

Yusura Kankitsu

Illustrator
Ruria Miyuki

vol. **5**

Reincarnated Mage *with Inferior* Eyes

Breezing through the Future as an Oppressed Ex-Hero

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Abel

A genius mage with Amber Eyes—the strongest you can have. He reincarnated into this world from two hundred years ago.

Ted

A spoiled noble who looks up to Abel as his magecraft master.

Yukari

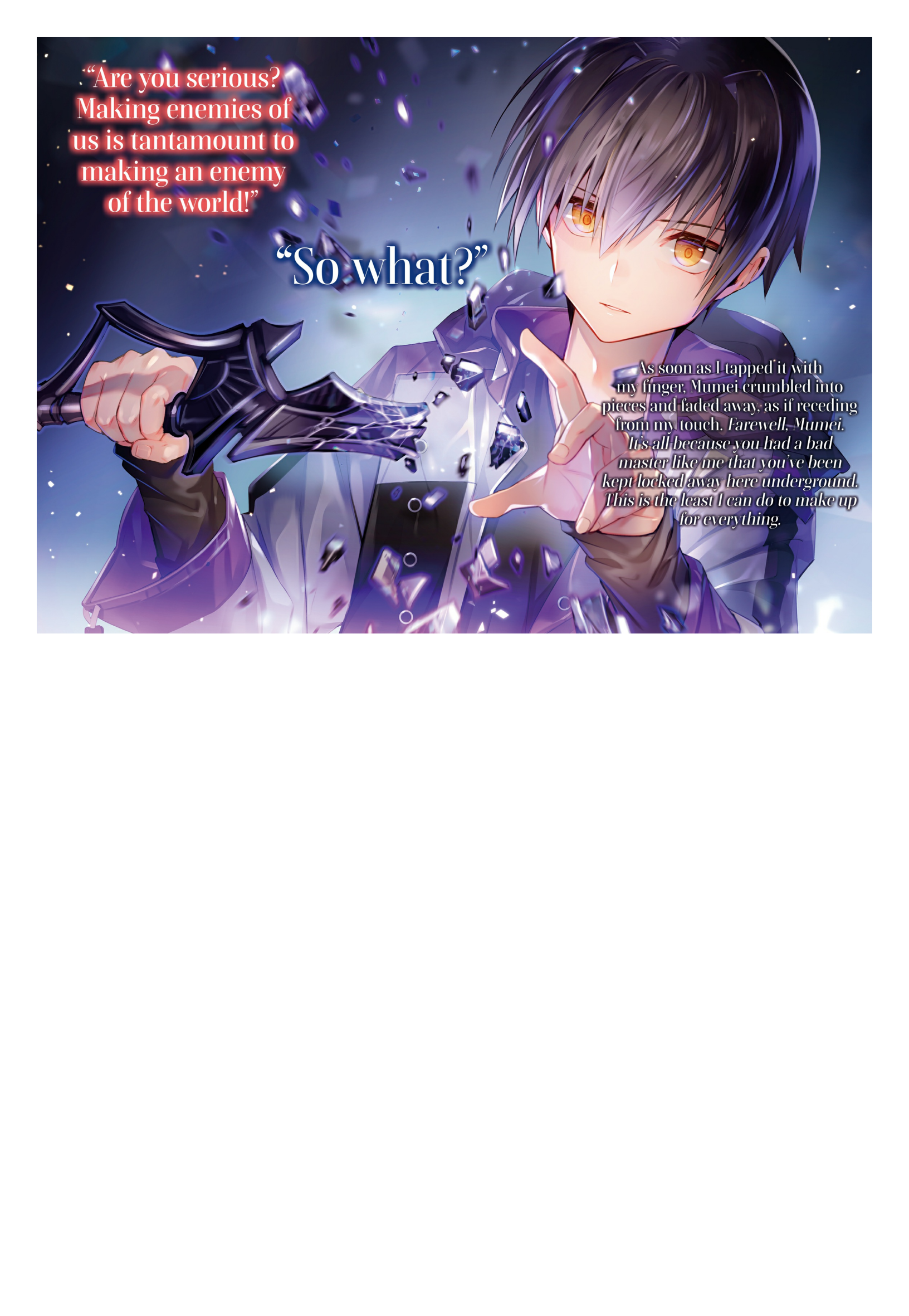
A classmate of Abel and the others, and Eliza's best friend.

Eliza

The descendant of the Hero of Fire. She loves delicious food.

Lilith

The daughter of the demon king. In the past, Abel saved her.



“Are you serious?
Making enemies of
us is tantamount to
making an enemy
of the world!”

“So what?”

As soon as I tapped it with
my finger, Mumei crumbled into
pieces and faded away, as if receding
from my touch. Farewell, Mumei.
It's all because you had a bad
master like me that you've been
kept locked away here underground.
This is the least I can do to make up
for everything.

Hm. Sorry, but I just inadvertently had a thought that might be quite rude to the two of you. By holding them like this, I knew their exact weights. I was a little worried by how light Noel was...and also worried by how heavy Eliza was.

