while insulting Granbell with this implication, Damrada also refused to comply with his demand.

"..."

"We'll continue the part of our business in trade as usual. But let us just pretend like all of this never happened."

Leaving these words, Damrada rose up from his seat. Granbell, having missed the mark with his proposal, couldn't simply argue back at Damrada anymore. The organization known as Cerberus was way too powerful in the underworld of the Eastern Empire. Angering any one of its leaders, such as Damrada, would lead to a splinter in their relationship. It would be too huge a loss for the Rosso at that point in time.

“...It can’t be helped. Then leave this matter to us. Just don’t hold us back.”

“That’s for certain. Do put your trust in us considering our relation so far,” Damrada answered with a smile and departed after giving a polite bow.

His sincere attitude made him appear as an honest merchant, but had Hinata been eliminated, he would’ve been long gone to go and garner Demon Lord Rimuru’s support. Then he would’ve simply weighed the benefits between the Rosso and Demon Lord Rimuru and waited to profit. The fact that he was able to achieve this under everyone’s nose shows that Damrada of “Gold” was not just for show.

Yet Granbell was also a cunning man who had accumulated his fair share of experience. He already understood half of Damrada’s intent. Their party was probably not going to hold the Rosso back, just as Granbell proposed, but he couldn’t know for sure whether Damrada would do business with Demon Lord Rimuru or not.

But Damrada was rather upstanding as a merchant, for he did not lie.

Though in the eyes of Granbell, the ruler and head of the Rosso, Damrada’s attitude was unacceptable.

“...How unpleasant. You dared to exploit our failure. We will take care of you all by the time this whole ordeal concludes,” Granbell’s mutters echoed in the room after Damrada left. His eyes, dyed with the color of humiliation; A surge of furious flame emerged and gradually consumed his eyes...



“...And just like that, I made the deal with the Five Elders,” Damrada reported to the young man casually sitting on the chair.

“Is that so? It’s great that our tie with the Rosso is finally settled as you expected. Now we can ensure a channel of communication with them in the future.”

Although Damrada maintained an arrogant composure when negotiating with the Rosso, he appeared rather humble in front of the young man. But that was only natural, for this young man was Damrada’s boss, and commander in chief of the secret organization Cerberus. The young man nodded leisurely after hearing Damrada’s reports.

“I see. Having said that, those bastards are the type to force the quest to take on that type of monster on me without even providing any information...”

“Ahaha, I guess our luck is down. But it is probably the most fortunate in this whole unlucky ordeal that you were able to retreat in time.”

“Hehehe, indeed. How lucky. Was he called Diablo or something? He could rival that Primordial White (Blanc) that rampages in the Empire—such a terrifying demon. It shows that Demon Lord Rimuru is not the only threat.”

“I suppose you can put it that way... The speed at which Demon Lord Rimuru seems to accumulate strength is much faster than our own reorganization...”

“Indeed. That demon lord has incredibly good luck. Not only did he gather a group of powerful majins under his reign, he even tamed that ‘Storm Dragon’—”

“Honestly, it would be the worst option to confront that kind of power head-on.”

“No chance of winning—although I wouldn’t go so far as to call him unbeatable. Cerberus would definitely collapse if we came into conflict.”

“Regardless, there is no use in rushing. Since there’s still time, we should take our time to think about it.”

“That should be pretty appropriate. This chaotic situation may last for quite a while, and we may suffer some losses from striking under such circumstances.”

“You have a point. I tried to intimidate them by using Hinata... But that strategy has failed as well. It is best that we stay quiet for a while before we dig ourselves into a deeper hole,” the young man commented jokingly and agreed to Damrada’s opinion, sharing his own thoughts. Suddenly, Damrada seemed to have recalled something and began to complain.

“By the way, the Five Elders sure brag a lot. They promised to eliminate Hinata the Saint and look how *that* ended up. Both Demon Lord Rimuru and Hinata survived safe and sound with their misunderstanding resolved to top it off! There probably won’t be any more misunderstandings between the Western Holy Church and Tempest Federation...” Damrada said in quite the frustrated tone. To that, the young man replied with a wry smile.

“That’s within my expectations as well. I suspected that Demon Lord Rimuru would be too naive and wouldn’t want to kill Hinata. If things had gone smoothly, that naivety would have destroyed him. I was even looking forward to it...but it appears that he’s not as naive as I thought.”

“The Five Elders seemed to plan to suppress the ‘Storm Dragon,’ and it appears that they intended to collaborate with Demon Lord Rimuru.”

“We wouldn’t be in such a bind had things gone that smoothly. I ordered careful surveillance expecting this failure.”

“I see, so that’s the case. But speaking of which, I was saved thanks to it. If you didn’t contact me then, I would have run into Hinata the Saint before she went to find Demon Lord Rimuru.”

They could have kept their identity a secret if lucky, but it was simply wishful thinking, considering that Hinata was their opponent. That’s why Damrada was very grateful towards the young man who sensed the danger and informed him beforehand. With that being said, there would be no danger of being exposed had the young man not tasked Damrada with lying to her in the first place.

But such matters were trivial to Damrada. As the commander in chief of Cerberus, the young man’s orders took priority over anything else. After all, the young man who formed the secret organization Cerberus aimed to dominate. He wished to conquer the entire world. Damrada resonated with his ambition and greatly admired him. Even though he would laugh

such a notion off under normal circumstances, Damrada had a hunch that the young man can make this a reality. That's why he didn't doubt the young man's order.

The young man responded to Damrada frankly: "My plans would have been wasted had I lost you as well."

"Well, I'll at least try to figure out a way to escape if I really run into a life or death situation like that," Damrada replied with a proud smile after seeing the young man's concern for him.

"One can't just become a leader of 'Cerberus' with money alone. They must also have tenacious strength, enough to at least back themselves up in order to convince the many powerful men in the underworld."

The young man also seemed to know that, so he replied with a mocking grin, "Ahaha, but seriously, don't go all out yet. It should be the last resort anyway. Right now, let's just enjoy observing this wrestling game from afar without brute force."

Going all out—in other words, if Cerberus were to give everything they had, it would require the presence of the other two leaders. When that happens, it would no longer just be gentle manipulations in the background, instead it would likely lead to the outbreak of a great war involving all of the Western Nations.

As the commander in chief, the young man didn't want things to develop like that. Damrada was quite aware of it as well, so he answered without hesitation.

"Then it is perhaps best for me to return to my motherland first."

"Right, that would be even better. Even though you weren't spotted by anyone, it's Hinata we're talking about here. She probably already has her eyes on you. It will be more difficult for you to act in public, so it would be best for you to find yourself a replacement. With that being said—"

Damrada already knew what the young man was going to say. The issue was concerning one of the other two leaders of Cerberus who shared a status similar to Damrada.

"Don't get Vega here."

That's why he could understand why the young man would make such an order.

"Understood. Then I shall ask Misha to replace me."

"Good, go do just that."

The bosses were nicknamed the Gold, the Lover, and the Power, the three symbols of a man's greed. Misha, the Lover, was someone you never wanted to let your guard down around, but she at least listened to reason. Vega, the Power, was a handful. He was a living, breathing personification of violence, as his name suggested. Damrada could do nothing to sway his mind; he only listened to direct orders from the boy, who knew that well enough and didn't want Damrada to deal with him.

"Then I shall proceed as you wish. By the way, what resolution do you see fit for the slave trade business I've been promoting here (the West)?"

"...I almost forgot about it. It'd be too troublesome to deal with, so just let the 'Slave Trade Union Orthrus' under your management bankrupt on its own. I hate slavery anyway."

"Hmm, I don't object, but some rare monsters were supposed to be transferred to Misha's

‘House of Whores (Echidna)¹, should we release them as well? Moreover—”

“No, it’s business as usual for confidential merchandise. It’s only natural for us not to waste such things after all the effort we spent maintaining a window of communication with the Rosso.”

“Understood. Then, please leave the rest to me.”

With that being said, Damrada left the location.

The young man closed his eyes and delightfully played a game of chess in his mind. It was then that sharp footsteps reached his ears. A smile emerged on his face as he turned his back to speak to a secretary looking woman.

“Did you catch all that, Kazalim?”

“Loud and clear, boss. But why did you want to dismantle the ‘Slave Trade Union’?”

The person who had arrived was Kazalim. She (He) was the trusted companion and consultant to the young man.

“Very simple. I wish to sell ‘Him’ a favor this time.”

“Is that the only reason?”

“Isn’t it obvious? The whole of the Jura Great Forest is now under that Slime’s rule. He will definitely ruin our business if we continue to hunt monsters there. If that’s the case, wouldn’t it be more beneficial for us to close shop early?”

“I see. That does seem to be the case. It’s the same as lizards cutting off their own tails; we only have to focus on protecting the important merchandise.”

“Isn’t that right? Can I entrust this task to you?”

“Selling ‘Him’ a favor... Oh, you are talking about that guy. Boss’ idea is interesting as always. I see how this is. Please leave it to me then.”

“Hmm, I’ll be counting on you, Kazalim.”

“No problem. And by the way, I hope you can call me ‘Kagali’ from now on.”

The young man’s eyes turned wide at Kazalim after hearing his words.

“Oh...have you finally made up your mind?”

“Yep. I only made my resolve after Clayman died. Before I can take my revenge against Leon, the ‘Name’ *Demon Lord Kazalim* needs to be sealed up.”

“I see. Then, Kagali, this is quite the sudden request. But anyhow, I’ll be entrusting you with the matter.”

“I’ve got it covered, boss.”

The two looked at each other, both cracking a smile.

And soon, a new wave of unrest was about to unfold—

¹If you haven’t noticed, the subdivisions of Cerberus, like the title of the organization itself, are all creatures from Greek mythology

**Chapter
1**

**Reconciliation
and Pacts**

That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime

Chapter 1

Reconciliation and Pacts

I was exhausted after the whole incident. Everything was finally settled. It was more tiring than fighting against Hinata—but let's keep that a secret.

As for what happened during that time—

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The Western Holy Church believed in the God Luminas, whose real identity was Demon Lord Valentine. Her real name seemed to be Luminas Valentine, and according to her, she had previously granted her subordinate the title for him to proclaim himself as Demon Lord Valentine. However, Veldora revealed Luminas's identity during the Walpurgis Banquet and ended her disguise forever...

The Holy Knight Order under Hinata's command was able to win the peoples' support by standing against Demon Lord Valentine. Yet this was all pre-orchestrated, which Hinata seemed to know all along as well. It doesn't seem wrong logically speaking, but is this really okay?

"It really can't be helped. I tried to stop it but was defeated by Luminas-sama. However, Luminas-sama seems to have no interest in gaining popular support at all—" Hinata explained rather helplessly, seemingly noticing my concern. She didn't seem to approve such practices either, yet she had no choice but to follow along after her defeat against Luminas.

With that being said, Luminas had agreed to not harm any civilians. Hinata seemed to have made up her mind that as long as Luminas stuck to that promise, she would obey her every whim.

Regardless, Hinata did not arrange this.

"Indeed. I was the one who drafted the plan. My brother Roy also backed me up. In fact, this whole thing has little to do with Luminas-sama. Hinata objected to it from the start and even tried to defeat us, so if you have a problem with this, talk to me instead of her," said the man who arrived with Luminas, following Hinata's words. I recalled that he had been referring to himself as Pope Louis.

“Should I call you Pope Louis...-dono? -san? Which one?”

Louis replied to me with a dry smile and said: “Or you can just call me by my name, Demon Lord Rimuru.”

He asked me to call him with whatever preference. He didn’t seem to mind at all despite being in front of all the Holy Knights, saying that it was only natural for him to act humble before me, for he saw me as an equal to his master, Demon Lord Luminas. Louis then explained the whole thing from start to finish at a volume loud enough for the Holy Knights eavesdropping on the side to hear as well.

“So, was the Demon Lord Valentine I ran into during the Walpurgis Banquet your younger brother?”

“He was. My twin brother to be more precise. But unfortunately, he was murdered after that Banquet.”

There wasn’t much regret in Louis’s voice.

“Huh, did you just say that he was murdered?”

Although Louis didn’t seem to mind, I was a bit surprised. After all, the power that Demon Lord Valentine possessed was no way equal to any average body double.

“Oh, about that. Roy was probably overconfident to the point that he lowered his guard. There are many hostile factions to the Western Holy Church, and there are even countries that consider the Holy Empire of Lubelius to be an eyesore. I figure that assassins sent by these hostile forces probably got the best of him...”

With that being said, his death was still quite pathetic—Louis added.

He said it without a hint of remorse, but it didn’t necessarily mean Louis was completely apathetic. This Louis guy’s power, which seemed to even surpass Roy’s, was not to be underestimated either. Even still, he probably couldn’t view the murder of his brother, who possessed the power to rival demon lords, in an optimistic light.

“Lately we were using Roy to train our new recruits in actual fieldwork. He was once careless enough that even Sare defeated him, meaning Roy was indeed slacking,” Hinata concluded. “Nonetheless, we still have to keep an eye out for the person that murdered Roy. But that is of course none of your concern.”

Indeed, this Roy didn’t really concern me. But with this, the connection between Pope Louis, Demon Lord Valentine, and the God Luminas has been clarified for me. Not only me, but the Holy Knights listening to their explanations seemed to have figured it out as well. Everyone was stunned speechless, likely all hearing this for the first time.

Seeing that I have understood the situation, Hinata turned to face her comrades.

“All right, did you catch all that? I really had no intention to deceive you all, but I sort of did as a result—”

“H-Hinata-sama...”

She raised a hand to stop the Holy Knight and continued speaking.

“I couldn’t tell you guys before since the less people who knew about this plan the better. I

will have to dispose of any witnesses if the news of this leaks out,” Hinata cruelly declared.

I see. How reckless.

“Hehehe. I, Arnaud, will not be so easily fooled. You must have been threatened by the God Luminas—no, by Demon Lord Luminas! Am I wrong?” the Holy Knight called Arnaud interjected, yet Hinata immediately shot him down.

“Not at all. Didn’t I just mention? Luminas-sama protects the people; That is definitely true. It’s why I made up my mind that as long as Luminas-sama remains peaceful with humans, I would obey her orders. In other words, Arnaud, I won’t allow you to speak ill about Luminas-sama.”

Hinata served Arnaud the ultimatum with a glare. No wonder she got misunderstood all the time. It seems that Shizu-san’s concern was not unfounded.

“Ahh, don’t get so worked up now. I mean, Hinata, can’t you be a bit gentler with your tone? This level of explanation is not sufficient at all, is it?”

“Shouldn’t this be none of your business?”

Hinata shot me a glare. *I told you to stop doing that!*

“How is it not my business? We would be very troubled if you all split up due to in-fighting here.”

“Keep your hands to yourself. Basically—”

Hinata couldn’t finish her objections before—

“Don’t worry, we will always have faith in Hinata-sama!”

“Indeed, Arnaud has a point. Demon lord Rimuru, we don’t follow the God Luminas. The Order follows Hinata-sama and Hinata-sama alone, so you don’t have to worry about us splitting up due to in-fights.”

Arnaud and Renard spoke from the same mind as both dismissed my concerns. Even though they might have had some reservations², everyone still believed in Hinata. It was a shared sentiment among the knights. It was wonderful that they still had trust in each other.

“That’s fine then.”

Seeing that I was on the same page, Arnaud added: “Moreover, after seeing such a sight...”

Although he was vague, I was able to guess as to what Arnaud was referring to. That sight he mentioned must be referring to the fact that Luminas and Veldora were engaging in a fierce battle just above our heads.

Honestly, you two are giving me a headache, so please stop immediately.

I had established a defensive network with ‘Absolute Defense’ from ‘Covenant King Uriel’ in order to prevent people on the ground from being affected. But the area was simply too wide; there was still a chance for casualties.

It wasn’t hard to imagine the reason behind Arnaud’s quivering voice after witnessing Luminas’s intense and cruel attacks.

²The source here uses the metaphor of “having some *wasabi* in heart” (Wasabi is the spicy thing you eat with sushi, implying some resentment)

As in: "It's no wonder that Hinata-sama was defeated against an opponent as strong as that."

"She's indeed worthy of the title of God. If she were to become an enemy of humanity, we probably wouldn't be able to do anything..."

Compared to the conversations we had, this sight alone seemed to be far more convincing to the members of the Holy Knight Order. It was then that Louis addressed them, "Rest assured. Luminas-sama has a generous heart; her grace doesn't take joy in abusing people under her protection. As long as humans refrain from antagonizing her, a friendly relationship can surely be built. But she would indeed forbid anyone from revealing her true identity."

Don't spread news that says the God Luminas is a demon lord, Louis urged them firmly.

Indeed, it was all because of Veldora that Luminas's identity got exposed. I would naturally do them this favor as well. While I was willing to help, the Holy Knights...they seemed to also be willing to keep this information a secret. The reason was probably due to the fact that it was Hinata's wish as well. It seemed that their admiration of Hinata had far exceeded my expectations.

Now then, I guess there doesn't seem to be a need to worry. The way I saw it, Hinata was really cold and didn't like clarifying her words. Her personality made her very easily misunderstood—

"Hey you, are you thinking about something rude again?"

"EHH! N-no, I'm not thinking of anything—"

Could this girl actually have some sort of superpower? She read my mind like a book...

«Negative. No such effect is detected.»

I-is that so?

Then, her instinct is truly terrifying. I should really stop thinking about these things in front of Hinata—so I came to this realization.

Suddenly, a flying object hurtled towards the ground, striking a giant crater. That thing got up casually and ran towards me as soon as it saw me. That was of course Veldora. He snuck behind my back, staring up into the sky while using me as his shield. Above me, a silver-haired, young beauty slowly descended from the air while casting furious glares in my direction.

"R-Rimuru, go convince that stubborn guy for me fast! I've already generously apologized, yet she completely ignored me!"

Uhhhhh, okie. But seriously, please leave me out of this.

It was all Veldora's fault this time after all. But, come to think of it, when did Veldora ever do any good? I could only recall the many troubles he gave me after his recent revival. Just now I also witnessed how Veldora's apology method™ wound up triggering Luminas even harder.

Veldora casually said to Luminas, who was about to finish him off: "GHAAHAHAHA! I didn't mean it at the time. Everyone makes mistakes during his or her youth, so be the bigger

person and just forgive me already!”

Luminas was livid after hearing it.

“Hand over the lizard.”

The oppressive tone of her voice sent shivers down my spine. Her glare also terrified Veldora who was hiding behind my back. Honestly, I didn’t wish to become an enemy of Luminas over such a thing. Besides, I could relate to her feelings. That was not an apology at all. I think it’s about time for Veldora to get some punishment and reflect for a bit one way or another.

That’s why I—

“Here you go.”

I grabbed Veldora’s neck and without hesitation pushed him over to Luminas.

“NUUUU! I can’t believe you’ve betrayed me, Rimuru!”

“Nah, that’s no betrayal. Aren’t you the sole party responsible here?”

We’ve got to be reasonable on this type of matter. I should distinguish right from wrong right now in order to clear any grievances that I may have with Luminas.

I handed over Veldora based on these considerations. Luminas looked at me with surprise, but she quickly turned to Veldora with a cruel smile on her lips.

“Very good. You seem to be able to grasp the situation, Demon Lord Rimuru. That’s night and day when compared to this lizard.”

“You’re flattering me. But he has caused a lot of trouble for you this time, so you can punish him however you see fit before calming down. But I do hope you can forgive him afterwards.”

“Hmm, I’ll consider it.”

Luminas nodded, a small smile escaping from the corner of her mouth. And just like that, I made peace with Luminas.

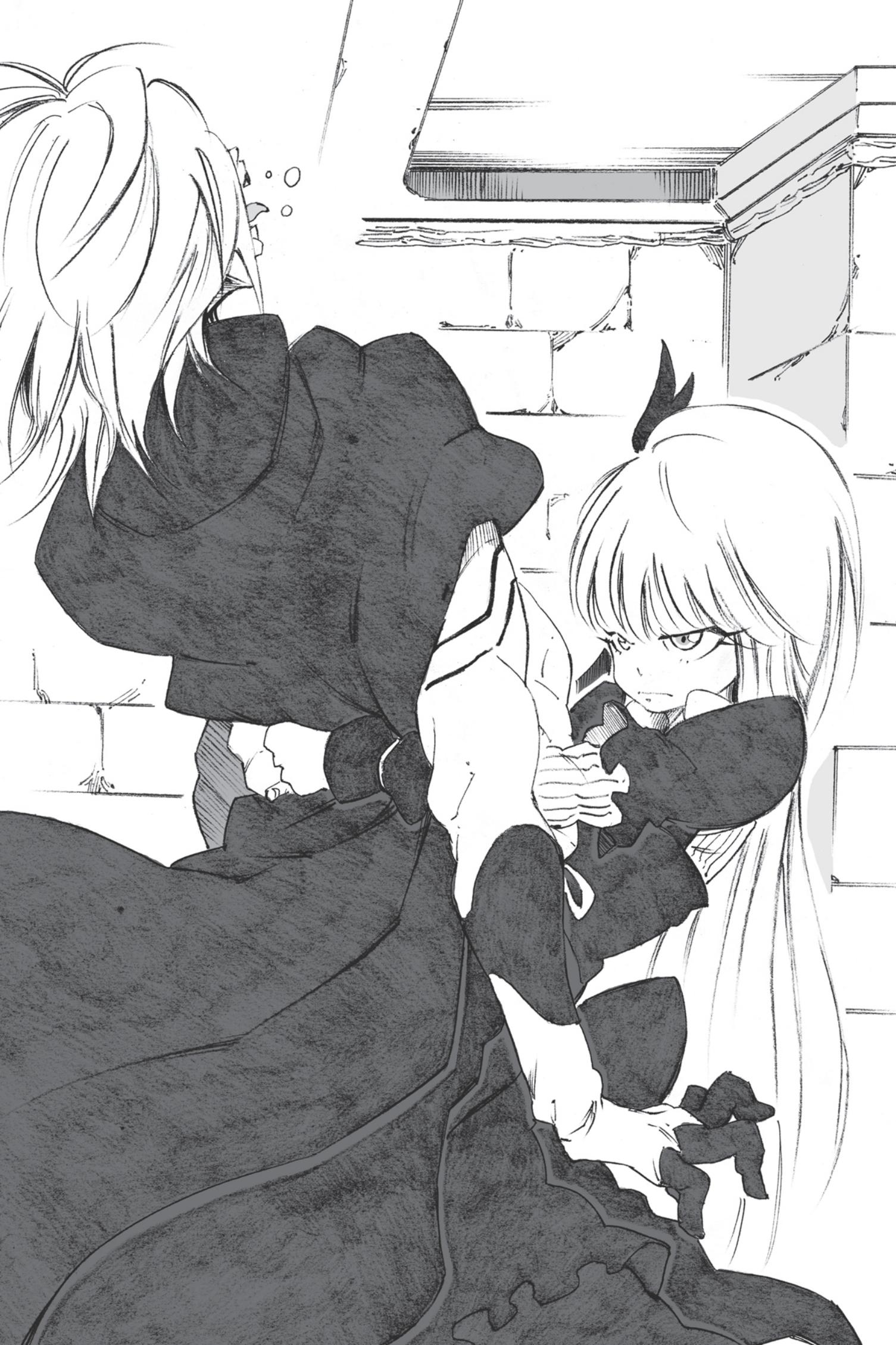
As Veldora shrieked: “Hold on! S-shouldn’t you consider my opinion as well?!” while being dragged off, both me and Luminas pretended to have not heard a thing.

“Then I shall release all my hatred for you once and for all! ‘Embrace Drain’!”

“GABABABABABA!”

It appeared as if Luminas was hugging Veldora, though not so much in a sweet couple way. Even though the two were different in build, it still could be considered as a type of bear hug. But that alone couldn’t possibly hurt Veldora... ~~perhaps only endangering his virginity~~ (Implying that Veldora isn’t the biggest chad)

«Answer. It is speculated that it will be draining spirit energy from the target—meaning draining magicules—while inserting sensations of ‘Excruciation’ and ‘Sickness’ into target’s body. If the transmission of such nervous signals is not intercepted, it will not be affected by ‘Pain Nullification’ and will directly attack the ‘soul.’»



Well, in other words it meant that even mister Veldora³ the Astral Lifeform would sustain this attack of ‘Forced Pain.’ In some sense, it was far crueler than just eliminating him directly. Veldora’s magicule storage was beyond measurement, so he probably wouldn’t die no matter how much spirit energy Luminas drained. But he would become exhausted afterwards. That, on top of ‘Excruciation’ and ‘Sickness,’ would make the perfect combo for torture.

Luminas’s attack continued for a while. Veldora cried and howled. He even stared at me with sad puppy eyes, but I ignored him with a stone-cold conscience. This would be best for Veldora as well—or rather, it was quite cheap to sacrifice Veldora to please Luminas.

This is the so-called political transaction. Forgive me, Veldora.

“—It’s fine. Since Luminas-sama also seems to be enjoying it, I feel happy that she gets to cleanse her resentment of late,” Louis commented flatly.

“Indeed. Right now, we are still not clear about who was responsible for killing Roy, nor do we hope that you will become our enemy… But there’s something that’s been bugging me, could ‘He’ actually be—”

Hinata agreed with Louis while turning to Veldora, asking a question out of confusion. Right, I now recall that he hasn’t been formally introduced.

“That’s Veldora. It’s hard to tell when he’s not in his dragon form, but he’s definitely the real deal. Since he appears to be quite busy (getting tortured) at the moment, I’ll properly introduce him to you all later.”

“H-hold on, Rimuru! Please i-introduce me now—”

“Oh? So there is still breath left in you.”

“WABOBOBOBO!”

Veldora’s desperate attempts to escape were only met with more intense assaults from Luminas.

Poor thing.

You could have been fine if you kept your mouth shut…

“—Is this the ‘Storm Dragon’ that Luminas-sama has been on guard against all this time? He does give off quite an imposing aura… ~~(among other things)~~” Hinata muttered in shock.

That couldn’t be helped I suppose. After all, mister Veldora was in quite the hilarious pickle now. With his majestic presence nowhere to be found, it was hard to imagine he was a Catastrophe-class monster. The rest of the Holy Knights shared the same sentiments, all with confused expressions hanging on their faces.

“I-I c-can’t believe this…”

“That is the real thing? The fearsome ‘Storm Dragon’—”

“You gotta be kidding me…? I kinda feel bad for him?”

There were many individuals who had already been fooled by Veldora’s appearance. Due to my ‘Clone’—the one that uses the young Shizu-san as a model—Veldora was arguably a handsome devil with his mouth shut. Some girls would probably fall for it when some handsome

³The actual title used for him is actually “Brother Veldora”

guy like him is begging with those distressed eyes.

But, don't get fooled now everyone. This guy was a spoiled, good for nothing dragon creature. If I didn't press stricter discipline on him now, it would cause trouble for us—or rather me.

«Report. Probability of outburst of Storm Dragon Veldora's youki (demonic aura) has fallen to a safe range.»

—Huh!

Could it be that the series of actions Luminas executed just now were all within Wisdom King Raphael's calculations? No, how could it... It shouldn't be possible. There is no way it can see that far into the future. I'm definitely overestimating it. I couldn't help but have high expectations, considering how accurate Raphael-san's predictions were during the fight with Hinata.

I shook my head in an attempt to dispel such thoughts and get back in the right frame of mind. I took a glance around and announced: "We should change the venue next. There have been a lot of misunderstandings, so let's settle down for now and discuss our future relations in detail."

And so, I decide to lead the Holy Knights into our town.

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.....

...

Rigurd was waiting at the city entrance. It seemed like he hurried his way here after I sent Souei to inform everyone. There was still plenty of time left, but that was just Rigurd's personality. The man loved to rush to his duty.⁴

"Thank you all for coming, and welcome to our city!"

Rigurd lead the Holy Knights into the city with a beaming smile. He may have learnt some new tricks from all the diplomacy lately, but that smile on his face would not lose to any professional attendant. He didn't display a single trace of hostility towards these individuals who we were just on guard against, how skillful!

"We will be preparing meals, so do tell if you have any dietary restrictions."

He had also carefully considered people that may have dietary constraints due to allergies or religion. His diligence in studying was truly admirable. He must have learnt about the human culture or mindset during his encounters with adventurers and merchants while I wasn't looking.

No one would probably believe that he was originally just some weak goblin.

"Ah, no. You don't have to be so courteous—"

Hinata looked troubled and planned to turn him down, but we still had to discuss our future plans. Before we knew it, however, night descended upon us, so we may have to move meetings to the next day. Since such an opportunity was rare, I might as well show these guests around

⁴More accurate kanji translates to "likes to do things by running"

town while they were here.

“Ah, don’t be so generous. Let’s leave the detailed discussion for tomorrow. Today we should hold a feast in celebration of our peaceful resolution and have some fun!”

“Oh oh, a feast! That’s a wonderful idea! There will of course be wine as well, right?”

Veldora, who Luminas had just finished beating up, happily seconded my proposal. It seemed like he was fine, despite me never worrying about him in the first place.

“Hmm. If you are hosting a feast, surely you would want to invite me as well, wouldn’t you?”

HMM-HUH!

Luminas snuck up on me out of nowhere. I did intend to do that, but didn’t you already say you would consider sparing Veldora?

“Of course we will! Should I call you Luminas...-dono?”

“That sounds quite awkward; just call me Luminas.”

She immediately approved just while I was worrying. Since we’re both members of the ‘Octagram,’ I should follow through and spare the courtesy.

“Then, Luminas, call me Rimuru as well. And about Veldora—”

“—Who I will not forgive by the way. But even if that’s the case, I’ve only come today to clean up the mess my subordinates left behind. Rimuru, I shall judge that lizard on another day for your sake.”

Ho ho, Luminas is calling me Rimuru. I thought she would be the arrogant type, but it turned out that she had quite the forthright personality. Now we could live in peace. Yet Veldora suddenly started to complain again, which in effect, caused Luminas to...

“What?! Haven’t you done enough?!”

“Stop nagging and shut up already! I’m the one who’s compromising here, okay? Or how about we fight it for real right here, right now to settle the score once and for all?!”

“GAHAHAHA! Interesting. I’ll show you my power after evolution then—”

The two started to fight (again). Should I call them incompatible?

You really couldn’t tell without seeing them get in a fight with each other. But if I continued to allow the two to act so recklessly, this entire town may end up destroyed.

“Idiot! You stop that right now! No fighting is allowed here.”

Having realized this, I invoked my authority to mediate the fight.

Luminas seemed quite satisfied also having *drained* a large amount of magicules.

She seemed to finally be done, so let’s refrain from further agitating her. If she were going to participate in our feast, I would have to treat her with the highest courtesy.

“Speaking of our feast, is it fine if we can’t serve meals as luxurious as those during the Walpurgis Banquet?”

Luminas nodded to affirm my question.

“I didn’t attend the feast last time because I had an ominous feeling, but that alone shouldn’t be a problem preventing me from going. Chefs who work for me also served those dishes in the past, but I’ve already gotten tired of it since there’s no need for me to eat anything. Is there any

rare alcohol here? That lizard over there seems to be looking forward to it, which seems to be rubbing off on me as well now.”

Luminas seemed to share a strong desire to attend the feast.

“Luminas-sama, won’t you be lowering your guard doing this?”

Seeing how Luminas behaved, the old butler serving by her side spoke up. His elderly character was only limited to his appearance. His back was ramrod straight, and one could tell he was no ordinary man from his aura alone. He was at least able to stand toe to toe with Louis.

Luminas turned to the man with displeasure.

“Huh, Gunther. You are always nagging like this, so stop being such a nagger. This is why I didn’t want to bring you along.”

“But that is my duty...”

“Forget about it; it won’t be a problem. Rimuru here seems to be quite the reasonable man as well. I’m not interested in finishing things off with Veldora at this point of time, so there’s nothing to be concerned about.”

“But—”

“How stubborn! Don’t you even think about ordering me, an ancient demon lord, around! So be a doll and just leave,” Luminas rebuked him, illustrating her aggressive nature. The elder butler named Gunther let out an exasperated sigh, but he probably couldn’t defy Luminas, so he decided to obey after a momentary period of hesitation.

“—Then, I shall depart first.”

Luminas lit up after hearing this.

“Hmm, thanks for the hard work, Gunther. I have Louis and Hinata here, so you are worrying too much.”

“It is only natural for me to worry about your highness.⁵”

Gunther turned to Louis.

“Then I shall leave the rest to your care, Louis.”

“Understood.”

Louis seemed rather troubled as well. Even though his face remained impassive, it was the vibe I got from him. Luminas probably toys around with them all day long... I couldn’t help but think that way after witnessing their interactions. Gunther vanished the moment he heard Louis’s response.

Now that he had left, Luminas’s mood seemed to be gradually lightening as well.

“All right, that annoying fella is gone. Now I can enjoy the feast all I want!”

And so, likely coerced by Luminas’s imposing aura, the Holy Knight Order was forced to join as well.

No one dared to object since none of them wished to displease Luminas. After all, her duel with Veldora just now was terrifying. Even though I was able to stop them before it escalated, things would have gotten hairy had I left it unattended. Those wearing tense expressions seemed

⁵The address used by Gunther here is actually “Princess,” which may either be some foreshadowing or just a term Fuse decided to use.

to be very aware of this, while some still seemed to be out of the loop with the whole ordeal. I'll just leave things as they are.

It was only natural for the Holy Knights to feel confused after going through all of this. Moreover, my duel with Hinata before was also at a superhuman level. In addition to the elimination of the ex-Heroes "Seven Luminous Clerics" and the fact that the God they believed in was in fact Demon Lord Luminas... Now we had that Demon Lord Luminas battling against the Storm Dragon Veldora. While they have pledged support for Hinata and appeared calm, these things probably still took time to digest.

Anyhow, I'll let them relax for the day.

Rigurd was straight to the point as he delivered the instructions with a resounding clap. With that, the citizens on hold quickly moved into action to assist the Holy Knights. Some were in charge of tending to the horses, some were safekeeping the weapons and gear, and others were distributing healing potions to the injured.

Now that I looked at these knights, their words about trusting Hinata were no lie. Seeing that Hinata had accepted the services, the Holy Knights handed over their weapons without a moment's hesitation. Some were even gasping at the effect of the medicine, most likely after trying them out.

And here I thought there might be more quarrels, but things were surprisingly peaceful.



"Then, since there's still time before the meal is ready, how about we have everyone clean off the dust from traveling by visiting the bathhouse first? And of course, the lounges are all ready for use as well if you so desire."

The Holy Knights responded with confused expressions. They shouldn't have been strangers to the term "bathing," considering there was such a tradition in the Kingdom of Ingracia as well. There were also bathhouses in the inns where Hinata's party lodged. But these people probably didn't expect that monsters would bathe as well.

Hmph, be shocked indeed! I was very proud of this, after all, since the bathhouse in our nation was more luxurious than the royal bathhouse found in the Kingdom of Ingracia. It was more like a hot spring resort since we had everything from a large bathing area to our famed outdoor bathing pool. We had all sorts of pools like those onsen towns (streets)⁶. On one hand, we get to promote ourselves, and on the other, they also got to wash away their fatigue. Moreover, their clothes were torn and stained after the intense battles, so we would be preparing replacements. It was a rare opportunity, so let's use it to advertise our nation. We had someone prepare the

⁶Hot spring street.

newly developed kimonos made from hemp. There were also yukatas for the ladies, so there were a lot of options.

“Please leave that to us. Shuna-sama is already working on it,” Haruna said, beaming. It seemed like there was nothing for me to worry about. If that was the case, we had to hurry on to the next phase.

“Then, I shall invite everyone to enjoy the proud hot springs of our nation. These are hot springs led directly from their source and can cleanse your fatigue. Moreover, it is superb for skin care.”

I didn’t forget to do a little touting. This seemed to have piqued Luminas’s curiosity as well.

“Oh, did you say hot springs? And skincare? How interesting. And as for my personal bathhouse, surely it will be the classiest room in this kingdom?”

Hmm? Personal bathhouse?

Ah, I suddenly understood what she meant. The Dwarven Kingdom, Dwargon, which possessed advanced technology, mainly used individual saunas. There weren’t any bathhouses for multiple people to bathe in. There were public bathhouses in Ingracia, but none in Blumund. Since the average denizens there would use ‘Utility Magic (Daily Magic)’ to purify themselves, there was little need for a water bath. There were also many people around major towns that could help with casting purification at a low price. In other words, water bathing was not common in this world, limited to only large nations with many otherworlders as residents. There, the upper echelons could enjoy luxurious, personal bathing pools.

I almost forgot the fact that here in our nation, every household had an individual bathing pool. Luminas probably thought of them as some sort of private royal bath, which we happened to lack. If I lead Luminas to bathe in a pool of a regular civilian household, there was no guessing how furious she would get. For this reason, I decided to clarify the misunderstanding.

“Ahh. We have bathhouses where everyone can bathe together, with the males and females separated of course. There is also a mixed bath if you so desire; I definitely won’t stop you...”

I was trying to get the idea across to Luminas first before someone else gave an unexpected response.

“—AHHH!”

“W-What did you say?!?” (said Arnaud, unsurprisingly)

“Oh uh...”

The male members of the Holy Knights such as Arnaud all turned to me with the same beam of light shining in their eyes. Hehehe, they seem to be quite the men of culture as well.

“Hmmpf. If you guys are interested, just go ahead—”

I was cut short midway when I noticed the icy cold glare Hinata was giving me. No can do, but I’ve seen that one coming...

“Luminas-sama, let’s go bathe in the female bath. I haven’t taken a hot spring bath in a long time, so I’m looking forward to it.”

“Oh? If Hinata says so, I have no objections either.”

I see, so it couldn't be helped after all. It was quite the rare occasion for Hinata and Luminas to bathe together—hmm, hold on. It's too early to give up just yet!

Arnaud and the rest looked quite frustrated, but successfully inviting Hinata and Luminas to a mixed bath was an impossible feat.

However, if it were just me alone...

Sorry—I cast a sympathetic gaze towards the rest of my dudes before leading Hinata and the others to the location.

“Then, I’ll guide you guys to the female bath.”

I casually started walking. But things didn’t go that smoothly. Hinata pulled the brake and said: “Wait. Why are you taking us there?”

“Why do you ask? Don’t you need someone to guide you?”

I can’t panic here.

I put on a face of calm composure and answer, feeling all righteous.

“Because none of you know the direction. Moreover, the baths are also separated based on their effects. We even have a sauna. So, considering all of that, it’s best if I’m the one doing the explanations for all the details.”

I even boasted about how I guided the two Beastketeers there when they expressed their interests in the bathhouse. Considering the good review I got last time, it would certainly go smoothly this time as well.

“Based on all these reasons, I wish to introduce them to you all properly so you will know their benefits.”

“Rimuru-sama, you should let me do it if that’s the case!” Shion spoke up. However, her interference would prove troublesome for me. *I will have to shut her down now somehow.*

“No way. Shion alone is not reliable enough.”

“How come?!”

“Ahh, you (guests) don’t have to be so courteous with me. I wish to join you all as well during this rare occasion,” I answered as if it were the most natural thing in the world. Now, it was totally not strange for me to use the female bath.

Hehehe, perfection, what a perfect plan. Now I can justifiably take the hot spring bath with Hinata and the others—

“Didn’t I tell you to hold on a second? Weren’t you a man in the past? Why do you look so justified trying to bathe with us?”

My heart suddenly pounded heavily—I’ve been exposed!

Reasonably speaking, I shouldn’t have any cold sweat on my back, but an icy sensation was crawling up my spine.

As Hinata pointed out the problem, Luminas also narrowed her eyes and responded with an “Oh?” sound.

“N-no, about that...”

Just as I was getting anxious, an unexpected voice suddenly came to my rescue.

“It won’t matter! Rimuru-sama is just Rimuru-sama.”⁷

The one who backed me up was the Shion who I previously deemed unreliable. Good job keep it up! I cheered for Shion on the inside, but unfortunately Shion was Shion after all.

“Can you guide us to the bath house too?”

“Of course!”

“Then, can I ask you to take us there?”

“But...”

“Don’t you think this is the chance to display how reliable you are by showing off your ability in front of your master?”

“I see!”

And just like that, Hinata was able to quickly persuade her.

“Rest assured, Shion-san. We will come along as well. You have the two of us at your side should you run into any trouble.”

“Right, we’ve bathed there several times before, so we know it like the back of our hand,” the two Beastketeers said to Shion, putting the final nail in the coffin.

“Rimuru-sama, please leave the matter to me!”

“Uh, m’kay... You go girl.”

Ah, what a rare opportunity. I was hoping to enjoy the view of Hinata’s beautiful, naked body... But since this is how it developed; I would have to give it up. And so I’d lost a once in a lifetime chance. As I admitted my defeat with tears in eyes, I left the matter to Shion. To comfort myself, I turned to Benimaru and the others.

“Tsk, it can’t be helped then. I’ll go to the male bath which I’ve not used for so long.”

This is one of my strengths: being able to quickly cheer myself up.

“Then, how about you help scrub my back? Bathing in this hot spring is even superior to the secret water springs hidden in the mountains⁸ when it comes to cleansing the sweat and weariness from your body.”

“I should be of service since you need a back rub—”

The hot spring we built together was quite popular amongst Benimaru and the rest, so it would be quite nice to bathe with everyone every now and then.

“GAHAHAHA! Then Rimuru, how about you rub my back for me?”

“Why do I have to do it?!?”

I didn’t feel the need to respond to Veldora’s feel-good words. I pretended to ignore him and moved out while leading everyone else.

The percentage of males in the Holy Knight Order was quite high, to the point of nearing almost a hundred men. But it would pose no issues for the grand bathhouse in our nation. Even though it would be crowded if they were to visit the same spot, we had several different smaller

⁷Special coupon giveaway for whoever gets the reference, you are a man of culture.

⁸I think it is referring to a lot of Japanese hot spring (onsen) in mountain regions where they use natural (hot) spring as direct source of water supply. Supposedly these places have medicinal benefits. E.g. Hoshi Onsen.

bathhouses specifically for that occasion. Everyone went to try them in separate groups. They all seemed elated at the prospect of visiting the bathhouse, so I must've astounded them with its wonders.

As I was thinking, I ran into Shuna midway through the journey.

“The clothes for changing are all prepared. By the way, Rimuru-sama, why are you walking with the male guests?”

Although the tone of her voice was incredibly gentle, there was no smile in her eyes.

“Oh, I wanted to bathe with everyone else.”

I was somewhat confused (by the way she talked) but gave my answer, nonetheless. Shuna cracked up a cute smile. Eh? Why does she look mad?

“What is going on here?”

Shuna glanced around as she spoke, her gaze lingering on Benimaru and Souei.

“Rimuru-sama still has things to attend to, so he can’t accompany everyone any longer. In addition, Nii-san and Souei, I have something to discuss with you two.”

“Ah, no—”

“...”

Benimaru and Souei were cowed into silence under Shuna’s pressure. Although they didn’t know the specific reason, they deemed it inadvisable to anger her right now. As for me, I was dragged to bathe in our own private bathhouse.

I don’t get it. Why is Shuna upset?

With that doubt in mind, I left the venue at Shuna’s urging.



After a quick bath I went to check on the feast preparations.

The venue was the banquet hall. Since we’d been hosting many feasts as of late, I thought it was a good idea to have a proper venue. It was a brand-new building. The building’s shape resembled a large, round dome, about the size of a gymnasium. Once you entered, the interior was wide and spacious with tatami⁹ floor mats bedded all over. It could also serve as an emergency shelter if such a situation arose, since there was enough room to squeeze in quite the number of people.

Being a building with a large open space, we built it with a sturdy steel frame, though over time it was to transform into magisteel. In that regard, our country had a great advantage since we housed many majins in possession of abundant magicule.

The meals happened to be served on the dining table¹⁰ just as I was in the middle of consid-

⁹A type of mat used as flooring material in traditional Japanese households

¹⁰The phrase refers to a special dining table that is served separately with the dish to the table where the person is

ering this. The tables were all topped with delicate bowls only found in classy restaurants.

I sculpted and fired clay bowls during my spare time, which led to the children learning about it too. Since then, we had acquired lots of new and fine-looking works of pottery. Some were even colored by either extracting juice from medicinal plants or by mixing strange minerals into the clay to make colorful and vibrant products. The bowls used by every household were all made by the children. You never know until you try.

Even the dining tables that were being presented to us were all top-notch pieces of furniture decorated with delicate patterns. Dold handled the part that required processing wood material. The children learned alongside him and we've helped schedule labor time for them to do this as part of their entertainment. Considering all of this, it seemed that my interest for hot springs and food containers was being reflected in the products we had here.

Looking back to the time when I was still eating grass, my life today is surprisingly comfortable. I even got to taste the delicacies of food these days. I saw it was indeed true that people would work hard in order to better their life.

Today's meal was tempura¹¹.

Amazing. I'm truly moved that we were able to make such food. Not only was its taste exceptional, but it was also visually appealing. It was a testament to the skills of today's Head chef, Shuna. And it goes without saying that Shion took no part in the cooking process. Anything Shion cooks will look absolutely awful to begin with. Even though she now had the Unique Skill 'Cook,' we couldn't let her risk it and be responsible for everyone's food.

These tempuras were some of the dishes Shuna developed after viewing my memories. Milim also couldn't stop praising the Karaage (Japanese style fried food), hamburgers, steak, and croquettes; there was also ebi fry (fried shrimp).

As someone who wasn't well versed with the intricacies of cooking, I couldn't elaborate on the difference between ebi fry and tempura. To put it in simpler terms, "Ebi fry dips the shrimps in the coating ingredients first before frying with oil." The coating would greatly alter the taste and texture. There were also varying ways to fry them, so it was a lot harder than expected to recreate the taste and texture of the food from my vague memory alone.

Shuna endured a lot and worked hard for it. It's all thanks to her efforts that the cuisine could be recreated to this extent. There were many exquisite dishes in Ingracia too, but they unfortunately didn't have Japanese delicacies. The meal Guy prepared was also along the lines of classy Western fare, so I guessed Japanese dishes were rare in this world.

There was one reason for that—

Among the Western Nations, few were coastal, making seafood a rare commodity. It would also be quite expensive to use magic to maintain the freshness of these products. Even if there were otherworlder chefs from Japan, it'd still be difficult to make food if you didn't have the ingredients.

sitting. (since in traditional Japanese household they sit on the ground where there is no big dining table)

¹¹Japanese dish of fried vegetable/seafood

Speaking of which, Yoshida-san also expressed his frustration about it, saying that there were too few varieties of alcohol, chiefly wines, which made it almost impossible to recreate many different types of cake. He was ecstatic when I told him I'd prepare them for him.

Considering all this, you could understand just how blessed I was. Even with relevant knowledge, it was still an impossible feat to recreate dishes in such a short period of time. Especially Japanese ones, since gathering ingredients was already a difficult task in and of itself. I had to catch a bunch of fish in order to make things like Katsuobushi (dried tuna)¹². By using my skill to perform ‘Spatial Movement,’ I was able to create a means to transport and maintain freshness, therefore allowing us to accommodate different types of ingredients. But I still wanted to figure out a way to transport without using skills, so it became a topic of study in the future.

Food is the essence of culture.

If the food of a nation is not sufficiently developed, then such a nation’s culture would be of no significance to me. I believed that among the three pillars of life’s necessities: food, clothing and shelter, food was the most important. But everyone is entitled to his or her own opinion.

Based on all these reasons, we toiled to develop all sorts of cuisines. It was far easier to get cereals like wheat, barley, and oats than I had imagined. I remembered seeing white bread in the capital of Ingracia, which was considered daily fare for the rich. By studying its production method, I was later able to produce them in my kingdom with relatively easier means.

Our current research efforts centered around white rice. We haven’t improved it to the point of having satisfactory taste. Compared to the Japanese rice that had been researched and improved since time immemorial, the quality of ours was definitely inferior.

But that was only natural. I didn’t expect things to go that smoothly anyways. We were able to quickly harvest by using magic to grow them. But with that being said, growing them in the winter season was no easy feat. Currently we only had a small amount growing in controlled indoor environments. It would take a long time before we could show any results.

But there may be a solution. When I asked Raphael-sensei if there was a better way, I got an immediate response. The method was to use Shion’s ‘Cook’ to overwrite results. Since she could overwrite results, improving the quality of the product should be a piece of cake.

But will it really work?

I didn’t think anyone would accept such a method since it was quite the devious way to do things... But that’s just me thinking. Although at this point, it was probably already too late to be saying stuff like this. We’d used this method quite recklessly during the production of wines, so any intention of self-restraint was long gone.

Our appetite took precedence over ethics. But we couldn’t rely on Shion’s power during every harvest, so we needed to continue our research. However, that was excluding a small portion of—primarily for me—white rice. Shion was happy to help, so I handed the rice over to Shuna and told her to only serve it during special occasions¹³. Today was one such special

¹²Fishing side story refer to side story compilation, chapter 3 “Fishing”

¹³The word used here is “記念日” which refers to anniversary or commemoration day, likely holiday in Tempest Federation.

occasion. Demon Lord Luminas was in attendance, among other things, hence we had to splurge lavishly. In order to ensure good relations from now on, we had to demonstrate our country's value. We had both a carrot and a stick to offer. Your impression of someone will skyrocket if you get treated well despite having a negative impression in the past. If a delinquent youth were to suddenly commit a virtuous deed, his or her reputation would be greatly improved—that was my thought process at least. If we were lucky it might even make their previous impression of us turn a big one-eighty.

Even though I didn't think the Holy Knights were this shallow, it was still an effective and classic approach. With such a devious scheme in mind, I made sure the night's feast was served with only the finest delicacies. And regarding the matter concerning white rice, something I insisted on having as an ex-Japanese, but it may have been unsuited for the appetites of the Holy Knights.

Either way, Hinata would probably be pretty happy about it. After all, I was quite delighted when I got to eat the white rice that I had not seen for such a long time. As for tempura, I was pretty sure everyone would think it was delicious after eating it. The merchants and adventurers sang their praises, and it had even won over Benimaru's approval. I thought it would be fine considering the level of satisfaction it garnered so far.

The dishes had all been served and were waiting on the table while I was buried in my own thoughts. The only thing left being to wait for the Holy Knights to return from their bath.



The seats were arranged in a U shape, with three seats at the head of the table. I was seated at the center, with Veldora and Luminas to my left and right respectively. From this seat I could have everyone else in my line of sight. My own executives were sitting face to face with the Holy Knights. We intentionally arranged it this way to allow everyone to establish a friendly relationship during the feast.

The Holy Knights were led to the venue of the feast. All of them had finished bathing and were wearing either the yukatas or jinbeis (bath robe) that we had prepared for them. Reasonably speaking they should not have been used to these clothes. However, they seemed to have grown fond of them after putting them on. But that was only natural since these types of clothes would not lose to any sporty track suit in terms of comfort. Not only were they suitable for daily activities, but they also were able to serve as pajamas.

The Holy Knights nervously followed their guides to their seats. They seemed quite confused after noticing that there weren't any chairs or tables. Moreover, furniture aside, they seemed baffled just by walking barefoot on the tatami. These were simply cultural differences, so their confusion was logical.

The goblinas leading the way, on the other hand, were not nervous at all. They smoothly carried out their tasks, performing their duties spectacularly as if it were second nature. This was all thanks to Vesta's training. The Holy Knights all seemed astonished at the fact, and I could tell that they were embarrassed.

The one walking at the front was Luminas. She moved elegantly while I waited at the head seat. She was then seated next to me. Next it appeared to be Louis's turn. He looked exactly the same as Roy, who played the part of a demon lord, and gave off the regal air of a pope. The third person arriving was Hinata. As soon as she sat on her seat, she turned to me with an air of conviction.

"I sincerely apologize for the great trouble that I've caused you. Both for last time, as well as today's incident. I acted entirely on my own. I did not act upon Luminas-sama's instructions, to say nothing of my subordinates who hold no responsibility for this incident... I don't think you can forgive this transgression with just me taking responsibility alone—"

"Ahhh, STOP!"

I hurriedly stopped Hinata just as she was about to bow and apologize to me.

I'll disregard last time, and this time it was a misunderstanding. After all, the ones responsible were the Seven Luminaries, and Luminas has already executed them.

I personally didn't intend to hold anyone further accountable for the problem regarding the Kingdom of Farmus, since Diablo had already dealt with it. That's why I stopped Hinata. But I'd also stumbled upon something incredible. Out of the corner of my eye, I happened to notice something...

—Two gently sloping mounds behind her revealing yukata!

They were slightly flushed and glistening after the hot bath.

I definitely didn't intentionally look at them; it could only be said to be terribly good timing.
Could this be the godly power of Wisdom King Raphael-san?

«Answer. No.»

Am I thinking too much? Also, the tone of its reply sounds so cold, but I don't really care about that type of stuff at this moment. Holy shit, my adventurous desires are flooding out non-stop. It's supposed to be time for my son to pop up, but he is unfortunately no longer with us. But you can't blame me for that.



Because men are creatures that will never forget their adventurous spirit!!

At times like these, it was wonderful to have a body that couldn't get a nosebleed. And by the way, bathrobe play, it's truly powerful. The destructive power of it was astounding. Freshly bathed woman in yukatas, now that's *the* best combo. Plus, the fact that it was a beauty like Hinata only added on to the terrifying effect.

I had been defeated...defeated indeed. Absolute and total defeat... With this, all was forgiven. But wait, I'd already forgiven her a long time ago!

It was at this instant that Shuna asked: "Rimuru-sama, to where might you be looking?"

She paused her serving and looked at me with a sweet smile.

How does she do it? Her voice was gentle indeed, yet it sent shivers down my spine.

"Nothing! I-I'm not looking at anything in particular," I hurriedly try to cover myself. "By the way, Hinata... As long as the misunderstanding is resolved, it's fine. At least, if you could give up your prejudice towards monsters, that would be great."

Hinata showed a momentary expression of hesitation before wordlessly nodding. Well in reality, that would actually be quite difficult. Being a monster was no different from being a dangerous convict holding a gun. It would be counterproductive if the public were to briefly believe that monsters were harmless, only to end up getting harmed by said monsters. We may have indeed been able to communicate with humans, but there was no guarantee that we could understand each other. Yet in this city, such a fantasy was made reality. Because the monsters all had faith in my words, they wished to be friendly and coexist with humans.

That said however, Shion and the Yomigaeri were once killed by humans.

"About that, I understand it's difficult to give out trust so easily since there's no way to know what your opponents are thinking. That, and the fact that when you consider that some monsters can be extremely cunning, only makes it harder. The guardians of mankind cannot afford to be so easily fooled by monsters."

"—You are right. Communication is the first step to understanding, but it is also a dangerous transaction. You risk the danger of being mind-controlled and having your soul bound."

I think the "soul bound" refers to being forced into some contract like how the Rosso controls all the otherworlders or how Clayman controlled Adalmann.

"Indeed. That's why it's enough for us if you believe that not all monsters are bad. If you ever encounter any suspicious monsters that you have reservations for, just leave them in our custody. It'll be all right for them to come to this town even if they're not accepted in human societies."

This was probably where we would find common ground. Our town would take in questionable monsters since the residents here wouldn't get shocked at unexpected situations that easily. But that was under the condition that those monsters could actually be communicated with.

"I understand. It won't be easy to change everyone's mind immediately, but I will ban the rule that allows people to deem monsters as evil and execute them without due process. Is that okay, Luminas-sama?"

“It’s but a minor matter, so do whatever you please. But don’t raise anyone’s suspicion towards his or her faith in me.”

“Understood. I’ll have it as the number one priority for everyone to keep in mind.”

Luminas seemed to also have accepted it. The Holy Empire of Lubelius was a kingdom built on the peoples’ faith in the god Luminas, that was why doubts from the public would shake the foundation of the nation. The Western Holy Church was, after all, a religion with significant influence on the Western Nations, so it would only be natural for Hinata to proceed with caution.

I, on the other hand, believed that Luminas underestimated her own influence. Even though she had said that such a thing mustn’t be tolerated, she didn’t look like she cared at all. Perhaps it wasn’t Luminas’s own wish to be worshipped by others as God. Or it could’ve just been me overthinking it. But she did seem to have given all the authority to Pope Louis and left the chores for Hinata. The incident before was the same. It was simply due to the devious scheming of the Seven Luminaries.

Hmm, but it shouldn’t be like that.

This ancient demon lord suddenly returned after leaving the spotlight for centuries just to rule once more with the figure of a majestic overlord, yet she actually disliked troubling herself—there was no way someone like that existed. “I’ll be the king while giving the power to the people.”—my thoughts naturally gravitated towards this direction, it was quite similar to the goal I had in mind. But I couldn’t ask the question so openly in public, thus I just kept these thoughts to myself.

As I was still mulling this over, Hinata turned towards my subordinates.

“I need to apologize to you all as well. I promise you that we will not be hostile towards others simply for the fact that they are monsters,” finishing with a deep bow. Seeing that Hinata had made a move, the rest of the Holy Knights quickly followed suit. “We’re sorry!,” all of them bowed their heads and apologized.

“Don’t mind it at all. If it weren’t for Rimuru-sama’s orders, we too would continue to treat humans as our enemies, after all.”

The one who spoke was Rigurd. He said that it was because of my orders that they were able to abandon their prejudice. For the goblins who were desperately struggling just to survive, all other races except for themselves would probably have been considered enemies...

“Personally speaking, I’m fine as long as you aren’t hostile towards us. I saw your fight with Rimuru-sama, and even as I am now, I’m unlikely to win,” Benimaru said, smiling. He was still his same warmongering self with his head filled with nothing but combat. I wasn’t sure whether Souei agreed with Benimaru or not; he simply nodded in response. There was a tendency amongst monsters for the strong to prey on the weak, so even if enemies killed them the fault would invariably fall on the weaker creatures. Souei seemed to be of the same mind and held no grudges against the Holy Knights.

As for Shion, she was behaving rather suspiciously, as if Hinata’s apology only agitated her.

“Shion, you should forgive them too. I understand your pain and anger, but not all humans are evil. There are bad humans and there are good humans; that’s just how it is. It’s the same for

monsters, and just like with monsters, you have to ascertain their nature accordingly. Moreover, humans are creatures that can overcome their mistakes. So, aren't we the same just like them? Isn't it the character of one's soul that's most important?"

Humans and monsters should not be differentiated by their races. The nature of an individual's soul is the most important factor.

I hoped Shion could understand this too. I said that to her with it in mind, yet Shion seemed to be further confused. To her, all humans must've been evil. But I hoped she wouldn't treat everyone the same way. Right now Shion was still obeying my command, but I wasn't sure whether the bottled-up discontent would burst out one day.

That must never happen. I hope she isn't just mindlessly following orders, but able to act based on her own thoughts.

At least that's what I initially thought, which was apparently just me being paranoid. In an instant, Shion abandoned all her reservations. Thinking wasn't her strong suit anyway; speaking with an open mind was more her style.

"I understand now! I'll learn from Rimuru-sama to judge good from bad based on their 'souls'!" Shion beamed, a fierce conviction written on her face. This may have been an indication that she had overcome a major obstacle. Even though I couldn't see people's 'souls,' it was good that Shion was able to open up.

The members of the Yomigaeri seemed to resonate with her, determined to think for themselves (in judging the nature of man) while abandoning their grudges against the Holy Knights.

What a bunch. These are all companions that I'm proud of. Being able to accept others' apologies and let go of past enmities wasn't easy. It was hard to determine to what extent they forgave the knights, but the two parties successfully made peace. As long as we were communicating, we would be able to accept each other. And just like that, we were able to reconcile on the matter.



Right, it would've been way too boring to continue with this solemn atmosphere, and it would've been a waste if these fine dishes got cold along with it. Most importantly, if this continued, there wouldn't be a chance for Veldora to show up again. He'd throw a tantrum and things would get dicey.

Supposedly, he shouldn't need to eat food, just like me. But for some odd reason, he became quite obsessed with it ever since his revival. It was a known fact that he loved desserts such as cakes. He was also quite the picky eater. No idea if he knew what he was talking about or not. It seemed like he was looking forward to enjoying this free meal, so I should probably get this

feast started as soon as possible.

Since that's the case, let's raise our cups.

"Now then, let us raise our cups for the courageous battles fought by everyone here, cheers!"

I came up with a random toast and started the feast. It felt best to drink a cold beverage right after a bath. And of course, I'd prepared that all beforehand. We were generously offering the secret wines produced in our nation en masse.

Absolutely flawless.

Wine was the mainstream drink, even in the kingdom of Ingracia. There was also beer, but it didn't taste that good. Should I describe it as lacking in foam or carbonic acid? It was quite warm, so perhaps that was the main reason why the taste was underwhelming.

But when it came to my nation, none of these were an issue. Don't underestimate my enthusiasm for food. I researched day and night and had now developed more varieties than during the time I visited Dwargon. And the minute I mentioned that I wanted something, people would immediately start researching ways to make it. My current living environment was ideal to the point of being frightening. *Could it really be because I've become a demon lord? No, it seemed to be the same before that too...*

Ah, never mind.

So this is basically how things were. My diet had come to resemble what I had during the time I lived in Japan thanks to the hard work of my dear monster friends. My nation's food was truly delicious.

The Holy Knights would definitely be satisfied.

And my predictions were accurate.

The female waitresses are all running around to refill wine for everyone. They became quite adept due to the experience of holding the many feasts in the past. The eyes of the Holy Knights widened in surprise once they took their first sip. And as the food entered their mouth, they froze on the spot. They stole glances at their neighbor to see each other's expressions, seemingly moved by the delicious taste of the food.

I chuckled to myself. I was finally relieved seeing that they were enjoying the meal.

The main dish was tempura, but we'd also prepared some seafood. We were even serving the chopped-up sashimi¹⁴ on the tables. I got ahold of ingredients akin to soybeans and was successful in recreating soy sauce. This was one of the many fruits of Shuna's labor. It wasn't a perfect imitation of real soy sauce, but only people who were already familiar with the taste could tell the difference. For a first-time diner, this bootleg soy sauce was just as good as the real deal. Since there were different types of soy sauce as well, there may actually have been one with similar taste to ours in Japan. All in all, I was delighted with the fine quality of our product.

Sashimi was Hakurou's specialty. Even though Hakurou was not present at the moment, several other chefs had also inherited his skill. Therefore, it seemed that the training of chefs

¹⁴Raw fish cutlet, basically thicc nigiri without the rice

had gone smoothly as well. These chefs were able to flaunt their skills in a variety of exquisite dishes and served them one by one. Even though we went for a Japanese style cuisine, most people still enjoyed eating it. Especially Hinata, she appeared to be deeply moved as she ate her meal in silence. Unlike the knights who were not used to using chopsticks, Hinata was able to deftly maneuver them to eat her meal. She turned her attention to me, seemingly suspecting that I was looking at her.

“I mean, aren’t you going a bit overboard with all this?”

“How is it going overboard?”

And I thought she was going to praise me, but I got teased instead.

I retorted as my anger quietly bubbled. And soon after, Hinata began to shower me with all of her doubts as if she were venting all of her discontent accumulated over time.

“It’s the same on the road to here! Inns serving ramen and dumplings, drinking areas with free water, grand bathhouses in the middle of nowhere, and now this! Why is there fresh sashimi when you are living in a giant forest?! I’ve already tried very hard to accept this sansai (mountain vegetables) tempura, but this sashimi is suspicious no matter how you look at it!”

Hinata no longer had her calm composure as she finished her sentence in one breath.

Ahh, okie. I didn’t expect that she would ask about that.

“Because I wanted to eat—”

“Whaaaaat?”

“I mean, that’s... Because I wanted to eat those foods, so I put in the effort to recreate them. And about the sashimi, we did a bit of fishing because the Beast Kingdom Eurazania, who we’re on good terms with, happens to face the sea. But right now we haven’t figured out a logistics network for transporting cold-storage products, that’s why we are using skills to resolve the issue for now. I mean, I want to live luxuriously sometimes too!”

“Did you say skill?”

I nodded and replied with a “Hmm.”

About that, I utilized the transportation channel of the orcs through Geld’s ‘Stomach’ from his Unique Skill ‘Gourmet.’ Transportation magic was usually unable to move food ingredients. However, Geld’s skills were an exception.

With that being said, we’d only prepared enough for this one feast. The orcs couldn’t be distracted from their construction projects simply because of my stubbornness. It was thanks to the people on vacation in the village who were willing to help that we were able to get the food this time. This was the limitation of using personal skills to conduct transportation. I would have to make this a research subject and improve beyond that.

Hinata was baffled as she listened to my explanation, not saying a word.

“—I see, so skills can allow for the transportation of objects without changing their quality. And since there are many people in this nation that can use that skill... It’s unbelievable how justified you seem utilizing skills of the public for personal exploit,” Hinata muttered, somewhat exasperated.

How rude! But it was fine, I didn’t plan to argue with her.

Hinata showed an expression of revelation, yet I remained unaware that an issue existed in the first place. Wasn't it only natural to make use of whatever could be used?

"It doesn't matter really, Hinata. No matter what the cause was, the fact of the matter is that all of these are delicious. Or at least, I like them quite a lot."

Luminas apparently overheard the conversation and chimed in, ostensibly drunk with a wine glass in her hand. These dishes were probably all new to Luminas, and she appeared to be greatly enjoying her tempura. She was even using her fingers to eat them, yet for some reason, Luminas looked elegant no matter how she behaved. Basically it was the correct way of dining, so it was fine as long as it didn't repulse other people. It was perhaps the hardest question we needed to resolve when it came to accommodating people who had never even seen chopsticks before. Benimaru and the rest already knew how to use chopsticks. Furthermore, the monsters in our kingdom learnt it themselves after they observed how we ate. But it was not the same case for merchants or adventurers coming from other nations. Moreover, we wished to make our nation an attraction for foreign nobilities, so we didn't want them to feel obligated to use chopsticks.

Coming from that point of view, Luminas presented a case worthy of consideration. She was using either knives, forks, chopsticks, or her fingers. The hotter dishes required chopsticks, but the rest could be eaten bare handed just fine. The methods of consumption varied depending on the dish.

It would be meaningless if the guests didn't enjoy eating, so they shouldn't be restricted to just one way. It would be better to inform them of the different possible ways to dine and wait for them to slowly adapt.

With that in mind, I asked Luminas: "Is our food suited for your appetite?"

"Hmm, I like it a lot. Delectable dishes, and even better wines."

I didn't notice that she'd been ferociously gulping down wine until after she mentioned it. Milim was a voracious eater while Luminas was an impressive drinker¹⁵. While using tempura as her appetizer, she drank a round of all the wines on the table.

"That's wonderful. But it will be bad for your body if you don't restrain yourself!"

"Silly, even poison has no effect on me, so how could I lose to mere alcohol? I had to however, go out of my way to lower the effect of 'Poison Nullification' just to get drunk!"

My advice to Luminas was apparently meaningless. *But did she just mention something about lowering the effect of 'Poison Nullification'?*

"I-is that even possible?"

"You don't say? Stop talking silly there—"

I asked Luminas, who was looking down on me, to teach me the method.

«...»

¹⁵The phrase here is “酒豪” which is to describe someone with incredible drinking ability (in somewhat of a heroic sense)

Wisdom King Raphael-san seemed to have some issue with that. But I didn't care, so I did as what Luminas taught and lowered my 'Resistance.' A sudden sense of drunkenness hit me the moment I did that.

Here it comes, here it comes!

Here we go! That's the feeling of getting drunk!

"GAHAHAHA! Rimuru, how come you don't know how to do such a simple trick? I've already mastered that low level of trickery!"

Mister Veldora¹⁶ looked quite proud. I had no idea when he practiced it, but right now he became a complete drunkard.

"Right, then let's drink some more!"

"Hmm. I'll drink with you then."

"You two are helpless. In that case, I shall accompany you as well."

Luminas got on board arrogantly, making the feast even more lively.

"Geez, Rimuru-sama," Shuna said, somewhat vexed, but she continued to refill my drink with a pasted-on smile. And like that we began to booze up without a hint of courtesy.

There were a rich variety of alcohols, our supply of ice was more than sufficient, and there were also refreshing beverages available¹⁷. And of course, we had also prepared tea and juice for those who weren't adept at holding their liquor.

Haruna-san and Louis helped to refill for Veldora and Luminas, respectively. As for Benimaru, Shion and Souei, as well as the two Beastketeers and Holy Knight Elites such as Arnaud, they seemed to be competing in some sort of drinking game. The members of the Holy Knight Order started off all serious looking, but they began to loosen up after their captains chugged down a couple rounds. Some chatted with Rigurd, while others made requests to the serving ladies for more food. Among them, some even appeared to be interested in monsters' diet and wished to try the food themselves.

Isn't that guy called Fritz? I remember he is a captain of the Holy Knight Order just like Arnaud and that he is one of the Ten Great Saints. Hmm hmm, he seems to be more impressive than I thought. The first step to understanding others is to take an interest in the food they eat. What a truly wonderful thing to do.

However, I recalled that bit of food there to be—

My drunken mind began to race.

That over there was black rice. We took samples of graminess plants and used magicule fluid—the highly concentrated liquid magicule formed in the sealed cave—to grow them. I did the experiment out of sudden curiosity and as a result made black rice that looked like it had been blended with squid ink. In my established view, rice was just white rice, so black rice

¹⁶The title Rimuru uses for him is “-san” but I think it's somewhat in a joking tone, so may use “mister” to show some sense of sarcasm.

¹⁷The source just says water here, but it may be referring to “beverages”

didn't look particularly appetizing. But its actual taste was without a doubt delicious. It even possessed incredibly high nutritional value, and so I added it to the production line with the name "Magic Black Rice"¹⁸. It became the main fare in our nation, though I sort of remembered a huge issue it had—

"AHHH, STOP! That thing is poisonous to humans!" I shouted, suddenly sober. But Fritz's exclamation drowned me out.

"T-this thing can restore mana!"

I couldn't stop Fritz from taking a bite. Instead of being poisoned, this was how he reacted.

"Oi, forget that! Is your body okay? Feeling anything wrong?"

Bodies of weaker individuals would be affected after ingesting large amounts of magicules. The magicule content in this magic black rice was exceptionally high, so it would be the equivalent of poison for people of lesser abilities. But if ingested at an appropriate quantity, it could be used as both medicine and serve as a main dish. It shouldn't be an issue for everyone else, but whether or not it would be safe for human consumption was anyone's guess. We couldn't be so hasty with human experiments. However, judging from Fritz's reaction, the result was different from how I imagined. I previously thought that the rice would be poison to humans, but could it actually be converted to medicine for people possessing a certain amount of mana?

«Answer. Mana restoration effect confirmed on individual "Fritz." If target possesses 'Resistance' against magicules, mana will likely be converted to energy.»

I see, so that's how it is.

It must've been because he gave his all in the battle and rapidly depleted his mana that the effect of the food seemed so pronounced.

I snapped back to reality as the other Holy Knights began to discuss the magic black rice as well. None of them seemed at all frightened. *Getting drunk sure is terrifying.*

It couldn't be helped then; we had to prepare the portion for all of them as well. Hinata probably felt the same way I had about the rice; she grimaced upon seeing its black color... But she wasn't complaining, instead she chewed on the chazuke (tea/soup-soaked rice) made of the magic black rice. As for those who still weren't satisfied with chazuke alone, we had also prepared onigiri (rice ball). It also seemed to be getting great reviews as more servings were ordered almost in the blink of an eye. I didn't expect the magic black rice to be more popular than the white rice we specifically went out of the way to prepare for me. With that being said, it seemed like I was the only one who had a problem with its aesthetics. In reality it tasted wonderful. It was probably easier to accept for people who had never seen rice before. And because of that I found an unexpected effect of magic black rice.

I was also looking forward to the promotion our nation would get as our guests enjoyed the

¹⁸In WN, this is called "Demon Rice" due to the name it used as "魔物米" (Monster rice), here in LN however, it is called "魔黒米" (Magic black rice). So we will be using the LN name for future iteration, though we can use a better phrase than Magic Black Rice.

food and beverages. Moreover, the important thing was that this feast would be an opportunity to communicate, as I saw monsters and Holy Knights chatting with each other. Shion even arm wrestled three Holy Knights. Apparently, she achieved overwhelming victory, though the Holy Knights seemed to react with laughter at the fact.

What a nice outcome, much better than my expectations. Perhaps it was thanks to the alcohol, but if this could become a natural sight, we could probably get along with each other much sooner.

To good food and good life.

In order to reach that goal, I had to strive to do my job well. It would be my duty in the future to protect these precious moments. I made up my mind at that instant. Yet as soon as I did—

“What are you doing, Rimuru! Come, let me help you refill, let’s get hammered today!”

“Most true indeed! I’ve come just to accompany you two. So let’s drink to our hearts’ content!”

“H-hold on, Veldora… And Luminas, aren’t you a vampire? Why do you even need to eat and drink and how did you end up so drunk—”

“Hmph, you’re such a tool! Once I became an advanced species (higher vampire), I could replenish energy from normal food. But that’s irrelevant, finish your wine already!”

I told her that they were two separate things, but she was completely ignoring me. I was getting crossfire from these two drunks, and the determination that I finally made flew straight out the window.

“Hey, you two!”

I wasn’t quick enough to stop them before my glass was refilled with the distilled wine made from magic black rice and forced to down it in one go. Hinata slanted her cold eyes at us, seemingly muttering “There should be a limit to all this monkeying around.” However, there was a tiny smile curled along the corners of her lips, but that might just have been my drunken delusions.

Hinata’s smile looked pretty cute too—but let’s keep that a secret.



And just like that, it was tomorrow already. My head hurt like hell.

«Answer. Of course. It is the side-effect of forceful reduction of ‘Resistance.’»

Thank you for your calm sarcasm.

Speaking of Raphael-sensei’s tone, it still sounded quite pissed. No, I must’ve been thinking too much. There was no way in the world that I would get scolded by my own skill. As such, I

shook it off and carried about as normal.

There was an important meeting today. The future relations between the Tempest Federation and the Holy Empire of Lubelius would depend on it. I hoped that we would reach a conclusion afterwards. The venue changed to the usual large meeting room. I took my seat while struggling to endure the headache.

In reality, with the circumstances at hand, not only were we about to become enemies of the Western Holy Church, we may even have potentially opened hostilities with the Holy Empire of Lubelius. It was also a fact that the Pope's Ministry gave permission for the Templar Knight Order to mobilize, and it could have caused major damage to our nation. Given that this was the case, we had to exercise caution when dealing with them.

With that being said however, the real culprits in the Kingdom of Farmus had been executed. As for the Templar Knight Order who aided them, there was not even one survivor remaining.

But the ministry should take responsibility as well since they weren't entirely unrelated... However, I'd already accepted Hinata's apology. Moreover, the culprits responsible for the incident had already been taken care of.

Unlike Farmus, I didn't intend to fight against the Holy Empire of Lubelius. It was meaningless to ask them for reparations as long as a friendly relationship could be formed. The monetary part was compensated with Clayman's inheritance and the reparations from Farmus. And if we were to take any land, it would be too far away geographically anyways. It would've been difficult to manage, plus having such a distant land to rule would give me another headache. They already admitted their faults, so rather than demanding reparations, we decided to try together to build a friendly relationship in the future. And that was honestly my wish. I contemplated the matter as I awaited Luminas and the rest.

Representing Tempest Federation, there was me, Shion, Rigurd, and Benimaru as well as the officers in charge of the judicial, legislative, and executive branches—the three chiefs Rugurd, Regurd and Rogurd. Veldora was here as well, but we could just ignore him. Getting through to him when he was reading his manga was simply an impossible feat.

On the Holy Empire of Lubelius's side, the participants were Luminas, Louis, and Hinata. In addition, there were also the five captains. I invited them to introduce themselves.

We have the vice-commander of the order, Renard, known as Childe of 'Light.' There's also the person that is said to be the strongest knight next to Hinata, Arnaud of 'Air.' As well as Bacchus of 'Earth,' Ritase of 'Water,' and Fritz of 'Wind.'

Now that everyone was present, we sat face to face and commenced the meeting. First, we needed to clear out the misunderstanding. Given this was the case, we began listing out the circumstances of both parties to have some context. We would be exchanging this information upon the start of the meeting.

We checked on these things while confirming progress with their party. There was no point in voicing our complaints; right now we were only trying to verify the facts. It was best to rectify any information that appeared different from our understanding, to which Hinata also agreed.

The testimonies of both of our parties were mostly expected. It seemed that we wouldn't have to do too much explaining. Everything began when the fire nation attacked with the invasion of the Kingdom of Farmus. We maintained our stance and would only change our terms based on the attitude of our negotiating party.

As for how things went down on the Western Holy Church side, Hinata mentioned that there had already been a problem before Farmus made their request. To put it simply, it would be defying the doctrines of Luminism to acknowledge the existence of a monster kingdom. It was an urgent matter that may have generated distrust among the believers. If left unattended, the followers might even renounce their faith. It might even end up causing the downfall of the influence of the Western Holy Church. That was why the monster kingdom must be eliminated. For this reason, they needed a reason to justify invading my kingdom—that's how Hinata put it.

"It was under those circumstances that Archbishop Reyhiem stationed at Farmus made the request. Nicolaus thus gave the permission. I didn't have an objection at the time, and more importantly, I couldn't forgive you then—" Hinata recounted.

Farmus, while trying to protect its national interest, grew greedy for profits and intended to eliminate us for that cause. At the same time, Hinata also wished to seek revenge.

"Was it because of Shizu-san?"

"Yes, that was the case. Now that I think about it, I seem to have been manipulated as well. Although I still have no idea who was behind all this, the eastern merchants must have had something to do with it."

"Merchants... Is that so? That's gotta be the reason. There were merchants going in and out on Demon Lord Clayman's side as well. Moreover, although Geld and his men are currently under my command, in the past they were all fully geared. I suspected that they may have had ties with some other countries, and as it turned out their trading partners were the eastern Merchants."

I nodded as I came to the realization. There were a large number of business transaction records in the ledger I asked Shuna to investigate. The Eastern Empire produced most of the merchandise that Dwargon originally exported. The Empire was undoubtedly doing business with Dwargon, yet the problem lay with the identity of its broker. There wasn't any form of record.

Shuna had done a thorough investigation yet was still unable to find out the real identity of their trade partner. We even interrogated the captives to no avail. Demon Lord Clayman was extremely cautious and ordered his subordinates to be meticulous with their work, not leaving behind any evidence. This was especially true for his associates in the Moderate Clown Troupe as there wasn't any record on them either.

However, on the matter of who the trade partner was, there were still ways to determine the identity of the person. There was a vast array of artworks and rare magic items stored in Clayman's castle that were collected from all over the world. Yet most of his weapons and gear came from the Empire. Because of teleportation magic, there wouldn't be an issue with transportation no matter where he purchased them. Yet he specifically imported their goods

from the Empire, meaning the two must've been somehow connected. Even though this could only count as indirect evidence, it was a decisive piece to victory.

In addition, the same logic applied to the food ingredients. There was an abundance of fruit, bread, and dairy products as well as other consumable goods¹⁹—A large amount of food ingredients were stored in Clayman's base. These goods couldn't be teleported through magic alone and had to rely on physical transportation.

Clayman's territory before his death was the Puppet Nation of Jistav. They seemed to conduct agricultural work with slavery, yet the agricultural products did not match up with the food items found in their storage. According to Shuna's investigation, there were several food items that must have required exports from other nations. If that were the case, the prime suspect would be the neighboring Eastern Empire. Since Milim was self-sufficient in her land, she wouldn't even have had the thought of trading with others. Furthermore, neither Milim nor ex-Demon Lord Karion had the money to trade such goods with others. That was another reason why I suspected that the people who colluded with Demon Lord Clayman were from the Eastern Empire.

“That’s right. They were the ones that told me that you had murdered Shizue-san. They also mentioned that you happened to be in Ingracia at the time. That was why I had moved out in hopes of eliminating you.”

“Indeed. The timing then was horrible, even now looking back at it just pisses me off—”

My words visibly shook Hinata. Not only Hinata, but also Arnaud and the rest of the Holy Knights were cowed.

“Quit intimidating them now. Your ‘Demon Lord Haki (Imposing Aura)’ is leaking out because of your anger, you rookie.”

Oops, my bad, my bad.

I only realized after Luminas pointed out that my youki (Demonic Aura) seemed to be leaking out. I only recently learned how to perfectly control it, but I still couldn't suppress it entirely when I got agitated.

I immediately apologized and continued.

“Anyhow, in reality, it was the eastern merchant or something who was behind this. So, do you know his name?”

“That person called himself Darm. But it must have been an alias.”

An alias? I guess it made sense. But the name didn't matter here. The important thing is the fact that the eastern merchant was the real culprit.

“Demon Lord Clayman also had ties with the eastern merchant. Moreover, it was probably the same party of people that instigated the ex-king of Farmus, Edmalis.”

“That was indeed the case. We were able to clarify that after interrogating Reyhiem.”

I nodded with a “Hmm” and began to connect the dots.

“Demon Lord Clayman must have secretly manipulated the Kingdom of Farmus. The two

¹⁹The term here is “嗜好品” which is a general phrase referring to goods that give a person sensational stimulus. This can range from food, drinks to cigarettes.

factions are not in a partner relationship; it felt more like the temporary collaboration between enemies.”

“And the people doing the matchmaking were those eastern merchants?”

As I was speaking, Benimaru opened up with a sudden realization. And for Hinata, she muttered to herself, “And I was also used by others for this plan—“ while emitting a dangerous aura.

Next, we needed to find out who the mastermind behind all this was, however...

“All of the incidents are linked to the eastern merchant, so based off of that, it doesn’t seem like things played out this way simply because the factions’ interests just so happened to align. Clayman always wanted to awaken and become a True Demon Lord while the Kingdom of Farmus had its sights set on territorial expansion, which is why they intended to take our kingdom. Moreover, there is ‘That Lord’²⁰ who is pulling the strings...”

“‘That Lord,’ it was the person Clayman mentioned, wasn’t it?”

Luminas and I nodded to each other.

“What does that mean?”

Benimaru and the rest knew about this, but it was new information for Hinata and her party. For that reason, I gave a quick explanation.

“In truth, Demon Lord Clayman seemed to have been following the orders of someone else.”

“It was quite impressive for a nobody like Clayman to have not revealed the person’s true identity even to the very end.”

“Is that so...”

“Could it be, that the person’s true identity is one of the Seven Luminaries?”

I got the sudden inspiration as if god had enlightened me. It was just supposed to be a random guess, yet it surprisingly retained some realism.

“What did you say? You brat, are you suggesting that the Seven Luminaries acted on their own behind my back?” Luminas glared at me, clearly displeased.

Even though she personally eliminated the Seven Luminaries, it must’ve felt bad to have someone raise doubts about her old subordinates. I understood her feelings, and just as I was going to apologize—

“I see, we can’t really exclude such a possibility”—Louis, Luminas’s trusted servant, said. I didn’t actually think he would acknowledge my point.

“Louis, now even you are jesting like him—“ Luminas shifted her icy glare to Louis. However, Louis was unshaken and decided to continue.

“Please hear me out, Luminas-sama. Those Seven Luminaries wanted to win your deep affection once more. Surely you were also aware of something as natural as this?”

“What do you mean by that?”

²⁰Just to clarify, the phrase in the original source can be understood as “That person,” but for consistency in Volume 6 where I translated Clayman to address this person as “That Lord,” I’ll continue to use this title.

“Your deep affection—in other words, the kiss of love (love energy). The last time Luminas-sama did the ritual for them was a hundred years ago. Yet in the beginning you would have done the ritual every week. The interval had only gotten longer over time. Have you not noticed that?”

Luminas scowls after Louis pointed that out.

“I see how it is now. Us immortals do tend to forget that they were originally humans. Even though they wouldn’t die without my spirit energy, they would definitely age.”

“Indeed, they would. That’s why they were striving to stop the aging and hoped that Luminas-sama wouldn’t lay eyes on other ‘Adored Individuals’—“ Louis continued in a rather flat tone.

Apparently the Seven Luminaries were once humans that won Luminas’s special affection. Human lives however are limited of course, that was why there existed such a ritual to overwrite this fact—the kiss of love from Luminas.

“—That’s why those people probably came up with the plan to win Luminas-sama’s heart again. If they had collaborated with the eastern merchant while colluding with Demon Lord Clayman in the dark, it would not be strange at all. Speaking of those bunch, especially ‘Master of Sun’ Gran, his ability would not lose to mere Clayman,” Louis concluded.

I only mentioned it due to a stray thought, yet somehow it managed to connect the dots. Even I was astounded. How terrifying. *The pure, boundless wisdom just radiating from my body is truly formidable.*

«...»

Wisdom King Raphael-sensei seemed to want to say something, but I was probably just overthinking it. It may just have been jealous of my talent. It probably felt it didn’t have the chance to shine since I never asked it any questions.

“Could the Seven Luminaries really have considered me as an obstacle due to such reasons?” Hinata asked, bewildered.

“Perhaps. They may have wanted to help Clayman awaken and fight you. It was impossible at least for them alone to emerge victorious against you. Thus, it is highly likely they chose to resort to any possible means in order to defeat you.”

Uh—but there was no way you couldn’t reach a conclusion from there.

First, they would have Clayman defeat Hinata. Then they would consider either eliminating Clayman or manipulating him as a puppet. It wasn’t clear what they were planning, but Clayman’s loyalty was most definitely true. If he could defeat Hinata, it would’ve been up to the Seven Luminaries to attend to whatever they wished to do. They could have the Kingdom of Farmus eliminate us in order to consolidate the doctrines of Luminism. And of course, they would reap a portion of the profits gained from doing so.

Once a powerful nation, like Farmus, mobilized, the eastern merchants could sell their goods such as weapons, gear, and food at a high price. And the Seven Luminaries would be able to bask in Luminas’s affection once more. It definitely wasn’t good to draw conclusions like this,

but it was certainly one worthy of consideration.

"Did they also send me to provoke Rimuru in order to get rid of me? It seems they tried to kill two birds with one stone considering it would be abiding by the doctrines of Luminism by doing that," Hinata continued, based on Louis's theory.

But during my first encounter with Hinata, she was too strong, so I ended up fleeing. While we were on this topic, something suddenly sprang to mind.

"About that, are the Seven Luminaries really the culprits behind all this?"

Renard, who was sitting adjacent to Hinata, answered, "That's definitely the case; it was none other than the Seven Luminaries who acquainted us with those merchants," so he said.

If that was the case, there was even more evidence stacked against the Seven Luminaries. Since heroes recommended them, nobody suspected a thing, which is why everyone danced along to their tune. Honestly, I didn't think the Seven Luminaries would have thought that far ahead during my first battle with Hinata. Yet they did intend for me to kill Hinata this time. It was quite troubling to deal with people that cunning, but there shouldn't be any worries now that they'd all been eliminated—

"Wait, hold on. If they are called Seven Luminaries, wouldn't it mean there are seven people in total? Doesn't that leave one surviving member?"

This completely flew over my head given how Hinata and the rest seemed so laid back, yet upon careful consideration I realized things were not quite over. The sole survivor must also have been related to this whole incident. I couldn't help but panic.

"Hehe, you don't have to worry about that," Hinata replied with a scoff. "Nicolaus, who remained at the home nation, has informed me that the last person has been taken care of as well. He also mentioned that he had found out that the crystal ball with your message was tampered with. He seemed to have used it as evidence to condemn and execute that remaining person."

A frigid smile curled on Hinata's lips. Even though I was just watching from the side, her expression was quite frightening. She radiated the air of a beauty who was contemplating something devious. *I suppose that's one of the reasons why Hinata is often misunderstood. Let's put that on hold for now.*

"Hold on a second. Who exactly is this last person?"

It may have just been my guess, but was he that 'Master of Sun' Gran who was apparently stronger than Clayman? If that was true, this man called Nicolaus was not to be underestimated either...

"It should be the head of the Seven Luminaries, 'Master of Sun' Gran. That man seldom went on the offense, so he was probably the one remaining."

"Really? He actually managed to beat that Granbell. By the way, isn't Nicolaus the cardinal who pledged his life-long loyalty to you? What method did he use?"

"It's nothing to brag about, but he seemed to have prepared 'Disintegration' beforehand. He caught Gran off guard by casting the shot on him unexpectedly and took care of him."

"I see how it was... Granbell had gotten old to have fallen for a lowly trick like that..." Luminas muttered lightly with a gentle sigh.

But this news brought me no joy. My wish had fallen flat now that there was one more dangerous man out there. With that being said, he seemed to have gotten the better of his enemy by surprise, so he didn't seem to be as dangerous. However, it was best not to get too careless. I may have been an exception, but 'Disintegration' was very dangerous to most other people.

Cardinal Nicolaus, I'll take note of that name.

"About that, Luminas-sama, the Granbell you just mentioned, is it referring to the 'Master of Sun' Gran?" Hinata asked.

The name "Granbell" must've been foreign to her.

"Right. That guy was originally called Granbell. He was once the Chosen Hero of 'Light' and had even fought against me," replied Luminas, reminiscing in a slightly childish manner. It almost felt as though she was pretending to forcefully sound arrogant, or was I just overthinking it? Even though I'd been surrounded by ambiguous famous figures who came out of nowhere all the time, could she be...

Just as my thoughts drifted towards this direction, I received a furious glare.

I must be overthinking it! That's why I should just keep these doubts to myself.

"I see... I couldn't have guessed, but—" Hinata seemed to have something on her mind that she was concerned about, yet she couldn't manage to voice it.

"He used to be very strong, strong enough to stand against me," Hinata admitted.

"That's true. Since 'People who become Chosen Heroes will be bound by causality'²¹, he may have resented me deep down in his heart."

It was all clear to me now. Just like Milim mentioned, Chosen Heroes and Demon Lords both couldn't escape the effect of causality.

Granbell only pledged allegiance to her because Demon Lord Luminas defeated him. But perhaps he had a lot of other emotions bottled away. Even though he was able to mentor many heroic and legendary figures, he couldn't escape the cycle of causality. ~~Have you heard the tragedy of Darth Granbell the wise? It's not a story the Seven Luminaries would tell you. It's a Lubelius Legend. So powerful and so wise he was able to mentor many heroic and legendary figures. He became so powerful...the only thing he was afraid of was losing his power, which eventually of course, he did. It's ironic he could save others, but not himself.~~

These however were just my guesses.

"Anyway, we can finally be reassured now. Demon Lord Clayman, the Kingdom of Farmus, the Seven Luminaries, all of the trouble-makers have been taken care of."

Hearing my conclusion, my subordinates with Benimaru in the lead, all nodded in unison.

"That's one thing resolved now," Rigurd laughed mirthfully. Noticing that the previously tense atmosphere had dissipated, I spoke cheerfully as well: "Hehe, that's true. Even though there were some tricky opponents, most of the problems seem to have been taken care of now. However, it would spell trouble for us if there's still someone out there furtively plotting against us. Had we not discovered the existence of those scheming merchants, I would have suspected

²¹This term is not clear, I'm interpreting this as something similar to the causality in Berserk.

the person responsible for all this to be Yuuki.”

Honestly, Yuuki was highly suspicious. He knew that I headed to the Kingdom of Ingracia and had connections with Hinata as well, so he was a prime suspect. That’s why I still harbored mistrust towards Yuuki despite my heart telling me not to.

“Yuuki? Are you referring to the head of Freedom Association, Yuuki Kagurazaka?”

I replied with a “Yeah” since Renard asked. You could figure it out if you thought about it calmly. He may have been the most suspicious based on the circumstances, but Yuuki had nothing to gain from me and Hinata fighting. Since there was no motive, it didn’t make sense to consider Yuuki as the mastermind pulling the strings.

«...»

In other words, I could interpret it as someone intentionally framing Yuuki. Perhaps it was an elaborate trap set to make me suspect him. This was something that those eastern merchants were capable of. They even had a hand in arranging conflicts at different locations. If the Seven Luminaries were the masterminds, it made sense why the merchants did it.

However—

“Yuuki being the mastermind... It’s definitely not him—actually, I can’t really say that,” Hinata claimed right after I had finally become reassured.

“Hold on, hold on, are you suspecting your fellow countryman?”

“Huh? I’m just considering all the possibilities. Moreover, it may be too soon to conclude that the masterminds have all been eliminated. After all, we still don’t have a clue about the people who defeated Roy, not even their motive. And the most central faction of the eastern merchants is still rooted in the Western Nations.”

I felt as if a bucket of cold water was dumped on me as these blind spots were pointed out.

She’s right, it is too early to conclude with confidence.

“You are right in considering that. We can’t be too optimistic before everything is resolved,” I said, reigning in the casual attitude.

“It makes sense, so let’s inform everyone else as well.”

Benimaru nodded along while the Holy Knights seemed to be on the same page as well.

“Just as Hinata has said, there is a high probability that the mastermind remains alive. It was me who suggested that the Seven Luminaries are the culprits, but those are just merely conjectures. We can’t conclude anything without decisive evidence. We will have to keep our minds on the matter in the future as well.”

Everyone nodded in agreement to my line of thinking.

Indeed, it’s not good to draw conclusions so preemptively. Even though I was quite confident with my deduction this time, Wisdom King Raphael-san didn’t agree. But nor did it deny, so perhaps it meant that the possibility existed. Either way, evidence based on my thoughts alone was as good as nothing. That’s why I should trust Raphael-sensei.

The Holy Knights agreed as well, so this would do.



All right, now both of our parties have caught up with our understanding of the situation. Whether there was a true mastermind lurking in the shadows or not—we certainly needed to figure that out, but that was for later. Right now we were to focus on the immediate problem, that is, our future relations, as well as clearing out any subsequent enmities between our parties.

It just so happened that Shuna then came serving coffee and snacks. The meal of the day was scones with potato chips.

As expected of Shuna; her timing was just perfect. We naturally went on to grab servings of the food while the Holy Knights sat there, looking somewhat bewildered.

“Oh, is that dessert? I want the ones on the large plate.”

Veldora was quick to join at times like this even though he didn’t participate in the discussion at all.

“Yes, I know that,” Shuna responded as if she was used to it too.

“Wow, this also tastes delicious.”

Seeing that Hinata had taken a bite, the Holy Knights jumped in as well... The atmosphere of the venue became somewhat of a period of break and leisure.

I took a breath of relief as I finished my desserts. Switching gears, I slowly said: “Next, we will discuss our future relations—”

“Before that, we have to be clear on something,” Hinata cut me off.

“Regarding the incident, have you already accepted our apologies?”

“Yes. I don’t intend to hold anyone further accountable. That way, we can build a friendly relationship in the future,” I answered.

This was not only my will, but the decision reached by executives such as Benimaru and the others as well. There was no need for further conflicts. Since the misunderstanding had been clarified, we should just make peace. That was the answer we gave based on those considerations. But someone couldn’t accept it, that being Luminas.

“That won’t do. Being indebted to someone does not sit well with me. It is obviously our fault this time, so that’s why we will have to compensate in some way or another. We will discuss peace-making later,” Luminas glowered at Veldora while speaking.

To put it in simpler terms, she just didn’t wish to owe any form of favor to Veldora.

“Since Luminas-sama has voiced her thoughts, I would like to inform you that I also still feel guilty giving you all the trouble. This is also our chance to show the highest extent of our sincerity,” Hinata chimed in following Luminas. With that being said however, regarding compensation...

As I mentioned just now, we didn’t wish to resolve things with money. Luminas’s party—or rather the Holy Empire of Lubelius—if they were willing to recognize us...with an additional

public announcement of a permanent ceasefire and then we're all good.

"Hmm—if that's the case, could you formally acknowledge our nation and form diplomatic ties with us?" As I brought the matter up, Luminas immediately agreed.

"No matter. But I don't intend to be too close with you guys since I'll punish that lizard one of these days regardless."

Most of Luminas's animosity seemed to be directed at Veldora, so worst-case scenario we would just have to throw him under the bus as a sacrifice. If that were the price of eternal peace, I would make the choice without hesitation.

"Hold on, Rimuru. Were you thinking about something super mean just now?"

"You're overthinking it, Veldora-kun. If you behave yourself and act intelligently, there is nothing to be worried about."

"Wait a sec, aren't you always thinking about something cruel whenever you add '-kun' to whomever you address?!"

Tsk, Veldora has grown sharp as well. But he's still too naive.

"Ahh, don't be so uptight. I'll give you my scones, so just behave yourself around Luminas."

"What? I should handle it well if that's the case. By the way, once I get serious, getting Luminas's recognition would be a piece of cake! GA—HAHAHA!"

See? Veldora was very simple-minded. Even Luminas looked dumbfounded by it, she didn't seem to be retracting her promise though.

"Don't get ahead of yourself, **B-BAKA!** Well then, I shall make this the exception and cease hostilities from this day onward for the next hundred years. We may even form diplomatic ties with you in the process. This will be the sign that I indeed have compensated you."

Luminas immediately declared a truce like it was nothing. The level of her frankness was astounding.

Umm, was this really okay? I was surprised. The same went for Benimaru. Even the chiefs such as Rigurd were shocked at Luminas's decision. The same went for Hinata and the rest, none of them seemed to have anticipated this turn of events.

"It's ok if it's just a pact of non-interference, but are you really going to form diplomatic ties with them?" Hinata asked. Luminas apparently didn't want to answer.

"Annoying. I've already made the decision!" she threw out her response almost as if saying "I'll leave whatever comes next to other people" while taking another scone. Hinata had a strong urge to express her concerns, but she also didn't plan on defying Luminas.

"If that's the case, we can only obey."

She nodded in agreement with Louis's statement and began to contemplate how to conclude the whole ordeal. There was however someone who still held a strong opposition.

"Diplomatic tie? If we do that—" Renard said.

He peeked at Hinata, as if uncertain if he should bring up his issues with the proposal.

"It's actually not bad. If Rimuru-dono's party were truly evil, we wouldn't be alive at this point."

"Indeed. Rimuru-dono and his party are worthy of trust. We should rid ourselves of the

bias against monsters.”

“I concur. For instance, Souei-sama has much the style and elegance of a gentleman.”

Fritz responded somewhat frivolously while Arnaud and Ritase added on. Even the man of few words, Bacchus, gave the green light. However, Renard was still very cautious despite what his companions had said. As expected from the vice-commander of the Holy Knight Order; he was not willing to compromise that easily. But the circumstances must have given him some ideas, so Renard spoke with determination.

“However, there are still problems remaining. What should we do about our doctrines? Due to its influence, the whole world will point fingers at the Western Holy Church. We can’t allow such a thing to happen no matter what.”

The doctrines—the prohibition of co-existence with monsters—was that it? Indeed, once they acknowledged us, what would become of those doctrines? Things seemed to have become more complicated just when we thought it would all be over. Yet just as my thoughts went in that direction, Luminas, the individual responsible, dropped a bombshell.

“How boring. I didn’t make those doctrines anyway, so I won’t consider it to be a betrayal if we stop following them. Those are basically just some signs of direction for the lost lambs of the civilian masses, which the people in charge at the time drained their brains in coming up with.”

Luminas’s statement had quite the impact. Not only the Holy Knights, but even Hinata was astonished as she muttered: “What?! That’s the first time I’ve heard of it...”

“Is that so? It’s nothing strange really even if you didn’t know about it. Even though the base scriptures of the doctrines are still available for browsing, the original manuscripts about its origin have long since been lost. You should have an idea of how our religion came about after reading those manuscripts,” Louis replied flatly.

This was Louis’s explanation:

It is said that the origin of the doctrines was for the protection of the people believing in Luminas. It may be a different case for advanced species such as Luminas and Louis, however lower vampires require raw human blood to maintain their livelihood. Moreover, it was rumored that the blood of humans overflowing with joy is particularly appetizing. At the time when monsters in the world reigned supreme, people had to strive just to survive. And in terms of the vampires, they could only receive inferior human blood, which posed a life or death problem for the vampiric race. It was because of that, that Luminas took the opportunity to draft a plan to protect humans.

The reason why she moved her kingdom seemed to have been due to Veldora-san... I managed to suppress my urge to inquire about it. After all, trying to pry into the matter would simply be asking for more trouble.

“Because I needed to protect my innocent people, I allowed the humans to live with joy. Moreover, if there is ever any threat posed by demon lords, the humans would feel reassured

that someone is protecting them. In this way they can peacefully enjoy their life. The people of Lubelius were thus protected in the name of god.”

Although this may be a bad metaphor, they seemed to be little more than “livestock.”

Even though it was said that they needed to suck out raw blood, they really only required a tiny amount, mostly unnoticeable by the donor. And after all, there was an overwhelming number of human citizens compared to the population of vampires there, so it was understandable.

The price of living a safe and secured life was by donating one’s blood. It’s almost a win-win situation.

“In other words, in the holy scripture—in the doctrines of Luminism—many entries were added to prevent unnecessary casualties because of monsters?”

“Indeed, that is the case.”

“To me, the important thing is having a heart of belief. Aren’t you all capable of using ‘Holy Magic’ due to your faith in me? It is a form of contract and an iron law. The task of protecting my people is a duty for my vassals, something I don’t really value at all.”

In other words, her conclusion was as follows:

No tolerance for coexistence with monsters—this doctrine is nothing but a cheap product in an attempt to control the people’s faith. If that was the case, there was no need to follow such a doctrine strictly. They couldn’t afford to go to the extent of forcefully altering the doctrines, which would plunge the Western Holy Church into chaos. To put it simply, they only needed to find a reason to persuade the people to accept us.

This was the solution I guess, but Renard still didn’t seem to be able to approve, wearing a grimace on his face.

“I can sort of understand that our doctrines didn’t come from the divine will of Luminas-sama. But there is a very real question at hand, that we have always been leading our lives following the doctrines. There will be problems if we simply discard them...”

Indeed, if they were to completely ignore the previous directions, the followers and the current establishment of the Church would no doubt experience extreme backlash. Even if Luminas showed herself before the public, there was no saying whether or not they will believe she was the real god itself. More importantly, there was no way Luminas would ever do such a thing... If that is the case, it would go against the long-established beliefs of people who still stood with the doctrines and cause internal division.

Renard was evidently quite troubled by this matter.

“Even if that’s the case, we still have to do it. I was trying to keep the situation down a notch until the issue gets resolved, yet you had already mobilized hundreds of troops. The news has probably already spread to the other nations. Moreover, didn’t all the reporters from the Western Nations witness the defeat of the Three Martial Sages?” Hinata inquired in a serious tone as she shifted her gaze, glancing over at me.

Hinata had a point. Diablo mentioned that he defeated a man called Sare of the Three

Martial Sages, there was apparently someone else at the scene, but then he turned tail and ran. After the reporters' eyewitness testimony of this chain of events, the status of Hinata and the rest of the guardians of mankind was surely going to suffer a disastrous decline.

In addition to the news of the defeat of the Holy Knights, there would likely be unnecessary chaos. Although according to how Diablo put it, he may be able to pressure the reporters...

Ayy, how troublesome.

"If that's the case, we can just resolve it by claiming that Hinata and I ended in a draw. Since we discovered the evil plan of the Seven Luminaries, we were able to declare a truce. My true identity as a slime is already public knowledge, and if the broadcast adds on the information that I am a reincarnated otherworlder, shouldn't that, to some extent, be acceptable to the public?"

"That indeed sounds like a great proposal for us. But are you really okay with that? Wouldn't the news that a demon lord ended up in a tie with me tarnish your prestige as a demon lord?"

Prestige?—I've got none of that.

I felt like Shuna's been lecturing me a lot lately. Whenever I encountered anything troublesome, I just tossed it to Rigurd to deal with it. All I did was travel and chill with Gobta... That's why a tie or two wouldn't really have an impact on my name.

"There shouldn't be an issue. You can even say that I was defeated."

Anything goes with things like victory or defeat. I answered the way I did because it was simply what I thought, yet it seemed to have a profound impact on Hinata and the rest.

"I mean, if you consider carefully, there are very few real examples of humans defeating a demon lord. There will be severe consequences if you just go and simply claim something like that. It may even cause the balance of power to collapse."

"T-That's exactly the case! You've just become a demon lord. If you allow other factions to look down on you under such circumstances, you'd be asking others to intrude on you and your domain!"

Hinata and Renard both tried to persuade me out of it. Most likely because they were worried about me, however...

"Benimaru, do you know of any possible forces that may invade this land?"

"Not at the moment. Even if there is anyone foolish enough to invade, I shall destroy them for you."

Hmmhmm, how reliable.

As for the Western Nations, Diablo was making proper arrangements. The rescued reporters apparently became his tools to exploit, so right now he seemed to be pushing his plan forward with an iron fist. As reports have pointed out, sooner or later Youm would be crowned as the new king. Even the small neighboring nations near Farmus were helping to accelerate the process. If that were the case, the only country left that possessed sufficient force to battle against us would be the Kingdom of Ingracia. Right now, with Luminas's promised hundred-year buffer period, we'd effectively conquered the Western Nations.

It was the same with the demon lords. I defeated Clayman in front of their eyes, which had quite the effect in setting an example. As long as I remained alive, even if the news of my defeat came out, they probably wouldn't believe it. They may suspect it is a trap and instead proceed with caution.

"How confident. I have no objection if that's the case. Then we shall take your proposal graciously and use it effectively."

"While we're at it, why don't you make an announcement about how the residents of our nation 'Are not bad people'!"

"You are right. Honestly, the citizens of this town are all very kind. It is hard to believe that they are goblins and orcs."

"It is still debatable whether demi-humans are monsters or not. But I think those are just discriminations caused by bias."

"Right. It would certainly be challenging if the humans become hostile against demi-humans while races such as dwarves are considered as an actual part of humanity. If they are categorized as monsters, even the elves would fall under the same category."

Races such as ogres and lizardmen were originally considered as demi-humans, yet due to their hostility against humans, they were categorized as monsters. As for their evolved forms (youki and dragonewts respectively), they were not categorized as monsters but instead as Earth Deities.

In short, the only point of distinction is whether they were hostile to humans or not. For this reason, it would be impossible to lump all monsters together as enemies.

"We have had diplomatic ties with the Dwarven Kingdom as well, so it would be fine if we talk King Gazel into making a hundred-year friendship. Wouldn't it add some credibility to our promise to not attack humans?"

Hinata nodded, seemingly making her mind up as well.

"I suppose that's fine. It would be much easier to persuade them and earn their trust. Moreover, since we have the opportunity, we may also eliminate the people with deep connections with the Seven Luminaries in the process."

It gave the impression that the Western Holy Church wasn't so unified either. But it wasn't anything strange. I guess that's just what it means to be an organization.

Hinata's voice was ruthless and cold, so no one dared to object. She planned to take the opportunity and push all the charges onto the Seven Luminaries. Even though this method seemed dirty, that was Lubelius's business. It wasn't an issue we could have a say in, so we just let them have their fun.

Then we begin to discuss the details.

For future communication, Arnaud and Bacchus decided to temporarily stay here, though they would first need to return to their home nation for preparations. They apparently planned to bring some civil servants along as well. As for us, we planned to take the time to construct a Luminism church for their accommodation. I didn't think it would take more than two weeks'

time. We should be seeing believers of Luminism coming in and out of our nation in the future as well. Although it was disconcerting to acknowledge religious freedom, it would all work out in the end. If there's a will there's a way.

Honestly, the monsters didn't believe in any god. There wasn't a single almighty deity that was widely recognized in this world, which was quite different compared to my previous world. There were indeed religions, but they were more like, for example, tributes to the earth deities. In a practical sense, they believed in deities who would actually respond to their prayers with actual aid. A good example would be the Worshippers of Dragons who revered Milim. Among the many religions of this nature, Luminism held the greatest power. The hands and feet of Luminas that were the Holy Knights would aid the weak, thus earning the trust of the public. If we changed our perspective, we could just consider this as our nation receiving a branch of the Western Holy Church that would help the weak.

I figured that even though there may not be such a chance, we may still help each other out if there was ever any trouble. When any threats appear, we may fight alongside the Holy Knights. Then, we'd have no reason to say no. Naturally they would be under surveillance, but with some freedoms.

And just like that, we were able to come to a compromise on the whole thing.



This concluded the difficult topic.

We made a deal with Luminas, thus the plan for the Holy Empire of Lubelius to acknowledge us had also been properly laid out. Those would be sufficient as compensation. We would only have to build a good relationship through communication on top of that. The duration was one hundred years, so we would have to utilize this period of time wisely so both parties could better acquaint themselves. Therefore, we agreed upon doing exchanges with the Holy Knights on a regular basis, starting with the sharing of our technology. This battle had greatly damaged their weapons as well, so I suggested that we would help repair them. On the surface, we were just demonstrating how high the technological standards of our nation were, but our real intention was to examine the properties of their weapons.

We first got our hands on a set of those rare armaments of light²². Wisdom King Raphael-sensei said it would offer the user's mana—which is their spirit aura—to the spirits so that they could be materialized. Because the sample had been destroyed due to overcharging, I exchanged it with a set of armor that Garm crafted. The Holy Knights seemed to think it was a bad deal, but they still gave it to us without reservations since they felt sorry for the incident this time.

²²Referring to the “Spirit Armament” in vol 7.

I initially thought that Hinata would have objected, but it turned out she didn't. That's why I decided to gift her a sword that I personally handcrafted. And speaking of the sword Hinata used, its name was "Moonlight Rapier (Moonlight)." I heard that Luminas gifted it to her and that it possessed great power. Or I should say, it was a little overpowered. I figured that it was just a unique-grade weapon of the highest level, yet it turned out to be a legendary weapon.

According to Kajjin and Kurobee, the quality of magisteel evolved over time. That's why after a period of time, first-class gear would apparently evolve as well, their quality increasing exponentially. The evidence being the items retrieved from ancient ruins. It was said that they've discovered ultra-quality gear that modern technologies were unable to replicate. These things were crowned the titles of legendary and were often sealed away, so normally there wouldn't even be a chance to lay eyes on them.

Both Kurobee and Garm seemed to be aiming to craft such a weapon. The two were mesmerized after laying eyes on Hinata's Moonlight Rapier. I hoped they would reach that goal someday.

Moreover, due to the sword's incredible nature, it was only used in crucial moments. If she tried to unsheathe the sword in the town, it would cause enormous hazards to the surroundings, considering its level. It would be like carrying a rocket launcher instead of a pistol for self-defense. There's no way you could just casually swing something like that around on a daily basis. I gifted her a sword based on these thoughts, and she seemed to like it a lot more than I expected.

Hinata's rapier was destroyed after I devoured and recycled it, so I created a new sword after analyzing and improving upon her previous weapon.²³ Its quality reached unique-grade, so it shouldn't have been much different in practice. After all, even its special ability of 'Dead End Rainbow' was recreated.

I also took in the broken greatsword called Dragon Buster or something. Its quality was surprisingly garbage. Seriously, how in the world could that thing possibly defeat Veldora?

There were also things like the 'Gear of Holy Spirit'—but they wouldn't allow us to see that. It was unique to Hinata and the original gear for the Spirit Armament. *Aww, I really wanted to analyze it—*

«Notice. Said information has been collected during combat and completed with 'Analyze and Assess.'»

...Umm...what?

C-completely flawless in action, Raphael-sensei. Or should I perhaps address you as grandmaster from now on?

«...»

Ah, you don't seem to be in the mood for that, I guess. I should just thank you nicely in

²³This is referring to her rainbow sword

advance.

Ok, this is epic. And speaking of which, Raphael sure was a ruthless character. With the results of the ‘Analyze and Assess’ of the inferior version of the Spirit Armament combined with information from my fight with Hinata, we were seemingly able to recreate the ‘Gear of Holy Spirit.’ It must’ve originally been a piece of equipment with Holy-element, but based on its principle of function, it may have been modified to possess monster-element.

Sorry Hinata.

‘Gear of Holy Spirit’ appeared to be some confidential equipment on a national level, and now we made it ours using ‘Analyze and Assess.’ It appeared to be rather tricky to use, so I had to figure out who to give it to. Just like that, we added another powerful item to our nation’s arsenal.



It was evening by the time we finished, reaching an understanding on the exchanges. Since we had wrapped up everything, I suspected the Holy Knights would want to return early, but I still invited them to dine with us out of courtesy.

“Right, Hinata and Luminas. It’s quite late already, so why don’t you set off tomorrow?” I threw out casually, really.

After all, Luminas could use ‘Spatial Movement’ to return anyway. Hinata no doubt had already logged a location in Lubelius using the elemental-magic ‘Waypoint Transportation’ as well. And of course, it would be the same for the other Holy Knights. They were all powerful individuals above Rank A, so they didn’t need to worry about how to return. I presumed they would probably answer with “We are truly sorry, but we should leave since our business here is done” or something along those lines to quickly bail. However—

“We are truly sorry—”

Hmm hmm, that’s right—or so I thought, but what Hinata said next was completely unexpected.

“—to bother you, but since you’ve asked, do bear to accommodate us tonight as well.”

“Yeah. I liked that hot spring very much, and the food was delicious too. I’m looking forward to tonight as well!”

Hmm? How strange? Not only Hinata, Luminas didn’t seem to be planning on returning either. Seeing that the two had made the decision, even the Holy Knights who planned to return changed their minds. With smiles on their faces, happy chatter with their fellow colleagues broke out.

Are the Holy Knights really okay behaving like this?

But those were just my thoughts. I couldn’t take my words back at this point in time. Since

they were already looking forward to it this much, let's give them a night to remember.

.....

.....

...

"All right then, since this is the case, we are having sukiyaki²⁴ today!"

" " "WOAHHHHH!" " "

"..."

How should I put it, up until yesterday we were still enemies, yet now my subordinates were having a jolly fun time with the Holy Knights.

Ahh, that does put a smile on my face... There was just a small part of me that was conflicted, "Is this really okay"?

In this world, clergymen who couldn't eat meat seemed to be a non-existing taboo. It must have been due to the lack of food that they were not picky about what they ate. For this reason, I decided to treat them with chicken-duck and cow-deer²⁵ we recently started to develop. There were also freshly picked vegetables. Shuna had made this effort since they would be more suitable in a hot pot. The bones of the chicken-ducks would be brewed into broth soups while their meat was served raw like sashimi. The main course was the jowl meat of the cow-deer, served with the sukiyaki for everyone to enjoy. In addition, everyone received one sanitized chicken-duck egg as well.

That should do. They will definitely be delicious.

"Well then, to the prospect of a lasting friendship, cheers!"

" " "Cheers!" " "

The feast that night kicked off with my toast.

First, we had the cooked rice that was well received the day before.

Don't be so picky with its black color. It would be a waste to share the white rice reserved only for me with these people who don't know its value.

Only Hinata was looking at my bowl enviously, so I ordered to prepare some for her since we both came from the same place.

Plain white rice²⁶ was the most delicious rice after all, although fried rice tasted great too. We requested the Kingdom of Blumund to provide us with rice to cook, but there was still room for improvement. Those couldn't compare at all with our white rice.

"There's even white rice... Aren't you living too much of a perfect life²⁷?" Hinata grum-

²⁴Japanese style hot pot

²⁵Still no clue what to call these chimera

²⁶I think it is referring to eating normal cooked white rice without any other additional ingredients or cooking process.

²⁷Perfect as in everything Rimuru wants gets fulfilled.

bled, ostensibly displeased. Her voice was shaking a little too. Could it be that she still wasn't contented?

"If you have a problem, you can return the white rice—"

"I never said that!" Hinata interrupted me while shielding her bowl.

Are you really getting worked up over something like that? How childish—But those were just my thoughts; *I'd better not say it out loud.*

"But it's truly astounding, baffling even how you were able to recreate the food from that world so perfectly. You managed to build such a comfortable environment in a mere span of two years... The things we desire, yet are incapable of accomplishing, you have done so easily..."

"It's nothing really. But you can praise me more."

"Jokes aside, when I heard the rumors from Yuuki, I thought he was exaggerating. But that was because even Yuuki had only heard of these rumors through his espionage agents. It's truly hard to believe without seeing it for yourself..." Hinata said, full of frustration.

It was no use telling me these things, not to mention the fact that I still haven't been able to reach my end goals anyway.

"No, this is still not enough. The transportation of goods is way too slow while the speed of information transmission is subpar as well. Even though there is magic, the issues concerning our living environment and food have only been improved to some extent."

"To some extent... Geez...it's like you are mocking all of our progress so far. How dare you even say such a thing after recreating all these delicious dishes!"

My statement seemed to have ticked off Hinata. With that being said however, progress will stagnate once you start getting complacent. I was the king of a nation after all, so my ambitions should be grander. King in name while also being a demon lord...

"That's precisely why, even though the food aspect has been satisfying, we are still lacking in culture. Our entertainment industry is also lacking. Like the manga Veldora reads, that's the type of entertainment I hope to make."

"Entertainment? Seriously? ...When people already have to give everything they have just to survive in this harsh world!"

"Yeah, that's true. That's why we are working on eliminating threats like dangerous monsters. There's no point in hiding anymore, so I'll make this clear now. I plan to make Youm the king and build a new nation. Moreover, we plan to establish an influence on the Western Nations."

"What are you on about? I want an explanation."

Since you want an explanation, an explanation you will get.

"I have a lot of ideas, first of all—"

I launched into a discussion about my ideas for the future while eating the sukiyaki. The current plan was to have the human society accept us. Given that all the leaders of the world had come to know us, this plan was halfway to success. There were even reports of suspected spies being sighted in our nation. We thus showcased our harmless side to them without even

noticing. The news should also have been spreading among merchants and adventurers so that the civilians of different kingdoms would learn about the prospect of our coexistence. However, it would probably take some time before such an idea firmly took root. But we'd get there one day, so there's no need to rush.

Next in line was the preparation of roads. We were working on that aspect as well at the moment. We were constructing trade routes that could be traveled with the guarantee of safety. The roads to Dwargon and Blumund had been opened and now we were planning to commence new construction projects to the Sorcerer's Dynasty Sarion. I also planned to work on the construction of the road to the Beast Kingdom Eurazania in the future.

Going hand in hand with this was the matter concerning communication. Since I had no concept for wireless transmission, I had to give up the idea. Now, even though it may be easy to seek answers from Wisdom King Raphael-san, it would be difficult to get everyone else to understand. The three dwarven brothers and Kaijin could probably understand, but I couldn't rely on them for everything.

This proved to be a problem for future study. I wished to place my hope in the children and build up schools for their education. Right now, we were only at private school (Terakoya)²⁸ level where we taught kids about writing and basic arithmetic. But I aspired to use my network formed during my time as a teacher to hire some human tutors.

But going back to the original topic, let's talk about communication. Right now, the available communication network was mostly formed by communicative crystal balls that only mages could operate. Moreover, they stood the risk of being stolen, given that they were magic items after all. In fact, there were several cases of theft involving them. More importantly, we had to assume that there may be no available mage when an emergency call needed to be made. We had to find a medium that didn't run the risk of being stolen and was also accessible to anyone. These were quite demanding terms, yet there turned out to be a solution.

I had my eyes on 'Sticky Steel Web' and magisteel. I already tried it with Souei. The conductivity of telepathic thoughts through my 'Sticky Steel Web' was extremely high. There were also magicules within it, lending the clarity of communication a very high quality. There was also magisteel, which possesses large amounts of magicule as well. That's why I suspected it had similar properties to 'Sticky Steel Web.' It turned out to be exactly the case after I ran an experiment. That's why I decided to use them effectively.

I would process magisteel into cables with a diameter of around one centimeter and connect them to all the major cities using 'Shadow Step.' That alone wouldn't do the trick, but in conjunction with the device that Vesta and the rest developed, it was going to convert one's thoughts into voice and image. The device could be run even without mana, which was why the devices could be installed as soon as they were developed. Therefore, all we could do was to start preparing the necessary magisteel.

²⁸Not exactly private school in the western sense. The term here is “寺子屋” which is referring to private institute in the ancient Japan Edo Period for educating commoners. In other words, this is a very basic level of education.

Due to our nation having a huge population of monsters, the iron ores stored in our warehouses would become magic ores overtime. We would be processing them into “Magic Steel String” and have individuals capable of ‘Shadow Step’ connect the wires. Since there weren’t any obstacles, setting them up would likely be effortless. Depending on how much we could make, we would not be connecting wires exclusively to major cities, but also the villages along the main lines of the network as well. We had that part planned out too. We just had to wait for the development of a transmitter.

Coming from a world thoroughly defined by the Information Age, I couldn’t overlook the importance of transmission speed.

“What do you think, won’t it be convenient after it is completed?” I bragged to Hinata.

Once the communication network was complete, we would focus on creating recreation opportunities and developing our culture. My dreams were getting grander day by day, leaving tons more things left to do. I hoped that with the fulfillment of these dreams, we could finally live a safe and comfortable life.

Without noticing, the venue of the feast had turned dead silent. It seemed that I was too mesmerized in my speech that all the Holy Knights had been frozen out of shock. In contrast, the eyes of all my subordinates were glowing with enthusiasm. My ramblings must’ve motivated them.

Seeing how we were acting, Hinata muttered, baffled: “I mean… Normally shouldn’t this kind of information be considered a state secret? Especially the part about communication, you can’t just tell people from other countries. Never mind, this is fine I guess…”

Hinata’s statement was like a bucket of cold water pouring over my head. I may have talked too much after getting a little too cocky. It was all because of the alcohol.

—Such an idea, getting drunk, was another big misstep of mine.

I was too busy thinking about how I screwed up when Wisdom King Raphael-san took things into its own hands.

«Notice. ‘Status Ailment Nullification’ reactivated. In addition, I am afraid that the re-interference of said ‘Resistance’ is impossible to engage at the moment»

W-what did you say! There was no use making up for the matter by complaining now. Moreover, this setting didn’t seem to be switched on and off based on my thoughts. While ignoring my personal will, the effect of wines was forcefully nullified.

Didn’t I tell you that alcohol is not poison?! My complaints couldn’t move the stone heart of that cruel skill.

Riiiiight, I was drunk yesterday and had a headache this morning due to a hangover, all because I let myself loose and got hammered a bit too hard. Perhaps I wouldn’t have spilled that much to Hinata had I not been drunk. I just gave up my struggle and considered the incident my own doing.

But apparently, I wasn't the only one getting in trouble because of alcohol.

I peeked at Hinata.

"Ayy ayy, isn't this great, Hinata-sama?! That means he really trusts us! Anyway, let's forget about that for now. I'll happily take this meat if you don't want it!"

The person in front of my eyes seemed to be someone named Fritz. The jubilant looking man was combing through Hinata's plate for good quality meat. I recalled him being one of the captains. His act of picking up the meat was precise and on-point. This type of absolutely fearless²⁹ behavior must've been the result of someone getting far too drunk for his own good.

As the meat reached Fritz's mouth, veins popped out of Hinata's temple. It was only noticeable because her skin was so white and tender—of course that's not the only reason.

"Fritz... You have a death wish?"

"H-how strange? Hinata-sama, what's with the serious look..."

He seemed to have suddenly sobered up. Fritz jumped up from his seat ready to flee, but there's no escape from Hinata. His chin was hit by a knife-hand chop, causing him to collapse like a puppet whose strings had been cut after suffering a concussion.

I planned to use this fool as an example in the future for what happens when you drink too recklessly.

Fast forward to the next day...

"About the things you said yesterday, if your city is that extravagant, beware of getting attacked by the angels," Hinata gave me this last piece of advice that she suddenly remembered right before departing.

The feast last night was not suitable for discussing such matters, but she seemed to have decided to inform us after considering our future interactions. It must be the angel army Elalude mentioned to Gazel.

According to Hinata, those angels with individual ranking of B-plus would attack in an army of millions. The magnitude of which was unimaginable. They even had established a commanding system with positions ranging from captains to commanders. It was rumored that they even assigned generals. It was said that if one traced long enough back in history, you would discover that the angels have even once fought against the demon lords. Their abilities were unknown, but even when compared to the demon lords, they were still undoubtedly strong.

The angels would choose monsters and civilizations with highly developed cities as their attack targets. Even the Western Holy Church didn't consider angels as a friend of humanity. It became only natural if you looked at it from a different perspective, considering that after all, the true identity of the God Luminas was actually Demon Lord Luminas.

"I find those flying bugs annoying as well. I'd love to take care of them myself, but it would also reveal my true identity... But since that lizard fucked me over, the Holy Knights already know who I am."

Even Luminas had some grudge against the angels.

²⁹The source says "act that doesn't even fear god"

As for the Holy Knights, they claimed to have sworn to keep Luminas's real identity a secret. Given that was the case, we would likely have more room to negotiate the matter in the future.

"I've also heard about the angels from others, so I'm aware of it. If they plan to take on my country, I'll have to fight against them."

I had no intention of being courteous with them. Whatever this army in heaven thought was their own business, but if they wanted to force those views on us, we'd have a bone to pick.

"Hehe, I knew you'd say that. When that time comes, perhaps we will join hands in battle."

"The same goes for me. I don't intend to have my 'Capital' destroyed again, whether it be from those flying bugs or that lizard. Rimuru, if you don't wish to become my enemy, make sure you educate that lizard well."

Leaving these words, they then departed.

This has been quite the meaningful experience considering the insights we gained from them. We hoped to build a friendly relationship not only with Hinata but Luminas as well. And so, the series of conflicts with the Western Holy Church and Holy Empire of Lubelius concluded with a satisfying ending.

Soon after, sometime later—

The Holy Empire of Lubelius, which had been holding an attitude of silent acknowledgement towards the Dwarven Kingdom, suddenly made a public announcement that acknowledged the dwarves as friends of humanity. They followed the statement up with the declaration of establishing diplomatic ties with the monster kingdom of Jura Tempest Federation. Even though there was a time limit, they also expressed the signing of a non-aggression pact with us. Not only demi-humans, but monsters as well were acknowledged to be a part of humanity.

—With this incident as the trigger, people began to explore the new relationship between man and monster.

**Chapter
2**

**Nations and
Invitations**

That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime

Chapter 2

Nations and Invitations

The news couldn't be kept a secret even if we wanted to. The rumor spread to the leaders of the nations surrounding the Jura Great Forest too quickly to be controlled.

—Hinata the Saint was defeated by Demon Lord Rimuru.

The information was released from multiple sources with great caution in order to prevent exposing the actual origin. The news was spread with much vivid description. It of course had to do with someone's conspiracy. Yet without anyone's notice, the rumors started to spread like wildfire.

No matter how secretive the attack was, it couldn't have hidden from everyone. Tempest Federation was currently right in the middle of the public eye, and so the neighboring kingdoms have been vigilant in their intelligence gathering. Given the fact that the march of the Holy Knight Order became an open secret, it only served to increase credibility of the rumor. As for the people who had received this news, there were all kinds of different reactions.

Some were fearful of Demon Lord Rimuru.

Some were angered by Hinata the Saint's supposed incompetence.

Some found it to be rather unimportant and instead focused on what they could do to keep their own country safe—some took special precautions.

Not only were there rumors flowing around; information had also been released through official channels. Hinata the Saint and Demon Lord Rimuru battled and ended up in a tie. The result of which was—

Holy Empire of Lubelius and Jura Tempest Federation signed a ceasefire and formed a non-aggression pact.

This information being as loaded as it was, there were still more pressing issues that needed to be addressed. Namely, the invitations sent out by said target of the rumors, Demon Lord Rimuru. The nations didn't really trust the information put out by the Western Holy Church at

face value. This event was already beyond comprehension, the entire world has and would be shaken by its occurrence.

That was a common understanding among the leaders of the world. Although no one knew the details, the Holy Knight Order didn't appear to have sustained any casualties. This became a decisive factor to the decision making of the leaders of the nations.

Troubled by a multitude of thoughts, the Western nations became ensnared in the upcoming turmoil.



The location is the Dwarven Kingdom, the Armed Nation of Dwargon. The top officials of the nation—the ministers of every department have gathered for a meeting.

“That guy is up to no good again—”

A rather imposing voice rung in the meeting room, one that belonged to Gazel Dwargon—Hero King of the Dwarven Kingdom.

For the past few days, his covert agents have been busy. One by one they reported in and the intelligence department had been working overnight to analyze all of the information they received. They produced detailed documents and reports after analyzing video footage, making several copies before presenting them to the ministers.

The wealth of information was enormous. As a result, the number of pages in the document was staggering. It was no wonder they'd been working overtime.

Nevertheless, the current state of affairs was already much more favorable in light of what had transpired over the past few months... When compared to that time the slime Rimuru became a demon lord...

They hadn't been able to catch a breath when, right after ascending, Rimuru dueled Demon Lord Clayman in a political nightmare. It was the same for the agents, intelligence department, King Gazel and the ministers of the kingdom. All of them suffered from a lack of sleep on account of that dire situation. Thinking back to that time, the current predicament was a piece of cake in comparison.

“He...hehehe. We'll have to consider this as truth even if it's unbelievable. Your junior has defeated that Saint...” Vaughn remarked, though in response, the Commander of the Pegasus Knight Order, Dolph, a far more serious person, disciplined him, “That's extremely disrespectful of you, Vaughn. This is a public meeting room, not your own private quarters. Be mindful of where you are!”

Dolph gave Vaughn a stern warning. Vaughn on the other hand shrugged and nodded care-

lessly. But looking across the room and receiving nothing but critical glances from other ministers, he let out a dry cough in response.

“Don’t blame him, Dolph. Even I was surprised, so Vaughn naturally couldn’t have made it through the news without taking a jab at it,” King Gazel intervened to break up the tension and approve Vaughn’s indiscreet remark. Perhaps everyone was really just so baffled by the reports that they now lacked the fortitude to offer any criticism of Vaughn’s comment themselves.

Speaking of the information in their hands, it contained the entire record of the incident from start to finish.

The content was shocking. The so-called strongest human warriors, the hundred members of the Holy Knight Order secretly launched an assault on the monster kingdom. Even the covert agents led by Anrietta, whom Gazel took pride in, only got hold of their movement in recent days. Or rather, they only started to notice after the conflict between the two parties broke out.

However, since his agents had discovered it, the intelligence agencies of other nations must have found out as well, knowing that many spies had infiltrated Tempest. Demon Lord Rimuru seemed to be aware of them already, but he simply let them be, likely for (commercial) self-promotional purposes.

With such a large-scale skirmish going on, no matter how stupid the covert agents may have been, they had to be aware of the condition—and its result:

The defeat of the Holy Knight Order.