"An emergency?"

"Wh-What are you doing?!"

"I'll explain later. We need to get out of here now."



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Prologue: Setting Off from Home

My name is Abel, and I'm a mage who reincarnated two hundred years into the future. In my day, those with Amber Eyes like me were heavily discriminated against. One day, I decided that I'd had enough of that, and developed reincarnation magecraft to send me to my ideal world in the future. In that regard, I succeeded, and found myself waking up in a new, peaceful era.

I then enrolled in the country's distinguished Arthlia Academy of Magecraft, and used the time over summer break to return to the Rhangbalt territory, the place I'd grown up in after reincarnating. The smell of grass from outside the window was pleasant.

The area was remote and surrounded by mountains. When I'd lived here before, I'd thought it quite the busy village, but after I had gotten used to life in the royal capital, it now felt incredibly deserted. That being said, it was nice to at least spend my vacation time surrounded by nature. Remote areas like this and busy areas like the city had their own respective charms.

"Oh, Master Abel. I had a feeling you'd be here."

As I was reading alone in the house's library, a familiar woman called out to me. Her name was Lilith. She was a beautiful silver-haired woman with a well-proportioned body, one that inevitably drew attention. She was the Demon King's daughter, a girl I had rescued two hundred years ago, and due to various circumstances, I was living with her.

"The carriage is ready. Ted seems to be anxiously awaiting your arrival," she said.

I glanced out the window and saw a horse-drawn carriage and a restless guy in front of it. *Good grief. He really can't stay put.* I could tell how eager he was to get back to school.

"Okay, let's go," I said.

I didn't really have a choice. The book was just getting good, but it seemed

that I'd have to read the rest of it in the carriage.

"Huh? Master Abel... Did you...?"

What's up with her? Is there something on my face? I tried to discern the reason why she had begun to observe my face from so close.

"Have you gotten taller?" she asked.

"Hm?"

Her comment was unexpected. *Hm. Now that she mentions it, I feel like I'm getting closer to being at eye level with her.* Not too long ago, my eyes had been perfectly level with her chest. But what about now? We were almost the same height, and I no longer had to try to meet her eyes.

"Wanna compare heights?" I asked.

"I'd love to!"

It was the perfect opportunity to see how much I'd grown. After we finished, it seemed that I had indeed gotten taller. I was only a little shorter than Lilith, who stood at 170 cm tall.



“I’m not going to lose to you just yet, Master Abel,” she giggled.

“Is this even a competition?”

She seemed happy that she was just a little taller than me. Her expression was proud. Was there some kind of meaning behind our height difference? Either way, it was only a matter of time until I was taller than she was.

“Master!!! What’re you doing?!” At that moment, our conversation was cut short by the sudden arrival of someone who should’ve been waiting outside.

This boy’s name was Ted. He was easily identifiable by his dirty-blond hair and toned body. For the record, I didn’t consider him my pupil in any way, shape, or form. Ever since I’d gotten to know him when we were kids, for some reason, he’d begun following me wherever I went.

“Let’s get going! The driver’s waiting!”

Good grief. We still have plenty of time until we’re scheduled to leave. Why are you always in such a rush? “You must really love school,” I said, attempting to discern his feelings.

A wide smile filled Ted’s face. “Of course! I wanna see everyone as soon as possible! Don’t you?!”

I fell silent at his question, searching within myself for an answer. I wasn’t really certain how I felt.

“Not sure,” I said. “At the very least, I don’t feel strongly enough to deny it.”

There were a lot of annoying things that’d happened right as we’d begun school—pointless classes, weak students. With those things weighing me down, the days had dragged on and on. But what about now? Just in the same way that I’d grown taller without even realizing it, it seemed that I’d changed without knowing it too. Now, I didn’t think of school as arduous. If anything, I took it as a good opportunity to see my acquaintances.

“Apparently there’s gonna be a school field trip in early September! I’m so excited!”

“A school trip? What’s that?”

“Huh?! You don’t know?! It’s only the biggest event of the year!”

“Not ringing any bells.”

After we got into the carriage, the horse neighed, and we were off. Thus, our summer vacation ended, and a new semester began.

Chapter 1: Career Path

The arrival of September brought cooler weather with it. We took a carriage from the Rhangbalt territory to Midgard, the royal capital. Now, in our first class of the semester, a familiar face greeted us.

“Good morning, class. It’s been two months since we last saw each other. If any of you are still in vacation mode, I’d like to ask that you snap out of it immediately! Once again, you will all be under my strict tutelage, so I hope you’ve prepared yourselves,” Fedia said, her glasses glinting as she finished her speech.

Fedia was a teacher at the academy who enjoyed working out as a hobby. She was also the one in charge of us first-years.

Various voices rang out across the room as the students began to complain.

“Sure, but...”

“It’s hard to get motivated...”