Demon Lord Rimuru’s subordinates were victorious without any casualties. Thanks to the expansive report the spies assembled, Gazel and the rest had a firm grasp upon what happened, despite not having been at the battlefield.

“Your Majesty, my subordinate witnessed the battle in person—”

As she finished, Anrietta began to give the detailed report. According to her, Hinata the Saint, and Demon Lord Rimuru seemed to have engaged in a one-on-one duel at the end. However, the magicule content of the battlefield was distorted suddenly and it interfered with all magic surveillance.

“—We also detected extremely powerful youki³⁰ at the scene. I suspect our surveillance was influenced by it.”

“Couldn’t it just be a magicule storm that was powerful enough to interfere with the magic surveillance?”

“Jaine-sama, I don’t think it was a magicule storm; instead, I think it was vast amounts of energy of opposing nature suddenly colliding that caused the interference on our signal transmission.”

“Hmm, regardless, you were not able to see the result of the duel, were you? If that’s the case, how did you conclude that Hinata was the one who lost?” the Court Mage old lady, Jaine, asked.

³⁰demonic aura

As Commander of the Holy Knight Order, Hinata was well known for her ferocity. Moreover, Jaine herself was one of many to have experienced that fierceness in person, so it was hard for her to believe Hinata's defeat to be the truth.

"This may just be some form of indirect evidence, however, for the Western Holy Church, distinguished for their hostility towards all monsters, to suddenly revoke its long-standing doctrine as well as wanting to establish formal ties with us dwarves, possibly to gauge our intent... There is no way a victorious Hinata would have allowed that. In addition, their home nation Lubelius is also changing its stance, forming diplomatic ties with Tempest Federation. They even went to inform every nation, which is basically the equivalent of an official declaration. Therefore, isn't this sudden one-eighty evidence for the defeat of Hinata the Saint?"

"Uhh... You have a point, if those stubborn-minded human-supremacists suddenly decided to change their minds on this... It means that some factor is forcing them to do so, so I suppose we can consider this. If that is indeed true, King Gazel—the likelihood of Demon Lord Rimuru having grown stronger than you has become a lot higher," Jaine said bitterly.

Although she didn't want to admit it, Hinata the Saint, and Sword Saint³¹ Gazel were similar in strength. If Hinata was defeated, it would imply that Demon Lord Rimuru had grown stronger than Hero King Gazel.

"That's just nonsense!"

"Jaine-dono, are you insulting King Gazel?!"

Despite the ministers' shouts in protest, Jaine remained unfazed.

That's an undeniable fact after all—Jaine thought to herself. Besides, Gazel agreed with her view.

"In the span of a mere few months, is it possible to achieve that much growth?" Gazel sneered at the lack of crisis awareness in Jaine's question.

That can't just be called growth anymore!

This situation started to genuinely worry Gazel down to his core. During their last encounter, he'd noticed that the newly ascended Demon Lord Rimuru was emitting a bizarre aura. He did not sense any sort of immense power, instead it was calm and peaceful, without much intent at all. While Gazel possessed the power to see people's thoughts, even with his Unique Skill 'Dictator'³², he couldn't see through everything about him. It meant that Rimuru had gotten complete control over his power.

"Indeed. He has evolved to a Demon Lord and possesses enough strength to rival me. It wouldn't be strange if he could defeat Hinata," Gazel said with much consideration. Even though the actual situation was still unclear, his survival alone was already commendable. Yet this still seemed hard for many of the ministers to accept, as they responded to Gazel rather emphatically: "But, but! How could a monster born only a few years ago even compare to your Majesty, a

³¹This is just a title “剣聖” (Master of Sword/Sword Sage). It's not implying Gazel's species, though he is likely a sage similar to the Ten Great Saints.

³²Annotation: 独裁者 (ウエニタツモノ) I have no idea what the katakana annotation means, but a search on google shows it has something to do with Japanese parliament, still, just going with the Kanji meaning this time.

hero?"

"Indeed. Could there be a mistake?"

"Moreover, if that is truly the case, wouldn't Demon Lord Rimuru be way too dangerous?"

They expressed their views one after another. Gazel let out an internal sigh. If they were really considering that, then Demon Lord Rimuru would not be the only person posing a threat.

His eyes fell on the document. According to their spies' investigation, Rimuru's lieutenants also fought against the Ten Great Saints, and the report showed that the monsters under his rule did not suffer a single defeat. They fought against the humans on their own and achieved complete victory. A particularly distressing report claimed that one of them had suppressed several Holy Knights all by themselves. If they decided to trust this report, it would mean that the total military force of Tempest Federation had surpassed that of the Armed Nation of Dwargon. The magic item used to record video footage was not precise enough to make sense of the situation, which was frustrating.

The video recording device was one of their proudest inventions, achieved only through the finest dwarven technology, yet it was unable to operate in locations where magicule content was unstable. Not only that, but the video was unable to record any audio either. This information alone would not be enough to analyze the power levels of the people being recorded; trying to sort out the situation itself was already challenging enough. With that being said however, these documents were indeed important...

The footage did manage to capture some monsters that Gazel was familiar with. They were the majins under Rimuru that Gazel conversed with once or twice in the past.

Have those guys grown stronger as well? At this point, they must be hard to defeat even with all of our nation's might...

The ministers continued to argue about the issue, taking sides against each other about the severity of the danger. Gazel was troubled that both sides made valid points. Ignoring the arguing ministers, he began to ponder. He was considering whether to eliminate the opposition before they became too much of a threat.

No—Gazel rejected such an idea outright.

Demon Lord Rimuru was a reasonable monster.

More importantly, he wished for friendly co-existence with human nations. The proof of this desire was the fact that he had built a civilized town and helped humans, all while trying to cooperate with other kingdoms. Had Demon Lord Rimuru not been a monster that understood and respected humankind, humanity would have faced an unprecedented threat.

Such worries are probably unnecessary. Kukuku, Rimuru would surely never consider destroying humanity!

Gazel firmly believed so. Demon Lord Clayman was eliminated yet Hinata remained unharmed, this was a fact. For that alone, Gazel believed Rimuru would not be an enemy to mankind. That's why Gazel decided to laugh off the ministers' concerns.

“Hehehe, don’t worry! That Rimuru is my junior. Moreover, unlike other nations we were the first to support him, thus winning his trust. Are you all wishing for me to abandon this trust and the benefits that come with it just to doubt Rimuru?” His words were infused with Ruler Haki (imposing aura) so as to intimidate the ministers. Thanks to its power, most ministers managed to regain their composure.

“Indeed. Now that I think about it, it is quite stupid to abandon the trading opportunities with this nation—”

“Hmm, the imports from that nation are all quite charming. Even the production of healing potions is now dependent on that nation.”

“It is the same for their technological exchange, which can’t be established if we don’t have faith in them. So why are we getting panicked now...?”

“That’s true. We shouldn’t be worrying so much at this point in time.”

The ministers looked at each other awkwardly and gave an embarrassed smile. Seeing their expressions, a smile emerged on Gazel’s face as well. Being frank and honest was the motto of the Dwarven Kingdom, even if the other party was indeed a demon lord, that didn’t warrant discriminating against them. Seeing that everyone was reminded of this, Gazel felt satisfied as well.

Rimuru had indeed acquired astoundingly immense power, yet anyone who had witnessed how he treated others in life, would undoubtedly know that he was someone worthy of trust. Right now they were on quite friendly terms with this Rimuru. Given this was the case, their relationship had to be maintained in the future.

Rimuru mentioning that he was originally “from another world” was of great importance. He also had the ability to recreate the knowledge from the other world through his overpowered skills. His stubborn desire to be a bit more sumptuous became his motivation for which he came up with all sorts of inventions. Even thinking about it made him intrigued.

Moreover, his subordinates all greatly admired this trait of his and would carry out any task no matter how (purposefully) challenging it may be. The proof was the construction of a road between Tempest Federation and the Dwarven Kingdom. It was a road that crossed through mountains and valleys, yet one that anyone could travel safely. It was monsters under Rimuru’s rule who were responsible for paving this road.

His idea needed only a single command to be realized. Even things that the other other-worlders previously gave up trying due to a lack of funds or labor posed no problem to Demon Lord Rimuru. He possessed the capabilities to push his plans through forcefully and was strong enough to have many monster followers.

It truly makes people envious—Gazel thought.

No matter how hard the problem was, “Everyone, let’s all work hard and find a solution!”—As soon as Rimuru gave such senseless speeches, the monsters under his rule would strive with all they had. Everyone would deem such an order to be natural and justified without question. That was the real terrifying side of that slime, his almost genius ability to win people’s hearts.

For better or worse, that demon lord was truly intriguing.

Perhaps I'm in that guy's pocket too.

But that would be fine regardless, Gazel secretly admitted to himself.

What would happen if Rimuru tried to build a world according to his ideals? To Gazel, it was a fascinating thought. He wanted to see that one day. It would undoubtedly trigger the “Tenma Great War” (Great war between Heaven and Monster). Rimuru was aware of that too, so he probably had plans to engage it. Tempest Federation was indeed strong enough to become a fearsome military power, they could stand a chance to win against the army of heaven. If it came to that, Gazel concluded he must give them his support.

“That Demon Lord Rimuru may not be related to me by blood, yet we are as close as brothers. As long as that guy doesn’t lose his humanity, I intend to support him with all we have. We will welcome the arrival of a new age; a cultural enlightenment. Speak now if any of you have an objection,” the imposing voice of Dwarven King Gazel Dwango resounded throughout the meeting hall.

This was the Hero King’s decision and his right.

“I support you, King Gazel. You are our big boss after all!” the military Commander in Chief Vaughn replied with a laugh.

“My liege, I am your shadow. Naturally, I will obey your decision,” head of Covert Operatives Anrietta responded without hesitation.

“Go wild with your ideas. I don’t have many days left at this age, so I would like to live my life to the fullest during the last period of my life, to follow King Gazel to the end of the world and until my death,” old granny Jaine who had lived since the time of the first king said morbidly, yet lively. Jaine’s declaration indicated her absolute support of King Gazel, no matter what.

There was also Commander of the Pegasus Knight Order Dolph. He sighed rather helplessly and said: “Since everyone has spoken, I can only clean up after them. There’s gotta be someone to come out and intervene in case he³³ gets out of control, right?”

This type of responsibility always fell on Dolph’s shoulders, but he didn’t begrudge them for that.

And so—

With these heroes and highest of officials deciding on this new policy, no one could object—but that was just on the surface, the ministers still held on to some of their own doubts. Nevertheless, they would go on to publicly support the decision wholeheartedly, with the hero’s decision as cover.

There was a single reason for that; as citizens of a powerful tech-nation, the cultural enlightenment the king mentioned earlier excited them greatly. As a nation, there hadn’t been much progress despite their continuous efforts in technological research. Yet that demon lord had uncaringly and fearlessly pushed forward research at an unprecedented rate. The report sent by

³³Somewhat vague here, I think it’s referring to Rimuru.

their ex-colleague Marquis Vesta supported this as well. Some even envied the freedom he had in that regard.

“How can Vesta-dono get to do whatever he wants like that?! Unforgivable!”

“I know, right?! Have you heard? It is rumored that the roads there have even had new anti-monster barriers installed.”

“And streetlamps. I heard they are also developing some sort of communication device.”

“Developing potions alone must not be satisfying enough, it makes me jealo—I mean outraged at what they are doing!”

Along such lines, the ministers revealed their actual feelings towards the topic. Gazel smiled wryly as he overheard their complaints. He coughed expectantly. Almost like a signal, the meeting room went silent instantly. The ministers turned their eyes to focus on Gazel.

“I’ve come to a decision. Our nation will trust the Demon Lord Rimuru and move forward alongside him! We will be the ones to accept and carry out the duties of preserving their technology. Even if they get defeated by the army of heaven, their technology must not be lost! This is the policy of mine, the policy of the Armed Nation of Dwargon!”

No one planned to complain about it from the start since King Gazel always put his nation first, concerning himself with its future.

The ministers all bowed their heads in expressing their agreement to his speech.

“Kukuku, trying to capitalize fully on the benefits, I see? It sounds a lot better to just say it rather than wrapping it in lofty rhetoric,” Vaughn’s comment resonated with everyone present.

They’d also decided to accept the proposal from Holy Empire of Lubelius, thus concluding the meeting. Some other civil officials could handle the procedures next, to form pacts with not only Tempest Federation, but also the Holy Empire of Lubelius. Although it would probably be a future matter, but these two nations would likely collaborate with Dwargon to prepare for the “Tenma Great War.” It was still unknown whether this judgement was correct or not.

But this is good enough—Gazel thought to himself. As everything appeared to be settled and King Gazel made his leave, one of the ministers raised his hand.

“Sire, may I borrow a moment of your time?”

He hurried the individual with his eyes to report.

“The thing is this, my liege, Rigurd-dono has sent an invitation. It states that Rimuru-dono will be holding a public presentation announcing his inauguration as a demon lord to the world...he wishes for you to attend the ceremony—”

“A presentation announcing his inauguration as demon lord? What in the world is that guy thinking?” Gazel was unable to guess Rimuru’s reason for this and couldn’t help but ask out loud. The minister being questioned, naturally, couldn’t answer either. He simply remained silent; his eyes wide open with fear.

And instead, the other ministers began to argue.

“It must be an excuse. He probably just wants to show everyone how close our nation is by inviting sire there.”

“Hmm—hasn’t that ceremony of his been hosted in our nation already?”

“Oh oh, so it’s about that event! Marquis Vesta told me about it before. They are trying to hold a festival in order to change how people view the monster kingdom. I heard that Marquis Vesta acted as consultant in giving advice and even directing meticulously planned recreational programs.”

Vaughn’s eyes started to glow after hearing the ministers’ intriguing words.

“Woah, that does sound quite interesting. The hotel in that country was also rather amazing. You get to enjoy taking a pleasant hot spring bath. The food was delicious and even the receptionists had great manners as well. I believe they were mentored by Vesta and thus were truly impressive. So the entertainment programs you mentioned will probably be quite interesting as well,” Vaughn exclaimed, turning his eyes to Gazel, implying that he should accept the invitation.

Judging from Vaughn’s look, even if Gazel didn’t participate, he would probably volunteer himself in the king’s place.

Gazel contemplated for a bit.

Hehehe, that brat Rimuru. I’ve got no idea what’s going on in his head, but he ain’t the type to play nice...

Gazel knew he was probably making an effort to have the Western Nations accept their kingdom, but he couldn’t see through Rimuru’s thoughts to be sure. But that’s what made it fun.

Gazel was trying very hard to suppress the urge to laugh. It was after all, a difficult task trying to maintain prestige in front of the many ministers.

That guy... He dares to set up this type of trap to give me a hard time... How bold!

Gazel used his newfound anger to mask his desire to laugh.

“So what does your Majesty think? Rigurd-dono did say ‘It won’t be easy to get his Majesty Gazel to be present, but if he is willing to attend the festival, we will be preparing the finest seat in hope of his arrival.’ They also seem to have informed the leaders of the other nations, so the available seats seem to be limited. He also mentioned that ‘Since there will be many people attending, the venue will likely be in chaos on that day, so please respond as soon as possible,’ as a special reminder for us,” the minister, trembling, reported Rigurd’s message to the silent Gazel.

Such a message was still considered quite inappropriate even while using a polite tone, which the minister worried may have angered Gazel. Yet Gazel didn’t express anger towards such a thing. In fact, he was actually somewhat confused by how the minister could have such a misunderstanding. Gazel’s Unique Skill ‘Dictator’ read the minister’s thoughts with ease. And so Gazel spoke up to correct his subordinate’s misunderstanding.

“I shall attend the presentation and take the opportunity to tour the city.”

At his decisive answer, the other ministers launched another round of complaints.

“Sire! No matter how close you are to this Rimuru-dono, you shouldn’t say this. I have no idea to what extent they are planning to make these entertainment programs, but it should be easy for them to at least manage one seat.”

“Indeed. Moreover, it may not be clear as to how many people they are trying to invite, but the royalty and nobility from other nations shouldn’t have the free time to attend just like us. I don’t think they would accept their invitations so easily.”

“On top of that, your Majesty, attending in person will also lead to all sorts of problems!”

The ministers did make some good points. But Gazel ignored their views outright.

“There’s no such thing, rather I should say that he just has great confidence. You all only know what that guy was like from when he visited our nation before. He has changed completely since becoming a demon lord. Rimuru is being very direct with this festival, so we can expect much. Moreover, Tempest Federation has considerable military power now, so many must want to get some inside information on them. It wouldn’t be strange if some people felt compelled to go check them out after receiving the invitations. As Vaughn has mentioned, the accommodation (inns) in that kingdom is amazing, so the reason why they want to get ahold of the number of visitors is likely to provide specific kinds of services according to their needs. That’s how I see it.”

As Gazel finished, Vaughn added on in agreement: “That’s indeed true. After becoming a demon lord, he gave off a powerful aura. Besides, I’m also highly interested in what type of festival those monsters would host. Even without representing the nation, I would still like to attend personally.”

Vaughn already planned to attend the festival and he had requested Vesta to get him an invitation, even if it was just for himself.

Can’t let others get the better of me—Gazel didn’t intend to back down either.

He already knew that most ministers would oppose the idea of him attending the festival in person. That’s why Gazel hoped to convince these ministers so he could participate without having to resort to drastic measures.

“I will not be attending as the king either, but as his senior to instruct him in person in case he gets looked down upon by people from the other nations. We must inform the neighboring nations that the friendliest nation to Tempest Federation is us, Dwargon,” as Gazel said it, some ministers began to realize Gazel’s actual motive.

“I-indeed! We must be the faction with the best relationship with Rimuru, and we have to show off this point to the other nations.”

“Hmm. I heard that the people from Sarion also started ingratiating themselves to Rimurudono after he became a demon lord?”

“Then we shall let everyone see how close he is with Lord Gazel, it will also serve as a way to keep the other nations in check.”

Gazel hid his delight. He was about to add on something to make things work out even more perfectly—

“These are all minor issues. I really can’t take it anymore. If we oppose his attendance, Sire will just sneak off on his own again. It’s safer for us to just attend the festival as a nation³⁴.”

³⁴The term here is not exactly “as a nation,” but “with all of the nation, using the resources of the nation.” But I think in terms of the context of the passage, “as a nation” is appropriate as well.

The elders from the senate seldom raised their opinion on these matters, yet now they'd given the ultimatum to the arguing ministers. This elder was probably traumatized from when the king snuck off after replacing himself with a body-double³⁵. As a result, with the words of the elder, the attendance of Gazel and the rest was settled.

I have a problem with that statement. But this way, I still get to attend the festival.

The conclusion was somewhat different from what he expected, but at least he got what he wanted. Although Gazel felt somewhat dismayed, he still decided to accept the result. To the invitation of Tempest Federation, they decided to attend as a nation. As for the ministers, this result was completely different from their expectations, yet remained to be the official and final decision.

Then I will also have to attend in that case—is what more and more were starting to think. The venue became noisier once more.

Soon after—

A bunch of people came forth to present their wish to accompany the king to the festival, troubling Gazel in selecting his companions.



The location was the Sorcerer's Dynasty Sarion.

In the Emperor's castle, there was a large beautiful and majestic garden containing a large number of rare, wild animals. The garden was maintained using a private fund from the emperor—in other words, the emperor's personal stash. The emperor enjoyed many privileges, and so he received enormous profits from them. The maintenance cost only accounted for a small portion of the funds, and so this beautiful garden was of no financial consequence.

Moreover—

The maintenance of the entirety of this majestic palace did not use a single cent of tax money. It was evidence of the unimaginable wealth possessed by the Emperor who stood at the peak of the Sorcerer's Dynasty Sarion.

Two persons were currently resting in this garden. One of them was Duke Elalude. He was the father of the adventurer Elen and a key figure of the nation, whose authority and power were among the top three³⁶.

Sitting opposite to him was another person. This individual was far more important to this nation and possessed authority well above Duke Elalude.

³⁵Refer to Volume 6.

³⁶Will be referring to as "Three Bigwigs" as it is coined by Guru in the WN.

This person being the Emperor—Elmesia El-Ru Sarion.

According to official statements, the gender of the individual was unclear. The Emperor was born with the beauty to rival that of a female. It was declared to the outside world as such, but in reality, she was indeed a woman.

The only thing, however, was that her age remained unknown. Her elven blood was extremely pure, which, in turn, prevented her from aging. She was also a living witness to history, making it a major taboo to inquire about the Emperor's age.

Her noble appearance was also not lacking in tenderness. Often, due to her petite figure, she was mistaken for a young girl.

She had a pair of almond eyes. Her jade-green pupils looked as if they were capable of seeing through anything. Her skin was smooth like water with its white color akin to fallen snow. Her silver hair ran down onto her pink and soft cheeks. The distinctive pair of long ears with sharp tips peeked out of her silver hair. It blended with the rest of her body perfectly.



She was the most authentic of the elven race—a so called “High Elf,” the supreme existence.

For an instant, Duke Elalude was also mesmerized by her beauty, but considering that the fury of his wife and daughter was far more terrifying, he quickly came back to his senses. He coughed and faced the Emperor once more.

Emperor Elmesia held herself with decorum, seated on an elegant-looking wooden chair.

“Sire,” Duke Elalude said, “as previously reported to you about the Monster Kingdom, they delivered an invitation to me this time.”

The Duke took out the envelope from his pocket and handed it over carefully. He had already checked it to ensure it was of no danger. He was aware of the content written in it but refrained from speaking. She hated it when people revealed things without confirming it herself—Elalude knew about the temperament of the Emperor all too well. Yet still, he felt unease.

I can't believe that guy actually got the recognition to become an official demon lord. That aside... What is the meaning of calling me to his festival?

In fact, there was actually no need for Duke Elalude to show the letter to the Emperor as it was meant for the Duke himself. Yet the letter wrote “If you are attending, please reply with the number of attendees.”

If it were asking for the number of participants, it could be interpreted as an invitation to bring whoever one wished.

Then, who should he invite? That was the problem.

It was natural to bring guards along since the Duke couldn’t attend alone. Some nobles caught wind of him having a meeting there in the past, so many had stated their wish to visit as well. The topic regarding Tempest Federation becoming a new trading nation had become popular among the high-ranked nobles in Sorcerer’s Dynasty Sarion.

Yet nobles were not the only ones interested. In the past, when he reported the results of the meeting with Rimuru to the Emperor, she glared at him coldly and commented in annoyance: “—Oh. So you went to such an interesting place by yourself? Well aren’t you a bigshot, Elalude; you must have *had a lot of fun*. Why did you ditch me and go by yourself? Let alone proclaiming yourself my envoy and establishing diplomatic ties with them. Given the significance of the matter, I would have wanted to see things for myself.”

This was how it went down...

But Elalude had things to say in his defense as well. He may have visited the Tempest Federation in the name of rescuing his daughter, it was still considered the real “kingdom of monsters.” Even though he had been using a homunculus, he’d had no idea what type of situation he’d run into there. He couldn’t say with confidence that there would not be any danger, so how could he have invited the Emperor Elmesia to that kind of place?

Yet she still scolded Duke Elalude harshly, “With such an intriguing slime out there, I

would've wanted to see it with my own eyes. I would have gotten to meet a new demon lord; in all my years, I've never encountered such a thing before. Yet you got to enjoy all of that by yourself? Do you know what 'snatching credit'³⁷ is? Even my trusted aide dares to treat me like that, what a sad life of an Emperor I am living—" Her complaints kept on firing without pause—

"—I'm so envious... Hold on a second, isn't this just too out of line? There's no knowing how much fun you had... No actually, there's no knowing how dangerous it was, so how dare you act on your own. Absolutely unacceptable!"

...Something along those lines, it was a messy meltdown.

It was more like whining than a scolding. In front of her subjects, her emotionless expression was like an icy mountain, and so people were led to believe that Emperor Elmesia was cruel and ruthless. The only time the Emperor showed the other side of her personality was when alone with Duke Elalude or with one other individual. So it could be said that the responsibility on Elalude's shoulders was particularly heavy.

Aren't you overplaying your feigned innocence a bit too much! Elalude always complained internally.

Nowadays his budget was frozen because of the Emperor's tantrum, and the plan for technological collaboration with Tempest Federation was put on hold. That's why he wanted to pamper the Emperor back into a good mood so he could resume preparations to collaborate with Tempest.

If he did not inform the Emperor about this beforehand, and went to attend by himself, he would definitely have pissed her off. At that point Elalude feared that the consequences would not be so simple as to freeze his budget.

The letter stated that Rimuru was hosting a presentation, but in reality, it must be some form of intimidation. The goal being to show off how powerful Demon Lord Rimuru is. There seemed to be a festival that would be hosted alongside with elaborately prepared recreational activities. It was unknown what would be included in it, but their programs appeared to be quite substantial...

Given that the event seemed rather lively, there was no way Emperor Elmesia, someone who'd been living an all-too-boring life would miss it. It was foreseeable that she would inquire about the event from start to end and interrogate Elalude if he did not report to her. The intensity of that fury would definitely be beyond his imagination.

Based on these considerations, Elalude decided not to hide anything and thus was showing her the letter now.

As he was thinking about this, Elmesia lifted her head as she finished the letter. He quickly tightened his posture. Elmesia stared at Elalude as he does so and said:

"So, what do you plan to do?"

"'Plan to do' meaning?"

³⁷The expression here is “抜け駆け” which means “doing something first/taking the credit of something first”

Elalude was trying to play dumb. He knew what Elmesia wanted to say. But he couldn't point it out directly. It would make national headlines if the Emperor Elmesia were to attend the festival. Knowing the significance of such an event, Elalude didn't dare to say too much.

I'll see what the emperor decides to do first—Elalude thought to himself.

"Oh—are you trying to play dumb now? Did you know, Elalude, that the quality of the desserts we are importing from Yoshida-san's store seem to have improved immensely as of late. Do you know the reason?" Elmesia suddenly changed the topic. Confused, Elalude had no idea what to say in response.

"You enjoy the reputation as a prominent adviser, yet you have no clue about the lives of the civilians? How disappointing."

"My most sincere apologies, Madam. Isn't Yoshida-san the baker Madam likes, whose shop opened in the kingdom of Ingracia? Although he doesn't possess combat ability, he is still under protection due to his identity as an otherworlder. It is the first time I've heard that you've been importing desserts from this Yoshida-san's shop. What does it have to do with Rimuru-dono's invitation?"

It was always all right to ask when you didn't know.

People who weren't close to the Emperor would most definitely have lost their job if asking such, but Elalude wouldn't be affected. He knew the most genuine side of the Emperor, and that close bond allowed Elalude to question her.

"What, so you really didn't know. Elen has been buying the desserts as souvenirs for me since a couple years back. You must have not received one."

"WHAT!"

Elalude couldn't help but shout. He suffered damage beyond repair learning that his daughter Elen didn't buy any souvenirs for him.

Seeing Elalude's frustrated grimace, Elmesia laughed, satisfied, while saying: "Since I had the pleasure of seeing such a dramatic and miserable expression on your face, I won't spare any details. Allow me to explain. It seems that Yoshida-san's confectionery has been getting ingredients from someone else since then. Because the variety of items has increased splendidly, the quality of taste also seems to have increased. And most importantly, I've been getting goods from him by offering financial support," and as such, Elmesia began to explain in detail.

Elalude was aware of this person called Kaoru Yoshida. His identity as an otherworlder alone was enough to make him a target of investigation, so naturally he already knew the relevant information about him.

According to his intelligence, Kaoru Yoshida ran a dessert place called Cafe (Kissaten)³⁸ in the capital of Ingracia.

He allegedly didn't have any skills, but whether this was true or not remained unknown. However, his bakery skill of making dessert was top notch. It was rumored that even the head

³⁸The term here is “喫茶店” (Kissaten), it is a Japanese style cafe store that serves both tea and coffee

of the Freedom Association showed up to taste his food. And according to suspicious sightings, Hinata the Saint had been spotted sneaking in and out of the location. The business there seemed to be booming. This was information that even Elalude was aware of, yet Elmesia continued to gush over the tasty desserts as she continued.

“I once went out of my way to invite Yoshida-san here. Speaking of Elen’s souvenir gift, that cake was extremely delicious. So I hoped to make him the appointed pâtissier of our nation. Yet I was turned down. No matter how much money I would offer, Yoshida-san was not willing to come here—”

According to Emperor Elmesia, the man named Yoshida couldn’t be moved by money. So she was forced to depend solely on the limited number of souvenir gifts she had to make it through life.

What have you been up to, Madam...! Elalude gasped to himself. Yet given how Elalude was already feeling, what Elmesia had to say next was far more impactful.

“Recently however, Yoshida-san said that he was closing shop. Whether he is opening a new store or moving away is still under investigation... With that being said, don’t you think it is a big problem to not be able to eat desserts during break time?”

“I don’t think so, what is the issue?”

“Oh—how could you say such things? Elen really likes the desserts there. If we can set up a more convenient way to purchase them, don’t you think she would come back more frequently?”

“Madam, w-what are talking about!”

“In fact, she has actively attended all of our regular tea parties.”

A truly shocking fact. Elalude had always thought that his daughter didn’t even want to come near her hometown. To him, Elmesia’s series of confessions left him broken and depressed.

It was one thing that her two bodyguards had been useless, but it was an entirely different matter that the people he sent to watch over her didn’t report anything of this sort.

Those guys... I’m gonna teach them a lesson later—Elalude asserted.

First however, it was more important to hear what Elmesia had to say.

“Now the matter is of utmost importance!”

“Right? I’ve actually gotten hold of some very reliable information about it using my wealth and influence.”

“Do tell.”

“It’s really shocking, the place he wants to move to is that Tempest Federation you visited! What did you see when you last visited that nation?”

After being pointed out by her, Elalude recalled something as well. He’d heard that the dishes served by that kingdom were all delicious, and his daughter Elen was greatly moved by one of the desserts. He remembered Elen exclaiming excitedly, “As expected from Shuna-san, you were even able to recreate that new dish!”

“Ah! So that’s what you are hinting at!” Elalude couldn’t help but shout, to which Elmesia sighed, baffled.

“Seriously now, are you really as smart as they say?”

Hearing this, Elalude's confidence vanished with the comment: "I'm such an embarrassment..." he apologized earnestly.

The reason why his boss, the Emperor had been upset was now clear. She misunderstood and thought that Elalude wanted to have all the desserts for himself. Even though it would be for his daughter, there was no way Elalude would go to that extent.

"How would I know whether you would have done it or not; with a father's love for his daughter and all that, you know..."

Due to Elalude's obliviousness on these many subjects, the Emperor's suspicion towards him gradually dissipated. Yet this lack of knowledge turned to her mocking him of such unawareness of these important incidents.

Elalude willingly endured the blow. He then switched his mindset to discuss another thing.

"By the way, Madam. We should get back on track, how will we respond to Rimuru-dono?"

Elmesia grinned sneakily upon being asked by Elalude.

"About that..."

She was keeping him in the loop and without giving an answer. Elalude fought back his impatience, he was not stupid enough to cut in now. As mentioned before, once the Emperor moved out, it would become a major state affair. If it were initiated by Elalude, there would most definitely be some objections. Things would undoubtedly become difficult if someone tried to intervene. The powerful nation of Sorcerer's Dynasty Sarion has prospered under the rule of Sorcerer King, Emperor Elmesia.

Under her were the thirteen noble houses³⁹, each with their own lord. Everyone pledged their loyalty towards the Emperor Elmesia. Basically, she permitted each house to have executive power over their own domains. The imperial house on the other hand, relied on the taxation from the thirteen vassal families.

None of the noble houses possessed any military capabilities. With all of the military power concentrated within the imperial house, the Emperor was the supreme commander of the military, responsible for mediating relations between states.

Elalude was from one of the noble houses as well. His mother Elise Grimwald has long held the top position of the thirteen houses. Elise was also the grandmother of Emperor Elmesia; yet another person that Elalude had to bow towards. Something off-topic: Elalude's brother—and Elmesia's father—was tragically killed during a battle against monsters. That was before Sarion was established as a kingdom and well before Elalude was born. To him, it was tale from ancient times. In other words, his niece Elmesia held a similar ancient status, someone who has lived far longer than Elalude. It was no wonder that Elalude couldn't raise his head in front of her.

Now, to put aside the matter of his mother Elise, let's talk about the people from the other

³⁹The system in the source sounds more like the Japanese aristocracy, so a brief explanation with the original texts just to clarify. There are thirteen aristocratic/noble families (王家) serving Elmesia, who is part of the Imperial family (皇家). Every aristocratic has its own lord/leader (君主達). This system should be the same as the European aristocracy system, where families are referred to as houses, which is why I have translated it this way.

aristocratic families... There were some mean characters among them as well.

There were lords who hid in their domains without any official duty and weren't willing to come out. Then there were those that attempted to meddle in state affairs using their authority. Some even believed that Emperor Elmesia wouldn't interfere with politics at all, emboldening them to the point that they would try to exploit opportunities in an attempt to amass power for their own house.

As a countermeasure, it was one of Elalude's duties as Duke to keep a watchful eye on them. It was precisely because of Elalude's position that he needed to act cautiously regarding this current situation.

A leisurely tour abroad may not have been a problem, but this was the monster kingdom he was going to. He feared there may be some individuals lying in wait, ready to use anything as leverage in order to take him down. Other than that, there wasn't much that was likely to happen. However, there was no way to rule out any devious assassination attempts on the Emperor. Before they could even set off, thorough preparations were an absolute requirement in order to prevent such a catastrophe from ever unfolding.

"You are worrying too much, Elalude-chan."

"Ma-madam?"

"No matter what those little boys⁴⁰ have in mind, they won't go so far as to harm me—"

The aura of Elmesia had changed. She was emitting the unique aura of a ruler. One that did not tolerate anyone's betrayal—It was the overlord side of Emperor Elmesia that the public saw.

To the eyes of Elmesia who had lived a lasting life, those cunning lords, including Elalude, were all probably like a bunch of cocky little kids.

Elalude was extremely nervous as he gulped over and over. The two were holding a familiar conversation due to their blood relation, yet the difference between the two was like heaven and earth. Despite Elalude himself being a heroic figure, he was someone of a completely different "status." It would be impossible for him to feel at ease during their conversation.

"That demon lord is called Rimuru, right? He's no opponent to underestimate."

"—What do you mean?"

Of course he's a force to be reckoned with. His personal strength alone goes without saying, yet his ability to exercise control over all monsters under his rule as well as having them obey his every order is no feat to be taken lightly. Moreover, his strategies of building cooperative relations with the neighboring nations make him an unprecedented type of demon lord.

However, this was all common sense, there was no way that Emperor Elmesia would point it out without a reason. Considering this, Elalude posed a question.

"Hehe, that demon lord called Rimuru, didn't he agree to build a road to our nation Sarion without so much as a second thought?"

"Yes. They demanded some rights, for instance tax collection for people using the road, but

⁴⁰The word here is “小僧” (Kozou) - Little boy

they are willing to provide all of the labor.”

“That’s precisely the point. That right alone would bring enormous wealth. Dear Elalude, you should know just by looking at me, right?”

Elmesia turned back to her friendly self and after having it pointed out to him, a sudden realization struck Elalude.

“Should I call it a ‘privilege’?”

Of course Elalude had noticed as well: that what Rimuru saw value in was the “privilege.” That’s why after careful consideration, he was willing to negotiate with Elalude.

Yet Elmesia sneered at Elalude.

“You are still too naive. Species with longevity like us must always plan with long-term profits in mind first and foremost. Surely you should know this principle?”

“Of course I do. I’ve carefully considered both the toll for using the road built by Demon Lord Rimuru as well as the cost of building the road ourselves.”

Despite Elmesia’s retort, Elalude still answered feeling justified.

Even though we need to pay toll, it is still a lot cheaper in comparison—or so Elalude thought. In fact, in order to construct a highway in the Jura Great Forest, notoriously plagued by monsters, it would require enormous funds and a lengthy amount of time.

Between the border of Jura Great Forest and Sarion lay the Coscia Mountain, on top of which the aggressive tribe of tengu resided, who held disdain for whoever arrived. One could only imagine the difficulty in trying to communicate with them. Even with that problem resolved, there were still many beasts and monsters⁴¹ left residing in the Great Forest.

Monsters would not be the only factor posing an obstacle: the complex terrain there was also another huge hindrance. They would need to drill tunnels through mountains and put up bridges over rivers and valleys. On top of achieving such difficult tasks, they would still need to prevent the workers from being harmed by vicious monsters.

Monumental construction efforts of that magnitude must surely force a nation to undertake a hundred-year plan. It would not be an impossible feat for a great nation such as Sarion, however, Elalude didn’t think the expense spent on such construction will be earned back smoothly. Demon Lord Rimuru’s proposal was more than what Elalude could bargain for given all of the amazing terms.

“How hopelessly naive.”

Elalude’s thoughts, however, were ruthlessly rejected by Elmesia.

“Sure, it will be hard to explore that forest. To this day we haven’t done so because there is no benefit in doing that,” Elmesia began to elaborate upon her thoughts, attempting to enlighten Elalude. Just as Elalude thought, given the circumstances, making back the funding of construction would be infeasible. The difficulties of doing so were numerous, yet there would be little meaning to constructing such a road.

However, that situation has changed.

⁴¹Here the source is stating “Bestial Monster” and “Monster” (Mamono), just a wordplay, no significant terminology change

For the longest time, all roads from Sarion have led to one single distant nation, the Dwarven Kingdom—the Armed Nation of Dwargon. Yet now that there was a newly emerging kingdom in the Jura Great Forest—the road would lead to Jura Tempest Federation. Naturally, the purpose for constructing roads was trade. Before, technological exchange with the dwarves would certainly help boost the nations technological advancements. But in the end, it was just not worth the effort of having to accomplish such a colossal task. With that being said, the previous order had been entirely disrupted now that the Tempest Federation appeared.

“The vast land of the south owned by demon lords has now become the domain of Demon Lord Milim, while the two prominent figures Beast King (Beast Master) Karion and Sky Queen Frey all became her followers. With the overwhelming military power to back themselves, their nation will no doubt become prosperous. There are also the Western Nations in the north-west and the Armed Nation of Dwargon in the north. Won’t the relay hub of these nations be none other than the newly risen Tempest Federation?”

“—Indeed, you have a point,” Elalude answered. He understood what Elmesia was trying to get at. Though that was the case, he didn’t perceive any severe error in his judgement.

Suddenly he was overcome with a striking realization. As Elmesia had pointed out, there hadn’t been any benefit before, yet now that land within the Jura Great Forest was creating an infinite amount of value. That nation was cluttered at the center of many distinct nations; in other words, it would become the center of cultural exchange... There was destined to be an unforeseeable development taking place in the future.

That was what Demon Lord Rimuru wanted, and because Elalude had realized that, he wanted to confirm the diplomatic tie between their nations. Yet the construction of a highway was necessarily linked with grave danger and huge monetary investments—

“My judgement was made considering that the construction work will inevitably require him to invest both funds and armed forces, it is probably more ideal to just pay the tolls and reap the benefits,” was the deduction that Elalude made, in order to justify his agreement to the plan.

Elmesia’s smile remained after hearing Elalude’s answer.

“You have a point. Given any normal circumstances, that would indeed have been the right decision to make, with minimal cost to our own nation. Regrettably, you seem to have overlooked that these people are a long-living species, and there’s a demon lord involved as well! One must always think twice when forming an accord with a permanent impact on the nation. That’s why, I’ll give you eighty marks for the decision.”

“...!”

“We should also participate in the construction. Select some people and send them in a group to partake in the project. Leave the matter of defeating monsters to them. If we are to at least be of some help, this effort would probably make our life easier when it comes to the negotiation of the toll.”

“Uhh!”

All the rights derived from building the street would now permanently belong to Demon Lord Rimuru. If they didn’t provide aid, it would be hard to turn such a table around. The

opponent was a demon lord after all, rendering intimidation tactics through military force utterly foolhardy...

After hearing Elmesia's words, he couldn't help but agree. Elalude was blinded by short-term benefits and failed to recognize his blunder.

"I've told you that you are too rigid in your thinking, Elalude. You did well to know that the situation would be changing, but you can't always be bound by preconceived notions."

Elalude couldn't agree more with Elmesia. His line of thought had always been that the construction would be too dangerous to carry out, yet if that weren't something one needed to consider, the construction budget wasn't really that high. Moreover, if he sent his own people to help with construction, they could hope to do some technological exchange and learn from the monsters' knowledge.

—Uhh, just look at what I have done... I can't believe that I lacked the foresight...

He could almost see Demon Lord Rimuru grinning from the shadows, but Elalude realized it was too late to regret now.

"By the way, don't you still need to reply to their invitation?" switching to a more serious expression, Elmesia started to speak.

Elalude nodded along in earnest.

"Whether it is the dessert shop or the rights to the road, Demon Lord Rimuru understands human society well. There is no denying his identity as an otherworlder, but more to the point, he has acquired the power and authority to apply his knowledge and experience. To put aside his status as demon lord, the person alone is already very impressive. The students of Hero Shizue Izawa—whether it is the head of the Freedom Association Yuuki Kagurazaka or commander of the Holy Knight Order Hinata Sakaguchi, both have some power in the Western Nations, yet they cannot rival Demon Lord Rimuru. We will have to participate in this event if we are to get on friendly terms with such an individual. I never had a choice from the start."

Emperor Elmesia made her decision. Elalude had no more words to say. However, something was still on his mind.

"Madam, I do agree. I'll find a way to shut the others up. But we can't ensure the security of that nation. Regarding the people to accompany you during the visit—"

They were informed that there were some conflicts between Demon Lord Rimuru and the Holy Knight Order. The conflict ended with the overwhelming victory of Demon Lord Rimuru. But unlike the time that Farmus army invaded, the Holy Knights didn't seem to sustain many casualties.

That was to show the public his confidence, though it also led to people spreading rumors about the naivety of Demon Lord Rimuru. For those who knew about the inside story, the event would shatter the will of most people trying to make a move on Rimuru, but there were plenty of fools who would still like to try. Moreover, the powerful individuals of the world could no longer ignore him, for if they did, the number of conflicts against that nation would undoubtedly increase.

It's unlikely anything would happen to Demon Lord Rimuru, but the security there may get worse. It's fine if it is just me (and the boys) going, but if we are to bring Madam to that kind of place...

These thoughts were circling in Elulade's head, but since the Emperor had made her decision, Elalude could only brace himself and prepare for the upcoming trials and tribulations.

"Send out the mediator group under the Imperial House. You are free to pick some candidates from the Magus Order," Elmesia casually said while Elalude broke out in cold sweats.

About this Magus Order, they were the high-ranked military order also known as "Knights of Purity." They possessed the qualifications to act as mediators and were the plenipotentiary agents of the emperor. All of the members were people with pure blood lines going back many generations and carried the most powerful military force of Sorcerer's Dynasty Sarion—by the way, Elalude was one of them. The existence of the order was a carefully guarded state secret, yet the Emperor had generously ordered them to move out. Elalude faithfully obeyed her order with caution.

"—Understood. We will proceed with the arrangements as you wish," he answered, leaving the scene shortly thereafter. The matter of the Emperor's outing was decided and would subsequently be announced to the nation.

And so the series of sleepless nights for Duke Elalude unfolded...



The location was the trading house of the Kingdom of Blumund.

Myourmiles felt increasingly anxious not knowing when he would be finishing all of his appointments. He was a highly renowned merchant and had the ability to assess the nature of any man after just one look in their eyes. Some came here to borrow money or discuss new business opportunities, and occasionally a few nobles that had fallen on hard times would come to discuss suspicious trades. It was annoying to deal with those idiots, but sometimes they did indeed bring profitable business. That's why he couldn't hand such critical work to others.

He finished dealing with a coman-looking fellow while concerned about that and called in the next guest.

A well-dressed man entered. However, his dapper appearance couldn't fool Myourmiles's eyes. Although his clothes were made of fine materials, its design was out of fashion. This person was only wearing old clothing for show while not being able to purchase the fashionable brands. Moreover, this man would not bring Myourmiles any profit; he was an impoverished

nobleman who came to Myourmiles in the hope of selling shoddy items that he proclaimed to be antiques at overblown prices. The memory of that incident was still refreshing to Myourmiles.

He's probably come up with some new devious ideas trying to swindle money out of me.

But he was a nobleman, nonetheless. His nobility had been confirmed after investigation, so he couldn't be underestimated. Were Myourmiles to act arrogantly in the face of real nobles, he may end up getting accused of irreverence and even lose his head. That's why his job was challenging this time.

Eh, how troublesome. Now I've got to get my nerves tense to face off against this guy...

While bearing this thought, Myourmiles decided to hear the person out. Unsurprisingly, he got even more annoyed after hearing him out. The proposal turned out to be devious through and through.

This man—Viscount Kazak—wished to open a new shop with his slaves, so he came to loan some money from Myourmiles.

Honestly, Myourmiles could tell it wouldn't be successful from the onset. A business wouldn't be turning a profit just because you bought some cute female slaves. It was of great importance to analyze the market and the target customers as well. It was also obligatory to find a decent location to open the shop as well as deciding on payment for the girls. However, giving such advice to him would amount to nothing more than “casting pearls before swine”⁴².

“Huh? It’s your job to find the place. And asking me to pay those girls? What a dumb question, what kind of idiot would give salary to slaves?” Viscount Kazak wouldn’t listen to anything Myourmiles had to say.

Even if forcing the slaves to work without pay was the whole point, you had to provide them with food regardless. Then there was also the clothing for them to wear and residences for them to live in that must all be planned out beforehand. The point is that buying slaves would inevitably mean a huge long-term investment. The beautiful slaves he wished to find as an eye-catching attraction could only be found among high-quality slaves whose prices were exorbitant enough to buy entire estates. Rather than having these people run the shop, he’d be better off recruiting average workers. A good example would be the shop opened with Myourmiles’s investment in Ingracia. No matter how beautiful the woman may be, she would unavoidably age in the end. The money earned through them would hardly be sufficient to recover the initial investments. That is how Myourmiles saw it.

If he were trying to increase the profit rate by also providing sexual services, it could cause the spread of disease in the region if appropriate preparations were not made. Should things end like that, not only would Viscount Kazak face serious problems, but Myourmiles would also become his accomplice.

Myourmiles sighed internally, he had absolutely no desire to participate in such a dangerous

⁴²The JP source is “馬の耳に念佛” (Chanting scripture before a horse’s ears)

ordeal.

“My my, Kazak-sama truly has a pair of wise eyes. Your humble acquaintance Myourmiles is most impressed. However, isn’t the pivotal component, namely slaves, rather hard to purchase here nowadays? Since this country does not permit human-trafficking, is it not arduous to try and find any good-quality ones, when all you have to choose from are enslaved criminals⁴³? ”

Myourmiles tried to turn him down to prevent trouble, but Viscount Kazak wasn’t buying it.

“Oh, about that. I’ll let you in on something, I’ve got ways around things, so if you are willing to invest, I may just tell you. But surely you get what I mean, this is some top-secret information... All I can say is that those slaves are all elves,” Viscount Kazak said with an entirely serious expression.

Those words made Myourmiles feel sick to the bone. Through sheer willpower alone did he manage to maintain his composure. He was a famous merchant after all, so he couldn’t just show his dislike of others on his face. The type of merchant to do that couldn’t even qualify as third-class; they were a rookie who would never make their business big. Compared to that, Myourmiles was more intrigued by the elven slaves mentioned by Viscount Kazak. If what he said was true, then it was no longer some simple matter such as regular high-quality slaves.

In fact—

Myourmiles was, after all, a prominent figure in the region. Since he was the head of a syndicate, he wouldn’t shy away from illicit affairs. However, he would still know where to stop before things got out of hand. It didn’t mean he should be forgiven just because of that, but he still didn’t wish to cross that line of extreme evil. This was how he instructed his subordinates to handle things as well. Precisely because Myourmiles was intensely familiar with shady deals, he couldn’t ignore the grave danger that came with buying elven slaves.

Did he just say elves? Those things are definitely related to a large criminal syndicate!

Elves were a species of longevity, most of them blessed with a beautiful appearance, high intelligence, and most of them were even talented in magic as well. It was unlikely for elven slaves to have been enslaved due to criminal activities and since there was no way anyone could enslave elves that had citizenship, it would mean they preyed upon the reclusive ones living in the forest...

A realization suddenly crossed Myourmiles’s mind.

Hiring monster hunters—whenever some wealthy people wished to get a classy pet, they would hire hunters to capture monsters in the forest. Yet considering the target here was demi-human, or more precisely, of the half-spirit race that elves were, most countries would not turn a blind eye towards such heinous deeds.

The Dwarven Kingdom consisted of demi-humans, and as for Sorcerer’s Dynasty Sarion,

⁴³Enslaved due to criminal acts, Okran’s light shine upon thee.

the Emperor himself was an elf. If this got exposed, it would lead to severe problems. Theft and fraud—it would be no petty crime like that, it bore the potential of becoming a diplomatic disaster. Myourmiles certainly didn't dare to carry out such an ordeal so uncaringly... For the goal of profit, even taking human lives would be an option while having a terrifying criminal organization behind the scene as backup... Myourmiles sensed several red flags popping up...

He drained his brain thinking, trying to find an appropriate excuse to turn down Viscount Kazak's demands. Deep in thought without any good ideas yet, there was a sudden commotion that may or may not have just helped him out of this thorny situation—

“Hey! How have you been? Myourmiles-kun!”

As they were halfway through their business, someone opened the door and entered. She was an angelic beauty with light-blue silver hair and golden eyes—wait, or could he be a boy?

“Who the hell are you, how dare you butt in on our important business meeting, ya rude piece of shit!”⁴⁴

The voice of Viscount Kazak seemed very distant to Myourmiles. He was shocked to discover the identity of the visitor. He couldn't forget about that face, the hero who saved Myourmiles—the real Demon Lord Rimuru in person. He knew Rimuru was the ruler of the Monster Kingdom and he also heard that Rimuru wanted to become a real demon lord, at the time he was quite surprised.

Yet Rimuru really managed to pull it off. He was now a member of the ‘Octagram’ recognized by the other demon lords.

With that being said, Demon Lord Rimuru seemed to have taken a liking in Myourmiles. The two were very close and had even collaborated in making money. He had asked Myourmiles to find ways to sell healing potions, right now the profit margin had become quite stable. Soon after that he asked Myourmiles for a favor to help him explore the market in order to sell otherworld food such as ramen. They were now being served in restaurants and received great reviews. Later Myourmiles also helped to taste test something called a “hamburger.” Rimuru made plans to open chain stores that sell them. Myourmiles also took care to handle the plans responsibly. Currently he was finding new employees, doing employee training, and attempting to arrange interior decoration for the stores. He'd been extremely busy doing preparations in all these areas.

He wanted to show his gratitude to Rimuru for all these things, but he seemed to have been busy lately. It had been a month since they last had any contact.

“Eh, isn't this Master Rimuru? Didn't you say that it is currently a critical time period and that you have no spare time to stroll around?” Myourmiles couldn't help but ask due to his shock.

Since this person—Master Rimuru, or Demon Lord Rimuru was currently busy confronting issues between himself and the Holy Knight Order. After all, he previously said it himself that

⁴⁴The original is just “無礼であろうが” which is arguably milder in tone, but why not.

“The circumstances lately may get pretty dangerous, so you better stay away for now.”

There was also the Freedom Association branch leader Fuze who had been overtly frustrated over the fact that he wasn’t capable of stopping Hinata the Saint himself. All of that was supposed to be the case, but how did the main person involved suddenly appear here?

—With all these thoughts crossing his mind, Myourmiles had thrown Viscount Kazak who he was just dealing with to the back of his mind. A moment later Myourmiles heard his servant running in to intervene in panic while shouting: “P-Please hold on! Our master is still in a meeting!”

Apparently, some people were still not used to it. One not used to looking at that beautiful face would quickly lose their minds over it. How uncourteous. Although it was exceptionally impolite, it was something that really couldn’t be helped. Myourmiles was no exception either, if he didn’t make up his mind he might easily get mesmerized as well. His face looked fine when he was talking to someone or when he was coming up with some devious ideas, but whenever Rimuru was acting normal, he appeared to be a completely different person that gave off a tender sense of affection.

Myourmiles couldn’t really blame the servant for his behavior.

“Did you just call him ‘Master Rimuru’?” Viscount Kazak attempted to interject, but Myourmiles ignored him. However, Rimuru seemed to have noticed the guest and looked quite embarrassed.

“Ah, sorry. So you have a guest here. Then I’ll stop by your estate to wait for you there, I’ll see you later!”

Myourmiles was still in a state of shock, until Rimuru’s words brought him back to his senses. He felt somewhat sympathetic looking at Viscount Kazak, who just shouted “Rude piece of shit” at a demon lord.

If Master Rimuru wasn’t such a kind person... This guy would probably be a goner by now... Myourmiles thought to himself.

The saying goes “Ignorance is bliss,” but Myourmiles was still troubled about whether he would inform Kazak about this or not. While oblivious to Myourmiles’s concern, Viscount Kazak continued to shout rudely.

“Oi, brat. Actually, little girl, I guess? Are you supposed to be Myourmiles’s mistress or something? You barged in to eavesdrop without permission and interfered with our important business, how do you plan to compensate?”

Viscount Kazak started to spout such things as he saw Rimuru’s face. Myourmiles was immediately filled with displeasure at the sound of it.

This guy! How dare he talk to Master Rimuru in that way—

Myourmiles was on tenterhook as he saw Viscount Kazak figuratively licking over Rimuru’s body with his disgusting look.

“How impolite of me. Ah, no one managed to stop me, so I’m really sorry,” Rimuru said in response and apologized, lowering his status.

Yet Viscount Kazak decided to pull rank and not forgive him.

“Oh, you are pretty good looking. Mannerism is quite important however, luckily for you I wouldn’t mind giving you a private lesson on that.”

In the end he only saw Rimuru’s beauty and even dared to say such a thing. Now even Myourmiles was angered, his feeling could no longer be described with being “stunned.”

Why am I getting looked down on by this type of nobody...?

Myourmiles was completely dumbfounded.

It was one thing that he got looked down on, but he went on to call Rimuru, who Myourmiles was indebted to, his mistress. He couldn’t allow the Viscount to insult people like that. The behavior of Viscount Kazak had exceeded Myourmiles’s limit of tolerance. Myourmiles was, however, the one at a disadvantage; if he were to get in a spat with a nobleman, he might be accused of irreverence. With that being said, there was no need to let him do whatever he wanted. Myourmiles had been acting politely because he didn’t want any trouble, but if the person intended to antagonize him, he would face him head-on.

Myourmiles solidified his resolve.

“Oi, Kazak, it is you who are being rude to my benefactor. You are but a viscount, do you intend to piss me off?”

“W-What!”

“My business with you ends this instant. Do not come to me for any favor in the future!”

“Ya, ya bastard! A mere merchant dares to disobey a noble, Myourmiles, have you lost your mind!”

“Heh! Anyone who plans to collaborate with a criminal organization that may cause diplomatic issues is a certified troublemaker to me, who may even get this whole town to stink. I hope a plague bringer⁴⁵ like you would scram as soon as possible.”

“M-Myourmiles, you bastard! You, you’ve forgotten the debt of my prestigious visit before... Mark my words I’ll make you regret this!”

Viscount Kazak dropped these words after Myourmiles’s scolding. He saw that Myourmiles’s men were coming to check up on the noise and seemed to think that the situation was no longer in his favor.

“Hmph, he belittles others even though he’s no better than a nobody himself.”

“E-Eh, Myourmiles-kun? That guy seems pissed, is everything okay?”

Like that, Rimuru casually made small talk with the furious Myourmiles.

Ah, this guy is not simple after all. He may have become a demon lord, but he hasn’t really changed a bit—

Upon thinking so, Myourmiles loosened up. Afterward, he rejected all of the people waiting to meet him in the next room and chased all of them out.

There are things in this world where you have to strike while the iron is hot. Myourmiles

⁴⁵The phrase here is “疫病神” which is a common expression to describe people who bring bad fortune.

was not stupid enough to pass up important opportunities. He was a smart and capable man who would even go so far as to check for rough diamonds in a pile of pebbles, figuratively speaking. But it was also an undeniable fact that there were things that he would sacrifice everything for. All in all, the real reason behind his actions was that he didn't wish to keep Rimuru waiting.

It wasn't because Rimuru would bring him enormous profit, he wasn't that short sighted. Rather, he saw an extraordinary virtue within Rimuru, that being how he still had his trade partner in mind despite the difficult circumstances he himself was in. It was because Rimuru was such a person, Myourmiles reaffirmed his vow to never betray Rimuru. He couldn't think of any work that could be more important than spending time with Rimuru.

Is he up to some new devious idea? Myourmiles began to feel excited at the thought. He was acting faster than usual and pushed all of the cases to his subordinates. A secret surge of joy flooded his heart.

And on that day—

A new opportunity arose that would put an end to the frustrating life Myourmiles was living.



Myourmiles guided me over to his manor. His butler immediately came out to welcome us upon seeing me. He must've gotten to know me after my several visits in the past.

There's no need to be so courteous—that's what I told him every time.

Myourmiles didn't seem to mind either and gave his servants the instructions with a smile. As usual, he had ordered desserts and tea for me.

“Ah, I’m really sorry, I seem to have interfered with your work.”

Myourmiles gave off a wry smile upon hearing so.

“No way, no way, Master Rimuru. I wanted to settle things with that bastard long ago. He used his position as a noble to burden me with difficult cases every time...” Myourmiles began to complain to me with a ghastly expression.

Oh, so that perverted guy was a nobleman?

Now that I was able to completely suppress my aura, I could show my face directly when visiting human towns. It was rather convenient since I broke my mask again the day I became a demon lord and hadn't gotten around to fixing it yet. That's why as soon as that mister saw my face, he must have mistaken me for a young girl. But I wouldn't lash out over such minor things. Unlike Veldora or Shion, I knew how to read the situation. I kept an extra eye out having noticed how arrogantly he was acting; it seemed that was the right call. Speaking of which, since Myourmiles cut ties with him, maybe I didn't really need to worry so much.

“That noble promised to set out for revenge, isn’t that kind of bad?”

“Indeed, considering that man called Kazak is hard to deal with. Speaking of his proposal this time, he is trying to use slaves, even elven ones...”

“Elves?” I asked out of surprise.

Speaking of elves, there were many of them at that nightclub in the Dwarven Kingdom. I also heard that Elen had an elven bloodline, but they were not considered to be monsters, rather demi-humans. Legally speaking human-trafficking was banned, so wasn’t that just straight up criminal activity?

“Wouldn’t that make him—”

“Yes. It would be a crime. That man planned to make me an accomplice. Although I’ve done some bad things in the past, I’ve not been stupid enough to capture and enslave elves.”

“So it is indeed criminal. What would happen if it gets exposed?”

“That is hard to determine. Despite how the man looked, Kazak is still given the rank of Viscount. Blumund is a small kingdom, so there aren’t that many noblemen. Even suckers like him have considerable authority.”

I couldn’t believe that man just now was a Viscount. Well it was no wonder that he would call me rude, but if that were the case, he would be a higher-ranked nobleman than Fuze’s friend Baron Veryard. It was no surprise Myourmiles said that he’s hard to deal with.

“Is it really okay?”

“No problem, I’m an underworld boss after all. There’s no need for Master Rimuru to worry, I can sort things out with my own power!” Myourmiles responded to my worries with a smile.

What underworld?! Where is such a place in Blumund even?⁴⁶

I guess he was referring to the slum, but that place was heaven compared to the environment where Youm grew up, considering that the Kingdom of Blumund was a nation with relatively good public order. However, I still had to give him some words of advice.

“Hold on, hold on, you really ought to be more careful since I’m here to give you an important job.”

Indeed, I’d consulted many things with Myourmiles. If he ended up getting harmed because of grudges held by some strange noble, I would be really troubled.

“Wahaha! Rest assured. I, Myourmiles, have a lot of confidence in my good luck. After all, even Master Rimuru is in such a good relationship with me!” Myourmiles laughed out loud seemingly wanting to dismantle my worries.

I’ve been defeated, but that’s why I like him. It would be too late if something happened to him, so I should send out a bodyguard beforehand to protect Myourmiles, I just have to make sure he doesn’t find out.

I thought to myself while facing the laughing Myourmiles.

“By the way, Master Rimuru, why have you come here today?”

⁴⁶There is a pun here in the source and I tweaked it a little bit. “暗黒街” is the phrase used to describe “underworld,” which directly translates to “Dark Alley.” And the source here is saying “Where is such an alley in Blumund even?”

Upon being asked, I recalled my reason for visiting.

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We planned to gather all the monsters from the Jura Great Forest and the leaders of human nations to host a large-scale celebration.

The name of it was—"Tempest State-Founding Festival"⁴⁷.

The date of the event had been officially decided. Now that we'd made peace with Hinata's party, all of the worries were gone with the wind. The date of Youm's coronation had also been settled, which on the one hand was in hope that he would come to support us during the festival and on the other to promote his crowning to the neighboring nations.

Right now Rigurd and his men were working intensively and sending out invitations to the leaders of the world.

In addition, Rigurd's men were not the only ones working hard. The monsters under my leadership had all heard of the incoming national celebration; everyone was excited, and all my executives had also come up with plans which were announced afterwards.

Let's take Shuna as an example, who was preparing a variety of new dishes to serve to the visitors. Moreover, she was working tirelessly to create colorful cakes in an effort to open up a cafe of her very own in my nation. I'd also introduced the renowned pastry chef Yoshida-san from Ingracia, who took care of me back then, to Shuna. It was a futile effort to try and convince Yoshida-san to open a store in Tempest. He wouldn't budge no matter how many times I tried to convince him and regardless of what I offered, yet he couldn't help himself once he met Shuna. (Kaijin: Get in line!)

"I-I received many people's care when I opened my store here in Ingracia, although I'd love to help you all, leaving this place is still..."

"I hope you may kindly make an exception on that part."

Shuna bowed her head politely to request the favor. Her hands folded beautifully as she bowed, the elegance of her movements was mesmerizing.

Yoshida-san tried to play cool on the surface, yet he was totally wrecked on the inside. It looked like we were about to finally win him over...

"—Uh. There is no chance you can beat me with seduction. If you truly wish for me to move no matter what, then show me how excellent your ability to cook is! If you can make dishes that would satisfy me, I may just reconsider things."

Due to Yoshida-san's proposal, the whole thing turned into a culinary showdown somehow. But it didn't pose a problem at all. Shuna's culinary skills were, after all, top-notch, to which everyone would agree.

⁴⁷The phrase for "State/Nation Founding Festival" is 開国祭, which can also be interpreted as "Opening up country for the public festival," hence for convenience I'll be referring it as "Opening Festival" for short.

“Shuna-san, go ahead and demonstrate your mastery! Make your best dishes and this arrogant cafe owner will surely run out of words of praise!”

“Yes, I understand!”

“Oi oi oi, master, who is supposed to be this “arrogant cafe owner” now...” Yoshida-san complained to me, which I ignored completely.

Shuna was highly motivated. Yoshida-san’s art of cooking ignited her fighting spirit. She used the kitchen to prepare dishes beyond simply “delicious.” The dish was—Tamagoyaki⁴⁸.

This was the ultimate delicacy that is rumored to show a chef’s skill from its making alone.

Yoshida-san gulped as he saw her serving the dish. He then began to use a fork to silently place the tamagoyaki inside his mouth.

“Delicious!!”

Instant KO.

After having a taste of Shuna’s overwhelming culinary skill, Yoshida-san finally recognized her.

“Thank you.”

A smile emerged on Shuna’s face. That became the fatal blow. Her smile dove straight into his heart, to which Yoshida-san had completely fallen for.

“Tsk, it can’t be helped then! This is my special treatment for you!” the brawny man promised Shuna with an awkward smile. Against the cute girl with light pink hair that was Shuna, I think he was completely mesmerized—or should I call it love at first sight, I’d better keep that to myself. Since he was making an effort to play it cool, it would’ve been quite pitiful had I pointed it out.

And so, Shuna and Yoshida-san became good partners. Our business would definitely be going through the roof. I had a feeling that they would become the center of attention.

There was also Gabil. He seemed to have been collaborating with Vesta in hosting a presentation reviewing the history of the healing potion. They didn’t intend to publicize any core technologies and their intentions seemed to be focused on attracting people who were interested and would volunteer to participate in their research plans. Right now there were already enough people, but they were simply trying to find those who are passionate.

It was no exception for Kurobee and the eldest of the three dwarven brothers, Garm. They would all be showcasing their proud work.

Gabil and Vesta, Kurobee and Garm.

I heard that the two pairs would be displaying their exhibits next to each other and compete on the grounds of who could attract more guests. It was wonderful to see that they were having fun with their friendly rivalry during the festival.

Kaijin would also return sometime around the festival.

⁴⁸Or Tamago (玉子焼き), Japanese style rolled fried egg, the phrase used in the passage is “卵焼き”

As for Geld, I told him to take a vacation, so the construction work would probably be put on hold for now.

I also told him to give a vacation for the captives as well, so they would probably be hosting a feast on that day too.

Inevitably some people had to work during the holidays, so we made special arrangements to have them rotate so that they didn't have to work the entire time. The feast was planned to last for around a week, so I hoped everyone could have fun.

Speaking of which, Shion wasn't falling behind either, she seemed to be planning something as well.

"Hehehe, please look forward to it, Rimuru-sama!!"

Seeing how confident she looked, I was both looking forward to it and worried at the same time.

In addition, it was the same for Veldora—he had made some bold declaration again. I gotta think of a way to resolve it before he gives anyone around him any trouble...

Given what my companions were up to, I figured I had to do something as well. And the person who then came to my mind was Myourmiles-kun here.

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A servant entered to serve us black tea. Because of my previous visits, he had gotten more skillful and had prepared the desserts that I like.

I cracked a smile after sipping the black tea. It was tasty as always and could be used to switch up my mood. Let's talk business then.

"Ah, it's really nothing, just that I've got some work here that needs your favor. A piece of cake really, it should be easy peasy for Myourmiles-kun."

"Hehe—have you got some new idea? Young Master's commission has always been interesting, if equally as exhausting."



Myourmiles responded to my words with a smile. Although he claimed them to be exhausting, his expression clearly stated his interest in my proposal. We were after all working on the “Fast Food Chain Expansion Plan” to sell food items such as hamburgers. I’d handed that initiative to Myourmiles for his help in executing it.

Earlier, due to the movement of Hinata’s party I let go of the plan temporarily, but I was still rather mindful of its progress. In some sense I was checking up on it here since I planned to open that fast food store during the festival.

“Hehehe, don’t put it that way, Myourmiles-kun. Regarding the plan I handed to you previously, before shops are set up in Blumund and Ingracia, I hope to open up a shop in my own kingdom to experiment.”

“Oh oh, I was just wondering where to put the plan into practice, so the proposal came just in time. Speaking of which, since you’ve come to make the proposal, does it mean that the problem with the Holy Knight Order has been resolved?” Myourmiles asked worryingly hearing my words.

It seemed that I caused him some unnecessary concern. But even though we were no longer in conflict, the problem of the doctrines of Luminism would still remain. If we were to act in the Western Nations in the future, we could not have ignored the problem of Western Holy Church. Yet this issue had been resolved nowadays, so there was nothing to worry about.

“Hehehe, it’s already been resolved. I’ve made peace with Hinata and Ru—”

“Ru?”

“Rules! Yep, I mean Rules. We believe it was necessary to have a charter of rules and negotiated with their party. So everyone has made peace with each other.”

“Oh oh, I see! Huh, I thought that organization of Western Holy Church would have been a bit scarier. I didn’t expect them to be so understanding, have I perhaps been worrying too much?” Myourmiles smiled reassuringly upon saying so.

I gave off a forced smile while thinking “That was too close, too close,” wiping off my imaginary cold sweat in secret. Just now I almost spelt out Luminas’s name. If I had done that, even I would’ve come to be resented by Luminas. That alone may have been fine, but it was possible that even Myourmiles would be silenced because of it.

The Founding Festival would not only be welcoming Hinata and the Holy Knights, but even Luminas, so I had to be careful with my words. But, whether that arrogant Demon Lord Luminas would attend or not was still unknown.

“Why should I attend such a tasteless festival?”

That did seem like something that gal would say. If she were really coming, reception would probably also take a lot of hard work, so would it be better if she just didn’t come?

Yep, you’d better not come...

“Then I’ll show you the progress of our training before officially opening stores!” Myourmiles delightfully cut in as I was halfway through thinking about the ordeal with Luminas.

Since I wasn’t even sure whether she would come or not, there’s no point in worrying about

this type of people. I decided to discuss more seriously about the things I intended to push forward.

“Then, has the training been going smoothly?”

“Of course it has. Now they are trained to the point where they can do anything with some level of professionalism.”

“You sure are capable, Myourmiles-kun!”

Myourmiles and I locked eyes, and both gave off a chuckle in secret. It seemed that the plan has been proceeding nicely, then there shouldn’t be any issue with holding the grand opening during the festival.

“Regarding the shop-opening this time, should we be selling hamburgers, hot dogs, French fries and all types of juice?”

“Good idea. We will be able to attract plenty of customers with that barbecue kabob and its secret sauce alone. If we are selling them with rice balls, the sales would definitely increase.”

“Has the kabob been getting good reviews?”

“It has secretly become popular among the employees already.”

Myourmiles nodded deeply and commented that the barbecue kabob with cow-deer and chicken-duck⁴⁹ had been receiving good reviews.

“All right! Let’s put that in the menu as well. By the way, are there enough people?”

“About that, right now I can imagine a scale of around twenty shops. Although it will cost a lot of money, it is reasonable considering that we will need employees to rotate, so a training fee would be a necessary expense. Given that to be the case, we should have plenty to spare in order to open stores in five different locations.”

As expected of Myourmiles, he really got my idea and didn’t even spare any expense on training talent. Considering this—

“If that’s the case, I’m embarrassed to ask, but could you help prepare five people with the best culinary skill?”

“Five people? What do you plan to do with them?”

“The thing is, I have a friend called Veldora—”

“V-Veldora!”

“About that guy, he’s been very enthusiastic about opening a takoyaki booth.”

Was I thinking too much or did Myourmiles’s face contort during my explanation?

“I-I see...”

While replying to me, he had begun to sweat profusely. I was slightly concerned but carried on with my explanation.

“Given that’s the case, wouldn’t it be quite unsettling to have him handle the shop all on his own?”

“P-probably—”

“That’s why, Myourmiles-kun, I hope you can send five of your best chefs to assist Veldora!”

⁴⁹I still don’t know what to call this breed. Cow deer and chicken duck, very epic.

I said with a big smile plastered across my face.

Having pushed all the troublesome things to him, Myourmiles tilted his head upward and called out to Veldanava the lord above⁵⁰.

“The personal...uh regarding the personal safety of the people who would be assisting, is it assured?”

“Of course! Just talk to me if anything happens. I’ll definitely give that guy a good scolding if he tries to act stubbornly again.”

“I believe you would. But, about that, is this Veldora you mentioned that ‘Storm Dragon’-sama?”

Indeed he was. Wow, even Myourmiles had heard of the name Veldora.

“Is there something wrong?”

“I guess... It’s not really a matter of right or wrong, I’m picturing how everyone would be unable to work, given that they would have already been scared to death by the time...”

Ah, you have a point. That’s indeed true, to the uninformed, they may actually be afraid of Veldora. He’s a catastrophe level threat after all...

“Uh—so I guess it wouldn’t work out?”

“I suppose you can put it that way... At least use an alias so everyone can help without knowing—”

That’s it!

“That’s it, Myourmiles-kun! Let’s give him an alias to prevent anyone from finding out his real identity!”

“Eh? Would that actually work?”

“Piece of cake, I’ll just tell him ‘Do it or no deal.’ Right, let’s do just that. I’ll be sure to give an extra reward for the five, so please help me relay the message and let them know that I look forward to working with them!”

I was greatly pleased with how the issue was resolved and didn’t give a second thought about Myourmiles’s shock.

Veldora’s stubborn tantrums were nothing new at this point, but there were important figures from various nations attending the festival this time. It would be embarrassing if any of them got food poisoning during the event, so I had to assign verifiable supervision and have people watch over him in order to be reassured. On the one hand it would be too pitiful to reject him without reason, but on the other hand it would be terribly nerve-wracking to let him handle everything by himself. All things considered, I was quite lucky that the people found by Myourmiles had already been trained.

Myourmiles seemed to have something to say, but I doubt it was something important. That’s why I should just let him handle all of these things whenever they come my way...

⁵⁰The source states he just “ask the sky/ask above,” but basically a bruh moment for Myourmiles.



Rimuru appeared to be in a very good mood after “resolving” the issue. While on Myourmiles’s end, he felt as though he just had a giant bomb forced onto him, his mind couldn’t be eased.

C-can’t believe it is Veldora-sama. I’ve heard that his seal was broken, but I never imagined I would have to cross paths with him one day...

Myourmiles was getting a major headache at the moment. It was fine at the start when Rimuru first came to discuss things with him. Setting up a stall may be a good practice opportunity, but it was a whole other matter if they had to surveil Veldora. Myourmiles knew things had gotten serious, but seeing Rimuru laughing in front of him with a relieved attitude convinced him otherwise. Perhaps he should just let it slide, after all, he’d been striving to live a life free of regret ever since he was rescued by Rimuru. Myourmiles was cunning, and somewhat greedy, but bold enough to do these things.

“Speaking of which, if you are hosting a festival at such a large scale, there are probably going to be a lot of participants. From a businessman’s perspective, I think this would also be a great opportunity to make some cash,” Myourmiles muttered unconsciously.

Traveling merchants, adventurers and so on, there would be many people coming in and out of Tempest Federation. Moreover, given the plans to put on a pageantry, the neighboring villages and towns would likely be coming to join the festival.

This is indeed a tremendous opportunity to make money. He mumbled to himself as the thoughts swirled in his head...

“Oh? Is Myourmiles-kun interested too? Hey, heey. Honestly, despite how I look, I can relate to how you feel. I’ve already had you working on the merchandise we are selling, but I also wish to have some main featured products for our nation.”

Rimuru sipped on the black tea he was served. He must have overheard Myourmiles’s words and taken the look on his face as “Please consult with me.”

“A main feature, is it?”

“Right, right, eh, speaking of our town, we are planning to turn it into a health resort. We’ve already prepared hot springs, inns, and hotels to receive noblemen. My only gripe is the lack of recreational facilities.”

“I see...”

All right, Myourmiles had decided to listen to his plans.

Picking up on how Myourmiles reacted, Rimuru began to explain with joy.

The content was as follows—

Many high-grade inns were built in Tempest Federation, which Myourmiles had already

checked into before so he was quite familiar with them.

You would find all sorts of facilities for overnight accommodation in those places while experiencing a variety of different themes. There were inns where you could enjoy a beautiful garden scenery and meals at the same time, while others might offer open-air hot springs as well.

It may be different for large nations, but in smaller nations, even noblemen would find it challenging to sustain a personal bathing pool. For nations without a tap water system, filling the bathtub to boil water alone was a difficult task. For Myourmiles, this was almost common sense, that's why he could only use "astonishing" to describe having hot spring facilities that were open for use at any time...

Yet Rimuru was still not satisfied.

"But, even if that's the case, is it really enough for a health resort to have delicious food and space to relax?"

Myourmiles agreed that it was indeed the case, but Rimuru shook his head.

"You are too naive, Myourmiles-kun. We can absolutely do better than that! I want there to be some programs so everyone can have more fun. For instance, let's say—"

Approaching the topic, Rimuru brought up a so-called sightseeing tour of Jura Great Forest as an example. The program entailed sending guides as well as guards to accompany people on a day-long walk deep into the forest. Other programs would include fishing competitions near the neighboring rivers, hunting conventions so as to get in touch with nature, etc... The items required would all be available for lease; this way he hoped the registered guests would all be able to have fun.

"It sounds quite interesting. This may very well pique the interest of nobles with too much free time on their hands. Also, the ones that are often very busy will surely find this to be a welcome break and a breath of fresh air."

"Will they? That's fantastic. I was contemplating if there are any other programs we could set up for everyone to have fun."

Rimuru hoped that the Founding Festival would convince some guests to return in the future for more consumption. For this to be a success, he had come up with a multitude of programs in hopes that the guests wouldn't get bored.

Just how far into the future has this guy planned... Apart from being utterly baffled, Myourmiles was also impressed.

"How about we take a page from the Kingdom of Ingracia's book? The theatre in their capital seems to be quite popular, I've even heard that they put on an opera and a drama every day. In addition, the martial tournament hosted at the colosseum is rather prominent—"

"Oh-OHOH! Is that the one? I heard that there is a 'Masayuki the Chosen Hero' who is very popular."

"Indeed, indeed. Masayuki-sama has the title 'Shining' and has dominated many martial tournaments. Despite how I may look, I'm actually a super fan of his."

“Ehh!”

It turned out Myourmiles was an idolater too. Completely overlooking Rimuru’s repulsion, he enthusiastically set out to ramble about the tournament.

...

“—(He has spoken a ton already) so that’s how it was, since nobody could grasp the pattern of his sword swings, it’s what earned him the title ‘Shining.’ They would also fight to the death against captured monsters. The Chosen Hero’s companions are also very strong, yet I was so nervous that I got sweaty palms while watching that time. If there is some recreational program like that... Ah, I’m way too passionate about it. Speaking of which, Master Rimuru’s subordinates also all seem like powerful individuals, I wonder which one is the stron—”

“STOP! I won’t allow you to continue anymore, Myourmiles-kun.”

Myourmiles’s interest apparently moved on to Rimuru’s subordinates—in other words, Benimaru and the rest. That included Rigurd, who he had met several times, his body of muscle didn’t seem to be just for show. He’d also laid eyes on a bunch of other strong-looking majins, he must have always wondered which one of them was the strongest.

Myourmiles took the chance to ask Rimuru but was stopped.

“Listen closely, I will only tell you about it here—“ Rimuru said, then whispered to Myourmiles, “—If you are to say these words in front of those guys, there will no doubt be armed conflicts. Speaking of which, there was an asshole Holy Knight called Arnaud in the past who asked the very same question you just did ~~perhaps in another version of this story~~⁵¹. Later my lieutenants, one by one, began to argue over rankings and boring topics which almost led to serious conflicts. At the time, not everyone was present, so we managed to settle the matter peacefully, but be warned, you should not say such things that will provoke conflicts.”

Rimuru added that it was fortunate that those who were most likely to cause trouble happened to not be present, and so he was able to muddle through. But since then, they’d been deliberately avoiding that sensitive topic. If those executives started a serious quarrel, the town they took so much effort in building would become a victim as a consequence. Such an outcome should be avoided at all costs and so Myourmiles was advised to be cautious with his words.

“I-I see. Apologies for my offense.”

“It’s fine as long as you keep an eye out for it. But, it’s a rather peculiar viewpoint nonetheless.”

Unlike the fearful Myourmiles, Rimuru didn’t seem to particularly take it to heart.

This person’s values surely are different from any average person’s—Myourmiles thought to himself while quietly waiting for Rimuru to speak.

“There’s another empty block in the town, it should be pretty nice to prepare an opera house there. It may turn out that someone is aspiring to become a playwright; it will also complement the new recreational activities. Now regarding a colosseum—”

Rimuru turned to Myourmiles.

⁵¹As happened in the WN equivalent, during the reconciliation banquet.

From Myourmiles's point of view, Rimuru seemed to be grinning. *Ah, he must have gotten some devious idea again*—that's what he thought, but decided to keep his mouth shut.

Master Rimuru, you are an absolute beauty when you are silent, why do you have to put on this deplorable expression...

He was thinking something along that line.

“Myourmiles-kun!”

Here it comes! Myourmiles's heart tensed up as he engaged Rimuru.

“W-What is it?”

“You seem to be intimately familiar with the whole martial tournament thing?”

Rimuru got up off his chair and moved next to Myourmiles. He whispered next to Myourmiles's ear while giving off a perfect voice of coquetry. And then, he suddenly announced—they wished to host a martial tournament as well and hoped that Myourmiles would help with the arrangement.

“Please hold on, young master! It's far too late to suddenly tell me about such an important thing...”

“We will be preparing the colosseum, could you help me investigate what is required to host a tournament?” While ignoring Myourmiles's protest, Rimuru informed him one-sidedly. Given it had already reached this point, there was no use in resisting.

“Every single time, I can never win against Master Rimuru. I understand. Yours truly, Myourmiles, will sincerely attend to the matter with all my effort!” Myourmiles promised rather helplessly.

But he said so with a thinly veiled smile... Honestly, Myourmiles didn't dislike it. Or rather having entrusted him with such a monumental task, his joy was through the roof.

What do you need in order to host it? Not only will he need to investigate, Myourmiles also needed to put his ideas into practice. Never in his life did he dream to be tasked or even work on such a large-scale proposal.

I've got to do this one well! T-This must be a once in a lifetime opportunity!

It doesn't matter even if it fails, Myourmiles pulled himself together.

Regarding people like Rimuru, from Myourmiles's past experience with him, he realized that minor things wouldn't be enough to anger him. Moreover, he kept his promises and was worthy of trust. To a merchant, trust was the most important thing, and Rimuru was the type that garnered people's trust organically.

Just like he had promised, he would definitely prepare a colosseum. Although it was hard for Myourmiles to wrap his mind around it, Rimuru had complete control over the monsters he ruled, they would serve and obey any order he gave.

Even though that's how he acts, Master Rimuru is still a demon lord. If this proposal is

lucrative, it wouldn't be difficult to gather the necessary materials. And to have me to work on the plan—

Myourmiles was extremely moved. While entranced, the joyful voice of Rimuru entered his ear.

“Right, by the way, even though our goal this time is to receive leading figures from different nations, we are allowing normal civilians to attend alongside them. Like in the Kingdom of Ingracia tournament, if you can't involve the public, there isn't really any benefit to reap, is there?”

“Do you mean the average public?”

“Hmm, I plan to build a colosseum that can seat around fifty-thousand people⁵². There is still a lot of empty land left, so it shouldn't be an issue. In the surrounding area we will be opening the fast food stores we just discussed. Sounds like we could generate a lot of sales, right? Wouldn't there be cash flow when there's human flow? We should be expecting a lot of tourists. What do you think, Myourmiles-kun?”

In other words, Rimuru was saying that they would normally be providing recreation that the average public could also afford, maximizing their customer base...

What do you think, Myourmiles-kun? Upon being asked this, all Myourmiles could answer was: “That's beyond my imagination.” By constructing a colosseum large enough to hold fifty-thousand people, it would be able to rival the one in Ingracia. Or rather, it would be able to accommodate around five times as many spectators. Rimuru had to be really serious about this.

“We can have a standing area for people to watch from, that one we won't be charging anything for. When it comes to the rich, we will direct them to the designated seats and charge entry fees. As for the nobles who are generous with their cash, we will offer them the VIP seats. Then we will prepare box seats for specific guests. Those are my thoughts on it; I hope you can help work out the profit margin per seat, to settle on prices.”

And with that, Rimuru dumped all the work onto Myourmiles with a smile.

In order to allow peasants and townsfolk from the neighboring kingdoms to watch the fights as well, he was preparing areas that don't charge money—that's something even the kingdom of Ingracia wasn't doing.

So that's why they'd planned it like that, Myourmiles finally understood.

“I see, I was just about to say that fifty-thousand people are too much, so that's how it is...”

“Right. This type of event only has value when it draws everyone's interest. Wouldn't seats be more valuable when you can sit elegantly while a bunch of others can only stand and watch?”

“Indeed it does. Reserving seats ahead of time would remove the risk of missing out on one entirely, it's definitely worth it.”

The colosseum in Ingracia acted solely as entertainment for the wealthy, the concept for

⁵²For reference, the Roman Colosseum could hold around fifty to eighty thousand as well.

Rimuru's was fundamentally different. All in all, its main purpose was to garner attention for the tournament in order to draw in huge crowds.

Myourmiles mulled things over and came to admire the idea. If an entry fee weren't required, peasants during slack season would probably join the fun. As the news spread through these people, average citizens from nearby countries would get interested as well. The point is, if the population of people flowing in exceeded tens of thousands, the inns in the streets would no doubt make a lot of money. It would also be quite interesting to open up the fast food stores as mentioned by Rimuru on the way to offer a place to rest.

Moreover, they could also serve the tourists and provide them with a residence to stay at. If Rimuru was able to monetize them though the restaurants, inns, or hot spring in the town, running the colosseum would be extremely profitable... He couldn't help but imagine how the money spent by the people being attracted there alone would fill their pockets.

"As expected of master, you've calculated it from the start..."

"Eh? Ah, I-I guess so. Yep, it's all part of my plan!"

"It seems that you have plenty of facilities to accommodate people over night. Then the problem will be ensuring regular demand later on, because if we can accomplish that, our profit margin would no doubt skyrocket. Anyway, let's do promotion first. Then our next step is the proposal that you entrusted me to work on?"

"Eh, yep. That's it."

"I see, I see. It will be my job to come up with entertainment that would draw everyone back... Even if the martial tournament this time does not generate any profit, we will make the guests return regardless—if we manage to convince the customers to return, would it mean that our plan was successful?"

"—How impressive that you read my thoughts so well. As expected of Myourmiles-kun, you are the only one suitable for the job!"

The proposed martial tournament that would be used to garner crowds made Myourmiles shiver in excitement. Rimuru said that arrangement and planning would all be handed to him.

This is too intriguing! Myourmiles wanted to shout, but he endured.

"He...hehehe, that's making things rather hard on me—"

"Wouldn't such a thing be better handled by the hands of the professional? Myourmiles-kun, could it be, that you are not confident in yourself?"

"HA-HAHAAHAHA! How harsh, Master Rimuru is quite mean."

"Hahahaha, right, right. But if it's Myourmiles-kun, surely you can handle it easily, can't you?"

The two started laughing out loud. Both giving off a devious expression.

"I mean, then you will be mobilizing a lot of money! Surely you are aware of that?"

"Hehehehe, please be reassured. I am best at dealing with money. So I will definitely arrange the best result for Master!"

"That's most certain. I see that it is the right choice to leave the matter to you."

As they laughed, Rimuru and Myourmiles shook hands with each other.

The event would cost a lot of money. It would be hosted in just the way Rimuru described.

Seriously, this guy is terrifying—Myourmiles thought to himself.

It was horrifying alone to not know how far ahead he had already planned. Myourmiles proceeded to plan out the ideal blueprint in his mind, even though he still had that concern in mind.

“If that is the case, we will have another new usage for healing potions. No matter how severe of an injury they sustain, as long as they don’t die instantly, won’t they all be healed? That means that it won’t matter if the contestants get serious. Moreover, wouldn’t it be super effective for promotion if we claim that the injured participant would become fully healed in time for the next match?”

“What do you mean?”

“Ah? Have you not considered that?”

“Hmm yeah...of course I have! I just want to confirm whether your idea is any different from mine, that’s all!”

“I see! Hehehe, if it is Master Rimuru, surely such minor matters would be within your expectation. I’ve got to catch up to you,” Myourmiles continued to express his view.

Then they started to talk to each other in “Right! Yes!” and began to discuss all sorts of ideas.

First was the use of the martial tournament to promote the healing potion to sell to the adventurers. Second was regarding the lending and selling of weapons and gear.

“Speaking of the weapons made by Kurobee, even failed works of his will possess incredible quality. And though they are not good enough to debut on their own, he has trained many disciples—”

It would be fine however to sell items crafted by those disciples, Rimuru suggested. That’s why he hoped they would give it a try. Other things include, for instance, running a casino, which would be part of the national enterprise. There seemed to be one running in the Kingdom of Ingracia. Enormous profits would be made just through betting on a winner alone. Not only human versus human, it would be interesting to have captured monsters fight them as well. Of course, there was a need to ensure safety, but right now there were many strong subordinates under Rimuru that could be put to use. That’s why Myourmiles wasn’t worried at all that it would pose a problem. Or the colosseum could be used as a practice field for rookie adventurers and lend the venue. They could deploy coaches and allow customers to pay for their instruction.

Myourmiles’s head was spinning at a formidable speed, he felt that ideas he had never had kept flowing in. With the help of Rimuru, he was able to come up with countless fantasy-like proposals.

There are so many ideas. On one hand he felt that he had been entrusted with a great responsibility, on the other hand he was also immersed in excitement. Apart from shivering,

Myourmiles had made up his mind.

“I’ll do it then. I’ll show you! My soul as a merchant predicts we’ll be making a fortune!”

“Wonderful! What splendid confidence, Myourmiles-kun! Indeed, if it is you, you will definitely make enough money to satisfy me!”

Having been praised by Rimuru, Myourmiles flustered a bit. Seeing this reaction, Rimuru followed up: “By the way, if you don’t mind, how about you come to our nation after finishing hosting the festival? You are ideal for our commercial department, advertisement department or finance department. Regardless, I hope you will become an executive there under whichever sector. As our nation grows bigger, we will need to finalize a set of laws after the festival. If we are able to achieve something great, surely no one will dare to interject, what do you think?”

Rimuru implies with his words that he was convinced the event would be a success, to which Myourmiles was delighted.

What do you think? That line was like a divine melody touching Myourmiles’s heart as it echoed next to his ears.

He nodded his head firmly.

“—I have truly been defeated. Young Master, no, Rimuru-sama. I, Myourmiles, will assure the success of the plan no matter what so as to become a subject of Rimuru-sama!”

Myourmiles agreed without hesitation. That was only natural.

He has so much faith in me. Failure is not an option!

After living for so long, Myourmiles was once again feeling the sensation of having trouble sitting still as he felt his body and mind flamed by his excitement, hopes and dreams combined. This sensation was too precious for him to lose.

“You are being too dramatic, Myourmiles-kun,” Rimuru laughed, the two then proceeded to do more detailed planning, during which Myourmiles’s excitement showed no signs of dissipating.

I’ll make this festival a success and become Rimuru’s trusted subject—with this new ambition in mind, Myourmiles swore to pledge his life to Rimuru even at the cost of destroying his body and soul.

By the time Rimuru had left, Myourmiles gathered all his lackeys and servants.

“Myourmiles-sama, what did Rimuru-sama visit you for?” The ex-Rank C adventurer Bydd who was now Myourmiles’s personal bodyguard asked. Myourmiles nodded his head dramatically and said: “Bydd, we are going to be busy soon.”

“Is he making any forceful request again? That lord’s ideas are always interesting, but we always get ordered all over the place. I really wish he put himself in our shoes for once...” Bydd said with a laugh, but he didn’t mean it.

Just like Myourmiles, he was also saved by Rimuru and one of the people who were charmed by this demon lord. While he said that he was ordered all over the place, the person looking

forward to it more than anyone was none other than Bydd himself.

“Hehe, Bydd. This time is not like that abusive stuff. The ones in the past were but games with petty margins, this time it’s gonna be huge, actually, we are betting our future on it.”

Cracking a smile, Myourmiles continued.

He was already born with a villain-looking face, it became much more terrifying with a bit of killing intent. Nowadays his subordinates were no longer scared of his face, but they couldn’t hide their shock at Myourmiles’s words.

“Master, what do you mean by that?” the butler asked in everyone’s place; Myourmiles on the other hand briefly summarized the conversation he had with Rimuru for them. He explained that Tempest was holding a kingdom-founding festival, and during which they would be hosting a martial tournament as a recreational event. They would also be testing the waters for the proposed fast food stores. The reason for the Founding Festival was to put on air for the public after Rimuru became a demon lord. Every single member of the Tempest Federation would be contributing to the festival, so naturally its scale would be beyond Myourmiles’s imagination.

He excitedly announced to everyone that he had been given a crucial role during such an event. At the end of his speech, he declared: “I’ve decided to pledge my allegiance to Rimur-sama. So the proposal this time has to be carried out successfully no matter what!”

His announcement caused his subordinates to gasp. Myourmiles wasn’t planning to come back to the Kingdom of Blumund—after learning his resolve, his subordinates looked at each other, all looking confused.

“Hehe, Myourmiles-sama. Surely you are not planning to go alone, right? I may just be a common thug, but I am also a bodyguard. The lackeys under my command also admire Rimur-sama a lot, so do bring us along!”

“If we are really going there, you alone won’t be able to protect me.”

“T-that’s so mean!”

“—But, if you are willing to help me, it’d be fine to bring you along.”

“Of course I will, I am willing to do anything! I may not be very smart, but I’ve still got some wits in me,” Bydd said, given his past as a conman, witty trickeries were up his alley. But this type of speech only baffled Myourmiles, who on the other hand...

“I’m really hopeless against your type. Right, the more the merrier. That includes those thugs, if they don’t have a way to make a living, they seem at least capable of being guards. I’ll bring them along.”

—With that it was decided; Bydd and the rest would be accompanying him. Next, Myourmiles—

“What do the rest of you think? This house is all yours if you like it!” he asked his subordinates. Upon hearing this, they laughed in response.

“ “ “Please allow us to accompany you!” ” ”

All of these people were personally trained by Myourmiles, they had no attachment to this

kingdom and no hesitation. Having made that decision, they were left with tons of work to do. Myourmiles had gained the official recognition of this nation, Blumund, and was part of the Freedom Association. That's why it was his freedom to leave this one for the next.

Myourmiles's motto was "To act as soon as the target is set," but there were things that he had to resolve first. Remembering this, Myourmiles decided to ensure there was no potential trouble left behind. He turned to one of the subordinates who also wished to accompany him and happened to be the head of a small group⁵³ under him.

"Oi, you should also be able to stand your own ground. Is it fine if I hand this shop to you?"

"M-Master! Why are you bringing this up all of a sudden..."

"It's nothing really. I'm very happy that all of you wish to accompany me. But do consider this yourselves. We don't have any basis of livelihood on Rimuru-sama's side. I hope to plan this thing right and have Rimuru-sama promote me... But I don't want this to affect you all and give you guys a hard time."

These were all courteous words, Myourmiles however had something else in mind. If he abandoned this estate, he would lose his territory that he put so much effort into building in this country. That's why he hoped to leave a few people behind so they could safeguard the base on this land where they could still operate freely. This lieutenant should be more than capable of handling it.

His name was Bach. He was the son of Myourmiles's close acquaintance, who was first sent to his shop in the hope of him learning things. The man was smart enough and Myourmiles appreciated him a lot too, giving him much care. But, the failure of Bach's family business had changed the situation. Since he then became homeless, he was officially hired by Myourmiles, making him a manager in his shop. Nowadays Bach's family all relied on the income he received as manager, Myourmiles couldn't bear to have him fall on hard times like this. That's why he hoped to leave Bach behind. He was almost perfect when it came to handling work. That's why Myourmiles was convinced that it would be fine to hand this shop to him as well.

"M-Master... I'm truly happy that you want to hand me the shop. But we also want to—"

Perhaps it's because he was young and energetic, Bach couldn't accept it. Perhaps he wished to gain more recognition from Myourmiles and so he couldn't make up his mind to go independent.

Although how Bach was acting was rather pleasing, Myourmiles didn't think this should go on. Bach wouldn't be able to stand on his own if this continued, Myourmiles would have to find a chance to let him go and now was the perfect opportunity.

"Bach, I'm not your parents. I never mentioned giving you this shop, only managing it. Listen now, even with me gone, you cannot allow this shop to go bankrupt, do you understand? And then, in time you will buy this shop from me! First run this shop to prosperity and get your actual parents here one day."

⁵³The phrase here to describe his rank is “若頭” (waka-gashira), a common ranking of lieutenant running small group in Japanese yakuza organization.

With a gentle smile on his face, Myourmiles put his hand on Bach's shoulder. His words may have sounded kind, but he would make sure to sign the confirmation document and be very clear with the money. Myourmiles was a businessman after all. He was not that naive. With that being said however...

If he can't even make enough money to afford purchasing this shop, this boy will not make it big in the future.

In another sense, he was also like a strict mentor.

"Thank you, thank you... I will...I will strive for greatness in order to repay Myourmiles-sama's gracious deeds!" Manager Bach expressed his gratitude with tears in his eyes.

These types of words wouldn't get to Myourmiles's heart either way. He nodded deeply after replying: "Good luck then!"

Soon afterwards, Myourmiles finished all of the procedures. After selecting who to bring and who should stay, he gave some final advice to Lieutenant Bach.

"In case of any trouble, just come and discuss things with me. I have faith that you guys will be successful in running things right. You better not let me down!"

Bach and the rest who were staying at the estate nodded after hearing this. Myourmiles was thorough with his teaching, so no one would dare to be reckless. They wouldn't go so far as to do something rude even against noblemen.

"Myourmiles-sama, everyone here was trained from start to finish by you. Please be reassured!"

Myourmiles nodded after hearing Bach's guarantee.

"Heh, you sure talk the talk. But there's something you guys should know—"

"Please be reassured. We will handle the trade route built by Myourmiles-sama on this land with caution. We will prioritize reaching any of your demands first."

"Hmm. I'll be counting on you!"

Just in case, Myourmiles had made the deal beforehand that if there was ever any emergency use, they would focus on getting rid of (selling) their own merchandise first. He wouldn't get careless in that regard.

And Bach wasn't hesitating either, his thoughts aligned with Myourmiles's without a word and he quickly came to realize it.

*He's still lacking something for now, but I can tell from his eyes, Bach is already starting to be his own man... Then I can hand it to him with reassurance—*Myourmiles thought to himself.

And like that, Myourmiles had finished managing everything. With a group of followers, he set off for Tempest Federation.



I sighed with relief after leaving Myourmiles's estate.

Wonderful, now he has finally taken the task. There should be a lot to look forward to, now that he has made a direct response to my invitation.

Our nation didn't have any monster who was good at managing money. Up until now Shuna had been in charge of accounting, but this probably couldn't continue. Right now she could still handle it at village-level, but if it rose to national-level, even Shuna would have to surrender. Lilina from the management department and Vesta who was a minister in the Dwarven Kingdom were there to assist her, but it was undeniable that there remained an inadequacy of talent. It would also be impossible for me to do it since it was too troublesome.

It was then that I recalled Myourmiles-kun. This man was a master of finance even in the human society. He had traded with a bunch of nobles in addition to a few different kingdoms. It was quite the waste to have someone like him be a mere merchant, that's why I thought he would definitely be of use in my nation. And most importantly, Myourmiles-kun knew how to be flexible. If I had him in charge of finance, I could ask him to spare more pocket money for me. I'd collaborated with Myourmiles in the past as well making money in secret, so I looked forward to grabbing tons of cash in bigger actions.

*Just kidding, there's plenty of that in our nation's treasury! But all the money has been taken by me and not distributed as salary to my subordinates. This makes me feel...sort of guilty and stuff...*⁵⁴

All of this belongs to Rimuru-sama—everyone said, so I was even more afraid to take anything. I would definitely feel bad afterwards. All in all, I thought that money should be spent on national development. However, we still needed money. Not that I was personally interested, but because I had to bring that brat Gobta to the Night Butterfly again. Veldora was also arguing that he wanted to come along, which was super annoying. Visiting that type of store would cost some money one way or another.

I was (definitely) not personally interested, but Gobta and Veldora were really giving me headaches. This amount was nothing compared to the national treasury, but if it were just my pocket money, the expense would be so ridiculous that I'd be spending it all in one place. Moreover, Shuna always got my pocket money for me, but as soon as she heard the location I had

⁵⁴Cue side story “Payday in Tempest” in volume 13.5

visited she would confiscate my wallet immediately... Under those circumstances, how could I even dare to ask, "Isn't the money from the treasury my money anyway?"

That's why I was working on side-projects to earn pocket money so that there would be no such concern in the future. I even ended up with the intriguing plan to host a martial tournament. Myourmiles-kun truly had an outstanding talent. I had no idea how he interpreted my words, but his enthusiasm for planning exceeded my imagination.

Attracting crowds by hosting a martial tournament was his idea, and he also quickly came up with the plan to introduce merchandise as well as selling healing potions and equipment. He was indeed a visionary. These were amazing pitches.

After I returned, I needed to tell everyone to construct a colosseum fast. While Geld was helping the Beast Kingdom rebuild their city, Mildo would need to assist him as well. With the two persons in charge of the construction department abroad, I had practically become the one in charge.

But that's totally fine. It was probably due to the continuous construction projects that our nation had gradually given birth to new engineering talents. That's why nowadays all I needed to do was ask, without any need to do heavy work. There was a craftsman⁵⁵ called of Gobkyu, who was Mildo's disciple. Now he had become a pillar of the town's construction industry. If it were him, surely, he would be able to build a gorgeous-looking colosseum.

Under normal circumstances, such a project would take up to a dozen years, but with the strength of monsters, the time can be reduced tremendously. With that being said, the time left before the festival was just barely more than two months. The remaining time available was insufficient, it would be impossible to complete all of the buildings. So we should just lay out the stages this time.

As for the design—

«Answer. Have extracted master's memory of Colosseum ruins from ancient Roman period. Construction of blueprint based on this information... Successful.»

—Just like that, easy peasy.

There was still some paper left, so I started to sketch and add up my ideas on it. Normally speaking, it would take at least a couple of months to reach this level of design. Field measurement, calculation of construction intensity etc. What made it worse was that the time taken for these operations alone would be using the base unit of year, which would be more than common.⁵⁶ In addition, the design graph of it was supposed to be sketched in a computer for a few days, but now all I needed to do was draw it out by hand... The support of Wisdom King Raphael-sensei on such details had also been boosted in efficiency. Although I still felt that this was somewhat beyond common sense—that is but my belated comment, I should have more of

⁵⁵The term is 職人, which means craftsman/worker, in this case the role is similar to "engineer"

⁵⁶Fuse works in the construction business, probably speaking from experience.

an open mind.

Next, the design graph was done all right, but I still needed to discuss with Gobkyu. Before that, now that I was in the Kingdom of Blumund, I wanted to drop by the Freedom Association.

I should first hand the design graph to Gobkyu. When he has spare time, he can gather and lead the workers to the construction site.

Then, let's deliver the message.

"Ranga, are you there?"

"Yes, my master!"

I summoned Ranga. He stuck his head out from my shadow and responded.

Since the plan to conquer the Kingdom of Farmus had been settled for a while, everyone except Diablo had returned. But Ranga seemed to have taken my shadow as his designated personal seat and immediately went into it.

I handed the sketched design graph of the colosseum to Ranga.

"Hand this to a craftsman in the town by the name of Gobkyu. By the way, could you help me by asking whether they have time to gather at the west gate?"

"Understood. Speaking of which, isn't Rimuru-sama returning as well?"

"No. Since I've come all the way here, I want to visit Fuze first before returning."

"If that's the case, shouldn't you need a bodyguard to accompany you?"

Knowing that I was not returning yet, Ranga seemed quite anxious. I saw that his tail was hanging low, but you need not worry that much. Despite how I look, I'm still a demon lord after all. At the moment I wasn't getting careless and had 'Absolute Defense' running. If I actually ran into an attack strong enough to break it, wouldn't it be unsafe for me wherever I go? What Ranga was doing is called being paranoid.

"There's not gonna be any problem. I'll just be going to have a little chat with him. If anyone should warrant any worries, it would be Myourmiles. He seems to have become a target of some strange nobleman. There's no way of knowing what that type of person would do."

"Oh, are you referring to that vulgar man from before? Should I go and bite him to death?"

STOPUUU. Don't do that kind of thing in towns of other kingdoms. It's gonna cause huge problems.

"Geez, you must have gotten so aggressive because of spending all that time with Shion. I think you'd better relearn some normal values."

"H-How so!"

Ranga was shocked at my comment. He wasn't self-aware at all.

"During your last battle, did you really adhere to my orders? Have you really not overdone things?"

"T-There's no such thing, master—"

Ranga seemed kind of shaken, could it be...

The only things reported back by Gobta and Gabil was as follows—"N-No problem at all!"

“R-Right. We were lucky to have Ranga-san there, he was really reliable!”

I felt something was suspicious but did not ask for details. I had a feeling that it would've just given me a headache if I had asked. Therefore, I left those matters for Diablo to take care of and, since that guy hasn't complained about anything, I'll just pretend everything was fine. (Grigori: It was not okay)

This is what people call running away from problems. But, if there really was any problem, someone should have already reported to me, so I just chose to believe them. I hoped Ranga could be more cautious in the future to stay away from getting poisoned by Shion(’s mind).

“Ranga-kun? Do it as a favor for me, please don’t act too reckless!”

I caressed Ranga’s neck and gave him those words of caution.

“I understand—”

Ranga nodded obediently in response, concluding this ordeal.

“All right. Next, I hope you can deliver the message. One more thing, by the way, if there are any people available from the security department, send them to protect Myourmiles. Please confirm the matter for me as well!”

“Understood!”

With that being said, Ranga once again snuck into my shadow and set on his way to return home.



I decided at last to send a guard to Myourmiles’s side. They would be protecting him from the shadows without being noticed. Although I wasn’t sure who they would send, but there were very few individuals in the security department who could operate on their own. It’s safe to say it wouldn’t be any rookie, the person coming would at least be a seasoned veteran at the rank of squad leader.

The squad leader is the team leader of a five-man squad. In terms of ranking for adventurers that equates to Rank B, tasking them as a bodyguard should not pose any challenge. During my stay in this town, I needed to get hold of Myourmiles’s trace so that I would be informed if he encountered any dicey situations. Before the guard arrived, I went to go see Fuze first.

I opened the gate to the building of the Freedom Association branch in Blumund and entered. I accidentally went overboard last time, which made me concerned about whether I would cause a commotion... But only a sight of “Who are you?” greeted me. Since the person didn’t say anything, I successfully made my way to the counter.

Oh right, I came in last time with that mask, so there was no way they would know who I was.

Never mind, this is fine. If they weren't willing to help me contact Fuze, I'd just drop the invitation and leave. With that relaxed outlook on my mind, I walked towards the counter.

"Heyo. My name is Rimuru. Could you help slide a message for the branch leader Fuze-san? Ah, take this, it's my identity card."

As I finished, I took out my identification card from my 'Stomach' and showed the reception lady.

How is such a young girl an adventurer? Usually I didn't mind hearing this. All I felt was "Ah shit, here we go again."

I'd long gotten used to it by now, but luckily the reception lady still remembered me. She blushed and gazed at me mesmerized.

"Ah, you must be Rimuru-san! Long time no see! How have you been?"

"Hmm? I'm doing fine, very lively! I see you are doing fine as well, how wonderful—"

"Yes! I've been doing fine too. By the way, Rimuru-san, I heard that you've passed the test at HQ and even ranked up to B-plus. Impressive, I truly admire you!"

"Ah, right. I wanted to go through the Rank A test, but I've been busy lately."

Actually, I just felt it was too troublesome. Since I'd already ranked up above Rank B, my access increased with it, and with it came more responsibility. I already felt there to be too much trouble at B-plus, but I'd go for a higher rank when there was the need.

I wasn't doing it for the salary anyway, yet I still had to move out when crisis emerges. But in return, I got to access all the nations conveniently and I also didn't need to pay resting and dining at different branches. To be honest, it was indeed delightful to have so much convenience covered in so many areas, but it would be really troublesome to have restraints put on me by others. But I didn't need to say such a thing to shatter everyone's dream.

"If it is Rimuru-san, surely you will make it! I'll be cheering for you!"

"Ah, is it now? Thanks a lot, hahahahahaha..."

It was also very troublesome when she was gazing at me with those shining anime eyes—yet upon thinking so, the reception lady immediately dropped the shocker.

"By the way, Rimuru-san, won't you be very troubled that you have the same name as the demon lord? There's something called 'Rename System' that if you are truly troubled by it, you can re-register your name at the association. If you visit a location where no one knows you, you would be able to operate with the disguise of a lower-level rookie, what do you think?"

I-I totally forgot! I'd become a demon lord, and was using my name directly in public...

Nowadays, the name of the member of the Octagram Rimuru Tempest the "New Star (Newbie)" was known by the world, wouldn't it pose a problem to be an adventurer with the self-proclaimed name of Rimuru?

I should just stay away from the adventurer career. I'll wait until whenever I am forced to move out as an adventurer to use my "Rename System." It seemed that for me I could move out when lowered to Rank B, that should be enough. By the way, I never knew there was such

a convenient system.

“Thanks. I’ve picked up a good bit of advice today. I’ll have to trouble you if I need that. Anyway, are you able to reach Fuze-san?”

“Ah, yes. Please come by and register by that time! Then, I shall lead the way for you.”

With all the other topics cleared, she immediately let me go. Seeing that someone was personally guiding me, commotion began to spread behind my back.

“Is this serious?”

“Who is that young girl!”

There were some conversations mixed in the voices, the one talking seemed to have witnessed my prowess in battle last time.

“Eh, you gotta be kidding! That fellow turns out to be such an adorable little girl?”

“Unbelievable... So that’s what the Rimuru-dono who defeated the lesser demon with ease looks like...”

“I heard he shares the same name as the demon lord.”

“Could this be the real deal—”

“Ya idiot, how could that be possible!”

“I guess you have a point, ahahahaha!”

Something along those lines. It seemed more and more people were spreading rumors about me, though there was nothing to worry about, it was all within what I expected. We only shared the same name; it was fortunate that no one appeared to realize that I was the actual demon lord.

Perhaps the name “Rimuru” wasn’t that rare after all. (~~Veldora: Am I a joke to you? Everyone: Yes!~~) As I thought so, I walked towards the room Fuze was waiting in.

I entered the room casually. Upon seeing me, Fuze was holding his head. I didn’t give much thought to it and greeted Fuze.

“Heya! I’ve come to play. What’s wrong with you, did something happen? What’s that distressed look on your face?”

“Uh... Everything was so peaceful up until just now, but a demon lord suddenly showed up...”

“Eh? Really? That would be terrible. Aren’t you being too casual?”

“No no no, that demon lord is right in front of me. Now then, what should I do...?”

“Eh, is that so? Hmm, I suppose you should serve him a cup of tea? And if there is any cake or food like that around, I think the demon lord would be pretty pleased to eat them too!”

“What cake! Do you think it is that easy to get luxurious food like that! Seriously, why does Rimuru-san, even after becoming a demon lord, enjoy coming and going wherever you please?”

While complaining, Fuze didn’t forget to prepare tea for me. You can’t judge a book by its cover, he was a serious man.

I said my thanks as I took that cup of tea. With a sip down my throat, we began to discuss business.

“Rimuru-san, I’m really sorry this time. We weren’t able to successfully stop the Western Holy Church which led to the march of the Holy Knight Order...”

“Ah, that really couldn’t be helped. The masterminds seemed to have been the ‘Seven Luminary Clerics.’”

“Really?”

“So no matter how hard we have emphasized that the people of my nation are harmless, they would probably not listen.”

“It’s the ‘Seven Celestial’...? Those people were the guardians of mankind, they were great heroes in the past—”

“So I heard. They had Hinata in their sights too, so after a series of incidents, she is luckily still safe and sound and our misunderstanding was resolved along with it. But unfortunately, there was one casualty. One of the captains called Garde went missing.”

“Garde of ‘Fire’—Although he was not as good as Shizue-san, he was still talented in launching elegant spear moves combined with the magic of fire spirits. That man was one of the Ten Great Saints who are the protectors of mankind...” Fuze muttered regretfully.

The Garde I saw was an illusion created as a disguise by the Seven Luminaries, so I wasn’t able to meet him in person and had no idea what type of person he really was. But since he appeared to be quite famous, Fuze would naturally know given how well-informed he always was.

While I said that he had gone missing, I suspected he had probably been murdered. I felt really sorry for Garde-san, but all I could say now was “rest in peace...”

I then recounted the events up until today. Just now Fuze had been worried about me, so I also told him about the Walpurgis Banquet. I mentioned that the demon lords had been reduced to eight people and their name changed to “Octagram.” I also told him about my conflict with Hinata and how the Seven Luminaries died. Mindful of my promise, I vaguely brushed over the part about Luminas’s true identity. Although people may say that my lips were never sealed tightly enough, I was not thick-headed enough to have revealed such an important secret.

“I see how it was... No matter how we had approached or tried to contact them, it would have all been obstructed on the outset. I even sent people to the Church headquarters after communication with the Western Holy Church branch failed. But I couldn’t get in contact with anyone higher than the rank of priest... I never imagined that the Seven Luminaries would have been plotting behind the scene.”

“Hinata said so too. But, their faith towards Ru—correction, the God Luminas was true, that seemed to have also been confirmed by Hinata.”

“Humans are too fragile, that’s why we want to rely on the power of god—”

“Does Fuze do that too?”

“Haha, I’m not like them. When I run out of my last breath, it would be the end of me. I’ve lived all my life with that resolved in mind. Although I do pray for miracles, I do not pray to any ‘God’ that I’ve never met.”

I see, so Fuze was an atheist. In this world, monsters with supernatural strength were often worshipped as earth deities to be respected by man. But they would only do so after meeting said beings. It was no exception for Luminas: in the beginning she seemed only interested in protecting individuals that she had known well. Fuze had never met such a god before, that's why he relied on his own strength. It may sound very pragmatic, but it was easy to understand.

"I can indeed understand how people feel the need to pray to god. But in reality, what god is capable of doing is probably only within their own abilities. To put aside God Luminas, it is sufficient to say that the incident has brought us and the Western Holy Church together in peace."

It was precisely because I knew the true identity of the God Luminas that I knew praying was a meaningless action. But at the end of the day, it is but empty talk. Sometimes prayer alone would bring people strength, it is not something I could just simply rebuke.

"That's right. I personally feel as if a huge burden has been taken off my shoulders."

Fuze smiled as he finished. He seemed to be quite troubled by achieving pitifully little while struggling to persuade the Western Holy Church in accordance with our deal. Seeing how much he cared sparked joy within me.

I'd talked from start to finish about all of the events as we chatted. I rose up as I brought the conversation to a close, but suddenly recalled something.

"Then it is about time for me to leave, here's something for you."

I took out an envelope from my pocket and handed it to Fuze. The envelope contained the invitation for the Kingdom-Founding Festival that was planned to be hosted in my nation. I almost forgot about it during the intense exchange. This was my purpose of visiting today after all.

"And this is?"

"We are hosting a celebration for the presentation announcing my inauguration as demon lord. Being titled a Founding Festival, we plan to have some fun. I've also sent out invitations to the royalties and noble in the neighboring nations, Fuze, you've got to attend it as well."

"Huh? Hold on, Rimuru-san. Even if I attend—"

"It's all right. We have an invitation for the king of Blumund as well, so help me deliver it along the way."

"Why don't you just directly—Ah, is it not convenient..."

"Indeed. I have people directly sending the invitations to the Dwarven King and Duke Elalude's side, but I'm not familiar with the people in other nations. A monster running directly towards them may cause a commotion, so I've had people send them to the Freedom Association branches in their respective kingdoms. I did meet the king of Blumund once, but is it really okay for a demon lord to go there in person?" I said with a smile, Fuze grasped the invitation with a wry smile, "Things are already bad enough when a demon lord comes here."

"I've now indeed got the invitation. I'll make sure to hand it over to the king," Fuze changed his expression and made his promise.

Now that my business was done, I did plan to leave for real now, but this time I was in-

terrupted by Fuze suddenly speaking up upon recalling something, “By the way, the head of Freedom Association has been worried about Rimuru-san as well. He was drained during the negotiation with the Western Holy Church, I’ll inform him later that the problem has been successfully resolved.”

So Yuuki had been worried about me. A lot had happened since I last met that guy. I got a nostalgic feeling.

“I see, it seems I’ve given Yuuki some unnecessary trouble.”

“It’s not unnecessary. Honestly, the Association doesn’t wish to antagonize the Western Holy Church, so he judged that it would be most ideal to find a way to peacefully negotiate.”

Fuze told me not to worry. But I kinda wanted to give something to Yuuki in return—

“Speaking of! Let me invite Yuuki along. Or would it cause some problems?”

“About that, I’m not exactly sure. Although I’m not qualified to say so, he is still quite the busy man. I’m not sure if he can find the spare hours...”

“I’ll cover his transportation for coming and leaving, is it possible for him to have one day off? If he can’t then I won’t push it, I’ll just go play with him later. That’s all, please help me deliver this to him as well.”

As I finished, I started to write a letter in front of Fuze and put it into the envelope along with the invitation. I handed it over to the shocked Fuze.

“Rimuru-san, where did that paper come from... Uh, never mind. Besides, if it’s only a letter I can do the favor utilizing the magic of ‘Teleportation’...”

Fuze seemed exhausted. I may be a little bit too casual with asking people for favors.

“Ahaha, sorry. Then, I’ll be counting on you.”

“I understand, Rimuru-san.”

“Ah, just one more thing, Milim is coming to the Founding Festival too.”

As I confirmed Fuze had taken the envelope, I delivered such an astonishing statement.

“Milim? Ehh, do you mean...”

“I’ll be leaving first then, that’s just how it is!”

I smiled widely as I bid him farewell to quickly flee the scene.

“Hold on! Is that supposed to be THE Demon Lord Milim??? EH, OIII!”

Some tormented voice seemed to be projecting in my direction, but I’ll just pretend I heard nothing.



After leaving the location of the association branch, a man jumped out of my shadow to greet me while kneeling.

“My name is Gobemon, I’ve come to answer to my liege Rimuru’s summon.”

The man called himself Gobemon and was one of the hobgoblins that I named. He was quite ambitious, I recalled hearing news about him fighting with Gobta over the seat of vice-captain back when Rigur was still captain. Naturally, his strength was guaranteed...

“Eh, didn’t you become a centurion? And didn’t you move to another corps because Gobta became the captain of the goblin riders?”

If he was able to become a centurion, it meant he was more than capable of being a commander. No squadmate has been given the title⁵⁷, and he doesn’t actually have a hundred-men as subordinates⁵⁸. But of course, it is a higher position than squad leader, compared to a squad leader who can lead five to ten men, the strength of a centurion is far beyond that.

“Yes. Honestly, I don’t want to work under anyone. Right now, I’m trying to work on my own. I want to recruit direct subordinates that only answer to me and build my own troops.”

Oh oh.

This guy’s got some bone in him. Good, because he didn’t want to work under Gobta, that’s why he was not interested in the position of vice-captain of the popular Goblin Riders, so having such ambition was as expected.

“I see, then I hope you can learn well. Myourmiles-kun is someone I really rely on, so please protect him vigorously and avoid being noticed. In addition, his way of manipulating people’s hearts is worthy of studying. Even though most people work for him due to the temptation of profits, that is definitely not the only factor. You can learn from him while protecting him.”

“Yes! I’ll keep my liege Rimuru’s words in mind and carry out my duty with dedication!”

Gobemon was fully motivated.

According to Benimaru’s observation, Gobemon tended towards being too confident in his abilities and often looked down on the flawed traits of his subordinates and companions. That was also the reason why, despite his constitution and other results being superior to Gobta, he didn’t make the part of the captain. If this mission could teach him to care about his subordinates, it would be fine to hand the whole corps to him. Therefore, I hoped he would undergo some growth through it.

“If you complete this mission well and learn something along the way, report back to me then. As your reward, I’ll gift you this dachi (sword) that I’m using right here.”

Kurobee had informed me that my special sword had been crafted. Which means, I’d be bidding farewell to this dachi. At first, I only had someone make it as a replacement, nowadays its quality had become incredible after being intensely submerged in my youki. I had it repaired once after the battle against Hinata, even Kurobee was shocked by it then. It would be pretty appropriate to make it a reward.

“R-Really?”

Gobemon was flattered, his eyes opened wide, bursting with excitement.

“That’s right. Considering your abilities, you should be able to wield this sword. But you

⁵⁷Not exactly sure what this is referring to, source: 隊員がいなくて与えられるのだが

⁵⁸Based on the term “Centurian” which has both the literate kanji meaning of “Hundred-men Leader” and its roman origin being the commander of a squad around a hundred men.

must work harder to get my approval!”

“Yes sir! I, Gobemon, will meet my liege Rimuru’s expectations!”

Departing with these words, Gobemon ran off to guard Myourmiles. I intentionally dangled the reward before his eyes to lure him into doing my deeds; I wondered if Gobemon got the message or not.

Winning a subordinate’s trust isn’t a trivial matter. Just like the concept known since ancient times—the Feudal system, if there wasn’t any mutual benefit, the relationship between the ruler and his subjects would inevitably fracture. Speaking of this, I was concerned about getting better myself, so I really shouldn’t be seen as a role model. I hoped Gobemon would prove himself in his own way and meet my expectations.

All right, now all the invitations had been sent. Next, all we needed to do was to ensure our preparations wrapped up before the festival. I hope we can host a grand festival.

With my mood flying high, I outlined the necessary matters in my head.

**Chapter
3**

**The
Preparations**

That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime

Chapter 3

The Preparations

The location was a small, slightly disorganized conference room. Within stood two suspicious shadows.

No, that's not all. There was also the shadow of a smaller person. It was around thirty centimeters tall and possessed wings similar to those of a dragonfly. With this tiny person's shadow at the center, the other two sat opposite to each other.

It was Ramiris and her two servants—Beretta and Treyni.

Doooong! With an imposing aura, Ramiris struck the mini-table in front of her.

Then, she shared her feelings to her two trusted subordinates.

“This isn’t gonna work! We have to move away!”

Maybe she hit it a bit too hard, she rubbed her hand in pain.

While looking at Ramiris gently, Treyni said:

“As expected of Ramiris-sama. What a great idea!”

“Right? Right?”

Ramiris nodded in satisfaction and responded to Treyni with a smile.

The person who spoke up to persuade them is the other person—Beretta.

“One moment please. Putting aside whether or not this is a good idea, where are you planning to move to? And could you share the reason?”

Why do I have to be that guy—Beretta thought anxiously.

Speaking of his colleague Treyni, she was kind and attentive, a very capable woman. The spirits also really liked her, all of Ramiris’s labyrinth was under her management. These were abilities Beretta did not possess. She was undoubtedly, to Ramiris and himself, a useful talent.

However, there was still a problem with her. That being, Treyni was absolutely spoiling her master, Ramiris. She agreed to Ramiris no matter what she said without even a single shred of doubt. That’s why, before things got problematic, someone had to intervene.

I can’t stand it. I didn’t follow Ramiris-sama to be that type of character, always the guy to intervene... Ex-Demon-Clan member Beretta mocked himself.

Beretta really liked Ramiris and he didn't feel any pain even after being toyed around by her. But his colleague that stood together with him not only didn't advise Ramiris, but even blindly spoiled her in her palm, which was hard for him to accept.

Unfortunately...

That was the true nature of this world, the serious people tended to suffer losses.

This will be bad if it continues—whatever stands up to hit the brake will also be responsible for cleaning up the mess.

As such, Beretta would be playing the unfavorable role today...

"That is a great question! Isn't it super boring living here, Beretta-chan? There is nothing fun to do unless you count making golems perhaps. There aren't many visitors normally anyway! But there is a lot of fun stuff over there. That's why we should go there and have fun. That's how it is!" Ramiris stressed energetically.

Hearing this, Beretta sighed inwardly, thinking "That's just what I expected."

Beretta had no direct reason to object to Ramiris's suggestion. The only thing was, based on Demon Lord Rimuru's personality, he didn't think the man would easily agree to it. Even if she wanted to move directly to there, it was possible that she would eventually get kicked out. Reasonably speaking, Treyni should've also understood this, but as his colleague, she kept on caving to Ramiris. This forced Beretta to take a stand.

"But Ramiris-sama, hasn't Rimuru-sama already rejected this plan?"

Indeed, she had been rejected once already. That's why without a proper reason, it may displease *him*.

Ramiris may not have been so self-aware, it was, however, a huge problem to Beretta.

"Beretta, you are overcomplicating things. Rimuru-sama is a good and kind-hearted person. If someone as cute as Ramiris-sama makes a request, how could he possibly refuse her so ruthlessly?"

Beretta's useless colleague just liked to make such optimistic claims all day. She was extremely calculating and capable of encountering anything unrelated to Ramiris, yet right now she really couldn't be relied upon. That's why Beretta had to think on behalf of the two airheads to come up with the right plan. After all, Beretta also wished to move closer to Rimuru.

Because of that, even in such a ridiculous situation, I can still find joy in it...

Beretta thought to himself. The face hidden behind his mask was smiling cheerfully.



After Gobemon departed, I returned to the town of Tempest Federation.

I had been using 'Spatial Domination' to travel, as it could teleport me instantly to anywhere I'd been before. Its magicule consumption was quite large, but it was a negligible portion of my

total magicule storage. So it shouldn't pose a problem, and I could use it however many times I wanted, given how convenient it was for traveling. With that being said, it would suck if I entered stasis from overusing it. That's why I put some restraints on its usage.

By the way, as soon as I returned to town, Ranga contacted me with 'Telepathy Net.'

«Master, Gobkyu and the workers have gathered at West gate, but—»

Ranga paused upon saying this.

What happened?

Feeling somewhat uneasy, I walked towards the West gate.

Despite just talking about exercising restraint, I used 'Spatial Domination' to instantly teleport.

Then, I applied 'Universal Perception' to sense the wide area beyond my visual senses to catch on to the location of Ranga. Next, I could easily activate 'Spatial Domination' as long as it was within my visible range. It's a lot like exchanging coordinates.

It was really convenient, but it should be pretty difficult to use it for combat. The activation requires some time, during which I fear that I would be wide open. It really depends on how you use it, in normal days—Uh, I gotta restrain myself.

This time it counted as an emergency event. I appeared near Ranga's location.

It was outside the west gate, Gobkyu seemed to be arguing with someone.

—No, I've already used 'Universal Perception' to find out who that was...

"I've already told you. We are taking over this place!"

Oi oi oi...

I hid off to the side to eavesdrop, and as a result they said something so astonishing.

"Even if you say that, we can't accept it—I'll be reporting to Rimuru-sama right now. Please do not move around by yourself and stay here for a bit."

"No way! We abandoned our previous labyrinth just to visit here! We are poor and homeless now, are you chasing us away?!"

"Even if you say so... Anyhow, this land has been officially included under Rimuru-sama's rule after he became a demon lord. So you have to get Rimuru-sama's permission first—"

"Tsk, it seems that playing the pity card didn't work either. If that's the case, we won't mind resorting to violence. I'll tell you now, my Beretta won't allow you to keep fussing over such trivial stuff..."

It was no use to keep watching, so I concealed my presence and snuck behind the problematic figure. With a swift motion I effortlessly plucked her out of the air. I looked at her face. It was indeed Ramiris.

"What are you doing here?"

"K-KYAA—! How's life, Rimuru?"

She greeted me while avoiding eye contact. She was clearly aware of the trouble she found herself in. As for what this girl was up to, the secret lay within the small shack behind her.

Ramiris declared that she had taken over the place, so there was probably something hiding in it.

By the way, how did she build this shack here—

“Ramiris-sama! I’ve brought new wood!”

My question was answered with the sight of Treyni-san running here with wood in her hands.

“What are you doing here, Treyni-san...”

“Ah! I-It’s Rimuru-sama, long time no see—”

Treyni-san saw me and started to act dubiously.

Don’t you guys think that your scheme would get exposed immediately after you built a shack right outside the town’s gate?

“What is going on here, Treyni-san?”

“A-About that, you must be misunderstanding. I-It’s not Ramiris-sama’s fault, it’s...”

Treyni-san always looked very professional in the past, but ever since she began to serve Ramiris she had started becoming inept. Sure enough, a servant would be influenced by their master... Speaking of which, the only person who could explain this clearly was probably him—Beretta—who immediately kneeled upon seeing me.

“Come and explain things a bit, Beretta.”

“Ah, so I have to do it after all...”

At my urging, Beretta gave up his struggle and began to explain. According to him, all of this started because of a speech given by Ramiris.

“B-Beretta! You traitor—!” Ramiris escaped from my hand and shouted, but I ignored her to listen to his story.

He said Ramiris wanted to move to our town no matter what, to which Treyni-san also agreed. I glanced towards Treyni-san’s direction and saw that her eyes were downcast in embarrassment.

Based on Beretta’s explanation, Treyni-san was apparently spoiling Ramiris. This rings true given it was the same when they met before. And since that Beretta couldn’t object to the both of them, he was forced into this whole charade of forced house moving.

“But in fact it is just as Ramiris-sama has said, we’ve sealed the entry to the previous labyrinth and moved here.”

“That’s right! So Rimuru. If you chase me from here, I’ll be homeless!” Ramiris said pitifully, but no matter how you put it she clearly had it coming. Also, Treyni-san was saying: “How poor Ramiris-sama is.”

Please stop spoiling the fairy. But then again, now I understood the situation. Gobkyu didn’t start the quarrel. The fault was in Ramiris’s party.

“Gobkyu, thanks for being so patient.”

“There’s no need, we are fine. It did give the men guarding the gate some trouble though...”