And this is exactly why modern mages are so weak. As much as I wanted to say this, I couldn’t, because I understood their feelings. Arthlia’s summer break was long, and we’d essentially been at home relaxing for close to two months. Just because the new semester had begun didn’t mean that everybody could instantly change gears and get back into student mode.

“I already knew you’d all react like this,” Fedia chuckled. “Here’s your first assignment—read through the paper I’m passing out.” She handed out what seemed to be a survey with blank boxes drawn on it.

What is this? It says it’s a “Career Survey.” At the very least, I’ve never encountered such a thing before.

“A career survey? Feels too real,” Ted mumbled from next to me, a cryptic look on his face.

Hm. From the looks of things, this asks students to list their desired future

career paths.

“When you lack motivation, it’s best to get back to basics. You must all have had some kind of goal if you made it into the academy! There’s nothing to be embarrassed about. I want to hear your candid thoughts.”

Hm. That’s a pretty tough ask. Ever since I’d reincarnated into the present, my only goal had been to live a peaceful life. *I’ll try giving it a little more thought.* Then, as I did, I remembered the goal I’d had when I’d first entered this school.

“You’d like to work in a job that uses magecraft in the future, right? If so, then you must first graduate from school. Please remember, this is a time of peace. Do you understand? Or perhaps you intend to live your life utterly and entirely dependent on me? I wouldn’t mind, personally, but...”

I suddenly remembered what Lilith had said to me as she’d fixed me with a cold stare. *Now that I think about it, the reason I started going to school in the first place was because I couldn’t keep leeching off of Lilith forever.*

“The career path you’re aiming for will also affect your classes next year. You should take this opportunity to give it some serious thought.”

Things had been fairly busy since I’d entered the academy, so even though I knew I wanted to do something that involved magecraft, my plans were no more detailed than that. *My dream, huh? It might be time to get a clear picture of what I want to do in the future.*



After school ended, I decided to go do my daily reading, so I made my way over to the secret library in the Olden Magecraft Research Society’s room.

“Abel!”

As soon as I arrived, I heard the sound of a girl running to greet me from inside. Noel, also known as the Ice Queen, was an unparalleled prodigy of the school and the founder of this research society. This was the first time I would be seeing her since the summer training camp.

“It’s been so long. I’ve missed you...”

Good grief. She’s acting like a puppy with separation anxiety. She seemed to

be in such a good mood over the fact that we were seeing each other again after a month. Her metaphorical tail was wagging excitedly.

“I brought all of these so you can read them to me,” she said.

My eyes widened as I saw the number of tomes she pulled out of her bag. I decided to check their publication dates. *Hm. It seems that all of them are over a hundred years old.* In other words, these were all books written before the Great Disaster, during which the majority of old books had been burned.

From what I could tell, these tomes were very precious in the present day. At the very least, I hadn’t seen any of these in bookstores.

“They seem pretty valuable. Where’d you get them?”

“My family is friendly with a tome store. I asked my papa to get them for me.”

I see. Noel’s predecessor, Daytona, obtained a noble’s rank, but at heart she was still a merchant. She’d probably held on to a special distribution route for tomes.

“My dream is to become an Olden Magecraft researcher. I’m going to study a lot and become like you,” Noel said.

“I see.”

That’s very admirable of you. Dreams...huh? I’d had no idea that Noel’s dream was to become a researcher of Olden Magecraft. It was quite possible that the others had also already made plans for their futures. I’d have to ask them the next time I saw them.

Just as this thought crossed my mind, the perfect person appeared. “Master! Look! Look at this! I got the deluxe strawberry parfait sandwich! They only make five of them per day!”

I was a little curious about what, exactly, this “deluxe strawberry parfait sandwich” was, but I decided not to dig too deeply. Ted was probably the only person I knew who would voluntarily eat these kinds of strange concoctions out of genuine enjoyment. Instead, I asked him about his dreams.

“My dream, huh? Well...I wanna become the lord of the Rhangbalt territory.”

“Huh? Really? That’s news to me.”

I'd known Ted since we were kids, and doubted he had the aptitude to be a territory lord. I wasn't an expert, but working as a territory lord seemed like a job that required one to have a brain. Putting it nicely, Ted wasn't great at using his.

"Well, when we were home for vacation, my parents convinced me to consider it... So now I'm kinda not sure what to do."

"Oh, so that's what happened," I said.

That makes sense, now that I think about it. Considering the condition of the older noble brat—his brother—Ted's the only one who can take over. I knew this too since I'd been in the area, but Barth hadn't come home during summer vacation. I wondered where he was and what he was up to. He'd changed a lot after joining AMO, the Anti-Magecraft Organization.

Then, a second voice called out the same words I'd just heard.

"Abel! Look at this! I got the deluxe strawberry parfait sandwich! They only make five of them a day!"

Following in Ted's wake, a girl named Eliza appeared. She was the descendant of the Hero of Fire, Maria, and ever since we'd first bumped into each other at the entrance exam, we'd continued to run into each other again and again. *Hm. I thought Ted was the only one with weird taste buds.* Now that Eliza was here, though, I could ask her about her dreams for the future too.