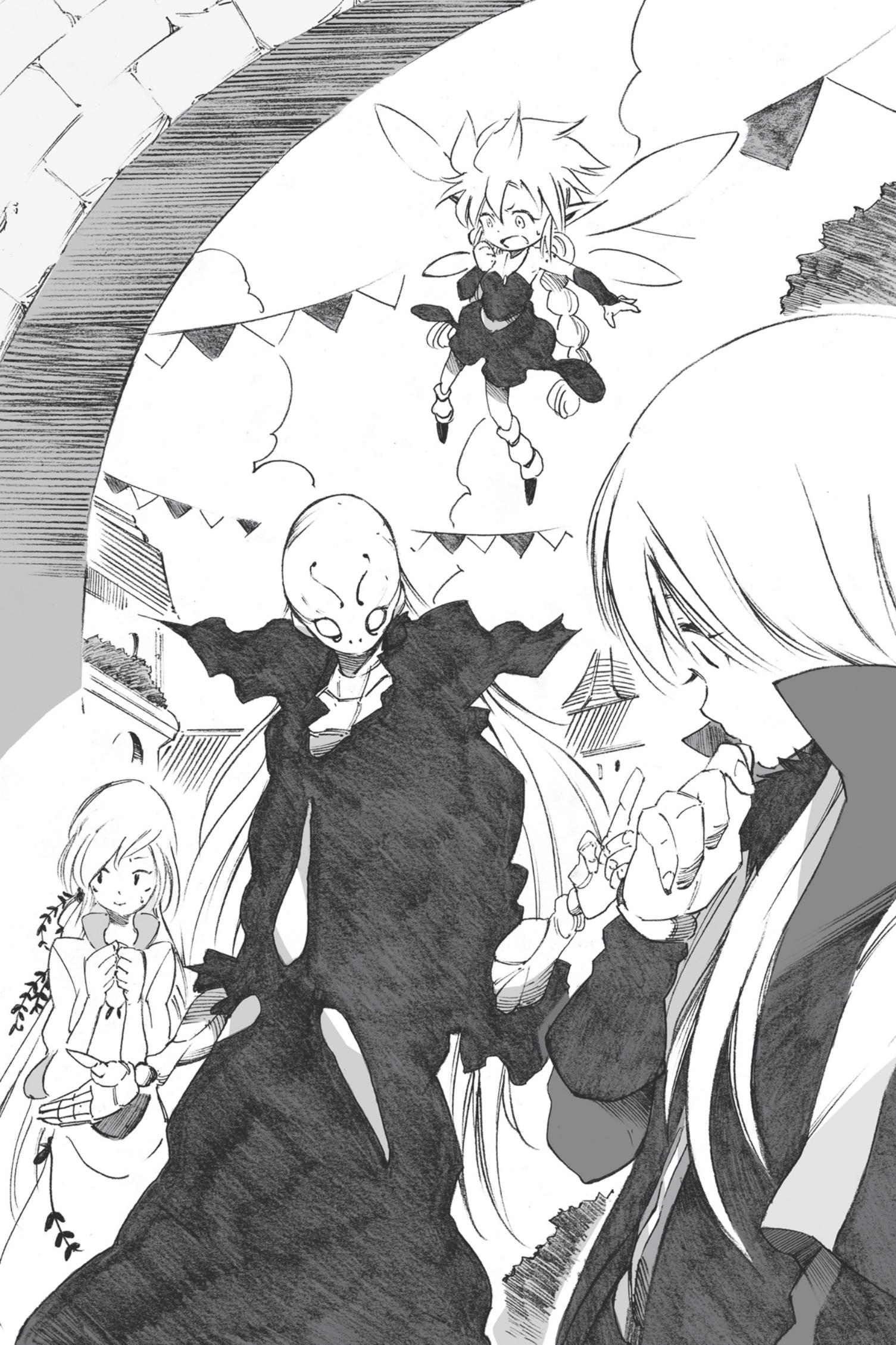
Gobkyu turned to the ogre gatekeeper who happened to be napping.

“—Oi.”

“T-There’s no such thing. I was just a bit too excited...”

“It is not Ramiris-sama’s fault! It was all because that gatekeeper said something mean to Ramiris-sama, so I used magic to put him to sleep for a bit.”

Treyni-san jumped in to defend Ramiris. What kind of farce was she playing... It seemed that she indeed used magic, apparently for Ramiris. Even Beretta seemed dumbfounded. I would listen to Ramiris and Treyni-san later. For now I needed Beretta to continue his explanation. However, he apparently already finished explaining the entire situation. He mentioned that Treyni-san was preparing wood while Beretta was doing the assembling.



The end product was the small wooden shack in front of me. It looked like they were planning to build a balcony next. Why build a shack? Apparently, it was for creating the new entrance to the labyrinth...

Speaking of this, Ramiris had mentioned something about wanting to move to this town. If all they were doing was setting up an entrance to Ramiris's labyrinth, putting such a small shack here didn't seem to pose a problem.

"So, you were trying to build the shack when the gatekeeper stopped you. And after you he interfered, you ordered Treyni-san to put him to sleep. And in the end, you were discovered by Gobkyu and the other workers who came here, is that the case?"

"That...no, there's no...such thing... I guess you can put it that way, but it's not really the case...probably the case?"

"In other words, my guess was correct? Gees..."

"Aha, Ahahaha..."

Ramiris tried to laugh it off, but this was simply too reckless. This was my domain after all, even the other demon lords had recognized it. What Ramiris was doing undoubtedly infringed on my territory. Normally, it wouldn't be strange if an incident like this developed into open war.

But right now I had an idea. Seeing the small shack in front of me, I had a sudden burst of inspiration.

After doing a bit of outside the box thinking, it wouldn't be so bad to let her create the labyrinth here. My conversation with Myourmiles from a few minutes ago echoed in my head. We needed to find a main event that would have people wanting to come back and see our nation again. That's why we planned the opera house, the colosseum, and the health resort. But I was also been thinking about whether there could be other attractions. After all, doing the same thing all the time will eventually get stale.

Besides, martial tournaments couldn't be held every day. At most we could hold four events in a year, considering it would be most appropriate to hold once per season. The same logic applied to horse racing. Content for ordinary folk to watch could be played every day, but these shows alone wouldn't be able to attract the nobles who had grown a hard-to-satisfy appetite.

Considering this, our main customers would be average civilians and foreign adventurers. This town was designed with logistical flow in mind, so merchants would definitely be visiting, the adventurers acting as their guards in tow, so I hoped they would consider this as a base.

An adventurer had many jobs to do, one of them being eliminating monsters. If I were to create a labyrinth here and fill it with monsters... In this way, wouldn't we be drawing a massive crowd every day?

Speaking of labyrinths, there was none that could top a dungeon. If we invited people to try and conquer the labyrinth, there may even be adventurers visiting for the sole purpose of exploration.

Yes, this may actually work.

I turned to Ramiris who was looking up at me with an awkward smile. She was kinda...

No, very unreliable, but this may just work. I'd made up my mind and decided to discuss my idea with Ramiris.



I asked Gobkyu to direct the workers to dismantle the shack. But since the work was already in progress, we decided to change this place to a resting shack for the gatekeeper.

Next, we held a strategic meeting. With Gobkyu in tow, we went to the meeting room that was often used.

“Q-question please? How do you⁵⁹ plan to deal with the adorable folk girl and her companions?”

Probably due to being too nervous, Ramiris's phrasing had become weird. It was probably because of her crisis senses. She kept on peeking at me.

“You don't have to force yourself to act so courteously. Besides, not all of your words were as humble as you think, even the way you addressed yourself sounded weird.”

That's why I hoped she could just use her normal tone to talk. I didn't intend to do anything to Ramiris anyway. If she accepted my proposal, I was willing to overlook the whole charade put on by her. But before that, I needed to confirm a few things.

“Gobkyu, I want to create an evacuation space under the colosseum, is it possible?”

“Even calculating based on the strength of an individual executive, the area under the stage is still not very safe. Once any hole is made, it may cause the entire stage to collapse. But it would be possible by shifting the position a little bit—”

“I see. I also wish to build a gate in that basement area.”

“...!”

“Building a gate?”

“Yes. Please make it thick and pave some stones to the walls to make it feel solid enough.”

“Will we be preparing evacuation space behind the gate too?”

“No, there's no such need. The important thing is just the gate, right, Ramiris?”

“R-Rimuru? Could it be, that you want to...”

Gobkyu looked confused while Ramiris on the other hand was filled with joy as she flapped her wings loudly.

I finally cracked a smile and nodded to Ramiris.

Speaking of my proposal, it's really nothing. I just wanted Ramiris to use her power to create and run a dungeon. Rather than building the entrance in some shack, we should prepare something more fitting and majestic. Since we'd defined it as basement level, it shouldn't be a

⁵⁹Ramiris is talking like a girl of low status from Japanese historical drama confronting some government official prosecuting her.

problem to build a colosseum on top of it.

The colosseum could provide amateur adventurers with lessons and instructions, and stores to sell healing potions were also expected to be set up. If we ran a dungeon like that, adventurers who were done with their business might grab a drink on their way home, so those stores and restaurants would also prosper along the way. Then I'd be able to grab money from the adventurers, and Ramiris would also have a place to live, not to mention a job. I would even give her pocket money. This idea required mutual cooperation, but it might just turn into something interesting.

Ramiris began to shout excitedly after hearing my words.

"Eh-EHEH! Could you be saying that you are giving me some amazing job on top of allowing us to create the labyrinth and live here?"

"If you accept my proposal, that would indeed be the case."

"Eh? Then, then, do you mean that I have a chance to overcome this unbearable state of being a NEET—?"

She seemed downright shocked after hearing my plan. Ramiris's eyes widened as if she'd been hit by lightning, even the way she spoke began to sound incoherent.

Treyni-san saw this with tears in her eyes and said: "This is wonderful, Ramiris-sama." For some reason, I felt a smile on Beretta's face. The exhausted look he gave before appeared to be an act, now he looked positively delighted.

Could it be that Beretta had hoped things would develop this way too?

It could be, or not. In any case, it's fine as long as he was happy.

"Q-Question... Did you mean it when you said that you will give me pocket money?"

She seemed to have calmed down. Ramiris gulped and asked me prudently. She appeared to be afraid that I would respond with "Never mind that."

How would I say something like that, I'm not that mean, really! But depending on the amount of income, I can't really promise you how much you are getting though... But that would at least reassure her a little bit.

"That's real. The only thing is we won't know how much profit we are getting until we try. Regardless, subtracting the necessary expenses such as promotional fees and venue rent, you get to keep two percent of remaining profits, what do you think?"

"B-Based on that, how much money would that be?"

"About that, if we assume a thousand or so adventurers visiting a day, your portion would be around two gold coins?"

"GUU! I-I get to earn that much money?!"

"Those are just estimates, whether it can be carried out successfully is still unknown. After all, there's not much of a show to put on if there is no audience. That being said, since you are already settling in here, isn't there no loss to you regardless?"

Ramiris nodded heavily in response to my question.

She came to live here without permission, and I knew, without her saying, that I'd be the one maintaining the labyrinth. If that is the case, she'd be better off just accepting my deal.

After hearing my permission for her to live and make money, Ramiris had only one reaction, that was to hug onto my head and shout excitedly.

Since Ramiris had already accepted it, Beretta and Treyni-san naturally would not object.

“Uhehe... Now I will become rich as well. Never again will I be looked down upon and get called the Jobless Broke Demon Lord!”

As such, Ramiris had been mesmerized in her own world. I couldn’t help but laugh at her state.

All right, that should do it.

Even upon seeing the silly⁶⁰ looks on Ramiris, the loyalty of her two servants remained unchanged. She may have always been looked down upon, but Ramiris’s motivation and enthusiasm were really something else. The level of enthusiasm she had displayed for the project probably exceeded my own. It seemed that I didn’t have to worry about her.

By the way, what’s with Ramiris’s obsession with money?

Putting myself aside, I hadn’t heard of any demon lord that loved money this much... Compared to having money or not, shouldn’t the bigger problem be whether or not she had a job?

That’s right, not a single soul had been visiting Ramiris’s labyrinth. Perhaps she was too idle and lonely. For Ramiris’s and my own sake, I hope there will be adventurers visiting. In order to achieve that, let’s quickly come up with a plan to make that happen.

After calling back Ramiris, whose mind had taken a trip, we began to draft the design graph for the colosseum construction.

My plans were as follows:

Outside the west gate, there was a plaza at the end of the road. We’d expand the plaza first, then start the construction. Since there was plenty of space, we could also open up a stable for the travelers to rest their horses in. In the future we would be adding tracks on the streets for trains to run on. I recalled planning for trains in hopes that royalty would ride on them. If we could ensure the safety of travel routes, it would be easy to attract wealthy tourists. That, of course, would not be the only purpose of trains. With them we would be able to transport large amounts of cargo. This infrastructure would likely also contribute significantly to the city’s development.

Since part of this plan was a scheme with the hope of developing the city, I hoped for it to work out well without complications. We might even set up a station near the colosseum... It would become a burden for the tourists if the distance were too far, so the standard would be within an hour’s walk from the gate. Having a location near the town would be better. Because the tourists would be walking, we would get customers at the inns along the route. Unlike my original world, people mostly relied on their legs to travel in this world. Most people could easily walk back and forth for tens of kilometers. So it shouldn’t be an issue to have some distance between buildings.

Keeping these factors in mind, I considered the location for construction—

⁶⁰A general Japanese term for: “Sorry-looking” (残念) one that makes people cringe

“Why? Isn’t there any empty lot in the town as well?” Ramiris pointed out and corrected me.

“Those are used as shelters for the beastmen. The temporary residences set there would pose trouble for building a colosseum.”

“Can’t we just chase the beastmen out of town for now and construct at this place until Geld-sama finishes building their new cities—”

As I began to explain to Gobkyu, Ramiris suddenly proposed something unexpected.

“If that’s the case, why not have them move into my labyrinth? You can move the area entirely into it without change and it won’t cause much trouble.”

Did you catch the drift? Gobkyu and I looked at each other over and over.

“D-Do you mean that, you can move the people inside there along with the buildings?”

“Well—it’s probably useless for living people. It requires personal permission before moving them into the labyrinth. If the objects do not possess the personal will of the owner, it won’t be moved, otherwise anything can be moved!”

“Are you serious? Are you implying that except the beastmen, you can move everything including the residences and personal belongings all into the labyrinth?”

“Yep, that’s the case!” Ramiris said proudly, but it was indeed impressive.

There’s no wonder she seemed so proud; this was an incredible skill.

After more careful inquiry, Ramiris revealed that this was her Intrinsic Skill, named ‘Labyrinth Creation (Mini World)’⁶¹.

As the name implied, it allowed Ramiris to create the interior of the labyrinth. She was nigh omnipotent in that regard. The area affected by its power was also extensive, it is said that even the people and objects near the labyrinth could become its target.

For instance, if someone was directly outside the labyrinth, she seemed to be able to deprive the individual of weapons and gear.

This skill may seem to be overpowered, but it did appear to have its limits. For example, if the person’s equipment possessed personal will—or was affected by the user’s mana etc., it will not be affected by Ramiris’s power. However, people who possessed such items were rare, so most would end up challenging Ramiris with only their bare hands.

She was a demon lord after all, that title was not just for show—

“How impressive... And I thought that you didn’t possess any combat ability...”

“T-That’s so mean! How dare you say such things to me, the menace to man and the strongest demon lord...”

“Ah, okie, don’t get mad now, Ramiris-chan. Let’s put that aside for now and tell me what else can you do!”

I started to ask some specific questions regarding ‘Labyrinth Creation.’

These questions roughly fell under five categories:

- I. How many floors can ‘Labyrinth Creation’ make underground?

⁶¹The katakana annotation is “チイサナセカイ” or “小さな世界” (Small world)

- II. How many days will it take to create them?
- III. What will happen to the monsters inside?
- IV. Can you change the interior structure randomly?
- V. What happens when you die inside?

Stuff like that.

Ramiris also switched to a serious expression and answered all my doubts.

First,

There didn't seem to be any restriction to the number of floors it could construct, but in reality, it could only reach around a hundred floors or so.

Second,

It took around one hour to create a single floor. The same went for additional floors, so it would take around one hundred hours to spawn one hundred floors. However, the energy consumption creating deeper floors seemed to increase exponentially, which appeared to be the reason behind the answer to the first question.

Third,

Not only monsters, even creatures such as insects could inhabit the labyrinth. I heard that there used to be spirits inhabiting the labyrinth before. That location had not yet disappeared but was stored in another level to isolate it from the outside world. It was also said that they were free to come in and out. If that's the case, we would be able to fill the labyrinth with monsters for adventurers to challenge.

Moreover, if you filled it with an abundance of magicule, monsters would be born naturally. By adjusting the magicule concentration, you could also conveniently predetermine the strength of the monsters. Monsters on different floors could be banned from interacting, so setting up difficulty levels seemed to not be a problem either.

And the most important point was—we'd come up with a way of filling the labyrinth with magicule. We would be doing that after we had prepared the contents for the labyrinth.

Fourth,

Ramiris's Intrinsic Skill 'Labyrinth Creation' had extraordinary efficiency, its interior structure could be changed in around an hour. After one change, it would remain fixed for twenty-four hours. That came, of course, with additional conditions. You couldn't make something out of nothing. It seemed that there was no way to generate organism such as vegetation, so we could only rely on creating inorganic walls to make the labyrinth... But it was not actually changing the whole structure, only the interior design of it that we'd prepared, this way it wouldn't cost too much time. By the way, it was also very simple to swap floors. The previously stated rules applied, meaning every twenty-four hours only one change was permitted, but it was still very convenient.

Fifth,

This was honestly surprising, but what happened when you died inside could be altered by Ramiris's will. Provided she was aware of the situation, Ramiris could even resurrect the dead. I was still contemplating what to do about the disposal of monsters' corpses and such and how to deal with the unfortunate deaths some adventurers might suffer. Well, as it turned out I heard something very unexpected.

We didn't have any examples of monsters born in the labyrinth to judge yet. However, Ramiris mentioned that she had resurrected adventurers several times before.

The secret behind this was related to the "Permission of the target," as mentioned by Ramiris before. It wasn't an exaggeration but apparently the will of "I would like to go in" was crucial. It was a pre-condition, without which entering the labyrinth was impossible. It was the same reason why I was able to enter the labyrinth before. If you tried to bring someone asleep inside, you would be blocked at the entrance.

Infants were exceptions. Children of young age have yet to form free will, so they appeared to be considered as goods and would gain protection. It was not impossible to force someone into entering the labyrinth, but this would also create a lot of pressure on Ramiris, such an action might fail due to the repulsive effect. So she wasn't willing to spend time doing such a boring thing.

That's about it, the prelude stops here.

Ramiris had the ability to rule over the people who entered the labyrinth. With that being said however, it still required the person's consent. If they were willing to accept Ramiris's management, she would be able to keep track of their status at any instant.

"That's right, didn't we really enjoy pranks? We just wanted to have fun watching how shocked people looked, but my conscience won't sit well if they had actually died. That's why we always knew when to stop and allowed people to return alive," Ramiris proclaimed with her chest high.

There were people who were unlucky and died, but that probably happened outside of the labyrinth. After all, Ramiris had no intention of killing me either back then.

And there was also the Elemental Colossus that tried to kill me, did they put that thing there knowing that people could be resurrected? I had wanted to ask, "What type of trial is this," but now it made more sense.

"In other words, even if adventurers enter the labyrinth to eliminate monsters they won't get killed and can be revived?"

"Yes. As soon as they are thrown out of the labyrinth they will appear as if nothing had happened when they are resurrected from death. But it would be problematic when the number becomes too large, so it should be best to have them wear the items I've prepared for resurrection."

With the identification items crafted by Ramiris using 'Labyrinth Creation,' people could be revived outside the labyrinth if they died. And so, the most worrying problem of safety had

been resolved.

“Excellent! This is wonderful, Ramiris-chan!”

“Really, really, really? Am I not impressive indeed?”

“Hmm! Now our ambition is as good as accomplished.”

“Is that the case? I think so too!”

We looked at each other and nodded.

“Thanks for the help, Ramiris.”

“No problem, just count on me. Now you can rest assured like you’ve boarded a huge ship.”

A huge ship you said. I hope it’s not made of mud.(Or called the Titanie)

Due to the difference in our size, we couldn’t really shake hands, but we communicated with our hearts.



I had accepted Ramiris’s proposal, and I was now heading to the empty lot located at the south-east side of town to build the colosseum. We would be building the dungeon under that spot.

As for the opera house, we would be building it at the northwest side where many classy health resorts stood. There were also a stadium, museum and other buildings constructed in the hotel area that we built beforehand in case they came to be useful in the future, so we decided to build one more to catch up with the festival.

With the plans for the dungeon and the opera house finalized, the problem was with the colosseum.

Geld was absent, but Gobkyu and his men were quite capable too. Before the unveiling of the Founding Festival, it could definitely be—

“—The situation is exceptionally dire, Rimuru-sama.”

Ah, so was the schedule really that tight after all?

But that was probably only natural. Normally speaking such construction projects took years to complete, it was really asking too much from them to complete it in a month plus a handful of days. No matter how powerful monsters were, it was indeed still a dire spot.

“Saw that coming... I understand, I’ll help as well. I’ll handle transportation of soil and processing steel.”

Despite how I may look now, I had worked at a general contractor company before I was reincarnated. Even though I was not that skillful in field work, having some knowledge of the discipline was better than having none. Moreover, I had Wisdom King Raphael-sensei with me as well, so I should be able to figure out something.

“I wanna too! I’m gonna help too!”

“Then, I should also assist as well.”

“Indeed. We follow the will of Ramiris-sama.”

Since Ramiris and her servants also agreed to help, let’s get to work soon. We arrived at the construction site full of camps and laid out the blueprint. I quickly modified it and handed it over to Gobkyu.

“I see. Then there shouldn’t be a problem anymore.”

“Great, I still have to let the beastmen know what we intend.”

First, we were going to host a meeting to explain things. Right now many beastmen were out at work, so I decided to explain the situation to Suphia and Alvis.

“If that’s the case, we will follow the will of Rimuru-sama—”

“Right. We don’t have a reason to object anyway.”

After hearing my explanation, the two agreed without hesitation. It was shocking how fast they agreed to it. They also told me to not to do any further explanation for the beastmen.

“Eh, is that really okay?”

“No problem, Rimuru-sama. We are in your care with residence and diet. We should be the ones to repay your debts, so allow us to help with the construction of the colosseum.”

“Besides, Karion-sama is also participating in the festival that Rimuru-sama is holding. So we have to help regardless.”

After saying so, Suphia and Alvis agreed to assist us.

“I don’t really feel well, so I’ll hand the matter to Suphia.”

“Right, just count on me!”

After discussing with them, we decided to have Suphia lead the beastmen. Afterwards, things progressed rapidly, and everything was on point. The process was so swift it was almost shocking. With Suphia’s orders, the beastmen all exited the tents. Glancing through the lined up beastmen, we had Ramiris move the tents into her labyrinth. In the next instant, the location had been cleared. While feeling somewhat hesitant, I activated ‘Gluttonous King Beelzebuth’ and bit out a square-shaped pit in the ground to set up the steel structure.

With Gobkyu and the rest lining up and paving the processed rock materials to fill in the walls, we were unexpectedly able to construct a flawless, beautiful product in only a day. And as such, this massive underground space was created with a huge gate set at its entrance. Given my advanced knowledge, the speed of completion had been quick beyond belief.

“A-Amazing. We are getting this as my castle... Ah, right! I set it up so touching the door here will teleport you to the floor with all those tents just now.”

Since Ramiris had said so, we immediately went in to have a look.

The scene stretched out before us, the living space of the beastmen had indeed been moved here in one piece. There was even air-conditioning which made living inside more comfortable than living in the wild. Even Alvis and Suphia looked surprised.

“Do we still need to set up tents inside here?”

“Indeed. There doesn’t even seem to be any rain, so it shouldn’t be an issue if we just

directly sleep on the ground..."

This was their conversation. There didn't seem to be any complaint, so there shouldn't be any issue. The beastmen appeared shocked as they went in and out several times. As long as the thought "I want to go in" was present you could enter it, so there didn't seem to be any inconvenience.

"Will it get dark at night in there?"

"Hmm! Since it is connected to the outside, I can even make it rain!"

There's really nothing that will pose an obstacle to her.

Since they were not conducting any agricultural work, I asked Ramiris to only simulate the day-night cycle. It felt more convenient than I imagined as it could be applied in other fields. It prompted me to consider all sorts of possible plans.

The beastmen at the scene seemed to be reassured and went on to assist the work outdoors. They were apparently under Gobkyu's command to help constructing the colosseum. Although the majority of them were women and children, they were still beastmen with strength far out-classing humans. They were an impeccable workforce and Gobkyu was also willing to only hand simple tasks to them. The beastmen who were previously receiving technical training had also returned to join in the construction.

Treyni-san had carried some lumber here of unknown origin with Beretta correctly processing them into boards for construction use. He was able to greatly shorten the time normally required for this by using magic to dry the wood.

I was under the impression that I had already thrown away things such as common sense, but upon laying my eyes on this sight, I couldn't help but realize, yet again, "Ah, this is an isekai all right."

If we proceeded at this rate, we might actually finish by the Founding Festival. The soil I just ate and spat out was piled up as a small mountain, surely they would make good use of it as well to construct a majestic colosseum.

"Rimuru-sama, leave the rest to me!"

I nodded after hearing Gobkyu's words and decided to let him do his thing until the project was completed.

When everyone officially started to work, Ramiris was left alone. In order to prevent the impetuous Ramiris from hindering everyone, I should give her a job. And if there was any job Ramiris could work on, it would be expanding the labyrinth. Given this opportunity, we should be a bit more thorough.

Speaking of which—

"Ramiris, your 'Labyrinth Creation' is really strong..."

It was a large area of land being moved into the labyrinth in the blink of an eye. Although I didn't really want to praise Ramiris, this one thing left me deeply impressed. Honestly, I think this thing called labyrinth is really awesome...

“It’s all right, just all right! Right now there are only some secret rooms for my fairy friends, the level with corridors. There will be new floors added tomorrow!”

I recalled she said that it was an hour per floor. If we were building a hundred-level labyrinth underground, it may be an insurmountable challenge with modern technology alone.

But Ramiris’s power could make it reality. And given that was the case, a man should pursue romance (epic fantasy)⁶².

“All right then, I’m counting on you to build the maximum one-hundred floors.”

“Eh! Do we really need that many?”

“Yes. I want to add in all sorts of contraptions and change the strength of the monsters based on floors.”

“It’s a piece of cake for me, but can I ask about something?”

“What is it?”

“I’ve been curious just now, what exactly do you plan to do in spawning the monsters? Where are you capturing them from?” Ramiris asked me.

It did seem quite exhausting to increase the floors to one hundred, it’s no wonder she would question me. But I had my own plan in mind. In order to convince Ramiris, I let her in a little about my scheme.

“It’s actually like this, but you’ll have to keep it a secret...”

With this magic word, I began my explanation to Ramiris covertly.

As I explained my plans for her dungeon, Ramiris’s eyes became brighter and brighter.

“Oh, so you mean, you mean—”

“Hmmhmm—next we will be doing this, Ramiris-chan—”

We whispered to each other and raised ideas. Both of us were enjoying this.

We had a pleasant chat—and were rushing towards a direction that, ideally, we should avoid; the unexpected idea of an advanced dungeon was gradually formed.

Is this really okay? Although this though crossed my mind, there was no going back on the matter. *All we can do is make it.* Ramiris was also full of motivation and promised me she would devote herself to making the labyrinth.

“You can slack a bit while doing it.”

“Hmph! Now that I’ve heard such amazing ideas, how will I be able to sit back and relax! I’m doing it. I’m doing it!”

I intend to spark up Ramiris’s motivation a little bit, so I spoke about it to encourage her, yet I didn’t expect to light up her spirit completely. I was happy that Ramiris could understand that sense of romance; that such a bold idea may have a chance to be realized was what I was looking forward to at the moment.

“Then please work hard. I’ll do my best to collect the necessary resources.”

“I understand. Good luck, Rimuru!”

“Right, the same goes for you, Ramiris.”

⁶²浪漫を求めるのが男というものの、Romance also means an epic, heroic adventure. Anyone remember the Dragonball closing theme “I’ll Give You Romance”?

We exchanged these words of encouragement, as a satisfied smile hung on both of our faces.



I left after the conversation. The sun had already begun to set. We seemed to have chatted for a long time. The work today was concluded, and people started to pack up and cook food.

It would be embarrassing to be a hindrance to them, so I told Gobkyu, Suphia, and the rest to return tomorrow and then left the construction site shortly after.

I decided to drop by Kurobee's workplace.

He'd been working on experimental weapons and gear out of interest. My visit this time was to ask him whether he could give me the products that couldn't be sold as merchandise.

Right now, the southwest area of the town had become the industrial area. Kurobee's workshop was also over there, with the workshops of his disciples surrounding it as well as dorms for the apprentices who didn't have their own shop. All these in addition to a large number of warehouses. Moreover, there were also inns and canteens set up specially for the craftsmen and apprentices, everything looked very prosperous. Kurobee's workshop was built at the central area.

Seeing that I was visiting, Kurobee came out to welcome me delightfully. After greeting and sharing a dinner with me, I asked him to bring me to the warehouses.

"Rimuru-sama, this way. The items stored at this warehouse are all very distinct, they can't be wielded by any random person. Is that really okay?" Kurobee asked worriedly, to which I nodded in response implying that it was fine. Just as Kurobee had said, some of these items were simply too strong for average men to use. Some of the items that he kept in the warehouse were too overpowered, others were too difficult or dangerous to use.

Some of the armor pieces were good examples to illustrate this point: For instance, there was armor that absorbed the wearer's mana in order to activate a magic defense barrier. It sounded pretty impressive, but in reality, it would draw mana without a limit, so after some time the armor would kill its user. Even though it was amazing that it provided a defensive barrier, such gear had no use in practice.

There were others, such as a sword that absorbed the surrounding magic until no magic could be cast nearby and then converted it into a huge blast. The strength of the sword was guaranteed, but as for the safety of the user...quite the opposite. These types of weapons were terrifying and mustn't be used under any circumstances.

There was also armor that gifted the wearer with extraordinary physical capabilities for a fixed period of time. But as soon as that time was exceeded, all of the user's muscle tissue would be torn rendering him immobile, leading to death without healing magic. A savage armor

indeed...

In short, there was equipment that caused the wearer to die an untimely death. I believed there wasn't anyone stupid enough to use them without first appraising their properties. That part I didn't find necessary for myself to handle, regardless of that, it should be fine in Ramiris's labyrinth.

"No, it's all right. Having those very obvious properties may actually prove to be valuable."

In fact, all of this equipment was of very fine quality. Half of them were of value above rare-grade, and among them were also precious items that appeared to be strong enough to rival unique-grade equipment. They were the same type of equipment as the scaled shield and tempest dagger.

I picked one of them up—a tempest longsword—and said to Kurobee while examining it: "Equipment of such amazing quality, just because they are experimental shouldn't make us just store it here without using them. Surely this gear would also want masters who can wield them, right?"

I made sure to be extra edgy, making things sound extra *deep*, which Kurobee was deeply moved by upon hearing.

"Is that so? Then please take as many as you like."

This was (definitely) not lying to him, though I felt my heart hurt a bit.

Kurobee took out many pieces of equipment from the warehouses. As for why I was taking them, it was to put them into the treasure chests in the labyrinth. The adventurers would get the equipment at the level corresponding to the strength of the gear. That's why I was definitely not lying. I shouldn't mind that much and take them happily.

By the way, they sure were capable of making so many of these. There were a lot more now than last time with more than a hundred items. Not only was there bizarre equipment, there were also items challenging to use. If this assortment of items had anything in common, it's that they were all of higher class compared to the merchandise I saw at the capital of Ingracia. I felt that all of these weapons and gear could only be seen in an auction.

After my evolution to demon lord, Kurobee was also blessed with the Unique Skill 'Godly Craftsman.' Apart from his original Unique Skill 'Researcher,' he had gained newfound ability to further his craftsmanship. Now he had even surpassed Kaijin. If Kurobee was serious with his production, the quality of his work would often be unique-grade. They were at least guaranteed to be rare-grade. That's why they were only showing the work of his disciples at the exhibition.

"By the way, you are really good. I learned about blacksmithing before, yet I can't make such impressive items."

"Hehe, it's quite embarrassing to be praised by Rimuru-sama. Oh, I should give this to you before I forget."

Kurobee was very humble, yet his expression suddenly froze as he ran into the further part of the room and returned while carrying something.

"What is this?"

“Sir⁶³, I’ve kept you waiting for too long, it is finally complete,” Kurobee said while handing me the thing, it was a straight sword (chokuto) with a dark blade.

Not too long and not too short. The sword was made just for me with an ideal length beautifully crafted.

“This is—”

“Yes, this is my finest masterpiece.”

The blade appeared to be jet black and wholly unremarkable. It wasn’t emitting any incredible power nor was it triggered using magic.

But this would suffice. The focus of the sword was its strength. It would not break easily or be bent and fit very well with my mana. Moreover, unlike Hinata’s Moonlight Rapier, it would not harm things in its surroundings.

Based on these considerations for a weapon that wouldn’t cause me any concern, it was the best.

“Amazing, this is amazing, Kurobee-san.”

“I’m also highly satisfied with the product. The sword is not completed the way it is right now. As I’ve explained to you before, the ideas proposed by Rimuru-sama, slots can be drilled in the base of the blade.”

Upon hearing so, I looked at the base of said blade.

“But there aren’t any slots here?”

“No. Other weapons will have slots drilled upon being crafted. But this straight sword is different. After being immersed in Rimuru-sama’s mana, it will grow—evolve. And it will look the same as now, like an average weapon,” Kurobee elaborated proudly.

I heard that afterwards the quality of the sword was to surpass Legendary-grade… I wasn’t sensing it in person just yet. As of this moment, we were still researching with other equipment and the crucial magic crystals for enchanting the slots had yet to be completed. Drilling slots alone would be meaningless, so it was no use for me to be anxious about it. I decided to wait and look forward to the arrival of that day.

Having received my own special sword, I departed from Kurobee’s workshop happily. Additionally, I had the equipment I came for in tow. I’d put these items in the treasure chests and deploy them in the labyrinth. The equipment with higher quality would be guarded by the floor guardians (boss of each level), it would be pretty interesting. This almost felt like crafting a real dungeon labyrinth, how exciting.

Indeed, these experimental or even failed works could still earn quite a lot of money from being auctioned off directly. If I asked Myourmiles and Fuze for help, they would probably secure a tidy profit in their own way. It would be more pragmatic, but we shouldn’t do it. The important thing here was the exchange between monsters and humans.

I wanted to attract people to visit my kingdom and let them experience the beauty of Tempest

⁶³Kurobee responds to Rimuru’s comments and questions with a “はい” in the beginning of the sentence, which is like “Yes sir/To answer your question.” Same for the next line.

Federation. In addition, I wanted them to feel the charm of this nation in person so that they would return again. We should consider the equipment as a small cost to reach that goal.

Besides, things were not over after I delivered the items. I already had outlines for the future. The adventurers would infiltrate the dungeon to bring back all sorts of items. Given it was extremely dangerous to use un-appraised weapons or gear, it was time for the “Appraisal Shop” to shine. Since all these items were crafted in our nation, we would also have complete knowledge of their effects. As long as the method of using them was not mistaken, many of these items could be useful in their adventures. There were some dangerous items included as I’ve mentioned, but I thought it would be fine if our nation bought those items back.

Money needed to flow in order to have value, it was meaningless to only fill our own wallet. First, it was imperative to buy back necessary ingredients, and then pay the expenses to some extent, the rest we could even give back to the adventurers. After some time, adventurers would naturally begin to spread the news and so the reputation of our nation would increase. All of this hinged upon our ability to retain a steady stream of customers to make good use of the buildings we constructed, not to mention the amazing promotional impact it was going to have. We should strive to make our investments count.

The southeast area would have the colosseum built with Ramiris’s dungeon beneath it. There were also inns and civilian houses charging a fair price on the southwest side. Unlike the northeastern block with many classy hotels, the facilities there would be more down to earth. This place would primarily appeal to adventurers, with the added benefit of keeping different classes separate. It was also most convenient to visit the labyrinth from there, so business would definitely be booming.

When Ramiris said that she wanted to move here, I was still worried about what to do. In terms of results, I suppose I had made the right call.

As far as the Colosseum was concerned, we would be hosting one or two major events every year. Beyond that, we would organize all kinds of events on normal days as well. Military training or events for adventurers to test their skills, to name a few. There were actually plenty of activities if I thought about it carefully. Underneath in the dungeon, we could also run field experiments and examine the results. Since we couldn’t die while inside, we might even do some dangerously excessive and over-the-top training.

Perhaps it could be for more than just commercial usage, there were plenty of areas it could be applied—concerning these ideas, I decided to discuss things with Benimaru.



So we had our “bait.”

But right now it was too early to decide exactly how the dungeon would be used. I want

to ponder on it after it was complete. In order to complete the final step, I decided to negotiate with a key figure.

The key figure of this plan—Veldora-san.

He was currently resting in the garden hut at my estate. The lone estate was like a tearoom with the Japanese style of quiet beauty. In fact, this place had a secret—uh, I'll put that aside for now. Let's just say that Veldora has become used to staying there and considers it his home.

Whatever really...

“Hey, Veldora. I’ve got a request for you, is it okay?”

“Uh? What is it, I’m pretty busy.”

Hmm, I see that you are reading manga, so yeah, there’s no way you’re not free.

“Is that so...what a pity then. That’s a waste of such an interesting thing... But since you’re busy then it can’t be helped. It’s such a rare chance for you to release your—oh, you are busy. Sorry that I bothered you.”

Saying this, I pretended to leave. Although this was basically me leaving my own room, which made me feel kind of bad, there was plenty of places to spend the night. And even with that being said—

“Umm, hol’ up. I’m a busy man indeed, but since it is you who came asking, it can’t be helped. Tell me about it!”

So did he really bite?

Gullible as always.

Veldora-san had the nickname of “Gullidora”⁶⁴. I’d known for a while that he was easily tricked. To me, outsmarting this guy was like twisting the hands of an infant. And given this was the case, what came next was much easier. I pretended to be deep while phrasing things very intriguingly.

“The thing is, I plan to design a home just for you...”

“W-What are you talking about? Building a place just for me, is this true?”

He had taken the bait. His eyes left the manga, and he began to pay attention to my words intently.

“That’s right! built just for you. But if you are so busy—”

“Wait, don’t be so hasty. You and I go way back after all, so of course I’ll prioritize your request, GA-HAHHAHA!” Veldora-san said that so arrogantly.

But this was good.

Seeing that he was waiting for me to continue, I might just tell him now.

Veldora often didn’t listen and I was forced into tricking him. Troublesome as it was, it remained the necessary ritual to draw his attention.

“So...some people need to make friends.”

⁶⁴This is actually グエルドラ, Gueredora, but basically, it’s just a pun name to say Veldora is very gullible. (Gullible Veldora)

“Hmmhmm, just speak your mind with the request!”

“The thing is, Ramiris is moving to town. We are building that girl’s labyrinth right under the colosseum and then—”

While he was still interested to hear me out, I told him about Ramiris moving in. Veldora understood faster than I expected.

“Oh, is it Ramiris? I’m not entirely sure about that girl’s ability, but I think she has the power to create tunnels that will lead to the same location no matter which entrance on the surface is taken. Is she able to create a labyrinth with complex layouts?”

“Right. She is also planning to add floors and I am thinking about preparing different types of traps.”

“There are even floors? I see, that chibi Ramiris seems to be stronger than I imagined.”

Upon hearing me say so, Veldora mirrored my serious expression. *You really are so, so gullible.* Next, I shared the entirety of the dungeon creation plan with Veldora.

“Isn’t it boring to just have an ordinary labyrinth? That’s why I’m trying to make it something awesome, a national brand. And today, I just discussed it with Ramiris. She is now working hard on expanding the floors.”

“Oh oh. So what does it have to do with your favor from me?”

“Honestly, I need a king to rule over the dungeon—”

“—You say king?”

“The management of the labyrinth will be run by Ramiris and me. Then there is a gate on the hundredth floor that leads to Ramiris’s home within the fairy maze. A guardian is required for that gate—no, we need the ‘Strongest’ guardian. Don’t you think that makes sense, Veldora-kun?”

“It makes sense! I see, as expected of Rimuru. So you want to hand that job to me, am I right?”

As predicted, Veldora had been fooled by my sweet-talk. Since he didn’t have much resistance against the word “Strongest,” I figured I could definitely lure him into agreement with that.

“That’s right, Veldora. Moreover, if you agree to this proposal, there’s another bonus waiting for you.”

“Oh? Although I’ve already decided to agree, let me hear about this bonus first.”

Hehehe. This was not just a bonus; it was actually the most important reason.

“Didn’t you want to release your youki all the time? And that you were almost at your limit?”

“What! Could it be...”

“Bingo! You don’t have to hold back your youki any more in the labyrinth. You can even return to your original dragon form.”

“Oh, ohoh...!”

“Think about it, a handsome dragon waiting at the depths of the labyrinth, giving off a solemn aura—”

“That’s me, right?” Veldora interrupted. “If that’s the case, I also get to unapologetically say to people: ‘GAHAHAHAHAHA, you’ve finally arrived! Welcome, pathetic bugs!’ and show off a little?”

He was already dying to give it a try. At the beginning he didn’t even seem to have a single scrap of motivation, but upon hearing that he got to release his youki, he appeared to be very excited.

How about I give it a final blow to seal the deal?

Thinking about it, I began to mention the final plan that I’d discussed with Ramiris.

“I’ll also be deploying some of my men there to defend against the adventurers. Yes, this is a game you’ve wanted to play for a while—I want to make it a reality. So, does it sound like fun?”

I expected to make the dungeon into something resembling a realistic simulation game. After hearing Ramiris’s view, I suddenly got an idea.

Deploying my men—aka monsters to fight and defeat adventurers. In order to guard the treasure chests, there will also be monster bosses. Veldora’s magicules will flood the dungeon. Starting at the one hundredth floor, where the magicule concentration will be strongest, it will gradually thin out as it spreads across the floors above, which will have the desired effect of spawning relatively weak monsters in the upper floors, but progressively tougher ones lower down. The magicules leaked by Veldora during his sealed state was enough to spawn strong monsters such as Tempest Snakes at Rank A-minus. If it is Veldora now, I can’t fathom how strong the monsters will be.

Honestly, there really was no need to deploy guardians. I didn’t see anyone even arriving at the hundredth floor, so there shouldn’t be such worries. The most important thing was having Veldora release his youki. I figured that after telling him to endure, he was at his limit. If I left him unattended, he might find a place to relieve himself without permission when no one was watching, that’s why I had to keep my eyes on him at all times.

If he accidentally released it in this region, apart from my executives and myself, any average people would be unable to tolerate it. With the magicule concentration spiking, people below Rank B might easily be killed. It would be asking too much to hope that Veldora would understand restraint, so Ramiris’s labyrinth was to be a facilitating factor.

After all, the interior of the labyrinth was an isolated space. I had confirmed that while exploring it in the past, there was no need to worry about magicule leakage. Moreover, even if Veldora released his youki, it wouldn’t shake the place. Even the sealed cave was unable to contain the youki released by Veldora after his full revival. Now that we established a research facility there, I couldn’t allow him to release it in the cave again... That’s why the dungeon was the ideal venue.

Then there’s also the ultimate goal, the hope that Veldora would release his youki completely—simultaneously preparing high concentrations of magicules to spawn monsters.

That was after all the core of this plan. Not only would we have Veldora release his youki, but we would be capitalizing on it effectively. How do I come up with these amazing ideas? It's killing two birds with one stone, actually, I should call it killing three birds. Not only would I be able to chase out Veldora who had been laying his nest in my house, I could have him be the magicule generator in the labyrinth to spawn monsters. Moreover, I got to give some work to this Veldora who had almost turned into a NEET.

Sadly for him, I didn't think he would ever get the chance to play the part of the final boss of the Labyrinth...

All right, shall we see how he'll react?

Veldora stood up and sneakily put his manga into his pocket. He then extended his hand towards me intending to shake my hand.

"Interesting. This thing sounds very interesting, Rimuru. Adventurers will fend off the minions and stand before me. Then I will get to teach these strong individuals a lesson. Of course, some adventurers will attempt to run away, but I will not let them off so easily! When times like that come, how about I say something like—'GAHAHAHAHAHA, you can't escape from my grasp. Don't you know? No one escapes from the claws of the one and only Storm Dragon—' I always wanted to try this line. Now am I finally getting the chance to deliver the line that I've been hoping to declare for so long? How exciting, I'm really looking forward to it!"

Spouting things like that, Veldora had now even begun daydreaming.

"Y-Yeah, you're right..." I gave the affirmative to him without thinking, but I might have gotten Veldora too excited...

Will this guy be all right like this? Since, you know, by normal logic, there's not gonna be anyone who will have the ability to make it to the hundredth floor.

Although I was a little bit concerned, I kept an open mind for the plan.

"—I figure this honor can only be handled by you, so what do you think?"

"Of course I will do it. Rimuru, you are so lucky to have come to me, I am after all the only one who could possibly fill this role!" he said, nodding his head earnestly. *I'm lucky that he's an idiot. I played him like a fiddle...*

And like that, I got Veldora's assistance with ease.



The next day—I paired up with Veldora to find Ramiris.

The construction work on the colosseum started early in the morning. The site was full of energy. Even the beastmen, who went out for training, had returned to help and were moving about under Gobkyu's instruction. Everyone was working their hardest, so in order to avoid disturbing them, we entered the labyrinth.

Upon entry, we found ourselves in the same room Ramiris was in... As promised yesterday, she seemed to be diligently expanding the labyrinth all this time.

"Oh, Ramiris. How are you doing?"

"Ah, Master! Long time no see, I've been good!"

Ramiris looked worn out but very satisfied as she made the response. It seemed she had been working too hard, even though I specifically told her not to overdo her part. Without me noticing, she had already sat down on Veldora's shoulder. The two looked so close, how wonderful.

Despite the wonderful things, there were still some remaining problems. Ramiris apparently wanted to show off her skills some more now that Veldora had come, and she was completely ignoring my reminder.

"Just count on me! I'll work hard. I'll definitely complete all of them!"

I just wanted Ramiris to calm down. The first thing we needed to do was to eat breakfast.

After finishing breakfast, Ramiris explained her progress to me. She had increased the size to fifteen floors. At this rate, we would reach the one hundredth floor in just a few days. The internal structure would be changed on the fly, so Ramiris didn't have to slow down for those plans.

"Anyway, the rest of the floors will be expanding by themselves," Ramiris said. "I'm pretty idle anyway, so why don't I do the interior design for the finished floors too?"

It seemed that even without Ramiris's conscious effort, the floors would increase automatically while consuming her power.

"Then, let's prepare Veldora's room first."

I planned to set Veldora's residence at the deepest level. In order to chase him out of my room, we would decorate the interior of his room first.

The bottom floor right now was a room devoid of anything. There were no walls, and naturally no hallways. There weren't even any stairs, we could only see an empty lot with a gate.

"This is truly empty I see."

"Oi oi oi, Rimuru, is this supposed to be my room? This really reminds me of the spot where I was sealed before..."

Veldora seemed kind of repulsed. That's somewhat pitiful really.

"It's all right, mentor! If I want, I can easily create walls and stairs."

Seeing how displeased Veldora looked, Ramiris replied grinning.

"Right, then, regarding what type of room we are decorating, we will discuss through our 'Telepathy Net' and decide."

With that being said, I promptly connected the three of us with ‘Telepathy Net.’ Then we began to construct an outline for the style of decoration based on my thoughts.

“Oh, ohoh! That’s it, that’s it, Rimuru! You are truly impressive. I see that there’s really nothing for me to worry about when you are handling things.”

Did your satisfaction rate just suddenly cap out just like that? Veldora nodded while humming “Hmmhmm.”

“It seems that Veldora is completely satisfied, can we decorate it to this type of style?”

“Just count on me! This is a piece of cake!”

Ramiris took on the mission without hesitation. And just like she put it, the empty lot was changed in the blink of an eye. The walls turned into thick and heavy stone walls, several small rooms and a hall appeared. The hall was square shaped with one hundred meters for each side. The solemn atmosphere of the interior design resembled the so called “Final Boss Level.” I transmitted the image in my head to her, and it turned out that she was able to recreate it wholly intact.

“You are so strong! This is just perfect...”

“Hmm, Ramiris, now I am satisfied!”

“Right, right! I am super strong after all!”

Ramiris probably seldom got praised by people, which was why she was overjoyed now. But even with that being said, she had been truly impressive this time. Building something like this in real life would likely not just take several years, but perhaps even decades to finish. Yet she completed it in the blink of an eye... It seemed that Ramiris held ultimate power over the dungeon and had complete freedom in shaping it.

Ah, that’s impressive, impressive indeed. I’ve completely changed my mind on Ramiris and now see her in a different light. But next, being impressed here alone won’t make any progress.

On the surface it appeared that this hall was a room to confront adventurers. But its true purpose was to allow Veldora to restore his original form. So if Veldora was unable to properly relax here, the effort would’ve been meaningless.

However, based on Veldora’s recent activities, he did seem remarkably relaxed even without being in his dragon form... Since transforming into his human form, he could read manga and play games. This must’ve been the case. After all, he decided to stay in my room without leaving. Based on this, I decided to prepare a room tailored to his human form as well.

There were two gates in this hall. One of the large gates connected to the stairs to the upper floor, and the other gate lead to his private room for everyday use. Ramiris’s ability to recreate things was indeed powerful, she could construct an exact replica of what I envisioned.

“Oh? Is this my room?”

While ignoring the intrigued Veldora, I took out a whole set of furniture from my ‘Stomach.’ I laid out the rug stitched by the goblinas and put out the tables and chairs built by the craftsmen. I’d even prepared benches, so he could lie down for a while if he wished. I even put out a bed, though I wasn’t sure about whether it was necessary or not.



I think this will create a very comfortable space. There were also shelves set on the walls with copies of the manga that Veldora liked. Unlike the solemn atmosphere the hall projected, this was built to be a comfortable space for private life that a commoner would enjoy.

“Nicu, nicu, very nicu, Rimuru-chan. I want that type of furniture too!”

After hearing how envious Ramiris sounded, I promised her that I would prepare a set for her as well. While I was originally worried about the size problem, that seemed to be unnecessary. Ramiris jumped onto the bench without hesitation and began to flip through manga. Speaking of this, it was the same during our last meeting. So I shouldn’t overthink it and just prepare another set.

Without me noticing, even Veldora had begun to play around and started rolling on the bed. He looked contented. The hall had an emphasis on atmosphere, the majesty of that in contrast to this room and how Veldora was behaving stood in stark contrast. *Right, there are things we just can't force.* On this day we managed to sort out Veldora’s room and with that dismissed our meeting.

After that, it took another whole week. Although we had slowed down a bit, the labyrinth had finally been built to a hundred floors. The interior designs were developed with modularity in mind. Thanks to this function, we were able to do an internal structural change every few days. Adventurers trying to memorize the layout would soon realize how futile those attempts would be. This design was truly evil.

Selling maps would be an option, however it would ruin the fun adventurers would have when they’re forced to create a new map every time they enter. But to put it in another light, they wouldn’t get bored this way... The labyrinth would always have a certain level of difficulty when being conquered, so that will never get old.

We at the very least had some measures to save progress. We placed a save point for every ten floors. I didn’t expect that in Ramiris’s labyrinth, you could conduct ‘Spatial Movement’ upon fulfilling certain conditions. More surprisingly, the act was said to be unaffected by magicle. It could even transport rations, which made it an extremely convenient function.

Of course, the same applied to humans and could transport them freely to any specific location. That was a save point. Once you reached it, you got to start from there in your next run. The same transportation method could be used by your companions too, so you could basically also cheat by having other people send you to a certain location.

We had differing views on this issue, but in the end, we took my suggestion to see how things would shape up before deciding on anything. Honestly speaking, cheating using savepoints would only give the people doing this a hard time. Since we were planning to put a boss on each floor. As the regional ruler of Jura Great Forest, I thought floor guardians were necessary components. Especially before reaching the save point set every ten floors, I wanted to deploy some especially strong monsters.

In other words, you couldn’t use the save point unless you defeated these powerful individuals. If they were capable enough to break through, the companions brought by these strong

individuals surely wouldn't be reckless. But if there was truly any problem, we would think about what to do by that time. In addition, I also wanted to prepare some treasure chests as rewards to incentivize defeating the bosses.

But is it okay if the bosses are defeated? Indeed, that was an important question. One of the abilities of Ramiris's 'Labyrinth Creation' was—the power of resurrection. Thanks to this skill, the adventurers inside it got to be revived.

As explained before, it required the will of the person, but the step would not be required if the individual had a ruler-subject relation with Ramiris. To my surprise, through the labyrinth created by 'Labyrinth Creation,' Ramiris's subordinates seemed to be immortal. Ramiris would disappear upon being killed, but her subordinates could be revived at the save points. As for the subordinates we were referring to here, it applied only to those, who had forged a pact with her or to people that Ramiris acknowledged. This skill was undoubtedly a ferocious power beyond my imagination.

That was the biggest reason why she wanted Beretta. Ramiris herself was not that strong, but Ramiris's army inside the labyrinth was invincible. That was why to Ramiris, who didn't have a single subordinate, this invincible skill was as good as none at all. It was no use if it was a golem without will. The reason why the Elemental Colossus was destroyed is due to the fact that it was merely a doll.

Considering that, Beretta was no mere doll. After becoming Ramiris's subordinate, Beretta practically became immortal⁶⁵ within this labyrinth. With the addition of Treyni-san now, Ramiris packed quite a bit more military power than I had initially expected. After all, the two were already very powerful before, now given the attribute of immortality, it was hard to say who would win even if I sent out Benimaru and Shion to confront them. Powerhouses such as Beretta and Treyni-san were now also very busy, but they had no complaints as they assisted the construction of the colosseum outside...

Thanks to Ramiris, the labyrinth had smoothly entered a stage of near completion. Once this thing was settled, I'd better find them both to discuss the defense mechanisms inside the labyrinth. However, that would come later.

"Ramiris, how is the item I asked you to prepare coming along?"

"Oh, you mean this? I've been trying to craft one."

The thing I asked her to prepare was the resurrection item. In order to obtain the attribute of "Immortality" from Ramiris's 'Labyrinth Creation,' she must first receive confirmation of the individual's will. But it was to be expected that everyone who wanted to enter the labyrinth would use one. Since this was a facility accessible to anyone—it was simply too hard to confirm the personal will and form a pact with everyone. If there weren't a lot of people, Ramiris should be able to maintain control, but if too many people came in at the same time, Ramiris might not be able to keep up. That's why she designed a single-use disposable item—that's how she described it.

⁶⁵To be more specific, the term here is “不滅” (cannot be destroyed)

She took out a bracelet that, upon first glance, seemed like nothing special. It looked like a braided bracelet that you could tie on your wrist.

“About this thing, have you confirmed the effect?”

“It works great! I tried it on Beretta last night!”

“Hold up, hold up, why are you so mean to Beretta...”

I never expected that Beretta would say “I’m a demon, so I won’t get eliminated regardless” at the time and offered his help happily. Although this was a request from me, they were still too reckless.

But that was worth the try, it was very useful in confirming the effect of the bracelet. Ten seconds after Treyni-san had pierced Beretta’s core, his corpse was transported outside the dungeon and was completely revived.

“It seems perfect. I appreciate Beretta’s courage.”

“Hmm hmm. This is my first time making a single-use disposable item. Although I guessed it would come out smoothly, it’s truly wonderful that I was actually able to make it,” Ramiris nodded with a smile, it did sound like it was her first attempt.

It was worthy of celebration that it had been successful, but it was truly frightening to think of what would have happened had it failed. At least do an animal experiment first. I should be mindful of her doing something this reckless in future requests.

Regardless, the resurrection item had been prepared. The emergency escape item for returning to the surface also seemed to have been finished.

“Resurrection Bracelet”, “Return Whistle”—these we would be selling at the entrance of the labyrinth to prepare for the unknown. Whether the customers bought them or not was their choice. *However, please take responsibility for dying or getting lost in the labyrinth without the purchase.*

It is a buy from me, absolute buy.

I’d think about the price tag for it later. Regardless, the preparation work was done for now. By the way, this resurrection item called “Resurrection Bracelet” actually only temporarily materialized Ramiris’s power. That’s why you could only be revived at the entrance after dying inside the labyrinth to be reset.

In order to prevent anyone from misunderstanding its function and therefore expecting it to be able to revive them at any location, including outside of the labyrinth, we needed to give a thorough explanation. There were a lot of people in this world that ignored other people’s advice, so I was a bit worried. If they really mistook things and ended up dying outside the labyrinth, it would be their own doing. Either way, I still couldn’t bear to see that happening. I should just specifically remind the people to be careful with it.

With that, the dungeon was almost complete. How impressive that it only took a week. Perhaps Wisdom King Raphael-sensei could even recreate that incredible skill, upon thinking so, I tried to ask it—

«Answer. Intrinsic Skill of Individual “Ramiris” cannot be recreated.»

And like that it immediately turned me down. Such majestic work could only be achieved by Ramiris. At this point, I felt that I should tell her “Thank you for moving here.”

“You have worked really hard, Ramiris. Now we can finally commence the next phase of our plan.”

“Hehe, that’s without saying! I always give my all when I need to!”

After praising Ramiris who was flapping her wings and flying around, I turned to Veldora.

“Kept you waiting huh, Veldora-kun. It seems the time for you to release your youki has arrived.”

“Oh oh, finally after all the waiting! GAHAHAHA, leave it to me!”

The moment I’d been anticipating had finally arrived. There were air vents in this hundred-level dungeon and stairs that connected the floors. If people asked me how there was any air flow one hundred floors underground, I would answer by saying it was all because of magic. So honestly, there wasn’t really any need for air ventilation, but I still asked her to open them, reason being to have the magicules permeate to each floor more easily.

There in the center of the hundredth floor’s hall, Veldora revealed his true self. And with it, his long suppressed youki was released.

“Then, here I go. HYAA—!”

He didn’t really need to scream like that, but it was probably because of his mood. The vicious youki blew towards me and Ramiris. Fearing an emergency, I had covered Ramiris with ‘Absolute Defense’ as well. The next instant, a shockwave arrived as if something had exploded.

“T-T-That was close... If Rimuru didn’t protect me, I might have been blown away...” Ramiris muttered while quivering.

Indeed, the shockwave was far more powerful than I imagined. Moreover, any average person would have been instantly killed by the concentrated magicules that filled the chamber.

“GA—HAHAHA! I AM HERE!”



The final boss level—correction, the deepest hall in the labyrinth took up a wide space, but after Veldora restored himself to his original shape, it felt awfully narrow.

After not seeing Veldora in his dragon form for so long, that appearance was indeed filled with majesty. *Ah, seriously, he's so authoritative when he shuts his mouth.*

However...

“I feel so good! Ah, aren’t I just so magnificent? If I did this outside, it might not have been a good idea,” he casually said.

It will be a catastrophe if you do this outside. While you are saying that it feels so good, you are still leaking out youki.

“M-Mentor sure is strong... I didn’t expect that my own labyrinth would get knocked crooked by others...”

Just like Ramiris said, the walls had been bowed outwards by the ferocious wind. It was probably due to the strong internal pressure, but that wasn’t the reason why the attack was so shocking.

“Should I call you impressive? You must have been holding back for so long. Before things end up like this in the future, you’ve got to remember to release your youki occasionally...”

Not only the youki he leaked, the magicule concentration alone was already sky high. It could only be imagined just how incredibly large Veldora’s magicule pool was. That’s why it was truly no good to wait for him to release it. In the worst-case scenario, he would have to start relieving himself more often one bit at a time.

By the way, the magicule concentration was truly immense. Just then an amazing idea crossed my mind. Should we perhaps set another room on the hundredth floor and turn it into a warehouse? We could then store the iron ores and other products from the mine in this room. Then by having them immersed in large amounts of magicule, they would be turned to magisteel ore very fast.

Magisteel ores are the rough stones of magisteel, its value could rival that of gold. The demand for them couldn’t even be reached by iron ore, and to us they were also very useful resources.

“Ramiris, can you create an additional hall next to this one?”

“Hmm, piece of cake!”

And so, I hurried her to do the preparations. Upon my next visit, I’d bring the iron ore from the town here as well.

As I thought of these cunning schemes, the magicules spread to the other floors as planned. Right now there weren’t any walls set up nor any other sort of areal partitioning. That’s why there weren’t any obstacles that hindered the magicules from permeating to every corner of the space. Even around underground level fifty, the magicule concentration was beyond that in the “Sealed Cave.”

Its effect had exceeded my expectations, so basically it was an absolute win. Next, we just had to wait for monsters to be born. The concentration was so high that it was terrifying, so a lot of strong individuals should be spawning.

With that hope in mind, we dismissed the meeting for this day.



The next day, both Beretta and Treyni-san were present. Veldora seemed to have maintained his dragon form to release magicules and was resting on the ground.

“Hey, Rimuru, I haven’t been as comfortable as I was yesterday for a long time.”

“That’s great then. You don’t have to endure it anymore in the future, let go as much as you like. Just remember not to release any to the outside!”

“GAHAHA, I know.”

Do you though? I was a little skeptical, but I chose to trust him.

It wasn’t convenient to continue our conversation like this, so I asked Veldora to return to his human form. Then I started to explain the situation to Beretta and Treyni-san. Now we could get to work—I did want to say that indeed, there was still something before that.

I wanted a final confirmation from Beretta.

“Beretta, did you swear in front of Guy to pledge your loyalty to Ramiris? Has your sentiment changed since then?”

Beretta looked at me in shock. He must’ve been showing a rare change of expression under that mask.

“—Rimuru-sama, please forgive my rudeness. As I have said before, I hope to serve you and Ramiris-sama.”

“Yes, I remember that. But, wouldn’t that be breaking your vow with Guy?”

“…Yes. When that day comes, I’ll take the responsibility myself—”

“No, you don’t have to split hairs like that. As you have wished, Ramiris has moved to the town too. Now she is also responsible for running the labyrinth, do you wish to help her?”

“Of course!”

“If that’s the case, there wouldn’t be any problem. In terms of results, you are basically pledging your loyalty to me too.”

I’d heard about this before, so I had the idea for quite a while already. If Beretta wished, I’d let him change to serving Ramiris. Since he had made a deal with the so-called strongest Demon Lord Guy, if he broke the vow Beretta wouldn’t be safe.

“Won’t you mind that? Then, I will serve Ramiris-sama,” Beretta replied without hesitation.

I felt as though all of this had been part of Beretta’s plan. *Well, never mind, that’s fine either way. This cunningness, who in the world did he learn it from—*

«Answer. It’s of course—»

Ah, I don’t want to hear that answer. How careless. What does Wisdom King Raphael-sensei

think of me? Seriously, if it is anyone with such cunningness, it would be Raphael-sensei.

«...»

It seemed to be slightly displeased, but I didn't care.

“That's fine. Then, Beretta, pledge your loyalty to Ramiris in the future!”

“Even though I will become Ramiris-sama's servant, I will not forget the gracious deeds done by Rimuru-sama. If I may ever be of any use to you, just say the word.”

“All right, I'll count on you then.”

As I finished my words, I deactivated the Creator Order (Master Lock) on Beretta and transferred “Master Access” to Ramiris. After the transference, I would only have access as the creator. If anything ever happened to Ramiris, the commanding right would return to me. But, as long as things didn't end up that way, Ramiris would always be Beretta's master.

Now I could be reassured. I wouldn't get bad-mouthed by Guy, and Beretta as Ramiris's guard was also trust-worthy.

I felt that there were surprisingly plenty of ways of using the labyrinth. On the surface, it appeared to be a promotional medium to attract adventurers. Further behind the scenes, it was a channel for Veldora to relieve himself. Lastly as its by-product—it turned iron ores into magis-steel ores using high concentrations of magicule. This will do. It seemed that by researching the mysterious substance known as “Magicule” in this world, we got to run this labyrinth effectively. That was beyond my expectation, which heightened the importance of this labyrinth.

I wasn't entirely sure about handing the mission of protecting the place to Treyni-san alone, but now with Beretta, I was a lot more assured.

As for Ramiris who gained commanding power over Beretta... The quick turn of events had made her a bit hysterical.

“Beretta has really become my subordinate... Now I'm finally not alone—”

“Ah, Ramiris-sama, you still have me.”

“Oh yeah! There's also Treyni, now I have a big family!⁶⁶”

Ramiris seemed overjoyed as she flew around Beretta. Treyni-san couldn't help but smile admiring the sight of her.

Ramiris had been alone all this time, she must've been very lonely. Even though she only had two subordinates, she still said they were a lot... This worries me. It worries me greatly.

Treyni-san was a very reliable person, yet she spoiled Ramiris too much. So Beretta would have to take on even more responsibilities, but I hoped someone with common sense like him would work hard too. He had the cunning and calculative side as well and would probably respond to my expectation.

“Beretta don't mind me for now. I'll have you take care of Ramiris. Please protect her well in the future.”

⁶⁶The word here is “大所帯” which means “a large (family) organization,” so it's more akin to “I've got this huge group now.” But hell it's pretty wholesome so why not family.

“Yes Sir! I shall guard her with my life!”

I had confidence in him. I could rest assured as long as Beretta was there.

The management of monsters inside the labyrinth would probably keep Treyni-san's and Ramiris's hands tied if they handled them alone. So it wouldn't be a problem if they did encounter such things since Beretta was here. Things worked out smoothly.

Veldora and I felt somewhat agitated by Ramiris who was making excited noises, but then again, the sight did put a smile on our faces.

Given that an official master-servant relationship was made, Beretta had become “immortal” inside the labyrinth. Even without a “Resurrection Bracelet”, the mechanism could still be carried out perfectly. Treyni-san was without exception. The items such as “Resurrection Bracelet” and “Return Whistle” that possessed Ramiris's power were all watered-down versions of her skills. But, since Beretta and Treyni-san were now her followers, they could avoid the hassle of using them. The same logic applied for the location of resurrection, as long as the save point had been set beforehand, it is said that they could revive wherever they wanted and didn't have to be expelled out of the labyrinth every time. In addition, they could also do simplified ‘Transportation’ through the save point on each floor.