"Hm..." she said. "I don't really have anything big enough to be called a dream, but I wanna work at a magecraft company after we graduate."

A magecraft company, huh? I'm familiar with them. Two hundred years ago, they were places where strong mages gathered and worked as mercenaries, but in present times, it seemed that they took a different direction.

Now, they comprised businesses that used magecraft to find solutions to problems, factories to develop Regalias, or infrastructure-related businesses that used magic stones that were very dense with energy. The range of work that magecraft companies did was very broad, and they apparently propped up the nation's economy.

"If I had to choose a company to join...I'd have to say Chronos. Joining the

strongest domestic magecraft company and making a career for myself is definitely a dream of mine.”

Hm. Chronos, huh? It was a name I’d heard before...due to a certain person’s scheme, which had given me the opportunity to fight some Chronos mages. From what I could remember, they were fairly decent by modern mage standards. It seemed like a good goal for Eliza.

“Whoa... Ch-Chronos? You’re really shooting for the stars, Eliza,” Ted said.

“You think so? What’s wrong with dreaming big?”

“But Chronos is a super prestigious company that only allows in, like, one person per every five thousand applicants! From what I hear, you can make a lot of money in your twenties, but be pushing daisies in your thirties. It’s hard just to get in, and it’s even harder to work there!”

What kind of weird rumor is that? Why would an organization with such an unsettling reputation be so popular as a career path for students?

“If you’re thinkin’ about having stability when you’re old, being a part of the royal capital’s knight order is the way to go!” Ted said.

“No way! You can’t live life without taking a few risks. People only grow by throwing themselves into competition! Joining the private sector is so much better!” Eliza declared.

As I’d expected, everyone else was thinking about their future. I wasn’t interested in trying to join them just to fit in, but I wanted to at least choose some kind of career path so Lilith wouldn’t think I was leeching off of her.

Immediately as I had that thought, I sensed something strange. There was an ominous presence approaching us. *Hm. I haven’t missed this viscous, creepy mana.* And unfortunately, I knew who it belonged to.

“Eavesdropping is a bad habit, Professor Emerson,” I said.

Said professor soon emerged from the shadows of the bookshelves. “You win again, Abel. Good job noticing me,” he said, smiling bitterly while scratching his messy bedhead. He was a person who we couldn’t let our guards down around, for a lot of different reasons. After all, he’d developed Regalias to observe me,

and was constantly trying to look into who I really was. He'd also sent Chronos members after me, and had even tried to stump me with a very difficult question on our exams. He'd caused so much trouble that it was hard to keep track of it all.



“What do you want, Emerson? If you don’t need anything, get out of here,” Noel said.

“Et tu, Noel? Don’t look at me like that. It hurts. I’m still this research society’s adviser, you know?”

Once again, Noel seemed to be treating Emerson as if he was some kind of suspicious person. On the other hand, one could say that he was getting his just deserts, given how he normally conducted himself.

“I don’t have any specific reason for coming here. It just sounded like you guys were having a fun discussion, and I wanted to join in.”

Both Ted and Eliza clammed up at Emerson’s creepy words. It spoke volumes as to how uncomfortable he made us, seeing as our two most talkative members remained silent before him.

“By the way, Abel,” Emerson continued, “have you been thinking about what you want to do in the future?”

“Not really. I’m in the middle of weighing my options.”

A creepy smile spread across his face at my words. “That’s good to hear. Do you have any interest in joining Chronos as a lower-level member?”

It might’ve just been my imagination, but I could’ve sworn that the air around us changed as soon as Emerson said that.

“Huh?! Is that even possible?! We’re still just first-years!” Ted exclaimed.

“Y-Yeah! Isn’t there a really strict entrance exam to join Chronos?!” Eliza asked, confused.

In the face of all this, Emerson just shrugged and sighed. “Look...I think you two are misunderstanding something. Recruiting talented individuals is always an arms race. In fact, more than half of Chronos’s members were scouted in their student years. To be frank, it’s outright abnormal that Abel hasn’t decided on his career path yet. It’s a huge loss for society.”

I remained silent. I’d already had a feeling about this, but modern magecraft companies were very different from the ones of the past. Two hundred years ago, these places were essentially lightning rods for mages with troubled pasts,

who had nowhere else to go. Now, times had changed—these companies were actively recruiting such mages, and the fact that I was being accepted into one so easily now was proof of that.

Now then, what should I do? While it was good that an option for my future had fallen into my lap so easily, I wasn't really into it. Judging from past experiences, I didn't have the sense I could trust Emerson. I determined it'd be best to avoid owing him anything.

"Well, I don't blame you for not jumping at the opportunity. How about going on a tour first? Oh, by the way, here's my card."

Emerson handed me a rectangular piece of paper. *Hm. This isn't a normal piece of paper.* It had very intricate Enchantments embedded in it. Most likely, it also functioned as a security clearance card under the right circumstances.