Speaking of Ramiris's Intrinsic Skill ‘Labyrinth Creation,’ it really had little use for herself, but instead was highly beneficial for her subordinates. *By the way... Infinite revival, the thought alone sounds terrifying already. Right now she only has two subordinates, and once this number increases...*

In the future, there would gradually be monsters born in the labyrinth. If she could tame them, she might be able to form a Ramiris Legion. Then it would become a major power so people wouldn't look down on her and call her chibi. Such an army with the attribute of “Immortality” would pose a force to be reckoned with.

From a standpoint of defense, Ramiris's skill couldn't have been any better. The only problem with it was that the user of the skill was Ramiris herself, who to this day had not been anyone's concern.

—But I guess it's just Ramiris after all. So there shouldn't be a problem and there is nothing to worry about. Such a cute fairy, she's just a chibi that is afraid of being lonely. That's why I don't think she will go lead a huge army and plot something like that—



Now we were entering the next stage, it was time to plan out the internal structures of the labyrinth. Since there were as many as a hundred levels, designing the labyrinth really was a laborious task. But, it's not really a labyrinth if it doesn't have traps, so let's be interior design-

ers for a while.

By the way, the first level of the labyrinth was square shaped, and the four sides were of 250 meters in length. It was large enough to rival Tokyo Big Egg (Tokyo Dome), but the deeper you went, the narrower it got. Structurally, it had an inverted pyramid shape. Since Veldora was releasing his youki on the bottom level, we built it like this so that it would be convenient for youki to spread out evenly. Almost every condition we considered had been fulfilled, it could be said that the structure we designed went beyond common sense. But there's no point breaking our heads overthinking such things.

Now, time to confirm what sort of traps to deploy:

- Poison Arrow: Arrows smeared with poison will fly your way out of nowhere.
- Poison swamp: ~~Weleome to Farron Keep 2.0~~, super poisonous swamp that you will recognize instantly from the mere look of it. Stepping in will give you ailment status and HP reduction due to poisoning.
- Spinning surface: You spin me right round to disorientate me. Please remember the importance of drafting maps!
- Shifting surface: Floors that will run away on their own, how terrifying.
- Dismembering Razor-string: If you run into it without noticing, you will get your head chopped off (among other limbs). It's gonna be quite vicious when paired up with shifting surface.
- Booby trap pit: Compared to the injuries you get from dropping into it, you should be more concerned about what you will encounter down there.
- Mimic chest: Amazing, it's a treasure chest? Sorry but, KONO MIMIC DA!
- Exploding chest: Amazing, it's a treasure chest! EXPLOSION!
- Monster cabin: Howdy! Are you our delivery? It's pizza time!
- Sealed room: If you start a fire here...
- Dark level: Shouldn't bringing torches be common sense? If you didn't, I can sell you some for, say, 3000 souls a huge markup.
- Low ceiling floor: Wow, didn't expect to encounter any monster while crawling on the ground now did you...
- Terrain effect level: WTF?! Why is there a volcano in this labyrinth?
- ~~Rimuru Tempest: Arguably the deadliest trap.~~

That's about it, something along these lines. I listed all the traps I could come up with to her and it turned out that almost all of them could be created.

"You are truly capable, Ramiris. Are you really able to make these types of traps?"

"Hmm! Inside the labyrinth, I can make whatever I want!"

Indeed, it was just like how Ramiris put it. Now even though we were one hundred floors down, the air composition was no different from that on the surface. This was all thanks to Ramiris's skill. It illustrated once again how super strong her skill was.

“By the way, what is this ‘Sealed Room’? Can it really be a booby trap?”

To her question, I cracked up a smile and replied, “Air—or I should say that there is a substance in the atmosphere called oxygen. Humans, or perhaps most creatures, will take in oxygen by breathing. Veldora and I are exceptions. If the concentration of oxygen drops too low, people will suffer hypoxia and may even die on the spot. That’s why adventurers should be cautious when faced with a room like that. After all, that’s a fixed rule of exploration.”

In general, it was fine if a room were sealed, but if you lit a fire inside, it would lead to a state of oxygen deprivation or may even cause the room to be filled with poisonous gases. Even if you discovered this type of room in ruins or labyrinths, you couldn’t immediately rush in. You must analyze the components of the atmosphere first and hold a skeptical view regarding whether there was poisonous gas remaining and assessing the concentration of the oxygen.

That is the basic rule of exploration, if an adventurer can’t even do that, he won’t last long. And since magic exists in this world, at least do the breathing with wind-element magic.

I explained this in a way that Ramiris could easily understand—although she didn’t seem to understand at all.

“Okay, I get now that it is some vicious trap. But it doesn’t really affect us, so we don’t have to pay too much attention to it, right? By the way, you... I had the feeling before that you were a pretty scary guy. But you also seem very capable. If it were me, I wouldn’t be able to come up with a trap like that...”

Knowing that they themselves wouldn’t have to worry about being harmed by the trap, Ramiris seemed to be reassured. She exclaimed so and praised me. She seemed to really believe what she said, and that kind of embarrassed me. If it were people who enjoyed gaming from my original world, they should be very familiar with these traps and even feel somewhat intimate with them.

But making them real is a horse of a different color. It was nothing like some amusement rides, you might pay with your life because of them. Moreover, attempting to overcome a labyrinth with these traps would likely take a couple of days. They might even take a few days just to take on a few levels, plus the terrain will alter, one must try to go all the way to the save point at the tenth floor.

If it was someone like us who had poison nullification and did not require breathing, eating or even sleeping, they should be able to conquer it using brute force by just tanking the damage. But this was not something average people were capable of. Even those who were worthy of the title of hero would need to rest. I personally was convinced that it would be quite the vicious labyrinth.

“Are we perhaps setting the difficulty too high?”

“Is it? I find it okay.”

“Yeah, Rimuru. This is really nothing!”

My worries were laughed off by Veldora and Ramiris. If that’s the case, then there shouldn’t be a problem. I was persuaded and continued brainstorming the labyrinth routes.

A few days passed after that, during which Ramiris joyfully prepared all sorts of traps. Beretta and Treyni-san had been deploying them alongside her. I had planned out the labyrinth route with Veldora. We came up with several different models and registered them first so we could make the change anytime we needed. Everything had been going smoothly, but when we attempted to add “Terrain Effect,” Ramiris raised an objection.

“No, no no no. I can’t sustain that much energy!”

To put it simply, she had a problem with it.

—Actually, it made sense. In terms of the layout—we wanted every level to have a specific natural disaster theme that would cover the entire level. For example a fire level, frozen level or a storm level.

Yeah, I guess creating a volcano is a no-go. I’ve come to believe that anything can be done with magic, but what I was asking for is simply too much.

“I see you have a point. Sorry, Ramiris, I was being too difficult—”

I gave up and decided to apologize to Ramiris. But then—

“Can’t that be solved if you capture a fire or ice dragon from somewhere? Do you need my help to catch some?”

What a familiar voice, but, that person shouldn’t be here. I turned around to see a pair of platinum pink ponytails.

It was Milim.

“Eh...? What are you doing here, Milim—”

This was level one hundred underground. In other words, this was the very bottom level of the recently built dungeon. We hadn’t even made this location public, so by any rational logic she shouldn’t have been able to enter...

Yet she just did—Demon Lord Milim stood there with a smug smile.

By the way, Wisdom King Raphael-sensei seemed to have noticed that, but since Milim didn’t have hostile intent against me, it intentionally didn’t report to me... But actually, it was me who told it to do that. Though I should still reassess the command. It’s all because Raphael-san doesn’t know how to be flexible, what a headache.

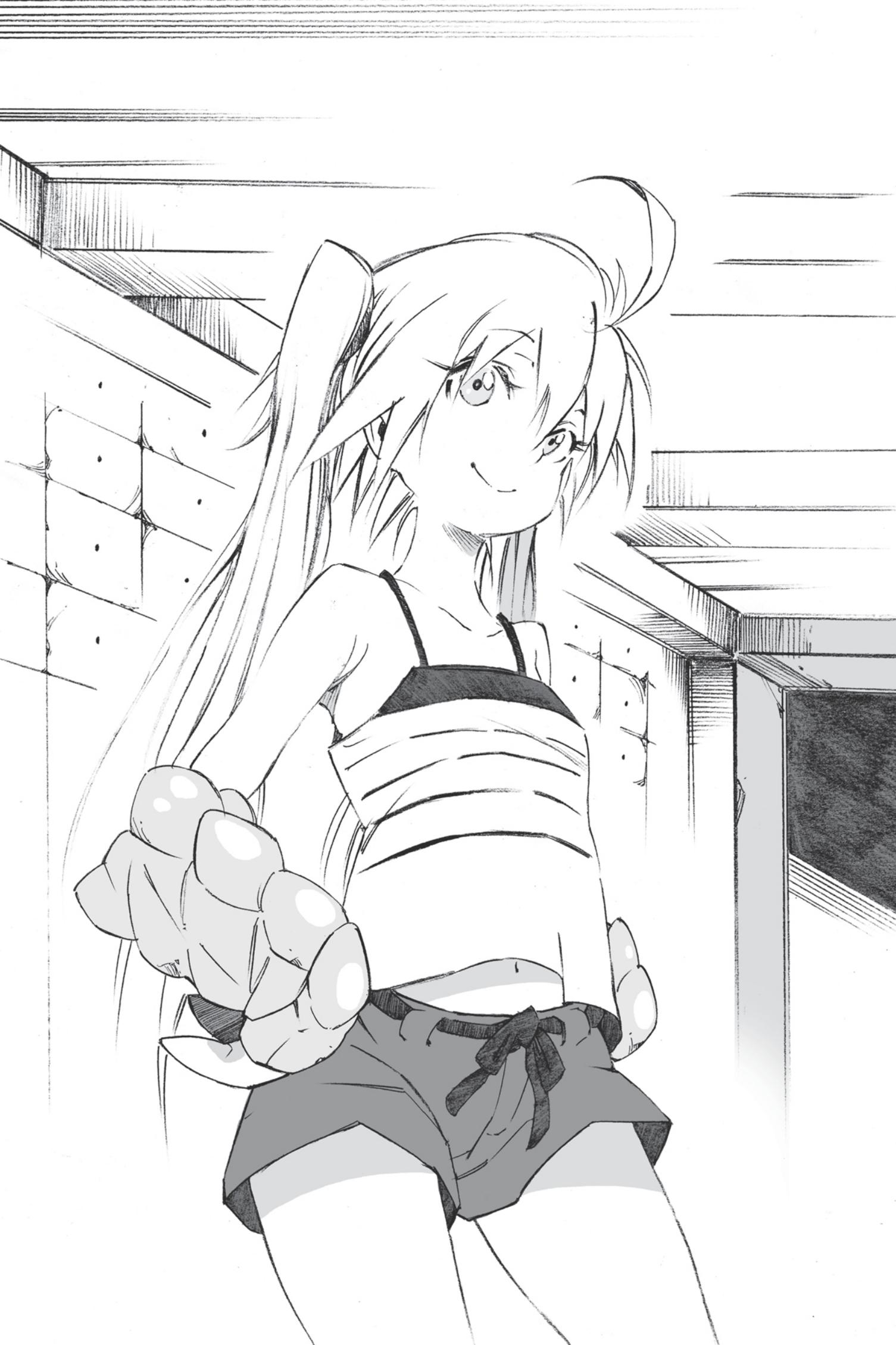
«...»

That will be a topic to discuss in the future, right now let’s deal with Milim. Upon thinking this, I turned to Milim. And soon after, she remarked complacently: “Fufu, I know that you guys have been up to something interesting, so I came by to see. And you’ve ousted me without notice, how dare you, Rimuru.”

Milim finished with an arrogant posture while straightening her plotless, flat chest.

She was wearing her usual highly revealing clothes, but the area covered by clothing seemed to be more than last time. After being dressed by Shuna and the goblinas, she may have become a bit more self-aware about dressing up in public. On her fists were the pair of drago knuckles that clashed with the rest of her attire. The light reflecting off its rough surface was emphasizing

their existence. It was very much Milim's style, she really was just a punk kid after all.



I couldn't bring myself to reject her, so if she really wanted to join the development—

“Heh, so it's Milim. You are just a brat, how could you understand the sublime work of us adults? We are not playing around here, don't get in our way!”

Veldora slanted towards Milim and exclaimed so while feeling justified. I didn't have time to respond before he interjected. It was work in name indeed, but this didn't seem like serious work at all... Not only him, even Ramiris decided to chase after Veldora's footsteps.

“Mentor is right!” she yelled, confronting Milim. “We are working here, so an idler like you should just go home!”

The poor chibi was immediately trapped in Milim's iron grasp. Her courage was commendable, but Ramiris, you don't really have the strength to back it up.

I lacked that sort of courage, so I decided to ask in a normal way.

“You mentioned that we are doing something interesting, what were you referring to? It was all because of your letter that we are holding this grand festival.”

“What? Didn't you ignore my letter?”

“How is that possible? Seriously, we are doing this to receive demon lords, so we can't just offer the bare minimum, can we?”

Up until now Milim was looking displeased, but after learning that she hadn't been ignored, she immediately regained her jovial mood, to the displeasure of someone else.

“Hold on, Rimuru! I'm a demon lord too! I'm just like you and Milim, a member of the Octagram!”

Seeing that Milim had received different treatment than herself, Ramiris began to throw a tantrum.

“Ramiris, there's no such thing as receiving you at all, didn't you move here without permission?!?”

“What? What do you mean by moving here? Ramiris, could it be that you are living with Rimuru now?”

After being pursued by questions from Milim and me, Ramiris was now the one who had lost her cool—

“That's right! I was not invited, but that's not important at all! Also I'm not gonna be alone in the future anymore now that I'm living with Rimuru too!”

—Or so I thought that she has just lost her cool, instead she dropped this easily misunderstood statement.

“How cunning and cheeky of you! I want to live here too!”

“Hehe—! I came here for work. I'm helping Rimuru, not a guest like you who can only give trouble to people.”

“What! How dare you say that, you are just a—”

Milim was furious and began to argue with Ramiris, who was not backing down either, even though she had no chance of winning, she accepted the challenge.

As for me, I just stood back and watched to avoid being affected. With that being said, if Milim begins to resort to violence in her confrontation, there would be no need to use verbal

arguments. That's why their conflict was but a verbal quarrel. The two were arguing against each other, but it looked pretty pathetic since both were lacking in the vocabulary department. Their exchanges of insults were all awful and would probably only make any bystander laugh.

Sometimes Ramiris would deliver a flying kick at Milim, to which Milim would chase after her in an attempt to grab onto Ramiris. It was like a game of tag, to any bystander, they would feel that they were just playing around with each other and they were actually on good terms. These two fellows had long been acquainted, so perhaps this was also a reflection of their affection for each other.

Soon after, they suddenly held back midway through their quarrel, putting an abrupt end to the argument—because Shuna came by with desserts prepared in hand and scolded the two upon seeing this.

“No dessert for anyone who’s fighting!”

And because of these words, the two suddenly quieted down. The two who had made peace were now eating desserts together with much love. The scene suddenly became so harmonious, but I still had to ask Milim what she came for.

“By the way, Milim, why did you come here anyway?”

“Fufu, didn’t I just say? I feel as though you guys are doing something interesting.”

“No no no, eh, is that really the only reason?”

“Yep. But, I’m so lucky to have come. This thing called cake is the best, and this labyrinth thing also looks quite interesting. I didn’t expect that Ramiris would have been so useful.”

“Fufu—! I’m just like everyone else who has kept my power a secret. It’s just that you didn’t manage to discover it!”

Even though you say that, you yourself didn’t discover it either, Ramiris—That’s just my thought, I should keep it to myself. By the way, this girl Milim was really keen to spot an idea of this size. There was really nothing that could be hidden from Milim. She was already someone who had ex-Demon Lord Karion and Frey as followers, and the speed at which she got here was truly shocking.

Basically, Milim was a wild card. Normally speaking, how was it possible for someone to run around outside all by herself, but it was not that surprising if that someone was Milim. It was really nothing to be astounded by if she showed up here. I’ll need to keep this in mind.

“All right, now that we are done eating desserts, it’s about time to get back to work. Also Milim, if you won’t interfere, you can stay and play.”

How rare, Veldora-san had given a mature response. Now that I thought about it carefully, it would be a problem if these two (Veldora and Milim) started arguing. Because her opponent was Ramiris, Milim held herself back. But it might not have been the case if it was Veldora.

The labyrinth facilities we put so much effort in to set up would be affected by their brawl and probably be destroyed instantly. It seemed that Milim didn’t hold a grudge against Veldora, so we’re safe for now.

“Since mentor has said so, I don’t object either.”

It seemed that Ramiris had also agreed. Speaking of this, Milim was surprisingly on good terms with Ramiris, she was just intentionally playing tricks on her from the start.

“Just count on me! I won’t be a hindrance, so give me some work as well!”

Milim’s mood had improved and she appeared to be willing to join us. I personally didn’t have an objection, I was going to agree without hesitation, but there was something on my mind. There was a point I needed to confirm first.

“If that’s the case, can we have Milim join as well—”

“Hmm! Such an interesting thing, you should have come for me during the planning phase!”

“I get it, but putting that aside—Milim, won’t your subordinates object? Did you actually get the permission from Karion-san and Frey-san?”

Although she appeared to be so wild and care-free, this girl was still a demon lord after all. Moreover, she had now taken the two ex-Demon Lords Frey and Karion as subordinates and even took Clayman’s territory to become an overlord ruling over a huge area of land. Though the management of the land had been handed to Karion and Frey, she should have gotten much busier, at least in comparison to how it was before.

Is Milim right now really allowed to stroll around like this so freely? Eh, that goes for me too? I’m honestly fine. My subordinates are all very capable, so I should just avoid interfering with them. Moreover, I really am doing and carrying out plans. I’m even doing planning now to attract tourists, so I’m definitely not slacking.

Putting my own matters aside, the focus was on Milim. After being asked by me, Milim averted her eyes.

“I guess...? You see, I’m very bright... Right? I definitely didn’t flee here because I hate studying!” Milim said incoherently.

—I see. Frey had been in charge of investigating and summarizing reports on different nations. She must have handed the data she collected to Milim in hopes of teaching her about ruling. But Milim escaped because of her dislike of it, that seemed to be the truth.

“I don’t care! I just want to join no matter what!”

I wasn’t able to say anything before Milim opened up first rejecting me. Very impressive, Milim’s instinct was exceptionally keen. Honestly, I should contact Frey or Karion now—But, never mind, I guess.

I wouldn’t be the one getting scolded anyway. “I know nothing of this,” that’s how it will go.

Compared to that—something Milim had said made me very curious.

“All right! You are the one getting scolded anyway, so I’ll drop the matter. Let’s talk dragons, dragon! Just now you said something about capturing a dragon, right? Is that really possible?”

“Uh! So I will get scolded indeed? No, but... It can’t be helped. As the saying goes, adventure always comes with risk...”

Milim was a like a kid who wasn’t scared about getting scolded for skipping classes and

homework to play outside. Honestly, I couldn't save her, this was the road she chose for herself. Standing by and observing was part of the duty as an adult.

After some internal struggle, Milim chose fun over work.

"You mean the dragons. They can be captured. Should I go find some?" she answered without hesitation and seemed to have switched up her mood. While saying it as if she was going to catch some beetles, she proposed we go catch some dragons.

That's just what I needed right now.

"Uh, can I ask for that favor from you? If that's the case, what types of dragons are out there? Are they related to the True Dragons?"

Since she wanted to help by catching some, of course I'd ask for this small favor. I bore such thoughts in mind while asking, to which Milim and Veldora both reacted.

"Rimuru, dragons are different from 'True Dragons.'"

"Right. It's not as if you were Luminas, it's simply wrong for you to mix me up with those lizards!" the two objected strongly.

So as a follow up to the conversation, I inquired about the details of dragons.



"—Basically, all of the dragon races in this world originated from my big bro, the strongest True Dragon, Star King Dragon Veldanava. They are just monsters born carrying a diluted version of his likeness⁶⁷."

Veldora began to explain in detail as our conversation proceeded. There was a basic but critical difference between the two kinds, that was the difference between material life form and spiritual life form. As a monster, the dragon possessed a physical body. It was only called a dragon due to its similar appearance to a True Dragon, but its nature was more akin to that of a dinosaur or in simpler terms, a giant, fierce lizard.

While it was said that there were in total four True Dragons in this world, right now only three remained. Veldora's elder brother, Milim's father Star King Dragon Veldanava was destroyed due to ~~nutting in the wrong species~~ a certain reason and had shown no sign of being resurrected anytime soon.

True Dragons were immortal beings, however, people believed that there was more to that attribute...but anyhow, let's put that aside for now.

The origin of dragons could be traced to this Star King Dragon, more precisely, it could be traced to the pet gifted to Milim by the Star King Dragon, Spirit Dragon (Elemental Dragon)⁶⁸.

⁶⁷The phrase used here is "因子" which means "factor"/"Element," but I think it's something more akin to "blood-line"/"Gene" in this context. But since spiritual life form doesn't really have flesh, so it doesn't really apply.

⁶⁸This is a case of katakana annotation confusion. Its annotation is "Elemental Dragon" when it's called "Spirit

Comparing this to the story Elen told me, that Spirit Dragon was no doubt the deceased Chaos Dragon. Nowadays in regions with concentrated magicules, there seemed to be Lesser Dragons spawning and dragons who inherited more elements of Spirit Dragon became Greater Dragons (Arch Dragons).

In addition, there were also more powerful dragons among the Arch Dragons, they were the dragon lords that represented the four elements. After living hundreds of years after evolving to an Arch Dragon, and then having their wisdom increased even farther—these were the dragon lords. After evolving, they seemed able to utilize part of Spirit Dragon's power and no longer aged as they grew older. They were nearly a semi-spiritual-life-form. But unlike True Dragons, once they were eliminated, they were dead for good.

I recalled that the sky dragon I beat was an Arch Dragon, its threat level was at Rank Calamity. Dragon lords are stronger than that, they could probably rival a demon lord. In other words, perhaps they could compete with Clayman and Greater Spirits, or were perhaps even stronger than them.

If they had that large of a magicule pool, they should be able to easily gain control over the terrain effects of each floor.

“Hold on, no matter how strong I am, I won’t be able to capture the mighty dragon lords!” Milim hurriedly exclaimed, afraid that I may have misunderstood.

If she said so then it must be the case. It would be impossible to tame dragon lords who possessed intelligence. We might persuade them by asking for a favor, but the problem we were facing this time didn’t require us to go quite that far.

“You have a point, then which ones are you catching?”

“Hmm! Although they cannot rival dragon lords, there are Arch Dragons who do possess elemental attributes. We will be catching and taming those guys and let them consume magicule and help change the terrain.”

I see. The dragons seemed to make their own nests, so they may modify their domain based on their needs.

All the necessary components had been prepared, and the magicule was filled to the brim. So I’d take Milim’s suggestion.

“Can I count on you?”

“Leave it to me! Some of the dragons with elemental attributes may soon evolve to dragon lords, so I’ll capture one for each element.”

According to Milim’s explanation, there were four elements that developed from the Spirit Dragon. For each element—the dragon lords of Earth, Water, Fire, and Wind were at the top of the food chain, followed by Elemental Dragons, forming a tree graph. There were four types of Elemental Dragons as well. They were the Fire Dragon, Ice Dragon, Wind Dragon, and Earth

Dragon” in Kanji. Will be referring to it as ‘Spirit Dragon’ to differentiated from 属性竜 (Elemental Dragon), which is a type of Arch Dragon.

Dragon.⁶⁹ The sky dragon I beat seemed to have been a subspecies that failed to evolve into a Wind Dragon. Unlike spirits, they didn't have the element of "Air."

It was also said that there were mutated dragons and ones that received special evolution, in human's words, they were called having (too much) personality.

Anyhow, now we could expect levels with terrain effects. If Milim does catch the dragons, we should put them at lower levels. By the way, the Elemental Dragons were stronger than their non-elemental cousins. A rough estimation of their strength was around Special Rank A, a powerful species. Even though they couldn't really compete with Charybdis, they were still very strong.

I didn't put too much thought in it. But in fact, a normal dragon could already rival six Holy Knights, or it was said to be able at least. But Elemental Dragons, even sending out a whole squad of Holy Knights might not necessarily be able to eliminate it... Still that's none of my business.

I'm not gonna care about that, but I've decided where to put my focus. The counters among the five main elements of spirits were as follows—Earth countered Air, Air countered Wind, Wind countered Water, Water countered Fire, Fire countered Earth. But the strength of Elemental Dragons didn't seem to be affected by this countering effect.

Although the elements countered each other, combat experience seemed to be far more important. In simpler terms, an older dragon surpassed a younger dragon. So I could put them wherever I wanted.

Floor 99: Fiery Hellscape

The final level surrounded by scorching flames. You must wear heat-resisting equipment, but what could be awaiting ahead...?

Floor 98: Icy Prison

Pause your footsteps and you will die. Will you make it with cold-resistant gear?

Floor 97: Electric Skies

Thunder from the heavens is posing an omnipresent threat, whether you can overcome it will depend on your luck!

Floor 96: Raging Earth

As if it is mocking the people arriving at the level, vicious earthquakes greet you. Behold the fury of dragons!

That's about it.

Before they were able to fight the final boss Veldora, we would prepare these terrain effect levels with ultra-difficulty. Then there would be no problem at all. By any stretch of normal logic, there's no way anyone could defeat all these.

"Nice job, Rimuru!"

⁶⁹The kanji names sound a lot cooler; they are Dragon of Flame (火炎竜), Dragon of Frost (冰雪竜), Dragon of hurtling Wind (烈風竜), Dragon of Shattering-Earth (地碎竜)

“Kukuku, so you are deploying low-lives before me. After seeing those imposters, the adventurers will lower their guards, and it will be my time to shine!”

“Uh, it is so awesome to have someone like Veldora to play that type of character. I want to try and be the final boss sometimes!”

The three each had a point that made them satisfied. I was also very happy about it. The only thing was, these pivotal dragons had yet to arrive, so I hoped that we were not celebrating for nothing. Upon thinking so, I decided to coddle Milim a bit.

“What are you talking about, Milim. It is all thanks to you that we are able to complete this final trap!”

“!”

“That’s right, Milim! I’m relying on you this time as well, remember to catch some strong and handsome dragons and bring them here!”

“Hmm, count on me!”

Seemingly having noticed my intention, Ramiris joined in to assist my ploy. It appeared to have worked as Milim was suddenly bursting with motivation. Now I could rest assured for a while.

As long as we had dragons, the traps could be deployed smoothly. It was fine to not put any effects on these floors, because as soon as Milim captured the dragons to build their nests here, they would become ferocious traps themselves.

As a result Milim went out to catch some dragons, adding to Ramiris’s growing number of underlings.



A few days had passed since the day when Milim suddenly showed up and left. The setting of traps had been completed, all we needed to do now was wait for Milim to return with the captured dragons.

“Ah, Beretta-san, Treyni-san, thanks for your hard work.”

“There’s no such thing, all of these are for Rimuru-sama and Ramiris-sama.”

“Indeed. I also feel overjoyed to work for Ramiris-sama.”

Beretta was acting very humble as usual in his response. As for Treyni-san, she had Ramiris sitting on her shoulder while looking thrilled. It looked like she’d be willing to take any command from her.

All right, now most of the things were completed—

“Right, Rimuru-sama, these things have been left with me for a while.”

After saying so, Beretta displayed some unique-grade weapons and gear.

“This is...”

“These were liberated from a certain magic doll subordinate of Clayman. I didn’t have the chance to hand these to you then, but I think they will be quite suitable to be put in the treasure chests—”

Oh oh, now that you mention it. It’s from that greatest masterpiece of Clayman or something like that, was it called Viola?

Viola was strapped with weapons all over its body, which Beretta had taken the entirety of as loot. He had offered them to me previously, which I refused, because the demand he gave was the permission to move here. At the time Beretta complied with my decision and brought those things home...

“Didn’t you offer them as gifts to Ramiris?”

Someone reacted to my doubts, not Beretta, but Ramiris.

“Hehe! I figured that I couldn’t really use them, so I’m not really that interested. They are indeed very strong weapons, but they can’t be modified too much. But even so, we kept them in hopes that they may be useful one day, that’s the decision we made after I discussed it with Beretta!”

“Is this really okay? You should be able to make a lot of money by selling them.”

“It’s okay, it’s okay. Because I have a job to do now too! I’ll probably be collecting money in troves in the future, so why be so petty now! Besides, we get to have a place of residence by doing so too.”

In this way Ramiris offered the weapons and gear to me, to which I expressed my gratitude and decided to put them to good use.

So that’s how it went down. *Let’s get started with setting up the treasure chests and confirming the progress on the labyrinth.* We began by examining the condition of the dungeon starting at underground level 1.

The initial level was just for testing out your skill. It was designed so that even rookies could proceed safely. The width of the hallways inside the labyrinth area was also very large, so structurally it wouldn’t easily cause people to get lost.

With that being said, four sides, each being 250 meters in length, was quite spacious. Investigating the hallways alone would be hard work and there wasn’t even much loot after walking all this time. This type of floor would likely lead to these situations. Having empty hallways alone probably wouldn’t attract any customers, but luckily there was a large number of weak monsters patrolling the area, so it shouldn’t be an issue. People could get magic ore from these monsters and practical items from their corpses. There were still a lot of rewards.

This loot would be purchased by us. There wasn’t a Freedom Association branch in this town, and the nearest was the Blumund Branch, which would be too tiring for adventurers to reach, so I figured that our nation could buy it at a cheap price with a cost difference that canceled out the transportation expense. It seemed like a pretty good idea. I was going to discuss with Yuuki to ask him the favor of building a Freedom Association branch in our nation, which was also a good idea anyway. Until that was done, we’d adopt this method for the time being instead.

Until underground level five, we are only making the labyrinth slightly more complex without any major changes.

However, the situation would become dire from level six onward. All sorts of traps would be lying in wait. With that being said, up until underground level nine there may be vicious traps, but no one should be killed by the traps alone. If these were skillful adventurers, they shouldn't suffer too much.

If the difficulty were set too high, we wouldn't get returning customers and we wouldn't be able to negotiate anything with them then. That's why the first nine levels were designed to be more beginner-friendly.

Next up was the indispensable floor ten. That floor had a slightly stronger monster placed in the room. This was the so-called boss level. By defeating the boss, the gate leading down to the lower floors would open.

“Rimuru, what type of monster will you be deploying there?”

“About that, I'll decide depending on what type of monsters are born... But I haven't spotted one?”

That's right, in fact up until level ten underground, I haven't seen a single trace of a monster. Although it has been ten days since Veldora released his youki, there isn't any sign of monsters spawning.

«Answer. Even while hiding his youki, monsters can sense the aura of individual “Veldora.” Deducing that no monster dares to approach him.»

Ah, I see.

“Veldora's release of magicules seems to have helped spawn some monsters, but they seem to have sensed Veldora's aura, making them too frightened to dare approach.”

“What! So that's why... It's no wonder that none of the monsters in the sealed cave showed up.”

After hearing my explanation, Veldora suddenly came to a realization. But weaker monsters couldn't really endure the aura either, so that was probably the main reason.

“All right, just try to find one when you are available next time. I estimate to put at least a Rank B monster that is slightly strong on level ten.”

“Oh—got it. But if there isn't any intelligent fellow, we shouldn't add it to my servants. Just bring it to the room and put this collar on it!”

Since Ramiris had spoken, I decided to take the collar. It was said that by wearing it, one could revive an infinite amount of times, even without making a pact with Ramiris. Then there would be no need to find replacements once they were defeated, how useful.

“Oh oh, this is so convenient. It will save a lot of work.”

“Right? Anyhow, in this labyrinth, reality can be whatever I want!”

It was indeed the case as Ramiris put it. She could also change the ability given on each item, Ramiris's skill was truly versatile. I once more lamented my inability to recreate her skill.

Now the problem with the bosses was resolved as well. Floor ten would only have the boss room, and it would be safe after defeating the boss. After this level, there would be a save point and the stairs leading to the lower levels, just these two.

Right, right, I can't forget about the treasure chests. There was no trap in the treasure chest. The only difference was that we would be moderating the drop rate of weapons and gear. I estimated there to be hidden rooms after that floor, so I'd set up treasure chests with traps. And following level 20, there would even be fake treasure chests.

This was somewhat distasteful, predatory one might say, but I suppose you could call that giving a sense of clarity and a reminder during the exploration of the labyrinth. When they experience it in the field, they should come and thank me instead.

It was not entirely a bad thing. The inside of the labyrinth was full of magicules, so the equipment might even become magic swords or magic spears after some time. Since they were getting such precious rewards, encountering danger should be expected. They wouldn't die as long as they had a "Resurrection Bracelet", so it would be more exciting to be cruel, and reasonably speaking, more interesting. I was really looking forward to what type of reaction the adventurers would give.

And like that, the inspection work for level ten was complete.

"What should we do next? Should we create a facility to buy back the items obtained by people from the monsters or for them to deposit the items?"

"Hmm—do we really need that? Because, if we have that type of facility, 'Return Whistle' will not sell well."

I suppose that's right too. Ramiris's comment was an on-point rebuttal. She did have a point. She was apparently quite perceptive when it came to money.

"Indeed, putting this type of facility on a level with a save point does make it meaningless. Should we perhaps pick the middle ones, to make levels ending in five be safe zones?"

"Hmm hmm, that should work!"

We should make them available for storing items looted by adventurers and selling healing potions among other items at high prices. Building a meal area would be nice too.

We didn't have to put all these facilities on different floors, we just needed to make sure these floors all had access to the same location. This was so creating them would not take too much work. Maybe there were many who wanted to rest outside instead of inside?

Well, that depends. "Return Whistle" was an item for emergency usage, so it would be fine to sell it at a higher price.

That part I could think about after the festival concluded.



That's about it, everyone was taking the opportunity to shoot their opinions at each other in the discussion while examining each floor. As such, we did a thorough check as we smoothly built up the labyrinth.

We later were able to finish confirming level 100, and the result was satisfying. Simply describing the completed labyrinth with the word vicious would not do it justice.

«Based on the strength of average adventurers, labyrinth set with low-level monsters already poses sizable difficulty. In addition with cruel traps and high-level monsters spawned, it is significantly insufficient to describe it with the term viscous—»

Eh, what? I didn't catch you clearly. Raphael-sensei seemed to be quite baffled by it. But of course, it must've been me thinking too much.

—Later I was going to have a profound experience that proved I wasn't thinking too much at all.

I decided to pick the bosses from among the spawned monsters, but it turned out that the monsters in the labyrinth were already overcrowding it.

“W-What the hell—!” I shouted, but it was all too late. I went through a very hard time trying to adjust the difficulty, but I suppose I had it coming... Whatever, it didn't matter if I had a problem with it. I would consider this as a minor miscalculation and quickly toss it to the back of my mind.

Many things happened in between, the rest would be handled by Veldora and Ramiris who were fully motivated. The dragons caught by Milim had been placed in their respective levels, and the magicule concentration of each level had also been moderated. There were also the automatically spawned monsters, who likely due to the deployment of dragons, were no longer so concentrated. After such influence, right now the bosses were only planned up to level 30, so I wouldn't think too much over this.

On the surface, the construction of the colosseum was still underway, the speed at which its skeletal framework was proceeding was incredible. It should be able to catch up to the Founding Festival after the snow melts. And as for this labyrinth that lay underground, it had become an amazing recreational facility that far exceeded my expectations. Even though people needed to purchase a “Resurrection Bracelet” first before entering, as long as you had that, anyone would want to check it out at least once. I intended to make it our main attraction in the future to capitalize on its expected effects.

There were still many ideas of mine awaiting to be carried out, but we would be done for now. We all wore an evil grin and looked at each other in agreement. With that, the preparation work for the labyrinth was concluded for now.

Though the preparation work for the festival was still going on, there were already some unfamiliar faces showing up in town. The snow was beginning to melt, and the visitors from all over the Jura Great Forests were arriving one by one to our nation.

The prelude to our nation-founding festival was soon to be unveiled—

**Chapter
4**

**Reception
Ceremony**

That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime

Chapter 4

Reception Ceremony

The labyrinth was nearly complete, so I ran back to the town. Veldora and Ramiris were still in the labyrinth. As for Milim, she'd help with the building process as well once she had caught enough dragons.

Speaking of which, was it really all right for her not to return to her nation?

—While these doubts crossed my mind, at the end of the day it was Milim who would get scolded, so she could do whatever she wanted.

The other three deemed their respective floors unsatisfactory after seeing the traps that I had set up.

Until floor 30, we couldn't make the traps too harsh. On one hand, if the traps were too forgiving, we wouldn't be able to properly mess with the visitors. On the other hand, setting all the traps to hard mode would cause the adventurers to lose their interest.

If they didn't have a good time at the start, the number of customers would gradually decline. Based on these considerations, I set the traps myself for the first 50 levels. As for Veldora and Ramiris, I handed the lower levels for them to design. They must've been trying to come up with even more devious traps after seeing the evil traps I set when I was serious.

“Rimuru, it seems I’ve been mistaken. Apparently, traps are not to be set individually.”

“That’s not fair, I want to do one too!”

“Hmm. I focused too much on power, and it seems I didn’t pay much attention to making it easier for the traps to lure people in. I gotta be more serious with the arrangements in the future.”

Their comments on every single little thing was driving me nuts—I’m too lazy to care after all.

Floors 51 to 60 had been assigned to Ramiris, while Veldora got levels 61 to 70. As for Milim, she would be in charge of levels 96 to 99. These rooms would all have dragons, which would be the most difficult levels with the addition of terrain effects. I let them modify the floors to their heart’s content, fully aware that they might devolve into pure insanity, but right now the adventurers could only get to level 50, so there shouldn’t be any problem.

If you're curious, level 95 had been made into a shelter for the beastmen. It would become a resting place in the future that provided expensive accommodation services. We'll take a wait and see approach, so I'll keep a mental note of this.

As for the remaining floors from levels 71 to 94, we'd see what we could do with them later. For now, we left them as they were. However, since there's still a dense magicule content in that area, some monsters might end up spawning there. And as such, the rest of the work was handed to the trio who seemed to be more than happy to do the job.

A few days passed.

After avidly scanning the city, I noticed Myourmiles's party headed our direction. It seemed they had prepared and hurried their way over as soon as possible, as they arrived earlier than expected.

"Rimuru-sama, I've arrived late. I'll be in your care from today onward!"

"Ayyy, Myourmiles-kun. You are finally here. Let me take you to your house first," I welcomed Myourmiles and brought him to his newly built estate that I ordered Rigurd to construct beforehand. The house was ready to be checked in anytime now due to his comprehensive preparations. He carried out all my orders without hesitation; how capable he is indeed. I should acquaint Rigurd and Myourmiles sometime along the way. But though I said so, Myourmiles had already been doing business with our nation for the healing potions for quite some time, so the two were already very familiar.

The chores would thus be delegated to the goblina guides and Myourmiles's lackeys. I then visited Rigurd's office with Myourmiles.

"Rigurd, excuse us."

"Oh oh, isn't this Rimuru-sama?! Even Myourmiles-san is here too. To what do I owe the occasion?"

Rigurd was probably very busy, yet he still welcomed us with utmost haste.

"I see it is Rigurd-dono; It's been a while. Young master—I mean, Rimuru-sama—has always given me good care, so basically things went—"

Without me having to do anything, Myourmiles avidly began explaining.

We moved to the guest room and immediately dove into the discussion. We first talked about the construction progress of the colosseum as well as the conditions of the inns in the southwest area. Next, we touched on the future plans for the stores that we planned to open up near the aforementioned colosseum. Finally, we brought up the recently constructed labyrinth designed to attract adventurers to our town⁷⁰.

"—That's about it. While the preparations for the dungeon are all complete, we still need a little bit more time before we can call it finished. With that being said, however, as of right

⁷⁰This is the part where I complain about my editors being fucking gaijin and self-interpreting the sources. But their feelings were hurt and removed my footnote, so I'm putting it down here again. Why am I complaining? Rimuru is a libtard basically.

now there're not many problems left with it. The colosseum is not yet finished, but the stage has been constructed. Moreover, only the VIP area needs to be extravagant. As for the commoner seating, we can just drape the staircases with sheets. If that doesn't work, we can just turn it into a standing area."

We didn't have enough time, so we'd save the work for the original standing area for later. The exterior of the building had yet to be decorated, so we would have to wait until Mildo returned. But since we'd been meticulous about the security, even with the construction itself being only half-way complete, the colosseum had the necessary stylistic elements of a building.

Rigurd and Myourmiles listened to my words, enraptured. The three of us then began to plan enthusiastically.

Rigurd raised the issue about how to deal with foreigners visiting our nation. He also vowed to properly educate the residents of the town by then. As for the martial tournament and the dungeon, Myourmiles had planned out how the events was to unfold. He had been brainstorming a lot of ideas after my visit, so he was quite confident about it. After he finished speaking, he put on a proud smile.

Later on, we helped to check for any flaws in each other's plans. We also reflected on our own plans to see what else needed to be done in advance.

"With the addition of Myourmiles-san into the equation, our little undertaking just got wings," Rigurd commented, smiling.

"Isn't that true! Myourmiles-kun is a very capable man after all. If our Founding Festival concludes successfully, I intend to hand over our finance department to him," I mentioned the most important point to Rigurd.

I told him that I intended to appoint Myourmiles to be in charge of the Financial Department. In addition, he would also be managing the Commercial and Advertising Department. I hoped he would do his part for this nation.

Rigurd didn't seem to have any qualms about this, promising that he would be selecting candidates to become Myourmiles's subordinates.

Thanks to Vesta, the literacy rate here had increased across the board. But even in spite of that, not everyone was capable of reading, writing, and counting. Our country would continue to grow in the future, so talented individuals such as Myourmiles were of great necessity. Rigurd probably understood this as well and was not simply blindly tagging along with my proposal merely because I wished for it. That's why he himself also supported Myourmiles's appointment as an official of our nation. He was likely aware of the short-comings of our countrymen when it came to math. While it had nothing to do with our planned festival, he still welcomed Myourmiles's addition for that reason.

"—I see, that's a great idea!"

"No no no, I'm not that good yet. But, I, Myourmiles, will do my best to fulfill my duty!" Myourmiles responded humbly, but this man had always been ambitious. He joined the operation with intent from the start. If he made the Founding Festival a success, Myourmiles's dream

of becoming an executive was sure to come true.

“But I will still need to show some results first, or else the others may not approve.”

“Indeed. Although if Rimuru-sama gives the order, everyone will obey regardless...”

“I don’t want to do that at all. Honestly, I think that I’ve been interfering too much in this whole thing already.”

“That’s right. A non-citizen of our nation becoming an executive, this matter alone will have a very good publicity effect. But in order to achieve that, Myourmiles-san has to make some outstanding achievement.”

“That’s right. Although I feel pretty bad asking so much from you, will you be willing to try to accomplish that, Myourmiles-kun?”

Indeed, that’s where the difficulties lay.

With the only criteria being capability, gaining approval from the monsters became a trivial task. Diablo was a good example of this. When he wanted to be my No.2 secretary, no one had any objections. More accurately speaking, Shion objected, but that was more because Shion was an airhead. Diablo’s strength was comparable to mine; that was an undoubted fact. No one dared to complain about the actions of such a dangerous person. That’s why for my military officers, as long as I’d acknowledged them, they could become an executive. It was all fair game as long as they were strong enough.

But the same couldn’t be said for civil officials. They were supposed to be recruited through examinations, but sadly we had yet to develop to that stage. People with prior experience such as Vesta were obviously welcomed, but they would still need to show actual results. After all, even Vesta was still just a consultant, in other words, he was considered as a guest.

I thought it was about time to promote Vesta to an executive too, but Myourmiles still needed to show some actual results. If possible, I hoped to recruit them both as ministers into the national organizations that aimed to update the structure of our kingdom.

Almost as if he were trying to blow away our worries, Myourmiles was wearing a very confident smile. I didn’t dislike this mischievous looking grin.

“Hehehe, Rimuru-sama. Please do not underestimate me. I, Myourmiles, promise that I will meet your expectations and complete the job successfully!”

Myourmiles, you are a truly reliable man. Your experience as a black-market boss doesn’t seem to be for show. His thick-skinned attitude is really reassuring.

“Hehehe, Myourmiles-kun, of course I have faith in you. I’ll be counting on you then!”

“Although there may be failures along the way, I see that you still wish to boast about your future success. That being said, if you dare to betray Rimuru-sama’s expectations, my iron fists will not be generous with you.”

“Hold on, hold on, Rigurd-san? You can’t do that! Shouldn’t you be encouraging Myourmiles-kun to work hard?”

“Please be assured, I won’t leave any evidence—”

“Ah, geez, Rigurd-san is so scary.”

“I’ll be counting on you then. I am *really* going to turn a blind eye to you.”

Although this is what we said, both of us had evil grins on our faces. Rigurd was no stranger to Myourmiles, probably having long since accepted him. This fact alone was very comforting. At the end of the day, as long as everyone could accept Myourmiles, any justification goes.

And so we chatted amicably until the meeting concluded, with everyone leaving behind their closing thoughts. Afterwards, we began the preparation for the Founding Festival.

As such, the preparation work was proceeding bit by bit—



Fast forward to tonight.

“How is this possible... How can this be?! This house is a thousand times more comfortable than the upper-class inns found in the capital of Ingracia!” Myourmiles exclaimed the moment he moved into the new estate.

It seemed that he was highly satisfied with his new home, which pleased me as well.

“There’s tap water, a magic-powered stove, and a bathroom. There’s even a toilet here! It’s like every single facility from all the classy inns is present here.”

Myourmiles was astounded after hearing the elated reports from his subordinates.

“Y-Young master...Rimuru-sama? Is it really okay to be so extravagant?”

There’s no use asking me this, as this was the standard issue facility of this nation. But, since Myourmiles’s subordinates were staying at his place as well, his estate was a lot more luxurious than the average citizens’ indeed. I asked people to build a house with the same standards with references to the estate Myourmiles resided in the Kingdom of Blumund. There were around ten rooms in total and some of them came with mini kitchens and toilets. There was also a large bathroom and canteen for communal use. Structurally it should accommodate a large number of residents.

“Is there such a need? It is a lot cheaper than preparing a home for everyone after all. Those who want to own their own house should start saving up right now to buy one in the future.”

I couldn’t manage to prepare a home for everyone, so I used the house exclusive to the executives instead. It’s great to see that everyone was satisfied. I’d be covering the expenses, of course. I did this in consideration of the fact that Myourmiles-kun had assisted me in making profits, so surely, we would continue to collaborate in the future as well. With this in mind, I’d just consider this a necessary expense. Compared to the potential profits, the cost of covering his housing was quite insignificant.

“I-I see... In this kingdom, this is the standard issue? Then, do the cheap inns in the southwest area also have this standard?”

“They do. Although not every room has a bathroom, they are built with toilets. After all,

there are large, cheap bathhouses nearby. Some inns even have free-to-use bathhouses.”

“I see... I recall during the discussion at the start of all this, didn’t you mention that you intended to make this city a spa resort? Now I finally understand, Not only are these amenities exclusive to the wealthy, but even the inn service for commoners has reached this level. It’s no wonder why the adventurers keep coming back.”

“Isn’t this living environment too comfortable?”

“That’s not just comfortable, compared to the entire western continent, the lodging here is the pinnacle of luxury. Now with a stable income from adventurers, this country surely will prosper as time goes on—”

“Hmmhmm.”

“...! I get it now, so that’s what this is about, Rimuru-sama!”

Huh, what do you mean?

Myourmiles shouted excitedly, completely ignoring me who seemed to be out of the loop with the whole ordeal.

“That’s why you are building the dungeon! As expected of Rimuru-sama, I am completely vanquished against your peerless intellect.”

“Oh, oh ho, yeah that’s right.”

What are you on about?

“Adventurers will come to hunt the monsters that spawn in the labyrinth. I originally thought that you were doing this to give them relief after they’ve lost their jobs as the Jura Great Forest became safe... Ah, how impressive, I’ve not expected you to think so far—”

Giving relief? What now? Hold on, the monsters in the Jura Great Forest did decrease but... The dungeon is just intended to be a purely recreational facility—

“That will work, that will definitely work! Because of the declining number of monsters, adventurers who are already having trouble making a living will be out of the market. As a result, there are probably people who will choose the dungeon as an occupation. We can also sell equipment and healing potions as such. We will not only be able to make this a health resort for tourism, but some may even start settling down in this nation. All the inns provide wonderful services and there’s also the tourist attraction of the colosseum. In addition to meeting the demands for recreational and occupational needs...”

I mean—is this the purpose of building the labyrinth?

I do intend to buy up the items that the adventurers collect, but that is essentially somewhat similar to buying back the little trinkets you earn in a carnival game⁷¹—Nonetheless, some of what Myourmiles was saying was indeed worth considering.

“You’ve only just arrived today, yet you already have such a solid grasp on the situation, Myourmiles-kun?”

“That is only natural. I’m confident that my ability to sense business opportunities will not lose to you.”

⁷¹In Japan gambling with money is illegal but winning little toys and other worthless trinkets is fine. Then you can visit the shop located next door, where you can conveniently sell these items for hard cash, that’s the loophole.

“Hehehe, I have truly been defeated, Myourmiles-kun.”

“Hahaha, surely you jest. It is all thanks to young master that I am like this.”

“I’m not as confident in taking care of all this alone, that’s why I wanted to have you handle the project—”

“Oh oh, is that true? I’m happy to help.”

The plan to turn the dungeon into a workplace for the adventurers—Myourmiles joyfully accepted. He now had a huge workload on his shoulders, but man is he energetic. How capable.

I had never considered the possibility of having adventurers settle down here until Myourmiles pointed it out. While some people might think they could earn a profit through the labyrinth, most would just spend their money and leave—this recreational facility had somewhat of a gambling factor.

I see, so the idea is to have the adventurers settle down and let them hunt the monsters in the labyrinth. Myourmiles sure is astute, and he has an interesting way of looking at things.

Unlike the animal inhabitants, having the adventurers stay here would not disturb the ecosystem of the forest. In fact, we did need their help to clear the labyrinth before the monsters started running rampant. It would also give us time to buy and prepare the necessary ingredients. There was no issue with the replenishment of magicules with Veldora present. In other words, the monsters would start to gradually fill in.

This may turn out to be an amazing project. Adventurers would earn some money first before spending it in the town. Not only would we be able to line our own pockets, but we would also be able to support the adventurers.

The bought-back materials could then be processed and exported to other countries. As for the magic ores, we might even export them directly. We might need some of the magic ores though, so we didn’t really need to export them all at once. Moreover, it might help if the Freedom Association came to set up a branch in our nation. When that time comes, to avoid cut-throat competition, we’d need to loosen our stranglehold to prevent boycott. If the association payed the adventurers, it would help us to acquire foreign goods.

We could then use that money to import things from abroad. Right now our trade relations with the Beast Kingdom Eurazania were on hold, and with the vegetables and grains produced in our nation alone, we wouldn’t be able to feed the numerous adventures either. That’s why we’d need to import things from other countries. Even if that weren’t the case, it would still be fine as I planned to turn my kingdom into a trading powerhouse. We’d stick to the plan this time around, but I still had to figure out ways to transport more goods per run.

Given that was the case, I had formed a rough outline. I had a plan in mind to increase the width of the road. The roads were only half paved, with the other half still having exposed dirt. I planned to fit train tracks on the unfinished half to allow cargo trains to run on them.

“The only thing left now is the promotional work.”

I was lost in my own visions of grandeur when Myourmiles’s words brought me back to my senses.

Oh yeah, there's no use in rushing things now.

Putting aside the train tracks, simply developing trains would already take some time. However, we first needed to commence the Founding Festival successfully to leave a good impression on the other nations.

"This isn't enough to be called a promotion, but I've sent invitations to several heads of nations. Some reporters from varying countries have also agreed to help, so I figure that we will get plenty of guests—"

"Hmm. As expected of Rimuru-sama. If we are arranging the transportation of the royalties and nobles, we should do that before the snow melts, which is now. It seems that I don't have to worry about that anymore. Then, let me get in touch with some other renowned merchants to inform them about the festival being held in this nation."

"Can I trouble you to do that?"

"Just count on me. I've actually already made some preparations. I wanted to check out the condition of this nation first before confirming whether I should do so or not," Myourmiles cracked a smile as he replied.

I knew I could count on him.

"Ah, Myourmiles-kun is too amazing. Your shrewdness always impresses me."

"You're flattering me. It is Rimuru-sama who deserves these praises. Compared to how much of a visionary you are, my skills are nothing."

We exchanged looks, smiling...

No no no, Myourmiles-kun's cunning mind is the actual thing that none can rival.

As I thought that—

"Rimuru-sama, this plan will not fail. With all these amazing conditions in our favor, success is all but guaranteed!" Myourmiles proclaimed with a serious expression.

Overconfidence was a common fatal flaw, but hearing it from him made me feel reassured. Myourmiles seemed to have also been attracted by the food, environment, and comfort of this town. That's the reason why he reacted that way. It was like foreshadowing the success of our plan.

I stood up and extended my hand towards Myourmiles.

"I'll be counting on you, Myourmiles-kun."

"Leave it to me—"

Myourmiles reached out and clasped both of my hands, giving me his solemn oath.

While secretly praising him, I had faith that the plan would be a success.



That night, I was invited to dine at Myourmiles's estate.

After the meal, Myourmiles and I enjoyed a bit of leisure time while drinking black tea. It was then that Myourmiles gave his men the order to bring some people in. The ones who arrived were Bydd and Gobemon.

Considering Gobemon's personality, he should've still been carrying out his bodyguard duty while keeping Myourmiles in the dark. *So why did he come here? Does it mean that he is reporting directly to Myourmiles now?*

Disregarding that, a more pressing issue had become apparent.

"Rimuru-sama, speaking of this Gobemon-dono here, he seems to be a bodyguard you sent."

I was going to play dumb, but it seemed that Myourmiles has already figured out my little scheme involving Gobemon.

"That's true, but let's put that aside for now, Gobemon, what happened to your arm?"

Since the cat's out of the bag, I decided to instead focus on what actually concerned me. It was about Gobemon's right arm: all of it below the elbow was gone.

"R-Rimuru-sama! I-I'm truly...truly sorry. It was all my fault for being reckless and getting discovered by Myourmiles. This lost arm is the punishment for my foolishness."

As he finished, Gobemon got on his knees to beg for forgiveness. I was at a complete loss until Myourmiles came forth to help mediate.

"D-Don't get so emotional, Gobemon-dono. Please get up and have a cup of tea to calm down."

Myourmiles had Gobemon sit on a chair and had his men serve the prepared tea. After Gobemon regained his composure, he began to elaborate.

According to Myourmiles, he seemed to have been assaulted several times after our meeting. Myourmiles was no fool, so he gave orders to his own bodyguards such as Bydd to remain alert. But in the face of several crises, they were only able to avoid them with the help of a secret guardian—Gobemon of course—who intervened.

The ambushes were more frequent than I imagined, so they were able to deduce that someone had been secretly protecting them. From there, they were able to figure out that the only one who could be responsible was me which was why Myourmiles pretended that he hadn't discovered Gobemon.

But he didn't expect a key event that took place later on. In an act of vengeance, Viscount Kazak decided to resort to outrageous violence.

"I found someone to inherit the store in that nation (Blumund) and came here straight away. I was thinking that we would be safe once we got on the road, where the attackers wouldn't be able to strike as easily. We thus lowered our guard, but I didn't expect—"

The roads were overseen by patrols and there were many other merchants as well as adventurers around. To avoid accumulating snow, the street was also cleaned every day, letting people travel on it even during winter days. There shouldn't be an assault incident on such crowded streets and even if there were one, the patrols would hurry over. Myourmiles was well aware of

that after traveling on the road several times before. For this reason, he lowered his guard, and as a result he was taken by surprise. He was ambushed at the corner of a street in a certain town.

“Village? Was it the one Bydd tried to con—was it the village where Bydd and I first met each other?”

“R-Right! That was the village Rimuru-sama and I first met!”

About Bydd...he was now Myourmiles's bodyguard, but during our first encounter, he was still a conman committing frauds. It probably wasn't appropriate right now to bring these things up from the past, so I'll just brush it off.

Bydd came to our side while helping to steady Gobemon. He then stood directly behind Myourmiles to eavesdrop on our conversation. After listening to our conversation, Bydd realized he had something to add. It was reported that a black carriage carrying a swarm of aggressive, Rank B monsters appeared out of nowhere.

Bydd, who was originally Rank C, and his companions were no match for those monsters. Each of them was prepared to make his last stand. With that being said, they still tried their best to assist the villagers in taking shelter and buying time.

It was then that Gobemon showed up.

“It was then that brother (aniki) Gobemon saved us!”

“That's right, not just me, everyone back at the scene is grateful towards Gobemon-san,” Bydd and Myourmiles commented, but Gobemon still looked dejected.

“But, it's still an undeniable fact that I've failed—”

There was no way that Gobemon would have lost to those monsters. He took care of them in an instant. He was going to pursue the culprit afterwards, but it was then that a wild Rank B-plus basilisk appeared. Gobemon's right arm was caught in the spray of the petrifying gas; he was forced to immediately perform an amputation at the elbow.

The black carriage escaped during that interval.

“So the failure you were referring to was that you let the culprit flee?”

“That's part of it, the other being that Myourmiles discovered me...”

Huh, so that's the failure you were talking about?

“It's really no big deal if you were discovered, really. The bodyguarding was your main task. By the way, you should hurry and heal up your arm.”

As I finished, I took out the healing potion from my ‘Stomach’ with the intention of giving it to Gobemon. Yet he bit his lips, unwilling to accept it.

“No, it was all because of my immaturity that I was injured. I wasn't able to defeat the basilisk on my own; it was with the help of Bydd and the rest that it was defeated. It was too embarrassing. And even though leaving me with one hand is inconvenient, it will regenerate over time anyway...”

Gobemon was very stubborn, or rather he was very prideful and relied too much on his own strength.

“Gobemon, do you think that it was shameful to ask for help from Bydd and the others?”

“I-I guess... It was my mission to be their bodyguard, yet I put the people I was guarding in crisis—”

“Hold on, Gobemon. You’ve got the wrong idea.”

“Did I get the wrong idea?”

“Yes. You’ve gone too far playing the lone ranger. That is where you and Gobta are different.”

The difference between Gobemon and Gobta was as simple as that one sentence suggested: the ability each person had to cooperate effectively alongside their subordinates.

Gobta wouldn’t take on all the duties by himself. Even when against powerful monsters, he would order his subordinates to have everyone fight together. During simpler missions, it would appear that he was skipping duty and not doing much at all, and honestly, he really did slack off a lot, didn’t he... Yet considering the growth of his subordinates, Benimaru thought that the way Gobta commanded his men was superior.

If it were Gobemon encountering a powerful monster, he would probably attack alone to get all of the spotlight, most likely because he was confident in his strength. Although Gobemon had his reason for doing that, acting alone wouldn’t help his men grow. Moreover, if Gobemon were defeated...it would probably be impossible to retreat by relying on his subordinates alone. It might even lead to their total demise. It was for this reason that Benimaru favored Gobta’s style.

And that’s also why I hoped that Gobemon would learn to trust his companions more. Myourmiles was a man who excelled at leadership. I hoped whole-heartedly that Gobemon would see him as a role model.

“—That’s why you should learn the importance of teamwork. With that being said, this is not me forcing you to do something with your companions, but to reserve your strength at times and only strike during times of crisis.”

“I... I...”

“You are strong, everyone would agree to that. But strength alone is not enough for me to hand an entire army to you.”

“...”

Gobemon seemed frustrated after hearing my explanation. I tossed the healing potion at him as I saw this.

“Ah!”

Gobemon’s right arm started to regenerate immediately.

“Gobemon, you should stay in Myourmiles’s care for now. Whether you decide to train Bydd and his men over there or just chill around, either is fine. In this town, Myourmiles doesn’t need a bodyguard, so you should face your inner demons first.”

“Y-Your Majesty—”

“At the end of the day, you will amount to nothing by fighting alone! You must have also learnt that from your failures this time. When you put your mind to it, I’m sure that you will know what to do next.”

As I said that, I smiled at Gobemon. I then drew out the tachi on my belt and handed it over to him. His eyes were wide open, yet he couldn't believe what he was seeing.

"My gift for you."

"B-But... My mission..."

"Didn't you bring Myourmiles-kun here safely? Moreover, I hope that you will improve yourself in the future. So consider this sword to be a mirror that casts light over your heart so you may reflect on yourself every night."

If Gobemon could let go of his ego and arrogance, he was bound to grow and become more reliable.

"I understand! I, Gobemon, will definitely live up to your Majesty Rimuru's expectations!"

Gobemon's eyes burned with passion. He was already very ambitious and would quickly grow after setting goals. I was confident that he wouldn't disappoint me.

"Then, Myourmiles-kun, is it okay that I entrust Gobemon to you?"

"Hahaha, no problem at all. I was going to ask the favor from you anyway. All right Bydd, now Rimuru-sama has given the green light as you had wished. Gobemon-dono will be training you guys."

Myourmiles agreed as well, although it was after the decision was made. It seemed that Bydd and his men were all very welcoming of Gobemon. And just like that, Gobemon now became a guest in Myourmiles's care and was free to act on his own will from now on.

After leaving Myourmiles's estate, I lifted my head to gaze at the night sky. The constellations of the winter season shone brightly above; their locations seemed different from what they were on earth.

I was still somewhat wary of the incident with the ambusher. Was the culprit really Viscount Kazak? He was merely a noble of the rank of viscount, so was it even possible that he had enough status and power to prepare several monsters for an ambush? Moreover, while it's one thing to control rank B monsters, controlling a rank B-plus monster is a completely different matter. Only extremely wealthy people from large nations could tame these monsters—wait...hold on... Can you even purchase a Rank B-plus monster with money?

«Answer. Previously Rank A-minus Summoner Thegis was able to summon a Rank B-plus lesser demon. It would not be unthinkable that someone has domesticated a basilisk.»

Oh yeah, it wouldn't be that hard with 'Summon Magic.' It would certainly be a lot faster than using carriages to transport monsters. But under these circumstances... There's the 'Barrier' Shuna set up to interfere with magic...which the roads just so happened to be lacking.

"I should order people to tighten security..." I muttered as I left the scene.

The citizens of Tempest quickly welcomed Myourmiles with open arms. I had already introduced or mentioned him to the executives, and Rigurd would be responsible for informing

the rest. With that being said however, the progress had been surprisingly smooth.

Myourmiles handled his work flawlessly. He had already become familiar with the subordinates I gave him in the blink of an eye, appropriately delegating work to all of them regardless of race. This also included Myourmiles's original followers, which immediately created a brand-new organization.

A competent man sure does things differently. Even though he was tasked with so many different jobs, Myourmiles was still full of energy.

Apart from running the new organization, he also utilized his own network to send out invitations to some influential figures. For instance, powerful nobles from landlocked countries and affluent merchants from all the large cities. There were also powerful figures from the capital of Ingracia, etc.

It seemed that the nation-founding festival that we planned to hold after the snow melted was going to be larger in scale than we imagined. And of course, we hadn't been idling on these projects. We'd been rehearsing for the plays that would be screened at the opera house, establishing the rules and procedures of the martial tournament, discussing the entry fee for the dungeon, and calculating the prices of all sorts of goods found in the labyrinth. Moreover, we were also keeping tabs on the import of marketable goods, as well as how we were going to sell them. This didn't seem like a first-time operation at all with how smoothly Myourmiles was handling it.

I had also introduced him to Veldora. Regarding the matter of opening up the takoyaki shop, Myourmiles was also willing to act as his consultant.

I made the right choice.

Among all the ideas that I came up with, it would seem that the appointment of Myourmiles had been my best decision yet. Without his help, these plans would most likely have ended in failure.

Just us alone would not have been sufficient to properly handle it.

To have met him under some miraculous twist of fate, how lucky of me.

I admired Myourmiles at work with delight.



Time passed fast.

The whole town was teeming with an atmosphere of festivity, full of enthusiasm and energy.

The construction plan of the colosseum was proceeding without a hitch as well, in part due to Gobkyu's leadership skills. In addition, the youngest of the three dwarf brothers, Mildo had returned from his vacation to help modify my blueprints. Thanks to his talent and input, the

colosseum became a gorgeous building of great artistic value. As expected from a true artist, I was truly impressed. I personally was never really gifted in the art department, so he was a huge help. The end product would definitely be enough to even satisfy royalty. Regarding the additional parts Mildo added, we'd have it all done by the time the martial tournament started.

Moreover, Myourmiles's subordinates were attempting to set up stores using the hard-working citizens as their practice customers. That was going smoothly as well, and business seemed finer than ever.

Things should be fine then. Both Myourmiles and I were relieved.

The dungeon was handed over to Ramiris and Veldora. While I wanted to work on that too, I frankly didn't have the time.

To celebrate my inauguration—or just to check out who I really was, the representatives of the tribes in the Jura Great Forest began to gradually gather at this town.

Their goal was to pledge loyalty to the “demon lord” and stand under my protection. However, if they discovered that the demon lord didn't really have any real power, they would immediately bare their fangs and rebel. Staying by the side of a demon lord without power would not only do them no good, but it might even lead to their swift demise. As such, it was only natural to take the necessary actions to avoid such a reality.