"You'll be able to look around all you want if you give this to the receptionist. You should visit with your friends sometime."

I didn't respond. Though I'd ended up accepting the card from him, I wasn't sure if there'd ever come a time when I'd use it. My memories of working for a mage company in my past life weren't very rosy. I didn't really feel like living life under the thumb of some organization. I wanted to carve my own path.

"Abel... That business card..." Noel began to say.

"He said that you could bring friends, right?!" Eliza cried.

Though I felt it'd be better for me not to accept his offer, life was full of surprises. Since Noel and Eliza seemed so interested, I now felt like I had to take them.

Chapter 2: The Mechanical Clock Tower

That very weekend, I found myself at the Chronos headquarters, carrying the business card that Emerson had given me. The eastern district of the royal capital, which was known for its numerous factories, was an unfamiliar area for students like us.

“Wh-Whoa...” Eliza said, looking up. “So this is Chronos’s headquarters...”

“This clock tower is huge...” Noel agreed.

They were both staring up in wonder at the clock tower that stretched up into the heavens. *Good grief. Eliza makes sense, but I’m still surprised that Noel wanted to come as well.*

“Abel... Thanks for inviting me,” Eliza said sheepishly.

“I’m so happy to be able to go out with you,” Noel said.

Well, I guess it’s all okay if they’re both happy. I can’t say I understand their desire to waste their precious weekend on a tour, though. I might have underestimated how big of an organization Chronos is to the people of this time.

“You don’t have to thank me,” I replied. “If anything, you should thank *that* guy.”

Now that I think about it, Emerson saying that I could bring friends might’ve been a strategic move on his part. By getting the people around me involved, he increased the possibility of me coming here. What a sly move.

“By the way, I don’t see any kind of entrance... How are we supposed to get in?” Eliza asked.

The design of the Mechanical Clock Tower was very different from that of the surrounding buildings. The exposed clockwork clicked loudly as it powered the hands of the clock. To anyone who didn’t know any better, they might have assumed that this was simply a strangely designed clock tower.

“Have you not noticed, Eliza? The entrance is right there,” Noel said.

She was right. We were standing right in front of the entrance. The trick was the strange design of this building—anyone who wasn't skilled with magecraft would probably never find the entrance, no matter how long they looked.

"Well, let's go inside, I guess," I said.

"Come on, Eliza," Noel urged her.

"H-Huh?" Eliza still didn't seem to know what was going on, and was standing motionless with a blank expression on her face.

In the meantime, both Noel and I approached the side of the clock tower. Though there wasn't too big of a difference between Eliza and Noel's strengths, Noel was much better when it came to observation.

"Huh?" Eliza was stunned. "I-I passed through the wall?!"

It seemed that she had finally noticed how it worked. From what I could tell, the clock tower had a security system that employed Optical Illusion Magecraft. It was programmed to change the entrance at random each day, on the hour, in order to keep unwanted guests out. It was as if the building itself was teasing visitors by saying that if you couldn't see through this level of magecraft, you didn't even have the right to enter it.

Now then, upon entering, there's a downwards spiral staircase. It looks like they constructed this building to have a very deep underground portion to it. It was possible that the overall size of the Mechanical Clock Tower was much bigger than I'd initially expected. After walking down the staircase for a while, we finally reached an open area.

"Welcome to the Mechanical Clock Tower. Please state your business," a robotic voice called out as we stepped into the large room.

I looked over to the source of the voice, and was surprised by what was there.

"Is this...a Magic Doll?!" Noel exclaimed.

Instead of a human, there was a clockwork doll sitting at the reception desk. *Hm. This is quite the interesting Regalia.* This seemed to be a more advanced version of the talking skeleton Eliza and I had run into at the game center. I'd never seen anything this flawlessly constructed, even two hundred years ago.

“An acquaintance of ours invited us to visit...” I said, taking out the business card that I’d gotten from Emerson.

“Reading data...” The Magic Doll beeped, and its eyes lit up and began scanning the card.

I see. The Enchantment on the card is made to work with the Magic Doll. That explains why it was hard to understand the point of the card when I was just looking at it on its own.

“Welcome, Mr. Abel,” the Magic Doll proceeded. “Dr. Emerson has informed us of your arrival. Please proceed to the entrance, door seven.” At these words, a door labeled with the letters “VII” opened.

Hm. Looking around, I saw that there were twelve doors, numbered from I to XII. I’d initially thought they were decorative to match the theme of the clock tower, but it seemed that the construction of the basement was much more complex than I’d imagined. It was almost like a maze.

Now, then... We entered the door labeled VII as instructed, but it didn’t immediately lead to another room—there was still some walking involved. Every last part of this place was very monotonous and one-note.

“Um, Abel. Is this really the right way?” Eliza asked, a look of concern on her face.

I stayed silent, but I understood why she’d be uneasy. The entire building itself gave off a sense of foreboding. We hadn’t seen any other living humans since we’d stepped in here; we’d only passed more Magic Dolls in the halls. What’s more, we could still hear the sound of gears turning in the background, even though we were all the way down in the tower’s basement.

“Yeah, we’re definitely going the right way.” *Whether or not we made the right decision by taking this path, though, has yet to be seen.* At the very least, I was sure that we hadn’t strayed from the course that we’d been set upon. After all...

“Hey, you made it. Thanks for coming.”

Waiting for us down the hallway was the very person who’d invited us here, Emerson.



After meeting up with Emerson, who'd been waiting for us, we began the tour of the complex underground area, until at last we came across a large facility.

"Take a look," Emerson said. "I'm sure you've seen these Regalias before." He pointed to a large assembly line on the other side of a glass window.

"Whoa!" Eliza and Noel said with wonder, staring at the process through the glass.

"Amazing... There are so many Magic Dolls..." Noel added, astonished.

A conveyor belt delivered parts to the countless Magic Dolls putting those parts together. These dolls were the same sort we'd seen in the hallways. I couldn't blame Noel for being so surprised. After all, it wasn't every day that you saw Magic Dolls—a type of Regalia—assembling other Regalias.

"Why are there so many Magic Dolls?" Eliza asked.

"Because they're exceptional. They're not like humans—they don't have feelings. You don't have to pay them wages, and they never go on strike. They are the ultimate workers!"

I see. I remember something similar from two hundred years ago, when the trend was trying to figure out human transmutation as a means to make up for the manpower deficit caused by the war. It seems that in modern times, they can fill that void with Magic Dolls instead. It was true that by working Magic Dolls to the bone, companies could be more competitive with their prices. *The changing of the times is fascinating.*

"The ones in the front right here are Sedona Mark IIs. And the ones in the back are a new product...the Levross 2000?" Eliza asked.

"Oh, you're quite informed," Emerson said, impressed.

"Of course! The Regalias made by Chronos are well-known. There're a lot of people in our school whose favorite Regalias are made by Chronos. Even my family has some."

I see. The Regalias that the students in the school use are made here. Of course, surely they hadn't *all* come from this factory, but judging by the scale of

the place, I wouldn't have been surprised if it produced the majority of the world's supply.

"Hm... What's your name again?" Emerson asked.

"It's Eliza, professor."

"Are you interested in joining us in the future, Eliza?"

"Yes! It's been one of my dreams ever since I was little!"

"Oh? I see," Emerson said in a low voice, sounding intrigued, as he observed Eliza from head to toe. "Well, it goes without saying that your abilities are garbage in comparison to Abel's, but you're definitely one of the better pieces of garbage in that academy. I expect great things from you."

"H-Huh?! O-Oh... I-I'll do my best...?"

Good grief. He really sucks at communicating. Though I was sure that in his mind he was trying to be encouraging, his comments only came off as scathing. As proof of this, Eliza didn't seem to know how to react to his comments.

"So, what do you think about our products, Abel?" Emerson asked.

Truth be told, I haven't liked the idea of Regalias since the day I reincarnated. It went without saying that they were convenient, of course—they were made so that anyone could easily use magecraft without having to compose the magecraft themselves.

"I can't say I'm a fan. I don't like how they stop mages from thinking about the magecraft they're using."

But it was precisely that level of convenience which had ended up causing problems. Mages came to rely on Regalias and no longer used their heads, forgoing training altogether. No doubt one of the reasons that mages had grown so weak was the popularization of Regalias.

"Well, of course," Emerson chuckled. "That's precisely why they were invented."

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"It's more lucrative to make products that weaker people can use. No matter

the age, people desire the simplest, cheapest, and most quickly produced products.”

I fell silent. I didn’t like how he’d said it, but he might’ve had a point. Though composing magecraft from scratch using Olden Magecraft gave you versatility, learning exactly how to do that took time. And unfortunately, what the masses wanted was Modern Magecraft, which you could use easily, without much thought or effort.

“Of course, I’m not much of a fan of it either. But in order to get a larger market share, we focus heavily on these products geared towards the masses. After all, they’re easily mass-produced entry-level models. Their quality is satisfactory, but their real strong point is how easy they are to make at a low cost,” Emerson said, continuing to boast proudly about his company’s products.

In essence, since Emerson had made them these Magic Dolls, the company didn’t have to worry about the cost of labor, and could undercut other Regalia manufacturers that did use human labor, thus gaining an advantage in the struggle for full market share. *This is seriously so pitiful. Modern-day engineers aren’t focused on the abilities of Regalias. All they care about is how to make manufacturing them as cheap as possible.*

“Oh, for the record, Chronos accepts custom requests. The waiting list to get a Regalia from me is ten years long. But if you’d like, Abel, I could make an exception and—”

“I’ll pass.”

“No bite, huh?” Emerson chuckled.

Why would I ever have needed to get a Regalia from Emerson? I’d already put myself in his debt by accepting this tour—I couldn’t allow myself to owe him anything more.



All of a sudden, as we proceeded with the tour, Emerson spoke up.

“There’s a clean room past here. You girls can use the room over there to disinfect yourselves.”