Until now Jura Great Forest had always been under the protection of Veldora. This inviolable domain had now come to be ruled by a new demon Lord. Moreover, this demon lord had just come to power, so it was still a mystery as to what central ideology he upheld. This was the reason why the representatives of the tribes felt unease.

—And that's how things were as of now.

Today, I was dressed in formal attire and placed on an altar to be worshiped.

I was in my slime form, treated no different than a decorative ornament. It felt like I'd become kagami mochi⁷² offered on an altar. *Can't we just put my clone on it?* I tried to suggest this, and everyone shot me down with a smile. Times like these were when the executives were especially united. They probably made the decision behind my back using ‘Telepathy Net.’

I was helplessly toyed with by them, and as a result I was so weighed down with decorations that I became basically immobile. They even specially prepared clothes (for slimes) on this day, to which all I could do was feel dumbfounded.

Not only that, but they also prepared several different types of outfits for each day. In the worst-case scenario, they would be changing my outfit every morning, noon, and night. I really hoped that they would show some restraint, but these people claimed that it was vital to make me look majestic... In other words, they were basically saying that the natural me—in slime form—had no majesty at all.

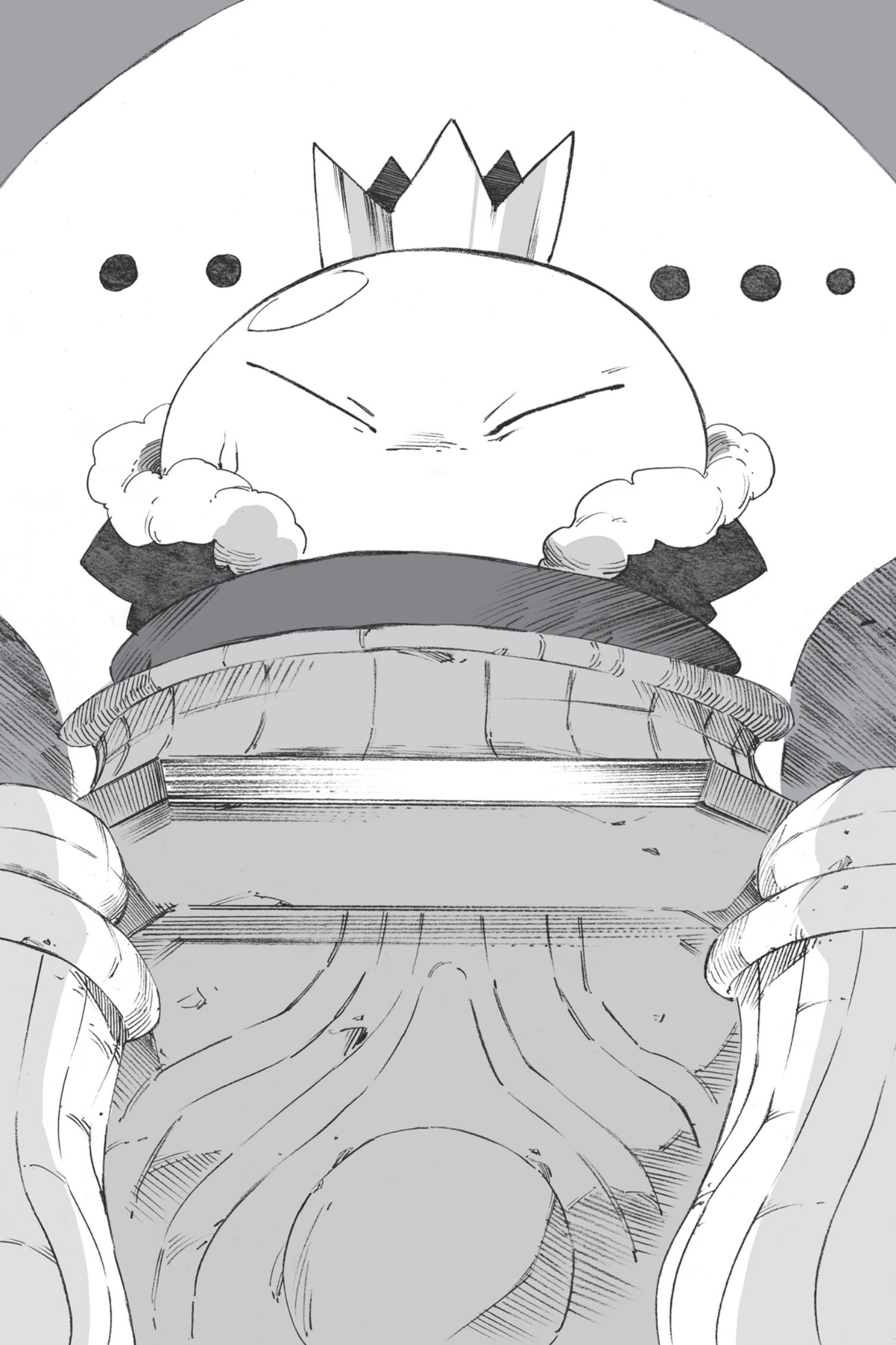
Right, never mind then.

⁷²This is a traditional Japanese New Year decoration (multiple food combined), it somewhat resembles Rimuru's slime shape.

As for the people attending the reception ceremony, everyone would be dressed like guards of honor. They were all fully armed, and unlike when they wear their normal clothes, their current attire held an air of prestige. Under this solemn atmosphere, Rigurd and Rigur, who were dressed in formal attire, were receiving the guests.

They told me that all I needed to do was remain silent and gaze down at the envoys. Since the magic of my appearance would be broken once I spoke, this suggestion was most appreciated.

Benimaru and Shuna flanked my left and right sides, respectively. Behind me, Shion, Souei, and Gabil stood in lines. Ranga was lurking in my shadow as always. On the right lane were the one hundred members of the goblin riders led by Gobta. On the left lane were the one hundred high ranked members of the Kurenai led by Gobua. The remaining two hundred lower ranked members were responsible for maintaining the security of the street. They were fiercer than the average security force, so even when encountering suspicious individuals, they should be able to handle it themselves. Plus, Shion's Yomigaeri were patrolling undercover in disguise across the town. Even if someone started a commotion there, they could respond to it before the situation spiraled out of control.



On another note, Diablo and Hakurou had still yet to return from Farmus.

According to the ones that returned first, namely Gobta, Ranga, and Gabil, the two would be finishing their work at hand before the Founding Festival. They seemed to express regret at the fact that they wouldn't have a chance to see me in my "majestic" outfit. But they did have things to deal with on their side too, since Youm was soon going to be crowned. Once that happened the kingdom's name of Farmus would also disappear, and in its place a new kingdom would be born. That's why they seemed to be preoccupied with preparation work, so their inability to return was reasonable. Even Diablo had been so busy that he rarely showed up lately. As for Hakurou, since he didn't have the skill 'Spatial Movement,' I hadn't been able to see him for a while either. When the two return, I shall make sure to reward them properly.

I wasn't the only one who had been working hard. Although my current state was extremely embarrassing, I'd have to endure it. I got the feeling that I should finish this reception ceremony as soon as possible.

The most interesting thing honestly was the reaction of the different tribes. While I served the role as a very "competent" decorative object with nothing else to do, I focused on observing the monsters coming to greet me—there were three types of reactions they were giving.

Reverence, observation, and fear.

In addition, among the people who were observing me, some even seemed to look down on us. It was an attitude often displayed by the newcomers from the opposite side of the Ameld river. It's not that big of a deal, and as long as I could show my strength, they would surely submit on the spot.

The problem lay with those who were afraid...

Right before me were people from a certain weak tribe whose expressions were filled with fear—the rabbitman tribe. They were cute looking demi-humans whose appearances closely resembled that of a human's, with the exception of their elongated, rabbit-like ears. Unlike the beastmen, the rabbitmen were an inferior species that couldn't use 'Transformation.' Their strength was no different from that of an average human, and judging from their equipment, they might even be considered weaker. But they still somehow managed to survive in the Jura Great Forest. It seemed that their 'Danger Perception' had been greatly enhanced, which was probably the reason why they weren't fooled by my appearance.

Dealing with people who feared me was most difficult. Some were even panicking. The priority here should be to calm them down first.

"T-Today...a-an honor to be invited—"

They were apparently so nervous that it gave them trouble speaking...

"It's fine. I permit you to meet with our ruler, the great Demon Lord Rimuru-sama. Please raise your head!" Rigurd spoke up, yet the rabbitman representative remained unresponsive. Actually, he didn't seem to be moving at all. Even with my cute slime appearance, he still didn't

dare to raise his head to look at me. Meh. But I guess it was true that he couldn't make eye contact with me anyways since I didn't have any in the first place.

Uh, maybe I'm stretching the topic. I don't intend to rule over others with fear, so I hope this misunderstanding can be resolved... However, to these people, the whole "This demon lord looks pretty weak"—is probably setting off every single one of their danger alarms.

So this was the so-called fear due to Gap Moe⁷³. Simply getting them to agree to cooperate with us on maintaining their domain and sharing their culture took quite a lot of effort. While this cooperation might be a little forced, I hoped that in the future they would come to trust us.

When the Federation was first formed, we had to deal with something similar regarding the halfling and kobold (doghead race) tribes. When I allowed the kobold tribe to travel and do business with us, they began trusting us. Nowadays, their representative Kobe⁷⁴ had become a steadfast comrade, and we often exchanged profitable trade information.

Whether it was this rabbitman tribe or other weaker tribes—I would declare that all were equal under my rule. I didn't want to imitate other demon lords and their Social-Darwinist philosophy of "might makes right." I'd have to repeatedly bring up this point to hammer it in. It would be difficult to gain their trust immediately, but that would be a task for the future.

It seemed that I had gotten lost in my thoughts while staring at their rabbit ears. The rabbitmen right now were all groveling on their knees with their heads bowed.

"There's no need to be afraid. Rimuru-sama is a man of leniency. He has said that all who are willing to pledge their loyalty shall be equal before him. You can greet him with ease of mind."

After Rigurd said that, the representative was finally willing to lift his face.

He seemed quite young and had a handsome appearance, but dark circles hung under his eyes. Is it because he was working too hard or is it because he was too nervous...

"G-Great Demon Lord Rimuru-sama, please grant us rabbitmen the permission to pledge our loyalty to you—"

I nodded with a "Hmm" as he finished.

My reaction seemed to have eased their tension a bit; the young man's shoulders visibly sagged in relief.

"I've told you just now, there's no need to be so nervous."

"Y-Yes sir! I-In fact, I brought my daughter here too, but she was too excited when she reached the town, and by the time I realized it I'd already lost track of her..."

(Gained Item: Spoiler-free ticket to read Mamono no Kuni no Arukikata, aka the bunny-girl spin-off manga)

"Hahaha, our town right now is alive and brimming with an atmosphere of festivity. She's a young lady after all, so her curiosity is only natural."

⁷³This is an actual terminology. I cringed pretty hard when my editor pointed it out it was an actual thing (Cen note: this was present in Overlord LN as well. Supreme being Tabula Smaragdina was known for his obsession with Gap Moe, hence the creation of Albedo and her sister Nigredo)

⁷⁴Previous volumes translate him also as "Coby."

“Ahh, this is too embarrassing. My daughter is always giving me a headache as she would run off to different places as soon as I stopped paying attention. I was afraid that she would be an eyesore to your Majesty Rimuru, so I wanted to keep her at the village, but she kept begging me to bring her along...”

The tribe chief, who was also the representative, must’ve been very concerned about the disappearance of his daughter. Although she wouldn’t run into any trouble in this town, he still seemed to be worried sick. I felt somewhat reassured to learn that I was not the source of his fear. I didn’t want any weak tribes to be fearful of me anymore.

By the way, a rabbitman lady...a beauty with rabbit ears... I've got to meet her sometime.

While contemplating about the issue, I accidentally let out some of my genuine thoughts.

“Since she is so naturally curious, wouldn’t she also be able to adapt to times of turbulence and change as well? She seems to show promise in growing to be a reliable successor.”

Due to the fact that I personally spoke to him, the rabbitman representative looked deeply moved.

“Thank you for your gracious kindness. If the chance emerges next time, allow me to introduce my daughter Flamaire⁷⁵ to you.”

The chief bowed his head, which seemed to indicate that the awkward situation had been resolved. Afterwards, Rigurd went through some rough explanations on how things would work before the rabbitman tribe came to officially pledge allegiance to me. The chief bowed to me several times before he and his people departed off into the distance. By the looks of it, he would also inform the other tribes that I was no fearsome demon lord.

After being guided out, the next batch of visitors arrived.

I turned to face the monsters who were kneeling before me, requesting a meeting. Among them was a familiar face—Gabil’s father—lizardman tribe leader Abil. Rather than feeling nostalgic, I got the feeling that he was a completely different person. Abil now looked like a warrior in the prime of his youth with a face full of energy. By the looks of it, due to me “Naming” him, Abil evolved. He had now evolved into a dragonewt that more closely resembled a human in appearance—but speaking of which, Gabil’s appearance never experienced such a drastic change. His sister Souka evolved to obtain a human form too, so perhaps it had something to do with human will.

“Long time no see, Rimuru-sama. It is an occasion truly worth celebrating now that you’ve become a demon lord, I—No, we also...”

Abil’s body tensed up due to nervousness. This must’ve been the feeling that came from deep reverence. Just as Gabil had mentioned before, demon lords were fearsome existences to both men and monsters. However, despite knowing my personality, he was still reacting this way...

That’s why I decided to say something to break the ice.

⁷⁵Or Flamea, Flavia (Seems like a translation mistake since her name is フラメア, not フラビア) as translated in the manga series “How the monster country works”

“Ah, long time no see, Chief. You don’t have to be so tense. We are all good pals within the federation after all, so I look forward to your guidance in the future as well.”

Benimaru gave off a dry smile while Shuna let out an exasperated sigh, however, I didn’t really mind.

“No, that can’t be right. Right now Rimuru-sama has become a demon lord, so things are totally different. As long as you are our leader, you are in effect the dominator of the Jura Great Forest...”

Abil was still the same as always, so serious all the time.

But that’s also why he’s so likable.

“Ah, it’s all right. There’s no other tribe present here, so you don’t have to be so stiff. Chief, your son Gabil has been working hard under me. He’s now an official and plays an integral part in our community.”

I decided to bring up Gabil’s name so Abil wouldn’t feel the need to be so tense.

I also emphasized the parent-child relationship between Abil and Gabil, hinting that it was time for him to make amends with Gabil.

“Geez, seriously. I’ve been defeated, Rimuru-sama. Gabil, that kid... Has my son been of service to you? He really is my hopeless, silly son...”

Abil nodded with gratitude, seemingly sensing my intention. On the surface, Gabil and Abil had cut ties with each other. Since Abil thought he shouldn’t publicly display concern about Gabil’s wellbeing, he didn’t bring that topic up. However, once I started it, he no longer felt reservations and continued the conversation. It seemed like he’d finally eased into it, once again displaying his heroic characteristics.

“Not at all. He is now working very hard and is in charge of the entire research department. Ain’t that right, Gabil?”

“Huh? Ah, yeah!”

During my conversation with Abil, Gabil had stood frozen on the side this entire time without saying a word. He seemed embarrassed to the point where even his ears were blushing red. His voice even jumped up a pitch after I called him out.

“This silly boy...”

While ignoring the panicked Gabil, I let a little bit of my ‘Demon Lord Haki’ leak out. This act alone turned the atmosphere solemn.

“Leader of the lizardman tribe, Abil, I hope you will assist me, the demon lord, as a member of the federation.”

“Understood! I swear by my ‘Name’ that I shall pledge my eternal loyalty to Rimuru-sama!”

Abil got down onto his knees and bowed, declaring his loyalty with conviction. The way he made his declaration was quite warrior like, resulting in a glorious display. I nodded towards him as my gaze fell onto Gabil, who was still in a state of panic.

“—Uh!”

Gabil sure is slow. Apparently, he didn’t understand what my glance meant. But slimes don’t even have eyes—though that is probably not the reason.

Rigurd, who could no longer bear to watch, made a move as he whispered to Gabil, “Rimuru-sama hopes that you and your father can have a good chat together to close the gap between you two. If you don’t take this chance right now to mend your relationship, opportunities are going to be hard to come by in the future. Moreover, Abil-dono will be put in a difficult spot if he has severed ties with an executive—”

Rigurd knew his stuff, all right. Unlike Gabil, he had completely understood the meaning behind my words. After Rigurd pointed this out, Gabil seemed to have finally understood the situation. He hurriedly bowed and accompanied Abil in leaving our location.

Next in line were the chiefs of each high orc clan who came to greet me with several subordinates. They must have put a lot of faith in us seeing that they didn’t even bring any guards.

The subordinates were their children. The improvement in the food shortage situation was only natural, and even their lives as a whole had been improved.

The most important thing, for them, was the birth of new children. Rumor had it that the fact that the newborns were also high orcs upon birth gave them a pleasant surprise, which is why they decided to report this to me in person.

Isn’t it normal for the high orcs to have high orc children? I thought so too, but it turned out to not be the case. Under normal circumstances, the high orcs would only give birth to regular orc children; the mutation was only limited to one generation. Due to the declining birth rate, they must’ve been putting more effort into raising their young. I hoped that this was indeed the case as more children would lead to more future labor for our nation.

Children are precious. Even in a different world, with a different race, this is still the unwavering truth. I was somewhat worried about the name inheritance, but it sounded like things went surprisingly well. Even though the names I gave them were randomly made up, and they had now gotten a bit complex... But they seemed to think that those types of names were perfectly normal.

Wonderful, wonderful.

While I believed this to be the case, it might just be that they had gotten used to their names. After being addressed with these names all the time, it naturally became the norm. They never had a problem with being unnamed in the past, so it seemed like I was worrying too much.

I heaved a sigh of relief and ended the reception ceremony with the high orcs.

Finally the last group of people for today. Apart from the lizardmen and high orcs, there was one last major faction of the Jura Great Forest left—the treants⁷⁶ had also come to greet me.

With that being said however, the only people who were actually here were Treyni-san’s two sisters, the dryads Trya and Doris. But since the treants were immobile, this couldn’t really be helped. Moreover, the dryads were the representatives of tree people anyways, so it didn’t really matter that they weren’t personally present.

Speaking of the tribe of the treants, I often visited the place since Zegion and Apito guarded

⁷⁶DnD race of essentially “Tree People”

them. Not only did they guard the tribe, but they also delivered high quality honey to me. It was probably due to these reasons that the reception atmosphere was pretty relaxed.

“It’s been a while, Rimuru-sama. We’ve come to congratulate you on your inauguration as demon lord.”

“Please continue to protect us in the future.”

The two weren’t holding back either as they greeted me with all smiles. This was good for me as well. We began to chat about our recent conditions, and so far, there didn’t seem to be any major problems at hand. If anything, the magicule density in the Jura Great Forest had thinned out, and as a result, movement had become somewhat more inconvenient.

It was as if the two were made from the same mold that birthed Treyni-san. They exuded the usual aura characteristic of an abundance of powerful mana. But the reduction of magicule concentration did still have an effect on them. In fact, the body of this Doris in front of me had become more transparent.

“I see...that part is my miscalculation. It’s probably because of the ‘Barrier’ applied on the roads. I gotta figure out a solution...”

“Ah, it’s fine. It’s not that big of a deal.”

“It’s just that us sisters are affected because we utilize ‘Magic Body’ made by magicules that are susceptible to environmental changes.”

“Speaking of which, Rimuru-sama—”

“We have some urgent matters!”

They claimed that the reduction in magicule concentration was nothing significant.

Monsters being affected by the thinning of magicule density was very rare, but the dryads, who fed off magicules, mainly had their lives tied to the treants. Since they were the last group of people I planned to meet for the day, I decided on a change of venue to continue our discussion.

I arranged another place to meet them that evening...

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It was nighttime, and as soon as I entered the room—

“The thing that we really wanted to discuss was—”

“We want to follow nee-san’s footsteps to serve the beautiful fairy queen.”

The two spoke at the same time. At this point, my mind was still stuck on the title “Fairy Queen.” That’s quite the dramatic name that didn’t suit that chibi at all. Also, the term beautiful was just...

Ramiris’s innocent smile crossed my mind. No way; there’s no such thing.

My impression of her, compared to those two’s, couldn’t have been more different; that I am absolutely certain of. If Ramiris is considered beautiful, then my appearance that resembles Shizu-san can only be described as godly. Even though I’ve begun to get used to looking at it lately, I still occasionally get mesmerized when looking at myself.

Not only me, but Benimaru and Shion by my side also shared the same sentiments. How-

ever, Trya and Doris seemed oblivious about it.

“It isn’t just our hope, it’s what all the treants desire as well.”

“We heard that this town—”

“Ramiris-sama has moved and settled here.”

“If that’s the case, we hope to contribute our fair share of effort in serving her Majesty...” the two talked in turns, either about following my leadership or about serving Ramiris. How could I take these people as subordinates when they were shouting about pledging loyalty to someone else? Seriously. Well, I guess since their sister Treyni-san was already serving Ramiris, I didn’t really have any reason to object.

“Then, would you guys want to ask her directly in person?”

“—EH?”

“Can we really?”

The two reacted quite enthusiastically.

As such, we walked together to where Ramiris was. Beretta was working quietly on something while Treyni-san was busy tending to Ramiris. Ah, Beretta seemed to be buried beneath a mountain of work.

I thought to myself, while on the other hand—

“AH! Ramiris-sama is indeed beautiful—”

“She is beautiful and noble as always. There is indeed no other who could be our master!”

They were just like this before, and as soon as they saw Ramiris, Trya and Doris went full fangirl and began to cry out in excitement.

Treyni-san saw this and nodded in acknowledgement. Who were these people talking about? I was completely baffled. Especially the part about “noble quality.” Because no matter how you put it, Ramiris seemed to be quite lacking in that regard.

“Did you hear that? Hey! I’m talking to you, you know! Didn’t you hear what they just said? Are you going to see me in a different light now?”

I saw that Ramiris was once again being cocky and acting boastful.

How troublesome. She was even flying around me looking all delighted, almost as if saying: “How ‘bout that!”

Never mind, I didn’t wanna deal with her anyways. It was indeed something to be happy about when you got praised...but she was seriously taking it way too far.

“How do you see it, Ramiris? Not only these two, but the entire tribe of treants wishes to serve you!”

“Uhmm, but...”

She seemed to be aware that she was a guest who was just temporarily staying here as she looked around, indecisive. That’s why I decided to lend her a hand.

“How about moving them into your labyrinth? Since you could move the shelter of the beastmen with ease, surely, it’ll be a piece of cake to move the treant tribe, right?”

Or perhaps it was too hard due to the distance involved? But I recalled that she mentioned

something about the labyrinth being connected to all parts of the world...

“Can I? Then we’ll have them move in tomorrow! With the power of my mentor, expansion of the labyrinth is super easy! I feel like my power has increased as well. There are still empty floors right now, so perhaps it’ll be a great idea to turn one of them into a forest!”

Ramiris accepted my proposal with joy all over her face.

“With the power of her mentor”—that line kind of concerned me, but whatever, that’ll do.

“But we are residents of the Jura Great Forest, so shouldn’t we follow Rimuru-sama...?”

Although, I still had some reservations about it. Even Treyni-san seemed to be concerned, though her facial expression said otherwise. I could tell that she wanted to live with her sisters as well.

As I stated several times: I personally didn’t object. In fact, the interior of the labyrinth was the domain of Ramiris. The region managed by me and the residence of Ramiris coexisted at the same time. This was the so-called special zone. It was why the area run by Ramiris inside the labyrinth could enjoy extraterritorial judiciary.

I explained the matter to them and told them that I wouldn’t hold them accountable for anything if they migrated now, since Ramiris’s subordinates were immortal inside the labyrinth. Moreover, I thought it best for them to serve their original master, so I suggested.

“We treants and dryads hope to move here and seek the protection of Ramiris-sama.”

“We know that this is sudden, but will you grant us your permission?” Trya and Doris requested. And without a doubt, I granted permission.

And just like that, the plan to move the treant tribe into Ramiris’ labyrinth had been approved. They’d live on floor 95, which was currently serving as the shelter for the beastmen. This dome-shaped floor was the largest of its kind, with a diameter spanning five kilometers, offering plenty of space. Another reason was that I was planning to make that level a resting zone anyway, and this just happened to help make things smoother. After all, we already had the so-called forest hot spring, so the resting area couldn’t be too shabby either.

The issue concerning their migration was settled quickly. Ramiris went to where the treants lived and created a new labyrinth gate to directly move the entire tribe inside. Since the treants traveled exceedingly slowly, she opened up a gate in front of every individual treant in order to speed things along.

And with that, Ramiris got a bunch of new subordinates. They even helped to stabilize the interior of the labyrinth as well. Managing the magicule concentration and the air conditioning had also become easier... Not only that, but the treants seemed to also be content with their living conditions. The increased magicule concentration had made everyone livelier.

As for the beastmen who were temporarily residing there, they didn’t seem to care much about it either. The treants were all very well-behaved people, spending most of their time sleeping. In addition, they looked no different from normal trees, so it was no wonder why no one minded. The beastmen would have to return to Eurazania someday, so sharing their

residence wouldn't really bother them. With a more comfortable living environment, chances were high that they'd actually come to welcome the treants instead.

The dryads also agreed to work on managing the labyrinth. Well, I should say that they were more like volunteers instead of workers.

"We after all have the honor to build an amusement park here, so it is an easy task."

Since Treyni-san put it that way, her sisters, and the rest of the dryads had no objections. Now we got some unexpected assistance.

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And so, a small forest had been added inside the labyrinth.

Floor 95 ended in a five, making it a safe zone. Plus, we still had some empty floors left, so we turned levels 91 to 94 into warehouses, flower beds, or processing factories. To be more specific, level 91 would be a warehouse for iron ore, level 92 the manufacturing factory that refined the ore to magisteel, level 93 the flower beds, and level 94 would be the honey processing plant.

Anyone from level 95 could directly reach these floors with ease due to convenient transportation. There was a save point in the center, adjacent to it were gates that lead to different floors as well as stairs to go to lower levels. It was thanks to the fact that the labyrinth completely negated the laws of physics that we got such a convenient structure.

As soon as someone defeated the boss at level 90, the stairs to level 95 would immediately appear. We all agreed that there was no harm in letting the people that had made it to that point take a little shortcut if they so desired.

After which—

From floor 96 onwards was a grueling series of the most challenging, hellish levels. Before attempting them, adventurers needed to take a rest and inspect their equipment. We didn't forget to set up gates and caution signs before the stairs leading to the lower levels. We also opened inns, as well as weapon and gear stores surrounding the gate. The inns had gates leading to all the safe zones. That made it very convenient in times like these.

Now let's check out the stores selling weapons and gear. During their opening hours, the shops would only display the rare equipment exclusive to the labyrinth. I didn't think we'd have too many customers, so they'd most likely become stores for the blacksmithing enthusiasts.

Should I sneak one of my own works onto the shelf as well? While daydreaming about this, I decided to discuss the plan with Myourmiles. And that's how it was. After the end of today's reception ceremony, I suddenly became the lil' helper for Ramiris and her men to migrate.

This floor would later become a forest city. Only people who had weathered through the trials of the dungeon would be able to gain access here and take a rest to receive some motivation, for further adventure of course—this so called "City of the Labyrinth" would become a

prosperous city of fantasy.

With that being said—at the time, I had not foreseen that at all.



The next day.

According to today's schedule, we seemed to be starting off with stronger species. These were the most powerful bunch among the new-comers; therefore I could expect some more intense stares to be directed at me while being observed—as if on cue, there was already a commotion taking place outside.

Members of two different tribes showed signs of starting a conflict with each other. Shuna frowned unpleasantly at the sight while Shion widened her eyes, forcing herself to endure her anger.

Geez, I hope things can be settled peacefully...

The people visiting were the ox-head (gozu) and horse-face (mezu) tribes⁷⁷. Both sides brought around ten young warriors who were already engaging in a standoff. It was said that both tribes had been engaged in perpetual battles against each other for over a hundred years without ever reaching a point of reconciliation.

The reason they were arguing this time was probably to determine who got to go in first for the reception. Perhaps they thought that whoever came first would get the upper hand, but I was determined to stay out of this mess no matter what. The day had barely started, and I'd already gotten a headache. With their relationship being this tense, I was honestly worried about them kicking off a brawl any moment. They attempted to pull each other back as they moved in front of me. Naturally for the high-ranked tribes in the Jura Great Forest, their strength was reflected in their arrogance.

The majin with ox horns was the first to speak.

“Yo, Demon Lord-sama, we are the ones that will be of real use on the battlefield! With us Gozu tribe in your alliance, we can definitely stand tall in this forest! If we eliminate those weaklings from the mezu tribe, no other race in this forest can stand against us!”

As expected from a race with impressive strength, not only was he not afraid of me, he even began to brag. Actually, compared to the ogre tribe and lizardmen tribe in the past, they did possess a higher magicule content. Just giving them a more careful look revealed that several of them were already at Rank A. It was no wonder that they were able to continue a war for as

⁷⁷Gozu and Mezu are respectively referring to “Ox-head” and “Horse-face” which are both creatures from Japanese legends.

long as a hundred years. Based on combat capabilities alone, they may indeed have been the strongest in Jura Great Forest...

Before I could make any response, the mezu majin began to shout angrily as well, “Hmph, bunch of fools! If you are a demon lord, surely you have a grander vision. So do not hesitate and collaborate with us Mezu tribe. Let us slaughter not only these gozu, but any monster who dares to defy us.”

Both of them were spouting unreasonable nonsense and their type of explosive personality already had me frustrated. It seemed that the rabbitmen who weren’t fooled by my appearance turned out to be more distinguished.

But, hold on a sec?

They are indeed irritating, but upon seeing these guys, an idea suddenly popped into my head. Honestly, whenever we think about a labyrinth, the first thing that comes to people’s mind should be “Minotaur.”

In Greek mythology, there was a famous ox-head labyrinth monster called the Minotaur—people thought that it was a legend or a fable passed on by generations, yet in the early twentieth century, they actually dug up the Knossos palace on the island Crete. The palace had a complex interior structure with its basement resembling a labyrinth.

Anyway, putting aside whether the Minotaur actually existed or not, the palace was supposedly filled with various paintings depicting an ox—that’s how the Minotaur became the iconic staple of any self-respecting dungeon. It must be my lucky day, because the gozu race, resembling the Minotaur from people’s fantasies, is just the thing our labyrinth was lacking!

Upon seeing the giant creature that was likely their leader, isn’t he a good candidate for that? I thought to myself.

The weakest part of our dungeon was the selection of bosses. Right now we had only captured some rather impressive monsters and placed them at levels 10, 20 and 30. This gozu guy would be most suited to defend levels 40 to 50—that’s how I see it.

I would love to appoint him a boss on some floor—such thoughts continued to pour out of my mind. But reality is often disappointing. These monsters didn’t seem to have much loyalty towards me. At most they were thinking: “This guy could be a pretty good employer.” Moreover, their intention of using me to eliminate their rival was obvious. They could be of so much use if they just behaved themselves a little. Such were my honest opinions.

That’s why I decided to activate some of my ‘Demon Lord Haki.’ I hoped that they would realize how strong I was and pledge their allegiance—eh, it flew over their heads completely. They continued to argue against each other right in front of me... Although it would be quite rude, should I perhaps dull their spirits a bit so I can recruit them?

I was just about to put that thought into action—

“You punks, how dare you act so rude in front of our king. I, Rigurd shall show you all your places!”

While flexing his muscles, Rigurd stepped forward. While he usually treated people kindly

and actively attended to national affairs in town, I knew that he had been secretly working out. In fact, he had already outperformed youngsters such as Gobta and Rigur. He even volunteered himself for the fight against the Holy Knights—he clearly had an aggressive side. I was confident that he could beat the leaders of these two tribes.

“What did you just say? How can a mere civil official be so pompous!”

“You’re just a lackey of some weakling demon lord, quit bluffing now!”

The two leaders rebuked, the rest of the youngsters responding in a similar manner. They’d been underestimating me before as well, the only people to be so pompous were them. All I needed to do was release some of my ‘Demon Lord Haki’ and any monsters who encountered me until now had obeyed nicely. These people however were clearly itching for a fight and totally lacked awareness of their situation.

Rather than fearing me, it was better that you looked down on me since it was easier to deal with that way. But I might have to reevaluate my policy now that they’d crossed the line. Surely, they would settle down once we roughed them up a bit.

Rigurd was looking at me. As I was about to grant him permission—

“What is that!”

“...This is...”

“—Geez, there seems to be something troublesome?”

“Hmph, it’s probably nothing.”

A shockingly imposing sensation was emitting from outside the town. The ‘Barrier’ constructed by Shuna had been shattered, followed by monsters with immense youki and large pools of magicule appearing—no, they were majins.

From the hostility they were giving off alone, it was evident that they’d not come in peace. Even the gozu and mezu tribes, who didn’t notice my ‘Demon Lord Haki,’ turned pale immediately after sensing this.

“S-Such power—”

“Hold up, hold up hold up now, Demon Lord-sama, could it be that the other demon lords have invaded...?” the gozu and mezu tribesmen started to shiver after saying so. Before this, Jura Great Forest had always been under the protection of the pact formed by the demon lords. The reason they were so conceited was because they’d never seen the world beyond here. They were forced to reevaluate their own abilities upon facing a real threat.

Although the romantic concept of a Minotaur boss was one of my top priorities, I suddenly got bigger fish to fry.

I immediately used ‘Transformation’ to turn into my human form and told Benimaru and the rest: “Let’s go.”

“Yes sir!”

“Understood.”

As I heard everyone’s response, I headed straight towards the direction of that powerful aura.

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Upon arriving at the scene, there were around ten members from the Kurenai surrounding the three men responsible. A couple of guards, gate keepers and members of Yomigaeri were lying on the ground. Ah, Gobjay was there too. He seemed to have done his best, but running straight at these intruders was just reckless.

The people who weren't injured were assisting the townsfolk and guests to take shelter. They had received training on how to handle emergencies, so things were going smoothly without stirring up too much chaos. The fact that anyone got hurt kind of pissed me off anyway.

I turned to the three culprits. One of them was a slim and tall, polite-looking man who wore an earring. There was also a brawny man with bulky muscles who wore a nose-ring. And the last one had quite a large build; he was a short and plump man who wore a mouth-ring. Their hairstyles were all very bizarre, each of them a different color. "Like delinquents with dyed hair"—that's a rather appropriate metaphor for the trio.

"Who the hell are you people, have you come to cause trouble knowing that this is Demon Lord Rimuru-sama's domain?" Shion, who followed after me, demanded from them. In response, the earring guy stepped forward with a smile.

"Get lost and out of my way. I've got no interest in scrubs. I was planning to kill that Clayman to take the demon lord seat, but it looks like someone screwed that up for me and now I'm quite pissed about it. I don't do needless killing, but if anyone dares to get in my way, I won't be so nice no more!"

His attitude was rude and imposing, but given the sights of the people lying on the ground, none of their lives were taken. Considering the difference in magicule storage, not even a Yomigaeri would survive if he really did intend to kill them. His claim about not doing needless killing was apparently true.

It seemed that I may have judged them too harshly based on appearance alone, they were not as wicked as I imagined. But since they'd come to stir up trouble, we would have to strike back. Especially at times like this when we were hosting the demon lord inauguration. The Founding Festival was drawing nearer, many merchants from various nations were already visiting. Causing a commotion in these delicate times wasn't something I'd punish lightly...

What a troublesome affair, but it cannot be helped. I shall take them on myself then—

"Rimuru-sama, please hold on. Leave this to me."

As I was about to act, Shion spoke up to stop me. Benimaru wanted to go first too, but after his eyes met with Shion's, they seemed to have decided the sequence of their showdown. Benimaru probably conceded because Shion's subordinates were beaten by them.

"Oh, are you Demon Lord Rimuru's entourage? My old man has told me about you, aren't you the female kijin that beat the shit out of that asshole Clayman? How interesting. You'll get me warmed up—"

"Hold on, big bro. The demon lord is all yours, so at least spare some of his entourages for us."

“Mmm-Mmmhmm, that’s right. My tummy is hungry too, so even one is fine.”

The three of them were apparently brothers. The eldest brother was the one wearing the earring, the other two were his younger brothers. However, not only did their father tell them about me, they had even heard of the battle between Clayman and Shion. In other words, the father of these guys was either a demon lord or someone close to a demon lord. All three possessed magicule to rival that of un-awakened Clayman, it was likely that they were sons of a demon lord.

Then, who would that be...? Guy, Milim, Ramiris, Luminas—it’s definitely not these four. Dagruel, Dino and Leon, is it one of them—Dino and Leon are unlikely as well, does this perhaps leave Dagruel to be our prime suspect?

As thoughts swirled in my mind, Shion stepped forward.

“Silence. We are busy hosting the reception ceremony for Rimuru-sama, so time is precious. Let me take on the three of you altogether.”

“Ah?”

“Oi oi oi, are you looking down on us?”

“I was going to hold back since you are a woman, but never mind that. You gonna cry, you definitely gonna cry.”

“Mm-Mmmhmm, my tummy just reacted to your words a bit. Now I can get the grand meal I’ve been missing to fill my stomach.”

Shion’s words caused me to gasp out of surprise. No matter how you put it, it was still a stretch for Shion alone to take on three persons beyond her ability at once. I was going to stop her, but she had already been angered, so there’s nothing I could do to stop her now.

Why is Shion so heated today...

“B-Benimaru-kun?”

“Just let Shion do her thing. She does a better job than me at holding back.”

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The swiftness of Benimaru’s answer made me speechless. If that’s the case, I’d just have to give up. I let Shion do whatever she wanted and hoped for the best.

The town must not get destroyed. I suggested changing the venue, surprisingly the three agreed without hesitation. They observed the city’s appearance with intrigue as I guided them to the recently constructed colosseum.

“Hey, woman, I admire your boldness, I’ll let it slide if you retract your words right now!”

Shion sneered at the suggestion of the earring dude. She went as far as to provoke the trio with a hard-boiled statement erupting from her hot-blooded spirit that came out of nowhere, “I’ll give you a lesson on how one’s combat prowess is not determined by the amount of magicule they have!”

A lively crowd had already gathered to relish the battle breaking out between the trio, who just came to settle a score with the demon lord, and Shion.

—The result was the overwhelming victory of Shion.

The fat man with a mouth-ring was unexpectedly agile, launching himself like a cannon ball at Shion in a manner unbefitting for his build. Unfazed by this, Shion countered it with a roundhouse kick and sent him hurling towards the earring guy. Using this moment as an opening, while the nose-ring guy was speechless at the sight, she snuck in to grab his arm and collar to deliver an over-shoulder throw. Nose-ring guy's head smashed squarely onto the stone pavement—he wasn't going to get up anytime soon.

"UHHHH, how dare you harm my bro!"

The mouth-ring guy sprang up from behind and tried to grab and lock her, yet Shion's superhuman strength would not allow him to do anything of the sort.

"W-What the hell! Am I not the stronger one..."

While glaring down at the shocked mouth-ring guy, Shion laughed with disdain. She turned around to face the fellow and began to twist his arms, testing his strength.

"Agh, GUGIGIGIGIGI..."

Snap

How pitiful, the two arms of the mouth-ring guy were folded into an abnormal angle, though since this guy was a monster, I'm sure he'll be fine. He was obviously in a lot of pain though, so he must've suffered heavy damage. Yet Shion wouldn't even give him another look before finishing him off with her iron fist. The mouth-ring guy didn't even have time to lament before Shion punched the living soul out of him.

It was then that a strong kick was launched by the ear-ring guy, Shion narrowly dodged it by leaning back slightly. However, a grin emerged on the ear-ring guy's face as he stopped his leg.

Danger—as the thought crossed my mind, it was already too late, the leg that the ear-ring guy just stopped midair rushed downward like a vicious axe in an attempt to crush Shion's head.

Thump! A heavy sound was made. Yet Shion's head was hard as a rock, breaking ear-ring guy's foot instead. Shion then launched a low sweep kick to break his other leg, forcing the ear-ring guy to collapse onto the ground. She crossed her legs over him to sit on his body and proceeded to lay down a series of punches without mercy.

As such, Shion emerged victorious. She didn't even have the chance to unsheathe her beloved sword Hercules Ex before giving the three a beatdown. Her power had obviously increased. She had beaten opponents with a higher magicule pool than her without even getting tired. Plus, she took care of three in one go, how terrifying.

"B-Benimaru-kun? Shion is—"

"Yes, it is quite astounding all right. But it seems that she has mastered the way of controlling her strength."

Eh, that's not the issue at all!

This isn't Milim we are talking about here, where is this strength even coming from? Benimaru's view seems pretty strange, but that's not what I wanted to talk about... Never mind, there's no use saying anything more.

By the way, Shion, she was truly strong. From this fight, it was proven that by utilizing mana in a different way, even when you are confronted by a rival on par in strength, you can still defeat them with ease. The experience she gained from giving Clayman a beat down must have helped her improve greatly.

Benimaru also believed that this was only natural as he seemed unfazed after witnessing the scene. Although I still couldn't quite accept it, Shion had brawled with an ex-demon lord after all. I suppose that Benimaru and maybe even both Souei and Geld could do the same.

No no no, I was definitely thinking too much. I seemed to have been overwhelmed after witnessing Shion's growth.

"Pardon me, is this still not enough?"

I wasn't sure whether she had misunderstood the shock in my heart or not, Shion slanted her eyes at the trio lying on the ground. I immediately replied, "No no no, that's plenty!" to stop her. *How is it not enough, you are actually being excessive.*

"Now that you've learnt your lesson, you better not bother us ever again! Also, the other demon lords are less forgiving than me, so don't try your luck with them," I told the trio, who were still unable to get up after getting punished by Shion's iron fists. The nose-ring guy who had regained consciousness nodded heavily in response. This advice was for their own good, after all. These people seemed to have gotten full of themselves to have attempted to challenge a demon lord. It was fortunate that they came to me. If it was any other demon lord, they might have suffered more than they just did at the hands of Shion.

"She's stronger than how the old man put it..."

It seemed that they've woken up as the ear-ring guy whispered.

"Big bro, that would mean Demon Lord Rimuru is—"

"Yep, he's gotta be stronger."

"Mmm-mmmHmm, I'm so hungry."

The three started to look at me with respect. One of them acted pretty weird, but I shouldn't really think too much of it.

"So, who sent you guys?"

I didn't want any more trouble, so I decided to clarify the relations behind them. If they were willing to tell me honestly—I didn't expect this concern of mine to be resolved as well.

"Yes Sir! We are the sons of Demon Lord Dagruel. I'm his eldest son Dagura."

"I am his second son Liura."

"I am the third son Debura!"

The three decided to spill the beans altogether without hesitation. As I expected, they were indeed Demon Lord Dagruel's sons.

"Oi oi oi, you just admitted it so fast like that, is that really okay?"

"Yeah. In fact our old man wanted us to go train under Demon Lord Rimuru."

"We were just messing around for a bit, but he lost his temper big time..."

"Hmhmm, we were chased out by dad!"

Why are you admitting everything now, also, excuse me what? So to put it simply, he couldn't discipline his delinquent sons and decided to push the babysitting work to me? Dagruel you bastard! We aren't even that close; how dare you make this decision without asking for permission...

But, isn't it not half bad to sell him a favor first? Our faction has yet to have a firm stand yet, we don't intend to antagonize an established faction at this point of time. I personally think they are quite troublesome, but there happens to be the devil of a drill sergeant Shion. I've seen her training for Gobjay and the others, her methods were crueler than Hakurou, even I was a bit terrified.

If I hand these guys to Shion, they will eventually run away after they can't bear it. When they leave by themselves, I would have done my part as well. Then Dagruel won't have any basis to complain about this to me, no problemo.

“All right, then you guys can go train with Shion,” I declared, turning to Shion. She probably didn’t want to take them, but I had already tossed the conversation to her.

Unexpectedly, Shion nodded to me with an evil grin.

—Eh? Her reaction was different than I expected?

“Hehehe, just now, Rimuru-sama has appointed me, Shion. Even softies like you three can more or less have some growth in my hands and turn into first-class warriors. Just rest assured and follow my lead!”

“Yes ma’am, that’s just what we want!”

“Understood! Allow us to follow big sis’s lead and work hard!”

“I wanna too! But before that, please give me something to eat!”

Surprisingly enough, Shion took on the job eagerly. It was great that she had no objection, so I’d just go with her flow. Then we left Shion with the trio and returned to the reception hall.

There seemed to be voices coming from behind my back—“Sensei, actually, allow me to call you master!⁷⁸,” “Hmm, you guys, remember to follow my teaching well!”... *Best that I pretend not to hear them.*

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Back at the reception hall, I saw the gozu and mezu tribesmen kneeling there, shivering with pale faces. The youngsters who were brought along all imitated the leaders and bowed their heads on their knees. Their previous arrogance was gone without a trace, and they looked awfully powerless now as if they were some pathetic tribes from some backwater.

“W-We humbly await your Majesty’s return!”

“We’ve decided to pledge our loyalty to Demon Lord Rimuru-sama!”

What type of emotional rollercoaster have you guys been through? Their attitudes were completely different from before.

⁷⁸Shishou 師匠

I returned to my throne and turned back to a slime. I thought that they were going to switch back to the conceited attitude, but there didn't seem to be any sign of that.

"You guys serious?"

"O-Of course!"

"Please command us at will!"

It seemed that they had really changed their minds. They were trying very hard, seemingly to get on my good side from the bottom of their heart. I see. After witnessing the commotion just now, they must've found Shion quite terrifying.

Then there was no need to be courteous with these people. Now I could use them to whatever end I wanted. After all, they'd been fighting a war for over a hundred years and were troublesome tribes. They must've really enjoyed combat, if that were the case, surely, they would not complain to have the inside of the labyrinth as their battlefield. I heard that they would even rob weaker species and commit other bad deeds, so everyone would be happy if I quarantined these people.

"I see that you guys seem to be full of energy, how about I help you all prepare a stage to fight on."

"Ehh, are you forgiving them? I was going to punish these people in Rimuru-sama's place..." Rigurd's reply was tinged with regret after hearing my words.

The commotion they just caused had been resolved like this, but Rigurd seemed to be dissatisfied. With that being said, since I had already taken in these people, I might as well give them the chance to work for me. It was better that way.

"Geez, don't get mad, Rigurd. In my eyes these people were just being ignorant. So don't fuss with them over this one incident. I'll leave things in your care if these people underestimate me again."

"Since you've spoken, I don't have any objection. You guys are really lucky. If Rimuru-sama were any less gracious of a slime man, you would have already been taken care of! If you dare to defy again, it will be your demise. Consider this as a lesson to reflect and learn restraint in life."

Fortunately, Rigurd seemed to have accepted it.

"Count yourself lucky today, if not for the commotions just now, not only Rigurd-san, I would have struck too. The balls you had to say those distasteful words, I planned to cut out your tongues so you couldn't say such grotesque things anymore. You guys need to appreciate Rimuru-sama's kindness and work hard from now on."

I wasn't able to reply before Shion suddenly piped up. The gozu and mezu tribesmen nodded heavily while shivering.

" " "W-We will not fail your expectations! That's why, we hope that you can forgive us for our offense!" " "

Seeing how unanimously they declared that, surely, they wouldn't dare to defy us ever again.

“Since you’ve pledged allegiance to me, I can consider promoting you guys. But first you need to stop causing conflicts with others. You have to behave yourselves under my order.”

Although I wasn’t required to make this warning myself, this was my ultimatum for them. I’d find one of the gozu leaders later and negotiate to have them work at the labyrinth. Now things were going smoothly again. I uncaringly threatened them and admonished them hard. These people should obey nicely now.

It looks like I’ll be getting my Minotaur after all. This incident has left me overjoyed to the point that it relieved the built-up stress and exhaustion from the past couple of days.



After that, the reception continued smoothly. The news of Shion taming the sons of Dagruel had spread and seeing how the powerful races of gozu and mezu were in fear, there were no other races that dared to look down on me. I hoped this would continue until the end of the reception ceremony...

In front of me was the elder of the elven tribe—who appeared to be a youth in his prime no matter how I saw it—he also brought several servants. Not one of them was female, which was a pity since the elven females were usually beauties to behold.

Basically, the elves were a species with a long lifespan.

Spirits after becoming materialized—or perhaps fallen—would turn into fairies and possess a body. They were the ancestors of elves and dwarves. A Race such as the goblins were also distant relatives of ancient fairies.

The ones possessing “Earth” element became dwarves, “Water” element became mermaids, “Fire” element became goblins, and “Wind” element became elves. These were all results of crossbreeding between ancient fairies and other races that made up their ancestors.

The Goblins were the species with the thinnest bloodline which made their lifespan shortest. It was about the same for their evolved race of ogre. Their lifespan was around a hundred years. Upon evolving to kijin, the power possessed by their spirit ancestors would be awakened. They then got to utilize powerful skills such as Psychic Power⁷⁹.

Back to the topic of elves. It was said that they could live up to five hundred to eight hundred years. Even human half-breeds could still live for nearly three hundred years. Basically, the lifespan of each elf varied greatly in accordance to how much fairy blood flowed through their veins... They would not age any further after living twenty odd years into adulthood. Around twenty years before their natural lifespan expired, they rapidly began aging until the day they

⁷⁹神通力 I’m still not very sure what this power/ability the author is referring to, so I’ll adhere to the last volume and call this “psychic power” as I’ve seen such explanation in Japanese dictionary.

died.

They enjoyed hundreds of years of youth, which to humans made them appear like a fairytale species. Notable however was their low fertility rate, likely due to their longevity, they lacked the desire to pass on generations. As a result, they were few in number.

This was all the information I learned from the ladies at the Dwarven Kingdom night shop—Night Butterfly, although I wasn't sure whether it's true or not.

By the way, fairies still existed as their own species. They were not even rare, but in fact a very common type of monster. They were about the same size as Ramiris and enjoyed pranks. They evolved from lesser spirits due to the influence of magicules. While they did possess intelligence, they were limited to one generation of descendants and had very short lifespans. While they were all fairies, these ones couldn't rival those evolved (materialized) from greater spirits, so they were categorized as two different types of monsters.

Some people often mixed Ramiris up with this type of fairy, but in reality, they were not the same creature. She fell from the high-ranked species of Spirit Queen, which was likely far more advanced than the ancestors of elves and dwarves. Ramiris apparently reincarnated a lot, so I probably couldn't get an answer even if I asked her...

Ah, I went on a tangent.

Let's hear the elder's greeting.

"We are honored to have you receive us. Today we've come for congratulations. Moreover, allow us to show our gratitude—" the elder said with a salute.

Normally speaking, they would first greet me, then announce their allegiance to me. As for the people who had joined the Federation from the start, some of them would express appreciation due to my efforts in ensuring their safety and comfort in life. But this was the first time the elven elder and I had met each other. I felt somewhat estranged after hearing his thanks, so I asked Rigurd to inquire about it.

"Oh, that's because—"

The elder claimed that it was related to the gozu and mezu tribes. The two races had been fighting each other for over a hundred years, and it was said that the biggest victim of it were the elves.

The elder stated—

The elves relied on the resources of the forest to survive, to them the expansion of the war-zone was an issue that concerned their livelihood. In order to prevent themselves from being harmed by external threats, the elves applied a disorienting 'Barrier' around their hidden residence. However, the war had damaged the forest—as the trees were chopped down the 'Barrier' was destroyed.

Without vegetation, trying to disorientate invaders was futile, which left their hidden residence completely exposed to the outside world. They managed to quickly relocate the tribe and were able to avoid the harm, but they didn't expect the scale of war to gradually increase.

The war caused the animals and monsters of the forest to flee. Edible vegetables and fruits

couldn't be grown, and there were elves that ran off to seek jobs in the Dwarven Kingdom. Now that I thought about it, the elven ladies at Night Butterfly must have left their home for that reason to make a living working in foreign lands.

Later, due to the increased severity of the outflowing population, their residence became hard to maintain. They were forced to plan to move again, but given how large Jura Great Forest was, it was not easy to find a new location of residence.

"That's why, we were hoping to report the matter to you so you may come up with a way to deal with those thugs. But before we could have made the request, your Majesty managed to make the judgement. Now all we need to do is to find a new place to move to—"

By then the people who had gone abroad for work would probably gradually return as well. These were the elder's claims. Upon hearing his words, an idea popped up in my head—a new place to move to...that's right, a place to move to indeed... We have that right here in our town!

The elven population was said to be no more than three hundred people. There were more of their race in ancient times, and back then they apparently also built a kingdom that prospered for a while. But their past glory was no more, the elves had become nomads that scattered all over the world. If they only had three hundred people, we did have a pretty good spot for them to move to.

Indeed, it was the mini forest we just finished building on level 95 of our dungeon. We just had to make them move there. As for their job assignment, we could make them assist Apito in raising bees and growing rare plants which could only be collected from forests with high magicule concentration. Or we could have them assist management in the planned inns on level 95. We could also invite them to manage the weapon shops. Moreover, though I didn't think such a thing would happen, but if there were ever monsters on level 95, it would be more reassuring with elves to protect the village. I heard that they got along really well with the treants, so Treyni-san and the others shouldn't object.

There was tons of work over there to do, they could also use this opportunity to call back the scattered tribesmen from around the world. *Perhaps those girls making money abroad will return too. By that time, will the Elf Club for special members only no longer just be a dream—?*

Amazing, this is amazing.

There were bars in our town too, except that they served as restaurants as well. Doing it this way was most suitable for the adventurers. When I wanted to enjoy a drink in peace however, that only left me with the executive's restaurant to go to.

I could always ask Shuna to help me prepare drinks in my own room, but I'm not that desperate for a drink.

I just want...just want to catch a breath sometimes. The reason isn't that I can't leave myself open when Shuna's present. Or that I won't be able to chat nonsense with Gobta, or that I can't find a suitable place to have secret meetings with Myourmiles-kun, none of these are the "actual reasons," it goes without saying.

—Seriously no, I'm telling the truth!

If we had a shop like Night Butterfly, I would be able to find venues for all sorts of things.

But that's just an idea. Seeing that the elven elder looked rather confused, I decided to raise the idea and give it a go.

“Chief, I’ve got a suitable place for you to move to—”

Due to me speaking up personally, Rigurd stepped back to be a listener. Perhaps he had found the time to train, no matter what situation he ran into, he was always able to respond without a sweat. Even if I slid off onto another tangent, he would probably help to round things out perfectly. How reliable.

“Oh, OHOH! Is that true, your Majesty?”

“Hmm. Since there are just three hundred of you, we can take in all of your tribesmen.”

“Thank you! Then please wait for me to return and bring all the tribesmen together to meet you.”

“Got it. Before you return, I will also modify the living environment to accommodate your residence. But I have some work that I want you to handle, is that all right?”

“There’s certainly no problem. If us elves can contribute for Rimuru your Majesty, it will be our greatest fortune.”

The elven elder was happier than I expected. He must have gotten a huge burden off his chest now that they didn’t need to worry about roaming in the dangerous forest in search for a place of residence. He immediately sent men back to have the tribesmen prepare for the move.

That’s how we decided to allow the elves to move into the labyrinth. It would be fine if things just concluded like this, but the elder brought up something that concerned me. He mentioned that many people who had gone out to earn money recently had not returned. He also added that the elven race was very united and that he didn’t think these people would abandon their hometown like this...

There were even cases of people not returning after going out to hunt monsters, which concerned him greatly.

But it might just have been due to elves’ keen inclination towards the idea of individualism, so perhaps they suddenly had the urge to leave, as the elder put it—this suddenly reminded me of something, it’s what I overheard at Myourmiles’s shop. Viscount Kazak of the kingdom of Blumund once went to discuss business with Myourmiles. I recalled that he mentioned opening a store that would use elven slaves...

Some of the elven youths had not returned for long. Their disappearance seemed to be linked to Viscount Kazak who got hold of elven slaves—actually, linked to some criminal organization. If this ominous prediction of mine was true...

Hopefully, I was just worrying too much, or else the problem would be severe.

I went so far as to push forward my dream of opening an Elf Club, but it seemed to be necessary to thoroughly investigate this situation first.

I bid the elven elder farewell who thanked me and was about to leave as I contemplated in heart. Then through ‘Thought Communication,’ I commanded Souei who was awaiting orders behind me.

⟨Souei, go investigate Viscount Kazak of the Kingdom of Blumund.⟩

〈Understood!〉

Souei immediately dispatched his ‘Clones’ to handle the investigation.

That should do it. Hopefully before the end of the reception ceremony, I could more or less get hold of some information. I could then find Myourmiles and ask him about how much information he had on the criminal organization that traded slaves. If we found out in the end that they were related to this, we would not spare them without payback. It was a challenge to my love for elves after all.

My personal ambition was to open the Elf Club⁸⁰ of my dreams and be the owner of the place. I’d just have to defeat whoever dared to get in the way of my business. I made up my mind and decided to open an investigation on the matter.



The last day of the lengthy reception ceremony finally arrived. If I made it through today, the nation-founding festival would then be hosted in three days.

After the meeting with the elves, there weren’t many other issues. Everything went smoothly and the monsters that temporarily settled in the town had not caused any major disputes either. The incident caused by Dagruel’s sons had become public knowledge at this point, but these idiots who tried to show off their power had also been tamed. Although I didn’t want to praise Shion, sometimes her lofty, violent behavior could be of use too.

Geld who had been on vacation since a few days ago had returned to the nation. Diablo and Hakurou had also returned yesterday.

“Oh oh, Rimuru-sama. I see that you are as majestic as always. It’s been so long since I got to meet you, the joy in my heart is overflowing,” Diablo started to say this nonsense followed by a series of “Kufufufufu” laughter. What prestige does a slime have?? this guy’s eyes must have some problem—is what I honestly thought.

I really wanted to hear his report, however, we would have to discuss that later. Diablo looked disappointed, but today we had an important meeting. The guests we were having a meeting with today were VIPs, drawing much attention from me.

I definitely couldn’t get careless. It was imaginable that this would be the toughest reception yet. That’s why today I had all of the executives present to participate in the ceremony.

As for these VIPs, I had Benimaru working on welcoming them. The fact that my right-hand man Benimaru took the task—from that alone you should realize how important this tribe was.

⁸⁰The nature of this facility is more like “Elven Cabaret Club,” which is why I’m referring it as “Elf Club,” in the original text they are simply referred to as “Elf Shop.”

A heated aura like burning fire gradually approached outside the entrance. It seemed that the rumor was true. As the door opened, a group of armed militias entered. They were—the race that Benimaru visited in person as an envoy.

The tengu race.

They resided on the Coscia mountain at the border of Jura Great Forest, an independent faction outside of my territory. Technically speaking, this was no reception, it was more like a conference. The armed militia arrived at the reception hall. Their leader was a beautiful young girl.

I thought that they were called tengu because they had long noses⁸¹. The tengu race was the heavenly dog (tengu), in simpler terms, they were the mixed race between angels and mountain wolves (Okami)—

«Notice. The correct term is not mixed race. The angel race incarnated into the bodies of mountain wolf race to have formed this race.»

Oh yeah, they seemed to be a race originated from incarnation.

The mountain wolves were a type of beastmen, they were born to be lonesome and prideful. Their name Okami (Mountain Wolf) has the same pronunciation as “Great God.” And so the name “tengu” had become a metaphor for “Person with extraordinary sense of smell.” By the way, about this race that seemed to be worshipped as mountain deities—

«Notice. Correctly speaking it is not the race that is worshipped. It is like individual “Ranga” who due to his “Individual” ability caused him to be categorized into the subgroup of deity.»

—Right right.

I was actually completely out of the loop on the whole thing, but basically these were mountain wolves who were born as deities that were crazy strong. Due to the incarnation of angels using their flesh, they were able to give birth to the tengu race that retained their personal will.

That powerful individual was the biological parent of this young girl in front of me, the elder of the tengu race. This elder’s power had declined greatly due to the birth of said child. It was for this reason that this young girl had become the chief of the tengu tribe.

Since we shouldn’t call this a reception, it was more appropriate to call it a conference. Moreover, there’s something more important—

.....

.....

⁸¹The kanji Fuse used for tengu is “長鼻族” which means “The race with long nose” and is why Rimuru thinks they have long nose. Their name can also be written as “天狗族” which means heavenly dog. (Which is honestly the correct use of the word as you read on)

...

Benimaru paid this tengu tribe a visit before.

They were kind enough to have allowed the high orcs to move over to their region, but in reality, this race was extremely prideful. If we were to demand of them to fall under my control, they would definitely dislike us. It may inevitably lead to war. Of course, I never planned on doing that in the first place.

This powerful race was strong enough to be worshipped as mountain deities, so there was no reason to deliberately fight them. Benimaru was well aware of that too. The goal of this visit was to obtain their permission to build the road from our kingdom to Sorcerer's Dynasty Sarion.

"I've successfully established contact with them. The tengu tribe cannot ignore Rimurusama, they apparently wish to pay you a visit," Benimaru reported to me after returning, yet in contrast to his report, he looked very exhausted.

"Was there any problem?"

"No, that's not the case..."

I asked him worryingly, to which Benimaru bit his tongue and didn't give a direct response. There was also Alvis who went along with him as an envoy, after returning, her body—actually, her mood—was very bad. The atmosphere then didn't seem to be appropriate to ask questions. I couldn't do anything about them, but I decided to force Benimaru to answer my question. It was quite inconvenient to make him talk in front of the rest of the executives, so I went for a drink with Benimaru in private.

These were the things I managed to get out of him—



Benimaru and Alvis brought a dozen Kurenai members and arrived at the hidden village of the tengu tribe.

Their journey had been smooth, up until they were halted by some young warriors of the tengu tribe in front of a cave on the top of Mount Coscia. The young warriors were wearing all white with a tachi sheathed on their belts. They had a pair of white wings sprouting from their backs and adorning their heads were triangle-shaped ears, like you'd find on dogs. They even had a tail! Observing their well-trained stances, it became readily apparent that they were proficient in martial arts. Benimaru wasn't oblivious to this fact and informed them about their intentions, seeking permission to be let through the 'Barrier' deployed in the cave.

The young warriors approved their requests and led Benimaru and Alvis inside. Through the

cave, they were greeted with flowers blossoming in what can only be described as an arcadia⁸². It was neither too cold nor too hot, the weather was always perfectly comforting—as expected from the residence of a powerful race, this was a beautiful village.

The warriors led him to a location where a beautiful girl came out to welcome Benimaru.

This girl, unlike the other tengu tribesmen, looked fairly similar to humans. Her pure white hair reached her shoulder, with the hair near the sides of her ears turning bright red. Her small, cherry-colored lips looked very soft. With pupils that resembled that of a wolf's, her narrow pair of eyes gazed at Benimaru inquisitively, without turning, as if she were analyzing her prey.

This person is not to be underestimated—Benimaru thought to himself. Her presence could rival Demon Lord Karion, who he had met before, or maybe she was even beyond that.

“My name is Benimaru. I am visiting as a representative of Demon Lord Rimuru-sama.”

“Welcome, Envoy-dono. I am the daughter of the tengu tribe elder. Momiji⁸³ is my name. So, what is the purpose of your visit? Do you plan to take over this land?”

Despite the glamorous smile on her face, the response she gave to Benimaru's greeting was anything but friendly.

We are not welcomed here, Benimaru could sense that. But he was not going to let such a minor thing hold him back.

“We have no such intent. We only wish that you will grant us the permission to pass by and cross the Coscia mountain between here and the border of Jura Great Forest. If possible, I also hope that you will permit us to dig a tunnel in this mountain.”

“Hmph. So you claim that you have no ambition to expand, I see... You may have permission to pass...but what do you mean by digging a tunnel?”

Momiji was not interested in hearing Benimaru's explanation, but the word “tunnel” had caught her attention. Honestly speaking, Benimaru was not too sure about what this “tunnel” thing was either, the rough explanation Rimuru gave him was that it is about opening a hole in the mountain. In fact, this tunnel plan hadn't even been tested yet, ever since Rimuru proposed it. If they were connecting with the capital of Sarion, digging a tunnel would create the shortest route. Technically there was no need to go that far; connecting the road to one of Sarion's towns along the border would suffice. There was really no need to dig a tunnel. Benimaru was aware of that plan B, but he still decided to bring it up.

“This tunnel thing, it is something about opening a hole in the mountain so that the road can extend to the opposite side. We won't press it if it's not convenient for you—”

“Hold on. Opening a hole in the mountain? Are you serious?”

“Indeed. That's how the plan states it. But we don't need to dig any tunnel for the road being constructed this time. I only asked beforehand in case of it becoming a necessity in the future.

⁸²This phrase here in source is “桃源郷,” which is a term referring to an ideal/perfect location that people reside whether with materialistic abundance or other desirable traits of an ideal society. The closest term in I can find in English for this is “Arcadia” (Greek concept) or “Eden” (Biblical concept), both refers to a form of “heaven on earth” or utopian ideal society.

⁸³紅葉 Autumn leaf

If you are not willing, we will not force you to do so,” Benimaru answered swiftly. However, the tengu tribesmen began to sway. To them, the mountain was holy, things like digging tunnels was tantamount to blasphemy.