“Um...what should we do, exactly?” Eliza asked.

“For specifics, feel free to ask the Magic Doll. Just follow its instructions and things should work out.”

“O-Okay,” Eliza said.

At Emerson’s signal, nearby Regalias moved towards us.

“Right, then. We’re headed this way, Abel.”

Hm. This is starting to get fishy—I don’t sense any kind of sanitization facilities beyond this door. I only sense a good number of people. He must have a reason for separating me from Noel and Eliza. But...at this point, there’s no turning back. My interest is piqued. It was time to find out what his real objective was. Soon, I’d learn what was waiting for me, and what the goal of bringing me here was.

The moment I opened the door, the atmosphere changed. Over thirty people were gathered in the open space before us, and black-robed individuals were looking down at us from higher up.

Good grief. I never thought that he’d go through so much trouble to prepare all of this just for me. “This is quite the heavy-handed welcome, Professor Emerson,” I said.

“I think it’s about time I explained something to you, Abel. It had completely slipped my mind until now.” Emerson’s glasses glinted as he continued. “Chronos has two sides to it. One is its public face as a Regalia manufacturer. The other is an organization of assassins that fields requests from the government.”

Um...I already know this. I wasn’t sure how to react to his proud explanation. If anything, the part that surprised me was that they made Regalias. The magecraft companies of two hundred years ago were gatherings of mages with troubled pasts turned mercenaries. Just because the times had changed didn’t mean that there’d be less demand for *those* kinds of requests. Most likely, the Regalia manufacturing was simply a front for the assassination business.

“We stand now in the Chamber of Judgment. The people up there are all elites of Chronos. I’ve gathered them here to judge whether you are worthy of

joining our organization, Abel.”

This had better be followed up with a “just kidding.” Then again, it still wouldn’t be funny. In the first place, I wasn’t remotely interested in joining this shady organization. I’d have really appreciated it if they didn’t keep progressing the conversation when nobody asked them to.

“Don’t worry, I get it.” Emerson chuckled. “You don’t really want to, right? But will you still feel that way after seeing...*this?*”

He walked towards the middle of the room, where a mysterious object covered by a cloth stood. He whipped off the cloth to reveal a very expensive-looking pedestal, in which a sword was embedded.

“Surprised?” Emerson asked. “This is a relic left behind by the founder of our organization.”

I fell silent. *Hm. I’ll admit—I am surprised. It’s been a while since I’ve been this surprised, actually. After all...that is without a doubt the same beloved sword that I used two hundred years ago.*

Emerson went on. “Any thoughts? Or are you so surprised that you’re at a loss for words? It releases a most ominous mana, doesn’t it? The name of this sword is the Blade of Judgment. It’s a tradition for those who want to join Chronos to take an entrance exam before it.”

Uh, hold on. Why are you naming another man’s blade when it already has a name? That’s Mumei. It was the same sword I’d been given when I worked for the magecraft company Chaos Raid.

“There’s a powerful curse laid upon this blade. None can so much as touch it. Amazing, right?” he asked me. “To think that there was a mage of that caliber in the distant past!”

Good grief. I’m the one who cast that curse. But I doubt they’d believe me if I tell them. Anyway, it seemed that the power of the curse had weakened considerably over the past two hundred years.

He continued to pontificate. “They say that our organization was started over two hundred years ago. Back then, they were a collection of extremely talented mages who worked as mercenaries. But with the changing of the times, there

wasn't as much of a demand for combat skills. That's why they diversified. By going into the business side of things, they were able to expand their reach."

I see. A gathering of the best mages would certainly be able to transition their successes in mercenary work to business and sales. Producing Regalias was one of the ways that they'd changed with the times.

"Companies these days are only focused on their business successes. Most of them consider their strength as mages a secondary factor. But we make sure that we're strong in a fight." Emerson paused, looking at me. "I think you'll be a good match for us."

I have to say, I'm surprised. After all his explanations, there was no doubt in my mind that Chronos had originated from the very same organization that I'd worked for—Chaos Raid. *How nostalgic.* After all, it was a fact that the mages in Chaos Raid were the strongest in history.

There was Cain, who'd gone on to be named the Hero of Ash. There was Ayane, who was proficient with curses and magecraft originating in an eastern country. There was Grim, my magecraft teacher...and so on and so forth. Thinking back, the organization truly was a rare collection of exceptional mages.

"Abel! You bastard! Why did you betray me?!"

Suddenly, I remembered the visage of Grim, his face twisted in pain, right before I took his life. I'd betrayed the organization, but I didn't really regret it. Even now, I think I made the right choice.

As a result of my betrayal, the organization collapsed from the inside. Afterwards, I'd heard that it had naturally disappeared with the shifting of the times. I'd never expected that it would still exist in some form in the present day. As I recalled, it was during my battle with Grim that I'd lost Mumei.

"Okay, Abel—I've told you the truth about our organization. I can tell that you're just like us. You're itching to discover the secrets this blade holds, aren't you? Well, the only way to do that is to join us!"