“You are truly awful. We don’t care for whether a slime becomes a demon lord or not, he can do what he wants as long as he does not interfere with us. We even planned to close one eye for you and that stinking snake you brought⁸⁴. But we can’t just sit here and endure now that you dared to belittle our divine mountain.”

Upon saying so, Momiji rose from her seat. Benimaru didn’t mean that at all, but given the circumstances right now, continuing negotiations with them seemed impossible.

What a misstep—Benimaru thought to himself.

Even if Benimaru tried to talk them out of it, the other party wouldn’t back down. He decided his best course of action would be to remain still for a while longer, an opinion Alvis clearly didn’t share as she broke her silence with words of indignation.

“You mentioned a snake that stinks, were you perhaps referring to me?”

She was secretly boiling in fury as she stood up from her seat to stare at Momiji. A fight was about to break out as both persons began to emit a dangerous aura.

“Oi, stop that at once—”

Benimaru tried to halt her when Alvis’s sharp gaze was shot at Momiji.

Extra Skill ‘Eyes of Heavenly Snake’—effects of paralysis, poison and madness etc. began to corrupt Momji who was in Alvis’s direct line of sight.

Yet Momiji wasn’t concerned at all.

“Petty trickeries,” she chided. “I am the daughter of the tengu tribe elder; status ailment doesn’t work on me.” She closed her hands to draw out a fan.

The tengu were semi-spiritual lifeforms. Just as Momiji said, they had high resistance against status ailment. Moreover, Momiji’s Extra Skill ‘Sense of Heavenly Wolf’ was always activated. It offered analysis ability that surpassed the five senses and had effects similar to an advanced version of Extra Skill ‘Magic Perception.’ But that was not all, ‘Sense of Heavenly Wolf’ could also nullify all illusion and conjuring magic. That’s why such a sneak attack on Momiji would never work.

It’s almost as if she were saying “*It’s my turn*”, Momiji raised her fan and with smooth dancing motions, launched an attack at Alvis. Alvis blocked the first hit with her golden khakkhara, yet was hit on the side of her stomach by the immediate follow-up, sending her flying to the corner of the hall.

“Oooof.”

Although it was just a casual strike, Momiji’s movement was extremely skillful. She reopened the fan that closed due to the previous hit and elegantly used it to conceal her mouth.

⁸⁴The source is: Snake that stinks of wild beast

A moment passed before Momiji broke the silence.

“Is that all? I see the prestigious Beastketeer isn’t that strong after all.”



Now that hurt Alvis's dignity.

"Don't underestimate me now, you hick. I held back since we are negotiating with you, but it seems there's no such need anymore."

Alvis's wounds had all been healed as she stood up uncaringly. She glared back at Momiji with cold eyes. As a high-ranked majin of the Beast Kingdom Eurazania, she began to demonstrate the proper style to stand off against Momiji.

"Holding back? That's my line. I've put an effort trying not to kill our envoy. Or is it that you intend to truly anger me?"

The two stared at each other as the temperature in the surrounding room began to drop noticeably. Even the young tengu warriors standing guard in the hall fell victim as the whole room was filled with concentrated youki that tensed their nerves. Under such circumstances, only Benimaru was drinking tea on his seat.

This could no longer be simply described as a misstep; things have gotten problematic. He thought to himself while taking a sip.

"You are indeed strong. But this world is not so pretty as to allow some little girl with no combat experience to triumph."

"Wanna try? As you've said, I want to accumulate combat experience too. You happen to be a pretty good target to experiment with."

The animosity was ever increasing between the two until it reached the breaking point.

At that instant—

With the flash of a sword, the fan in Momiji's hand was deflected.

Silence fell upon the hall.

The speed was so fast that no one was able to respond when Benimaru intervened in the duel.

"That's it. It was my fault to have spoken things that displeased you. With that being said, I will not allow you to kill my companion," Benimaru declared calmly.

"B-Benimaru-sama? Are you implying that I would lose?"

"Yes. Had I not intervened in time, you would have been cut in half."

"T-That's a lie! I did control my attack power—"

"No, your control of youki is not skillful enough. There was too much strength."

"H-How could this—"

"I... I lost...?"

Momiji and Alvis both unconsciously collapsed at the same time at the scene. It was then that a door deep into the hall was opened as a beauty with large dog ears appeared.

The young tengu warriors quickly kneeled.

"M-Mother!"

As she cracked a smile towards the panicked Momiji, the tengu elder—Momiji's mother—slowly stepped forward.

She then stepped towards Momiji—

“Silly girl!”

The elder scolded her loudly while approaching. Everyone changed the venue and the two parties sat face to face again. It was a Japanese-style room with tatami and futon (Japanese bedding). Deeper into this room was another U-shaped room without a door. It was specially arranged so that the tengu elder, who was often bedridden, could take a rest as soon as possible when she needed it.

After the incident, the elder gave Momiji a lesson with her fists, she was still holding her head with tears in her eyes. Although she still looked quite indignant, she didn’t appear to complain anymore.

“It’s all right, you don’t have to force yourself. We’ve only come here to greet you—”

Although their goal was not reached, the atmosphere at hand was no longer suitable for any negotiation. Moreover, Alvis was also dejected, so staying any longer would only make the situation more awkward. Benimaru decided to leave when the elder herself came forth to abruptly halt him.

“Hehehe, don’t mind that, young man. Speaking of which, your swordsmanship was extraordinary. Could it be ‘Oboro-Ryu’ (School of Haziness)⁸⁵? ”

“Why do you—actually, I see how it is now. Momiji-dono’s fan dance also had elements of my style. Could it be—”

“Indeed. I’ve also studied ‘Oboro-Ryu,’ from my mentor—‘Byakuya Araki.’ ”

“What!”

Benimaru was shocked. Seeing his expression, the tengu elder smiled contently.

“My name is Kaede (Maple)—”

After saying this, the tengu elder Kaede began to tell the story of her past. According to her, around three hundred years ago, she seemed to have stayed in the ogre’s village. She hid her true strength, went on journeys, and happened to encounter Byakuya and studied sword art under him. Kaede had a senior back then; the man could only be described as a genius who was born for the arts of the sword. He was also Byakuya’s grandson.

“How upsetting that I couldn’t grant him a name.”

Apparently, this was Byakuya’s mantra. Naming monsters on a whim may end up costing you your life. Byakuya was human, so he would have definitely died. At the time, Kaede also didn’t have a ‘Name,’ so she couldn’t understand how he felt back then, unlike now. The hope he held was to leave something for his loved one. To monsters, it was normal to not have names, but it was different for humans.

Later, Byakuya’s life came to an end and passed away from this world leaving his grandson, who then became the Demon Swordsman (Kenki)⁸⁶. His strength quickly approached that of Kaede, and his technique was already far beyond hers. Moreover, Kaede was mesmerized by

⁸⁵This swordsmanship style has been mentioned before as well, I will be referring it to as Oboro-Ryu as there is no good alternative. “朧” (Oboro) means hazy and unclear (There are also skills with this word in it), “流” (Ryu) means school/style.

⁸⁶Kenki is a title that this person got, it is directly translated to “Sword Devil.”

his dashing swordsmanship.

And so she confessed her love to him under a large maple tree. After sharing a night together, she departed from the ogre village...

The climate in the Jura Great Forest was very unstable, that maple tree, however, had always stood tall and beautiful. Its autumn leaves would be dyed with a pretty red color. It had become a symbol of the village which even Benimaru remembered. He recognized that she was speaking the truth.

“Eh, hold on, wouldn’t that make you Hakurou’s...”

Benimaru became anxious and his mutter slipped out of his mouth unconsciously.

“Oh, so is he called Hakurou now?” Kaede replied. “I see, my senior Kenki-dono got a name. To be honest however... It’s quite surprising to learn that he’s even still alive.”

Benimaru was getting more and more nervous seeing Kaede finishing her words with a smile on her face.

H-Hold up, hold up. Does Hakurou know about this?

All sorts of questions like that crossed his mind. But what happened next made Benimaru even more bewildered.

“With that being said, I can finally be reassured now.”

“...?”

“Hakurou-dono has trained a reliable and courageous prodigy, and he will be the husband to my daughter.”

Pffff!

Benimaru was trying to drink some tea to calm down, but he had accidentally spit it out now. Benimaru seldom lost his cool, yet this whole trip had been full of surprises ever since they arrived at the village. Benimaru, however, was not the only one to lose composure. Alvis next to him became speechless, dropping her teacup, which shattered into a million pieces.

Upon hearing this, Momiji looked at Benimaru first with her face blushed before turning to her mother Kaede.

“W-wait a second, mother—?”

She helplessly tried to cover up Kaede’s mouth, but Momiji was no rival to Kaede. She suppressed Momiji single-handedly and turned to Benimaru with a serious tone, “Then, Benimaru-dono. The proposal you just raised; we will accept all of its content. Moreover, we can pledge allegiance to Demon Lord Rimuru. However, the condition is that you will marry my daughter. That point really goes without saying, but I suppose I should ask for your perspective.”

How do you expect me to respond after asking so directly about such an important matter— Benimaru was at a loss.

Hopefully, they would give him some time to consider. The other person who managed to save Benimaru was the girl of the hour, Momiji.

“Hold on! I know that mother has already acknowledged this guy. But I haven’t! He does indeed seem stronger than me... If that’s the case, I hope that he would not be forced by Mother, but rather to truly like me. A good woman should move the heart of the man she likes, didn’t

mother always say that?"

Momiji flustered for some reason after saying this. She used her fan to hide her face before running away on her own. Kaede laughed out loud at the scene. Alvis raised her head with some form of revelation while Benimaru felt a bit embarrassed seeing how Momiji had acted.

Speaking of this, Hakurou has always acted very gracefully... Now that I've lost my cool over such an insignificant matter, it only means that my training is still lacking—

He did some self-reflection—but this whole incident just happened too abruptly... And so his marriage with Momiji was brought back to be discussed.

Basically, the whole deal had been Kaede's own personal wish, not actually something she wanted to impose on Benimaru. At most she was just delivering a message. It would be a huge gain for her if Benimaru had agreed, but that's just a thought. The rest of the requests from the Tempest Federation were also passed after brief discussion, there wasn't much of a problem. The tunnel digging on the mountain was discussed separately, they permitted us to build the road to Sarion.

However, there were other issues to be discussed. Putting aside whether Benimaru and Momiji could get together, they hoped that the tengu tribe could build a good relationship with Demon Lord Rimuru—Kaede proposed as much.

Despite how she looked, Kaede was in fact extremely ill—or so they proclaimed to the public.

It was however not the case. Kaede was pregnant with Momiji for too long and passed most of her power to Momiji. After giving birth to her fifteen years ago⁸⁷ and giving her a 'Name.' This caused her, the worshipped earth deity, to consume almost all of her magicule storage. Now she could only await her end.

That's why Kaede hoped to find her cute yet inexperienced daughter a strong backing. That was her only wish.

And Benimaru happened to visit that land. To Kaede, it was a sign of hope. Kaede thought it was the last string of hope left by the man she loved.

It won't matter even if my wish is rejected. So Demon Lord Rimuru had you by his side? I thought that you would have passed before me, what a delightful miscalculation. Surely it will draw back your memory when you see that child Momiji— Kaede thought to herself, and so she agreed to discuss the issue in the future.

And so, it was Momiji's turn to visit Demon Lord Rimuru.



⁸⁷She met Hakurou around 300 years ago... That was a loooong pregnancy.

About that... Benimaru seemed to be getting a serious headache over the whole thing. It was probably the biggest crisis Benimaru had ever faced since he was born. He claimed it was even scarier than our initial encounter, which I was really not sure how to interpret. Perhaps it was Benimaru's way of joking.

Putting that aside however, even that Alvis was easily suppressed. That woman's combat ability was not to be underestimated. It was fortunate that we didn't antagonize her.

—No, I'm running away from reality, that's not the issue. I never expected Hakurou to have a daughter...

A huge problem had emerged, and what truly unnerved me was that the conclusion I reached in resolving it was that we wouldn't know how to deal with the matter unless we met them. After all, this issue couldn't be resolved by me and Benimaru alone. Hakurou would also play a key role in this, I'd have to hear him out. But at the time it was not convenient to summon him back... That's why, before Hakurou's return, we decided to push these questions back for now.

And soon after, last night—we found Hakurou who had returned from the Kingdom of Farmus to discuss among the three of us. Right now we had no clue what type of demands the tengu tribe would make. There was no telling what might happen, so we planned to receive them on the last day. That's why I was about to summon Hakurou back if he didn't manage to get back in time. But it seemed there was no such need.

With that being said however, he did manage to return in time, but the problem remained unresolved. Whether Benimaru would be marrying Momiji or not, it would be their problem. Even if they were getting married it was fine. Basically it's none of my business...

“Please hold on! I have my own considerations as well, or perhaps should I stand my ground—”

“What are you talking about? Could it be that young master thinks my daughter is not worthy of you?”

“I never said that! By the way, you've never even seen her, didn't even know she was born, so don't act like a father now!”

“It is because I know that fact that I'm gonna take responsibility from now on!”

And just like that, Benimaru didn't know what to do while Hakurou was acting abnormally... Things had gotten a lot more complex. There was no way this meeting could continue...

We continued discussing without any rest, but there was still no conclusion. Afterwards we just decided on directly confronting the issue, which is how things had progressed up until today.

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...

A table had been temporarily set up in the reception hall. A beautiful young girl was sitting across from me. The color of her hair transitioned from beautiful white to vibrant red. This

young girl was the tengu tribe's representative, the fabled Momiji.

She was looking at me arrogantly and greeted me in a bold tone.

"Demon Lord Rimuru, nice to meet you. I have come in place of the chief of tengu tribe. My name is Momiji, I look forward to our future interaction."

"You are too kind. I am Rimuru who just became a demon lord. What you see now is my human form, but I'm actually a slime. I'm practically a pacifist, so you can discuss with me if you ever run into any trouble."

"You may spare the concern. It is truly impressive that you've united Jura Great Forest in this short time. I acknowledge that you are the ruler of this forest, so I hope you will be a good neighbor. However, do not interfere with us," Momiji declared in front of the many executives of mine. Shion was about to react as her body shook a bit. But surprisingly she endured it. I didn't tell her about the whole story, so it must have been Shion herself who decided to hold back. It seemed that there had been some change in her mind, causing her to no longer pursue every minor matter. That's a good sign, but it was also a bit eerie. I hoped she wouldn't endure too much and have an outbreak someday.

And about this Momiji, she was looking quite nervous while waiting for my response. It would not have been noticed if I hadn't pointed it out. While she looked quite casual and relaxed, internally she was probably on the verge of being crushed by extreme unease. That's probably because she couldn't tell whether I was friend or foe.

If that's the case, all you guys need to do is show your willingness for allegiance. But how could such a thing be allowed by their prideful race? After all, an inexperienced leader is done for if she's looked down on by others. I can understand her sentiment. But speaking of this, the young warriors of the tengu tribe do all seem to have given their fullest loyalty to Momiji.

"I see. I understand what you are getting at. We don't intend to interfere too much. I believe Benimaru here has also explained, we just want to conduct some road construction work at the foot of Coscia mountain. There's also another thing that I want to confirm with you, will you give the high orcs the permission to stay now that they've moved their settlement to the lower mountain region?"

"All right, all of these are fine. We've never claimed ownership to the resources of the mountain and forests, so they can do what they wish with the minerals. Those things are beyond our ownership. We simply dislike being interfered with, that is all."

About that... The lower mountain region was part of the Jura Great Forest, so I expected that she would complain about it. While bracing myself for their answer, it seemed that they didn't have a problem with it either.

If that's the case, what could the tengu tribe really be on guard about? It seemed that Alvis also disliked them a lot, could it be some conflict with Beast King Karion? I was rather mindful of it, so I decided to cut to the chase.

"About that, I'm not sure what you guys are wary of, but we really don't hope to be hostile against you."

"Why should I believe you?"

“Hmm, even if you were to claim that we had ambitions to expand our territory, do you really have any evidence to warrant your suspicion?”

Momiji turned to me immediately upon hearing this, trying to determine whether we were friendly or hostile. Then she replied boldly: “Aren’t you guys on good terms with that sly bird lady Frey? Her desire to usurp our land is the best evidence!”

The so-called unforeseeable surprise⁸⁸ perfectly represented this type of situation.

“Hold on, time out!”

“Time out what now? What does that mean?”

“It means stop! We need to discuss some things!”

I gathered all the executives and began to discuss. Momiji agreed without hesitation, but it seemed to have been mixed with some complaints... I must have heard wrong. While leaving aside Momiji who was muttering something, we gathered in a circle.

“Right, what do you guys think?”

“Ex-Demon Lord Frey’s territory is connected with the Coscia mountain, so it wouldn’t be unheard of if she has caused conflict with the tengu tribe,” to my question, Souei quickly replied.

Indeed, I checked the map in my mind as I thought so. The tengu’s residence was not within the Jura Great Forest and therefore not within any demon lord’s agreement of protection. They were very easily invaded by others.

“But what could have been the reason?”

“Indeed, there’s no reason to invade,” Benimaru followed up. He had gone to the actual location and knew that there weren’t any resources there.

“I’ve heard something before. It is rumored that Frey likes to go to move around locations with high altitude. Perhaps it is just as her nickname ‘Sky Queen’ suggests, could she be trying to move her city to the highest location?” Hakurou pondered while raising the case, but it still sounded a bit weird. Since according to Benimaru, only by going through the cave at the mountain top would you reach the arcadia that was the hidden residence of the tengu tribe—in other words, it was actually in a tiny alternate dimension. I figured that would be quite different from the city that Frey would hope for.

“Hmmm—”

Everyone fell silent while contemplating. And then—

“You people—Stop treating me like air!”

“Uhh!”

I got spooked when someone suddenly shouted next to me. Momiji had come over to vent her rising frustration. Now I couldn’t pretend that I’d not heard her. So I decided to give up struggling and returned to my seat. I opened up directly facing Momiji, “I have a question to ask. Has Frey ever schemed against the tengu domain for the purpose of expanding?”

“Ah? What nonsense is that—”

⁸⁸The source here states: 寝耳に水, which means unforeseeable event

Momiji looked at me dumbfounded. But after realizing that I was serious, she muttered: “You gotta be joking...” I saw that we seemed to be developing a grave misunderstanding, so to alleviate that, I asked her to give a detailed explanation of her own situation. Here’s what Momiji had to say:

The place Frey had her eyes on was the capital of Sorcerer’s Dynasty Sarion, “City embraced by the divine tree, Elmin Sarion.” She was not pursuing territory, but height. *Can’t believe that’s actually her goal.* It was quite like Frey’s style, and she wasn’t joking around.

Judging by scale alone, Sarion was undoubtedly a powerful nation with military power exceeding that of Frey. However, though the Sarion army could utilize its geographic advantage to look down on land armies from above, they couldn’t avoid the harsh battle against the great army of Frey who could fly freely in the sky. In other words, Frey had not given up on the divine tree. It was then that Frey took interest in the tengu tribe. She wanted to recruit the powerful tengu race to bolster her arsenal against Sarion.

However, the tengu were a prideful race. They wouldn’t listen to Frey’s command that easily. On the other hand, Sarion had also predicted how the tengu would act. They simply observed the other two factions battling each other until they depleted their strength. Sarion didn’t intend to collaborate in fighting their enemy but sat and enjoyed the profit of their conflict. Of course, Frey also realized this and didn’t make a move without caution. And so, a twisted triangle relationship was thus formed...

It was then that the war between me and Clayman broke out, and soon enough Karion and Frey became Demon Lord Milim’s subjects. A powerful force was thus born. One that the tengu tribe was unable to defend against. Every day since then they had been discussing where to migrate to in the future.

Benimaru and the others happened to visit at the time. The unlucky part was that the Beastketeer Alvis was with them. It has caused Momiji to have misunderstood that we were quietly pressuring them.

“What’s the situation on Frey-san’s side?” I asked Geld. He was in charge of the construction of their new capital, so Frey probably had made many requests from him. Among my allies, he was the man most familiar with Frey.

“Yes Sir, about this Frey-sama, she’s very satisfied with Rimuru-sama’s design. She’s even able to communicate smoothly with Mildo-san who doesn’t like to talk, even holding detailed discussions in the past.”

Oh, so she can even communicate with Mildo. I’m rather impressed by Frey.

“I see. Then she probably won’t be interested in the divine tree.”

“Indeed... Actually, speaking of that, Frey-sama’s interest has turned to—I’ve spoken too much—”

“Hmm? What happened to Frey’s interest?”

“Yes Sir, actually... We’ve not seen Milim-sama for a while. Frey-sama who was responsible for educating her didn’t pay attention for a second and she ran off to god knows where—”

Ah, right. I know where she is. But, I’m gonna pretend I know nothing of it. The saying

goes “Don’t go look for trouble yourself,” I didn’t want to get dragged in that mess.

“—So that’s how it is, Frey-sama’s new hobby...or rather, focus, I think has been her search for Demon Lord Milim-sama,” Geld concluded his explanation.

The skyscrapers of the new capital—that gigantic building that reaches for the sky had completely mesmerized Frey. Surely at this point, comparing it to any other city would just be stupid, so she must have lost interest in them as well. Compared to that, Milim was the bigger problem.

After which, Momiji absorbed the entirety of our conversation. The dichotomy between her imagination and the reality was so large to have caused her to become speechless, not knowing how to react. I guess that should be the case. That’s just how the reality really is. They were just keeping up their guard against a certain enemy that might cause crisis to their race, but it turned out she had switched her focus long ago. Learning this today would definitely prompt people to try and escape reality.

“—I understand the whole thing now. Anyway, that’s how it is. It is enough for me to have been able to resolve your misunderstanding.”

It was likely because the tengu had kept away from the world and were less informed on current affairs. They were still worried about being surrounded by enemies. Such anxiety caused Momiji to misjudge. Indeed, she had her reasons to make such judgement under those circumstances.

“I can’t believe that it was me who thought too much... Mother has always said that I was worrying too much about the matter...”

After finishing her words, Momiji felt relieved. She collapsed on the spot having been so exhausted. Seeing how she reacted, we gained a very profound insight into how terrifying it was to cause too much misunderstanding.



Since the misunderstanding had been resolved, the meeting quickly concluded. In place of the frustrated Momiji, a young warrior of the tengu tribe confirmed the content of our pact. I thought that he was just Momiji’s guard, but it seemed that he was also a capable civil official.

The tunnel part was reserved for now. Their argument was that if we couldn’t prove that the construction would be absolutely safe, they wouldn’t allow us to work. I found it reasonable and easily agreed, so there weren’t any problems with that. We still needed to talk with the executives from Sarion regarding us building a tunnel, but we would plan for that after the train development had concluded. There was no immediate need to make a decision at this point in time. The tengu tribe hoped that we would not interfere with them, but they only said so fearing that we might rally and invade them.

Now that our misunderstanding had been resolved, there was no reason why we shouldn't communicate. And so we reached common ground, at last where we would help each other out no matter what problem we ran into.

“—Then, is that everything?”

“Yes. We are extremely grateful for your understanding and participation in this helpful meeting with us. Thank you, Demon Lord Rimuru-sama,” the young warrior of the tengu tribe bowed to me courteously. Momiji was no longer misunderstanding us and we had also signed a pact. The only thing left was—

The relationship between Hakurou and Momiji as well as the marriage between Benimaru and her.

We had discussed a ton last night to no avail. From what happened today, Momiji seemed to have suspected we were enemies throughout the session, but those misunderstandings had now been resolved. Now then, shouldn't we let the people involved sort things out by themselves?

Just as I was worried about how to approach the subject, the young tengu warrior took out a sealed envelope.

“There's one more thing. Please have a look at this. It contains a letter written by our leader Kaede-sama to your Majesty Rimuru,” as he finished, he handed over the letter to me gently. Rigurd took the letter and handed it to Shuna for her to open. She began to read the content of the letter out loud.

The letter opened with some abstruse words of greeting followed by some humble writing that seemed to be trying to get on the recipient's good side. But then the word choices became more and more casual. As Shuna read it, a sense of confusion arose on her face too.

“Even though she's a headache to deal with and misunderstood you, I'll entrust my daughter to you. That child even bragged about letting Benimaru-dono fall in love with her before, she really doesn't mean any harm—”

Eh, are you sure this is a letter for me? No no, no no no, it doesn't seem to be no matter how you see it. Had I known that this is the content of the letter from the start, I would have the honor guard leave the scene... But it's all too late at this point.

“M-Mother, what is this—?”

Momiji who was on the ground suddenly jumped up to take the letter from Shuna's hand.
Eh, that's so rude. But I can't really blame her—

Since I couldn't blame her, I'd just pretend I saw nothing. If I switched places with Momiji right now, god knows what type of thing I would have done. This had long since passed a matter concerning reputation and was challenging the limits of shame.

“S-So there are actually two letters! That's so rash, mother dear...” Momiji cried out loud and collapsed on the ground, burying her face in her hands.

Ah, I see... It seems that the letter for Hakurou was mixed with the letter for me. Missy,

please stay strong.

While the tengu tribesmen were coming and trying to comfort Momiji, it had little more than the opposite effect. It was best to stay away from her for now. But it was at that instant—
“Hehe, that does seem like something she would do.”

Hakurou walked towards Momiji with a wry smile. He then took over the letter held tightly in her hand and scanned through it.

“I see how it is now. ‘—Although that child possesses powerful strength, her techniques are below expectations. I hope that my senior and the father of that child—“Kenki” Hakurou-dono will instruct her by hand and train her well—To my beloved husband, Kaede—’ I can’t believe that girl is still in love with me. Hehehe, living a bit longer does have its plus side.”

Upon saying so, Hakurou began to laugh joyfully.

“A-are you... My father?”

“Indeed. I am your father, Hakurou.”

“D-Dad!”

Tears began to drop from her black eyes that shared a striking resemblance to Hakurou’s. Momiji crushed him in a hug. Hakurou and Momiji had given us a moving scene of a father-daughter reunion. Momiji was no longer holding any suspicion against us or Hakurou.

“Momiji, I am quite strict when it comes to training people.”

“Got it—”

“That’s good. You will overcome the challenges with flying colors and have Young Master fall in love with you!”

“Yes!!”

Hmm, ehehhh!

I nodded quite frequently with a moved heart when hearing their conversation, but without my notice, the conversation started to stray into some strange direction.

What is this called again? “You have to fill the moat before taking the castle?”⁸⁹ Hakurou was usually very calm, but now with the sudden appearance of a daughter, he abruptly turned into the idiot dad that spoils his kid.

“Oi, Hakurou—”

Benimaru’s words couldn’t seem to reach him as the two were enjoying their own little universe. It happened at that moment—

Shuna added with a whisper: “Ah, there’s also this—“ everyone’s eyes fell on Shuna. She didn’t mind a single bit as she gazed at Benimaru.

“Nii-san, Alvis-sama has left you a message.”

With these words said, Shuna looked up to Benimaru directly.

“What is it?” he asked rather unpleasantly.

⁸⁹This is a Japanese proverb 外堀を埋める, which means to achieve a certain goal, some steps must first be taken to get rid of the obstacle. In this case, I think it is referring to the fact that Momiji’s presence got rid of the calm factor of Hakurou. But honestly it seems pretty out of place, or maybe just my moonrune skill is shit. Probably the latter.

Hmm, I understand how you feel. I think he hopes whatever it is to be put on hold for a while. However, the cruel reality was that Shuna rolled her eyes and announced the message.

Its content was as follows—

“Benimaru-sama, I’ve made up my mind. I wish to triumph over Momiji-sama and become your wife, and even if I am not so lucky, I still have the option of concubine. I will not give up, please make your resolve.”

—Shuna announced it while imitating Alvis’s tone. The honor guards gasped. The executives were all worked up by it.

“...”

Benimaru, on the other hand, had his arms crossed and remained silent throughout. *You should be getting a bad headache right now! Benimaru sure is something.*

—Wait a moment, hold on.

He had actually been petrified and shocked speechless. His prowess in the battlefield was second to none, but his ability wasn’t enough to handle this situation—I seemed to have discovered an unexpected weak point of Benimaru.

Sorry, Benimaru. My experience with love affairs is not enough—It’s zero, I swear!—to be of any help.

“Ah, speaking of this, it’s so hard being a popular guy...” I couldn’t help but blurt out.

“Rimuru-sama, are you serious? You aren’t exactly outside his league...”

Seriously? I don’t even have a gender. Gobta sure is an idiot.

“Kufufufufu, I have no interest in getting into any relationship. My heart only belongs to Rimuru-sama.”

No, I’ve heard nothing—I’m not interested either, so you can do whatever you want. I’m definitely not thinking about something else. I started to catch up on the whispers of the executives.

“As expected from Benimaru-dono, he’s so popular. I heard that the subordinate of my sister also really likes Benimaru-san, but they are both having a hard time to win over Alvis-dono and Momiji-dono.”

“Are you talking about Touka? Actually, not just Touka, even Saika has a crush on him too.”

“That’s right, I heard that they don’t want to compete with Souka and so they gave up on Souei-san!”

“What nonsense are you on about—”

“No no no, it’s all true.”

Gabil and Souei were whispering to each other.

However, what Gobta then said was the key.

“Does that mean, Benimaru’s gonna have a harem? I’m so jealous!”

After that was pointed out, I suddenly began to see things in the same light.

What the hell? I'm so envious! I'm starting to get jealous of Benimaru as well. Alvis-san is the beautiful and reliable big-sis type girlfriend while Momiji is the cute and tsundere imouto (lil sis). Not only these two, there are many other girls who also like Benimaru. Gobta had a point, in a sense it is just like he is collecting a harem.

But, Benimaru himself seemed to be quite troubled over it...

“A harem, that does make me envious.”

“Heh, that may not be the case. Despite how Benimaru looks, he's a pure-hearted virgin that doesn't know how to deal with girls. He may look like a chad to everyone else, but internally he must be very troubled.”

Gabil looked at him with jealousy while Souei gave his response. *I think he nailed the interpretation.* Even if there were many female pursuers, they were just a cause for concern to Benimaru. Moreover, he would be really mindful of how Shuna saw him. Benimaru seemed to be somewhat of a siscon, surely his mind was shouting “oh shit, oh shit” internally.

It was then that Geld interjected and added on: “I think this is a wonderful matter. Benimaru is very manly, so naturally females in this town would admire him. Alvis-dono is naturally strong as the head of the Beastketeers while Momiji-dono is Hakuro-san's daughter, both are impeccable choices. I need to follow in his footsteps.”

Geld apparently supported Benimaru in having both a wife and concubine. But whether he would have a harem or not, he hadn't given a comment on the matter. Compared to women, Geld seemed to focus more on work, so I was really skeptical about whether his claim about following Benimaru's footsteps was true or not.

By the way, Geld was actually quite popular too. He was a serious man of few words with an unyielding sense of responsibility. Not only among the female high orcs, many women from the other races also admired him a lot. That's why if Geld ever did take a chance, he would probably end up with a girlfriend pretty fast.

Seeing how Geld reacted, Gabil had something to say too, “No no no, Geld-dono is good enough already. Touka and the rest are just as how I described; they won't even look at me... For some reason, the subordinates who admire me are all men—”

“You must have not met the right person. I can relate to your feeling to some extent.”

Geld nodded. Indeed, his workplace was mainly the construction field which had a higher percentage of males. Monsters like me who had no gender and were as hard to differentiate as some amphibian might be exceptions, but if in a working environment there were female coworkers to work alongside the males, they might just be a bit more motivated. That part we would have to discuss later.

“That's not really the case, there are several female dwarven herbalists working with me. If it is true, we would have the chance to see to each other—”

“Then there shouldn't be much of an issue.”

Hold up hold up, isn't there still a problem? They were of different races after all. It's not as if the problem was solved if the numbers matched up, right?

“There's quite the big issue actually. Those ladies said that 'I can't seem to physically accept

something like a lizard,’ that’s why I’m not popular at all...”

“I see—”

...

Uh, uhmm. I’m a bit speechless. It seems that his obstacle is bigger than just the race difference. There’s no wonder why Gabil can only choose to give up.

“—Well, it is supposed to only be like that, but Nansou and Hakusou often get invited to meals and picnics in the forest! That really frustrates me—”

Ah! Now we can’t use racial difference as an excuse...

“T-That’s just...” even Geld ran out of explanations and was troubled by how he could comfort Gabil.

“Yep... That’s why I want to try a human form too. My old man got more handsome through ‘Transformation,’ but I may have a chance as well!”

No way, there’s no such chance. It’s not just about appearance. I’ve lived for nearly forty years without a girlfriend, despite looking very handsome!

The point is—

“How boring. That’s all because you never took the initiative yourself.”

Right, Souei-kun, bingo! That’s exactly the case. Just being a nice guy being a bystander is not enough. How will any girl fall for Gabil if he only complains like that all the time. Don’t fantasize about girls coming after you, instead you should man up and take the initiative... Eh, though I only realized this after becoming a slime...

“T-there’s no such thing, I mean, you’re not wrong, but—”

“Souei-san has a point! I’ve heard the dwarven big sis saying ‘Gazart is so cool,’ ‘Right right,’ ‘The quiet type character is the most attractive!’, ‘He’s like my pet lizard, so cute’ to praise Gabil-san’s subordinate. That’s why I don’t think the problem is appearance!”

Ah, Gobta was so straight-forward. Gazart was a subordinate of Gabil and a member of Hiruyu. That man was of few words and pretty good with spear arts, but he was also very clumsy. That’s why I didn’t let him participate in the research program but assigned him as the bodyguard of the researchers and the herbalists. It was obvious that he was originally a lizardman, after his evolution to dragonewt nowadays he looked quite similar to Gabil whose appearance resembled that of a lizard. Now even appearance could no longer be an excuse, Gobta sure was quite mean.

Gabil seemed very frustrated, and Souei dished out the decisive blow.

“—Moreover, it is actually surprisingly easy to get the affection of women.”

“W-what do you mean!”

How is that possible—I asked based on this thought, and as a result Souei responded with something extremely unexpected with a cold face.

“There was a female knight who seemed to have had some sort of misunderstanding and developed strong feelings for me,” Souei commented almost like a complaint with disdain in his tone.

“Are you serious! What did you do?”

“Oh oh?”

“That sounds so interesting!”

“Please give us the details!”

Souei’s words had also caught my interest as I was eavesdropping on the side. About that female knight... Right, what did Souei do to that lady called Ritase? I was curious but forgot to ask. For some reason, she blushed every time she saw Souei, surely it couldn’t be that...

“Rimuru-sama is also interested?”

“Of course I am. Moreover, you haven’t reported about the situation yet...”

“Oh, about that, so basically, I used ‘Sticky Steel String’ a bit—”

Using ‘Sticky Steel String’ a bit for what—as I thought so, a sudden surge of killing aura appeared behind me followed by a loud cough.

“Ahem!”

We were whispering just now when we suddenly froze to switch back to a serious expression. As I shouted internally “Oh snap” I turned back to slime form in secret to flee, but was hugged by a pair of white and slim hands.

“Rimuru-sama, you sure like jesting around. Let’s stop talking about that and discuss my brother’s affair.”

Oh yeah, there’s also that. I accidentally went on a tangent. I would die a horrible death if Shuna got pissed. We decided to drop the small talk and contemplated seriously.

Then—although I said I would contemplate seriously, there was no way I could give an immediate answer.

“Benimaru, what do you think yourself?”

“About that, it is really too early to discuss it, that’s all I can say. I think one spouse should be enough.”

He did have a point. Of course he would feel bewildered to be suddenly engaged. If someone asked me to accept an arranged marriage I would definitely refuse. That might be how they did it in the old days, but we were living in current year the age of free love after all. Moreover—

“Basically, us Greater Majins can’t bear children so easily. Some may find several partners to pass their seed and have them compete against each other, but I’m really not interested in that whole thing. That’s why I don’t want any concubines,” Benimaru said with determination before us. Momiji looked at him with sparkling eyes.

“Which means, you won’t have a harem.”

Not just harem, we didn’t even support polygamy. Unless the situation forced that to happen, for instance if there were too many widows, otherwise our nation did not apply such a system.

Just as I thought the whole thing was over, even more trouble emerged.

“I understand, then I will take on Alvis-san’s challenge. The one who is going to become Benimaru-sama’s wife will be me!” Momiji declared with motivation.

That’s not how you get in a relationship—although that’s how I saw it, I suspected that

Benimaru had already given up and was not saying anything.

“Rimuru-sama, what do you think?”

Why are you asking me, you can only let her do whatever she wants.

“That’s fine, I guess? You shouldn’t just duel each other, rather put in effort to let the person you like fall in love with yourself. But, if he still doesn’t like you, you may just have to give up.”

As long as you don’t become a stalker or something like that, there isn’t much of a problem.

“I understand, then I’ll do just as you said—”

As Momiji finished her words, Shuna cracked a smile. *Eh? Why do I have an ominous feeling...*

“I won’t lose to you, Shuna-sama!”

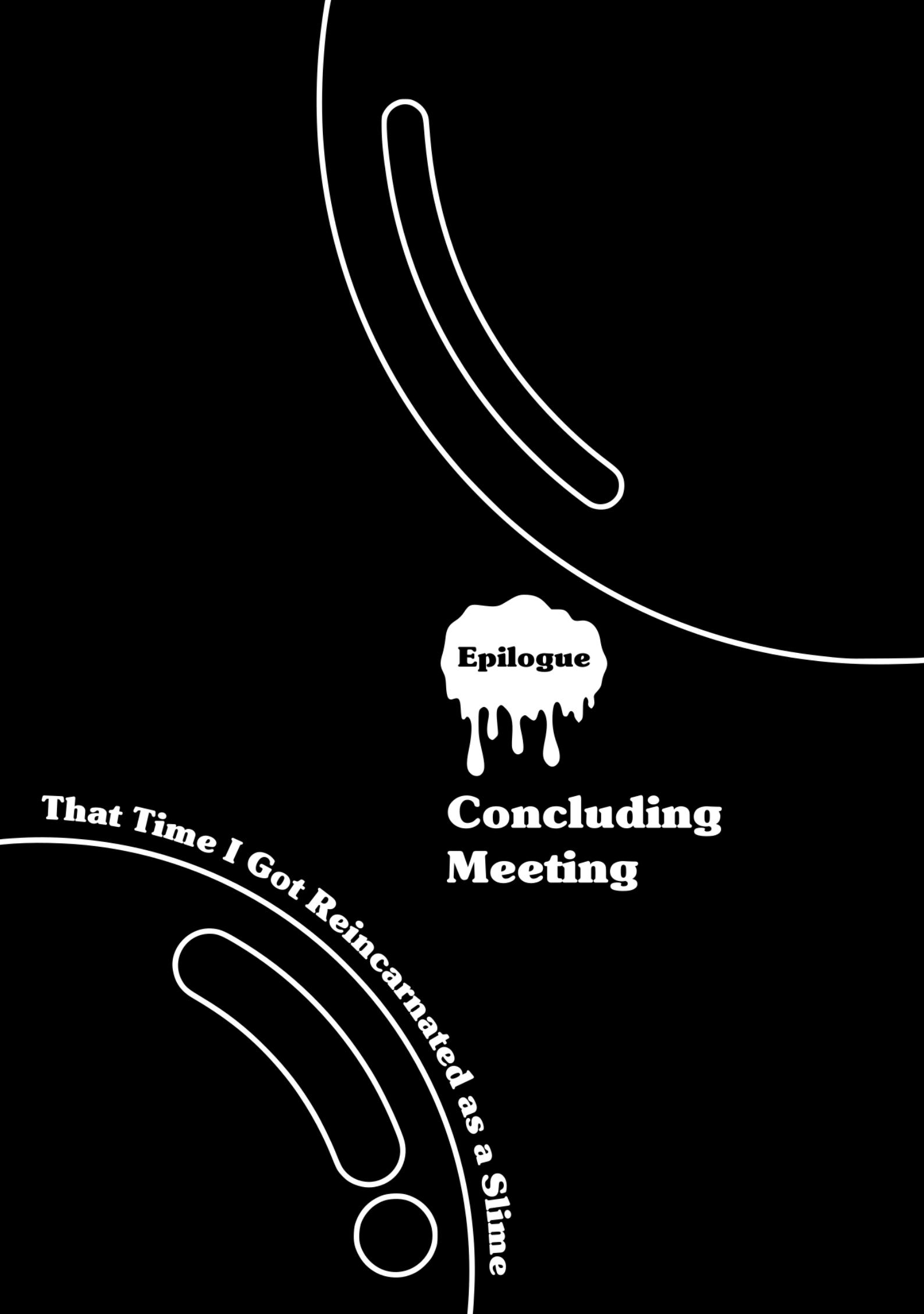
“Same here, Shion.”

Shion and Shuna said so while giving each other a smile. I was very confused, but I also got to flee from Shuna’s hands.

By the way, Alvis had always been in a state of observing, it was from today onward that she began to take action and tried to win Benimaru’s heart desperately. Momiji was not backing down either and went forth to battle against Alvis. The rest of the females who admired Benimaru ceased to remain silent too and joined the competition one after another. It became obvious to see that the battle for Benimaru among the female army had become more and more dire.

—From this day onward, there began a bizarre custom in Tempest Federation that was to force the person you had a crush on into submission through a display of strength.

The battle for free love thus unveiled.



Epilogue

**Concluding
Meeting**

That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime

Epilogue

Concluding Meeting

It was near evening on the last day of the reception ceremony that we concluded our meeting with the tengu tribe. All the executives had gathered in the meeting room after a somewhat early dinner—I was looking forward to that part—and I wanted everyone to give a report on their recent activities on this rare occasion. I also invited certain guests to this meeting as well. There were Veldora and Ramiris, accompanied by her servants Beretta and Treyni-san. Milim would be officially visiting in three days. Fearing the reveal of her recent activities, she quickly returned. It was a smart move considering there was no telling whether Frey would scold Milim or not, but keeping Milim in this town would definitely anger her. I didn't really want to get involved in that whole mess.

Right, there's, however, one more guest—

"I want to introduce someone before the meeting starts. He is a candidate for an executive position, Myourmiles-kun. If the Founding Festival in three days goes without a hitch, I plan to officially appoint him as the Minister of Finance (Head of Financial Management Department). I hope everyone can get acquainted with him beforehand," I declared, since everyone was here, might as well take the chance to introduce him. Myourmiles could also summarize the whole ordeal regarding the festival and gave his explanation...

"I-I am Gard Myourmiles. I am quite nervous right now given the important duty assigned to me by Rimuru-sama. Nonetheless, I hope to have a good relationship with all executives in the future."

Myourmiles was quite obese, so he didn't look tense at all and it was bold of him to have greeted them so daringly. That being said, he did look more nervous than usual. Despite being a boss in the underworld, he couldn't use that status nearly as effectively when dealing with actual Greater Majins. After introducing him to everyone, Myourmiles was seated next to Rigurd, and we cut straight to the chase.

"Then, Myourmiles-kun, could I trouble you to explain the situation to everyone?"

"Roger that. I'll do my best with my limited ability—"

Upon my instruction, he stood up to explain how the Founding Festival would be run. Two days from now, on the evening before the Founding Festival, the town would celebrate the eve of the festival. The guests would consist not only of those invited to the main festival, but also the visiting merchants and adventurers responsible for protecting them. We planned to offer free meals and wine to these visitors.

Of course, this event would be announced to the public, so we could expect some peasants from the neighboring countries to be coming as well. Since they might very well be our future customers, we would have to welcome them with open arms.

As for the guest hotel, we would be hosting a night feast there for any royalty and nobles. Regarding the dishes that would be served to said elite, they would be made between Shuna and Yoshida-san. Since most of the food prepared by them would likely be new cuisine, I was also looking forward to it. Further, we had changed the feast serving style to that of a buffet so everyone could try a wider variety of cuisines without needing to eat too much.

Now regarding the main event, i.e. the Founding Festival.

I would be giving a speech on stage in the morning. I had thought through this over and over, and I came to the conclusion that we couldn't skip this part considering that I was going to announce to the public that I had become a demon lord. And since all my executives and guests here were aware of the situation, my proposal was approved.

Next, we would be hosting a martial tournament at the colosseum. But we didn't plan to just let them stand there and enjoy the one competition. After all, it was our priority to let the other nations and towns get to know our country as more than just violent, so we couldn't have them stick to the web novel and have the readers read a boring ass tournament are from start to finish around to only watch the tournament from start to finish.

That's why we also planned to perform music pieces at the recently built, classy opera house for them to enjoy. As for what type of program would be shown there; I have no clue. While I was somewhat worried about it, Myourmiles was very confident.

“—I will use the opportunity to show everyone that Rimuru-sama is also a man of culture.”

A cunning grin emerged on Myourmiles's face while saying that. Almost as if she were playing along with his scheme, Shion seemed to be grinning as well. Could it be that...?

There's no use worrying about it. Myourmiles had already given me the guarantee, so I'd just take his word for it. After everyone finished lunch, we would be holding a technological presentation at the museum. Gabil and Vesta would be explaining the history of the healing potion to everyone; Kurobee and Garm would be showcasing various pieces of gear.

By the way, the opera house and museum would only be open for civilian use on the second day of the festival. On the first day, we would only be allowing royalty or nobility in. After all, there would be security concerns, so it was most effective to separate the two groups of visitors.

And then for the second day:

We would be watching the main contestants (after the elimination round) of the tournament.

Then, in the afternoon we planned to be hosting a delightful festival of cultural exchange—an activity in name only, which was basically just to serve as an excuse for free roaming.

I would be staying at the VIP section of the colosseum, ready to discuss any matters brought forth by whomever wanted to meet me. Myourmiles would be in charge of moderating this part, so all I needed to do was relax and enjoy the tournament. We would be assigning guides to guests based on the number of invitations, so we hoped everyone would be able to shop and have fun during the festival, visit and savor our exceptional hot spring street or finish viewing the tournament. It would be wonderful if everyone had an excellent experience.

And on the third day, we would be displaying the highly anticipated labyrinth available to the public. In the morning they could watch the finale of the tournament, and in the afternoon, they could watch an adventurer's walkthrough of the labyrinth.

"Even without me, you guys were still able to build an absolutely majestic colosseum," Geld remarked, relieved. He was quite reassured to find that there were suitable successors for him.

"Indeed. You and Mildo's apprentice Gobkyu worked hard to build it. It doesn't look rushed at all, and its durability also appears to be quite decent. Although, while it might be a different case if the executives dueled each other, it is more than enough for individuals below Rank A to battle."

In terms of safety, the colosseum was at the level where it should be able to stand up against Greater Spirits such as the Flame Giant Ifirit. But it probably wouldn't be able to hold if hit in some particularly weak spots. Not to worry though, I would be present on the day of the main event and planned to apply a thin barrier of 'Absolute Defense' just in case. That's why, as long as nothing too major happened, the audience should all be safe and sound.

"GAHAHAHA! By the way, I've also come up with the ultimate flavor with my takoyaki! Everyone should look forward to it!"

Ah, so he hadn't forgotten about it. Given that his spirit to open a store was so high, we could only have him participate with his identity hidden. Speaking of which, for some reason Myourmiles had become remarkably acquainted with Veldora. He had been receiving many difficult tasks, aka. favors, from Veldora, but now he seemed to have gotten used to dealing with that dragon. Myourmiles was really something else. It truly impressed me as this guy was far stronger than I previously imagined.

All right, that concluded the explanations.

Personnel who were previously on an expedition such as Diablo, Hakurou, and Geld appeared to be intrigued by the proceedings. Their unfortunate absence seemed to frustrate them a bit. I felt that I should give these three a bonus reward for their efforts. I'd give something to Geld when he finished his work, and as for Diablo and Hakurou, they'd already drafted the perfect battle plan.

With this in mind, I glanced around at my executives thoughtfully.

“Our plan is going smoothly; does anyone have any complaints?”

If not, we could move on to Souei’s report—

“Yes!”

—But I reached that conclusion too fast apparently. Ramiris raised her hand, rather vigorously too. She appeared to have a question, but it was probably nothing significant.

“What is it, Ramiris-kun?”

“Ehh, I’ve got a question.”

“That’s what I just asked.”

“It’s about the bottom level of the labyrinth...”

Ramiris paused to take a peek at Veldora. It was followed by Veldora’s loud laughter in an attempt to hide something.

“GAHAHAHA! No, there’s nothing there. Nothing important at all! Isn’t there a forest at level 95? For some reason, the forest has been growing and has now invaded all the way up to level 71,” Veldora chortled, “Miscalculation, miscalculation!”

Floors 91 to 94 were already isolated from the outside, so it was not affected by the forest’s take over, but the unprotected levels now looked like primal forests as the ventilation system for filtering magicules had been affected.

“Hold up hold up, now we have to clean all that up! That’ll take ages!”

“Right. That’s why I’ve come to discuss this with you!”

Ramiris had decided to just be frank about it. Even though the issue was quite baffling, this was entirely due to Veldora.

Despite already being the person at fault, Veldora dug his grave deeper with: “Not only that, there is another problem.” While I didn’t really want to ask, what has to be done has to be done.

With such a mindset, I queried, “...What is it?” yet Veldora’s answer was rather surprising.

“We didn’t find any suitable monsters to be level bosses. Which is a problem I need to discuss with you.”

Fortunately, he wasn’t asking about anything dumber.

Apparently, the forest consumed the labyrinth’s magicules too quickly for any stronger monsters to be created. Which is probably why there hadn’t been a monster born strong enough to be a boss of the bottom levels.

There *was* a Rank A monster—a tempest serpent that was now the lord of level 40. Initially, it was Veldora and Ramiris who argued that we shouldn’t use trash like that for the position, but nowadays they wanted me to give it back to them, something I didn’t plan to do.

“I want to rebuild the Elemental Colossus. That’s why I’m hoping you can help prepare some materials for me.”

“Just find a suitable lord candidate for me. Also, remember to clean the primal forest first.”

“...”

I understood what Ramiris meant. We only planned to make the first 50 levels public this time, so we could think of ideas for that another time. As for Veldora's proposal, I didn't have to listen to him. Since there was still time, I'd tell him to figure out a way himself. But just as I was about to refuse—three voices were raised all at the same time:

"If that's the case, there are some pretty suitable candidates."

"Rimuru-sama, how about we hand the work to those people?"

"My master, there are indeed some pretty good candidates—"

They were Shuna, Treyni-san and Ranga.

Shuna said that wight, Adalmann, was suitable for the role. Hearing her comment, Gabil nodded in agreement.

"His subordinates are all afraid of light, so they like to stay in caves or places away from the sun. The inside of the labyrinth should be a pretty good place for them."

Aside from Adalmann, his subordinates couldn't leave the sealed cave at all. It was said that they came out to stroll at night, and whenever a merchant ran into them, they usually all came to complain. That's only natural; running into skeletons at night is guaranteed to make you piss yourself. Isolating them entirely in the labyrinth seemed like a good idea actually.

"Besides, that guy practically treats Rimuru-sama as God, which is pretty intolerable..." Shuna tacked on, rather annoyed.

They seemed to worship me as their god and considering Shuna was a miko-hime (shrine maiden), that probably *was* quite annoying. In that case, I decided to accept the proposal.

"Then let's have Adalmann as the boss of level 60. I'll start preparing the materials so Ramiris can go create an Elemental Colossus and I'll tell Adalmann to help as well."

"Is that okay?"

"Should be fine. That guy's specialty is knowledge. I think he can even help with researching."

"I understand. Thanks a lot, Rimuru!"

And so, the search for a monster lord in levels 60 and 70 had been resolved. Next, it was Treyni-san's turn to speak.

Since levels 71 to 80 had less vegetation, she asked for Zegion and Apito to guard the location.

"These two executives are able to summon their vassals (clansman), so exploration will be easier. Moreover—" she glanced at Ramiris and then turned to me.

"If we can get him, Zegion, he should be able to fill the role as the boss of level 80. After all, he did a great job protecting the treants before," Treyni-san said, smiling.

"I see..."

"Rimuru, that sounds perfect! Let me train that guy to become a warrior worthy of the title as the boss of level 80!"

Zegion indeed seemed stronger than I imagined. When I last checked on him, he had already grown stronger than the tempest serpent of level 40. But he was still just an insect, barely the size of a small animal!

It would probably be pretty hard to train him... Never mind, all is well. I already know that Veldora is a weirdo anyway, so if he really wants to, sure.

“Right. Then, we can just do it your way.”

With my permission given, the problem was basically resolved instantly.

At last, we came to Ranga’s suggestion. The big boy stuck his head out from my shadow to talk, “Master, the Youko (Monster Fox) that you left with me has awakened. It says that it really enjoys exploring the forest. I think it would be quite interested in managing it entirely.”

A small cute fox sat on his head waving four golden tails behind it. That really was an adorable creature!

“Do you want to give it a try?”

“I would like to!”

The small fox nodded at me, eyes shining. Hmm, how cute indeed.

Since this small fox willingly accepted the job, I’d just hand it over to it. If it didn’t meet our expectations, we would just have to get rid of the forest. Otherwise it could simply explore the forest for us and form animal passages within the labyrinth.

“All right, then—”

I suddenly realized that there was a problem, when it was under Clayman’s rule, this small fox—Youko—previously known as the “Nine-Headed Beast” didn’t actually have a name.

“Before that, let me give you a name. From today onward, you will be known as ‘Kumara.’”

Just like naming a pet, I thoughtlessly just gave it a name. But I am no idiot; I’d learnt the lesson about not losing massive amounts of magicule over naming. That’s why I had already set a limit—eh, how strange?

My body suddenly felt exhausted. I couldn’t help but get unnerved.

«Notice. This is the effect of naming. Individual named “Kumara” has a massive pool of natural magicule storage. Thus, the magicule consumption of said action has “Exceeded Expectation.”»

I had been deceived by its miniature appearance. I now recalled it to be some super rare incredible monster. It seems I got careless. Moreover, after being named, Kumara grew almost instantaneously, and the number of its tails increased from four all the way up to nine. In its battle against Ranga, it had three tails. And all these tails were able to summon magic beasts⁹⁰ with special abilities. In other words, now it would probably be able to summon nine different beasts.

“Thank you, Rimuru-sama! I will do my best!”

Never mind, it’s fine. Since I had already named it, I couldn’t just undo it.

Either way, personally, I was safe and sound, so it seemed everything was within the control of Wisdom King Raphael-sensei. The way it announced “Exceeded Expectation” didn’t sound shocked at all. It probably planned to transfer so many magicules from the beginning. Or else

⁹⁰The term here is again “magic beast” as opposed to “monster”

how could the newly named Kumara have grown another five tails?

«...»

There's no use playing dumb. I've seen through it all!

Kumara was absolutely delighted, so I'd hand levels 81 to 90 to it. After all, there shouldn't be many adventurers who would make it there, so it'd be fine to have Kumara as a monster lord. With that, the problems raised by Ramiris and Veldora had been resolved.

This labyrinth was our proud masterpiece, and the executives also seemed to be looking forward to it, so we had to ensure the whole program remained on the right track.

With that thought, I pet Kumara on the head.



Finally, it seemed that the report regarding the Founding Festival had now concluded. Next would be the investigation mission I assigned to Souei recently; let's hear the report.

“Then, Souei, I'll trouble you to do the briefing.”

“Understood—”

Souei's findings turned out to be unbelievable and far outside my predictions.

A certain criminal organization called “Slave Trade Union” had been eliminated by the “Chosen Hero.” Additionally, the noblemen associated with them were reported to authorities as well. Viscount Kazak from the Kingdom of Blumund had also been arrested.

“Even the towns near Ingracia have been spreading this news. The ‘Slave Trade Union’ is an international criminal organization. They possessed armed militia consisting of many slave warriors. They even had magic beasts and majins as slaves and their military power was said to be more than that of a small kingdom. But they were eliminated by the chosen hero and his companions—“ a slight smirk emerged on Souei's face as he said so.

The Chosen Hero—“Shining” Masayuki, was said to be the most popular and allegedly strongest man within the Western Nations. It seemed that Hinata's crown as the strongest had been replaced since her defeat by my hands.

Did becoming known as a defeated foe of the demon lord mean that she was no longer worthy of carrying the hope of mankind? I felt somewhat sorry for Hinata; I hoped she wouldn't hate me for that.

Oh yeah, that aside, I needed to talk about this Masayuki. There was too little information so far to judge his personality and strength. But if his triumph over the “Slave Trade Union” and releasing elven slaves turned out to be true...

“It seems that several elves were captured by the trade union. Masayuki apparently is bringing them to our kingdom.”

If that were the case, I’d better give him my thanks. However, the problem was...

“How about it, Rimuru-sama? Before things get dicey, should I go and take care of him?”

“—No, don’t do that. I want to meet him. Maybe have a chat with him.”

“Understood. That guy seems to be marching under the banner of ‘Eliminating the demon lord,’ I was planning to show him who’s the boss and let him know his place.”

—Right, just as his words indicated, the Western Nations were all spreading the rumor that Masayuki was coming to eliminate me.

Souei smiled cruelly at my suggestion not to interfere. Speaking of which, as we were preparing the Founding Festival and dealing with such important national affairs, it would be very bad if we provoked the Chosen Hero. Not only Souei; but I was afraid that the two war-mongers Shion and Diablo would act preemptively.

“When the Chosen Hero Masayuki comes here, let me handle things. Any action against him is forbidden, understand?”

“ “ “Understood!” ” ”

You guys sure are enthusiastic. It’s only three days until the Founding Festival, and already, we have a problem.

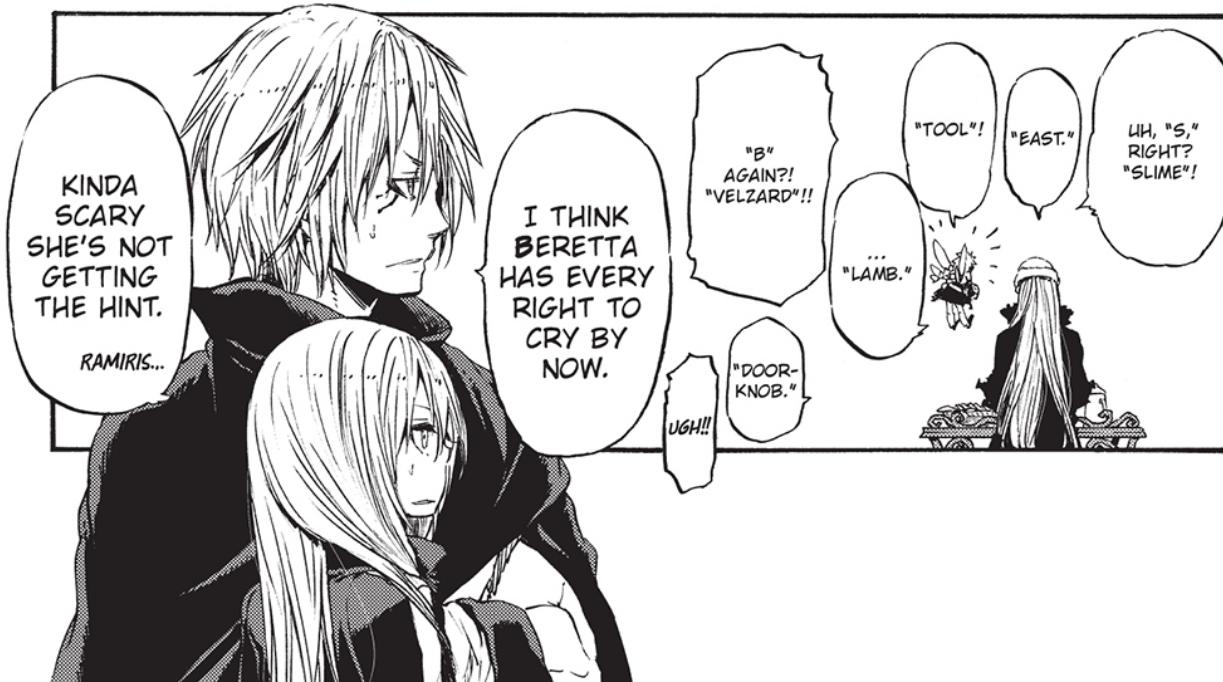
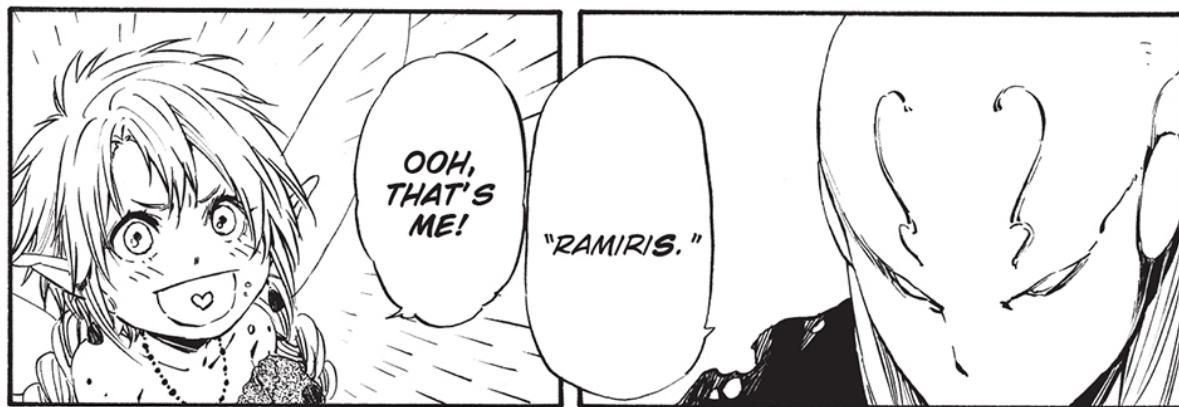
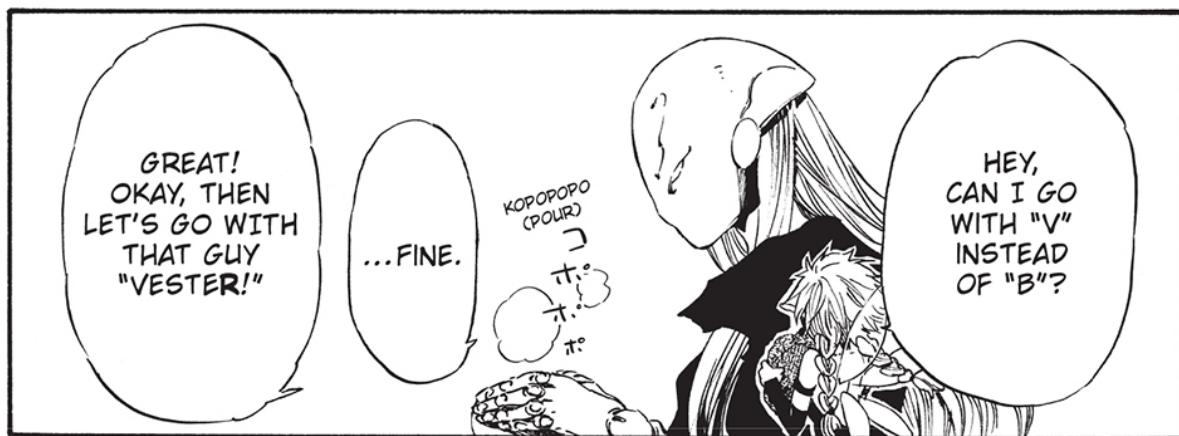
The joyful atmosphere we worked so hard to build seemed to have been completely wiped out by the others. I felt a little frustrated.

Soon after, almost as if to blow away the tiny unease in my heart, the jolly festival unfolded.

←READ FROM RIGHT TO LEFT!

His Name Is Beretta

Art: Taiki Kawakami



Afterword

Sorry to keep everyone waiting, here I bring you volume eight.

For those who have read the Web Novel before, you will know this volume is the “Founding of the Monster City” arc. As for why the sudden title change of this volume, there is quite the story behind it—

“Ahh, I will definitely finish up suuuuper fast this time and make the story short!”

“I’ve heard that line far too many times already. I won’t mind at this point no matter how long you want to write.”

With such words echoing by my ear, I grabbed my pen to write.

And as I wrote and wrote, the deadline arrived...

“Hey, there’s something I wish to discuss...”

“Right right right, what do you want to discuss?”

“About that, I’ve written things a bit too long this time...”

“Oh shit, here we go again. I knew this was how things would have gone,” Editor I-san replied rather unfazed by it.

But there’s another twist coming!

“Can I make it into two parts?”

“Huh?”

“Even if I continue to write for another hundred pages or so, all I will end up doing is getting stuck at an awkward spot in the story. That’s why we should change our direction to instead make it into two parts this time, won’t that be great?”

“It better be! Seriously though, how did things end up like this!”

We continued to have a very *lovely* conversation. In the end I was successful in making editor I-san roll his eyes (and agree). Nicu job!



So yeah. I've been reflecting as well.

I've got no clue why things ended up like this myself, but I'm beginning to realize: isn't it a bit too challenging for me to try shortening the story?

And so, I am currently focusing on finishing up the rest of the arc in volume nine "Founding of the Monster Kingdom." I will try my best not to turn it into a trilogy.

I look forward to your feedback in the future as well.

See you in the next volume then!