Slow your roll. You really don't know how to listen to people. Please don't assume that we're the same. Sure—I'd admit he was right that I was very interested in researching unfamiliar magecraft. However, the specific object he

purportedly held so much interest in was simply a nameless, lost sword. Consequently, it wasn't something I wanted to study—it used to belong to me, after all.

Emerson chuckled. “Now it's your turn to show your strength. Choose anybody you want to be your opponent. Everyone here is a starving beast, hungry to do battle. You won't be dissatisfied no matter who you choose.”

Good grief. It's extremely presumptuous of you to assume that any of those gathered here are strong enough to test my strength. I shrugged and walked to the center of the room.

“Abel...? What are you doing?”

I walked past Emerson, who was clearly confused, and focused my gaze on Mumei. *Long time no see. You've gotten pretty rusty in the time that we've been apart.* Though this would be annoying, I didn't really have a choice. What I was about to do, I'd do out of respect for the years we'd spent together. It was time for me to take care of it.

As I pulled Mumei out of the pedestal, a murmur arose around the room.

“I-Impossible! He's holding the Blade of Judgment!”

“I-I can't believe it. Who *is* this brat?!”

I sighed. *Can you all please stop calling my blade by the weird name you came up with? This is Mumei. A one-of-a-kind sword, with no true name.*

“H-How is this possible?! There's a powerful curse on it that melts anyone who touches it—bones and all! The only one who should be able to wield it is the blade's original user! How are you unaffected, Abel?!” Emerson asked.



Well, the answer's simple. I'm the original user. Given the atmosphere around the room, though, I doubted they'd believe me. After all, the original user should have passed away a long time ago. Reincarnation Magecraft was nothing but a dream—a mere fantasy to those gathered here.

"It's a pain to have to select a specific opponent," I announced. "You can all come at me at the same time."

I didn't really think that the people up there were fit to judge my strength, but...they were good enough for making some practice cuts with Mumei.

Chapter 3: Enemy of the World

“Dammit! He’s toying with me!”

So began a most unexpected battle, at a most unexpected time. One after another, this group of individuals who wouldn’t listen to a word I said began to attack me.

“Huh? He disappeared!”

Not really. I just raised my walking speed and wrapped around behind you. The fact that they weren’t able to keep up with this much speed was a testament to how weak mages had become. They’d leaned heavily into making profit, and now none of them knew what a true battlefield looked like. Even all together like this, they weren’t much of a threat.

“Hey—somebody stop him!”

“Damn! How’s this brat able to move like this?!”

Now that I’d gotten a good idea of their strength, it was time for my counterattack. They might’ve picked this fight with me, but we now lived in peaceful times. It’d be bad if I seriously injured any of them. *I’ll have to use the blunt side of my sword.*

“Ack!”

“Urgh!”

“Eek!”

The screams of my opponents rang across the room, and blood splatters stained Mumei red. *Hm. This is bringing back sensations that I thought I’d forgotten, whether I liked it or not.* At Chaos Raid’s orders, I’d killed countless innocent people. But it’d been part of my job—part of my livelihood. It was the path I’d chosen. I wouldn’t regret my choice to join the organization, not now. If there was something I *did* regret, though, it was that I’d brought a certain boy along with me, on this murderous path.

“Abel... Mr. Abel...” Suddenly, the voice of the guy who would later become the Hero of Ash—Cain—rang through my head. We’d met shortly after I’d joined the organization. *Could Cain have lived a happy life?* Coincidence after coincidence had piled up, and I’d met the descendants of my old companions Roy, Maria, and Daytona, but I’d yet to meet Cain’s. Then again, as talented a mage as he was, his personality wasn’t easy to deal with. It might have been tough for him to find a life partner.

“These damn bottom-feeders! They’re always holding you back, Mr. Abel! They haven’t matured at all!” Cain was a monster whose talent knew no bounds. If we were only talking about talent, he probably surpassed even me. His pure heart and the way he single-mindedly pursued his goals were simultaneously his strengths and weaknesses.

No matter how much they trained, there was a huge gap in strength between me and the rest of our party members, which greatly frustrated Cain. In the latter half of his teens, Cain became blindly devoted to me, and clashed with the other party members often.

Anyway, that concludes this little foray into nostalgic memories of the past. My battle’s done. Around thirty people had initially come at me, but after half of them were cut down, the rest had lost their will to fight. *Good grief. I made sure to avoid their vitals, but mages of this age are seriously wimps. I wish they’d still try to challenge me, despite knowing that I’m stronger than they are. It’d be good practice for them.*

“Bravo! Seriously—bravo!” A man’s voice echoed across the room, along with the slow sound of clapping.

Hm. It seems like this man is another one of the mages of this era who aren’t too shabby. In terms of overall strength, he was a little stronger than Emerson. In other words, he was the strongest mage to stand before me since I’d reincarnated into this age.

“How rude of me... I haven’t introduced myself yet. You can call me Elon. I’m the vice-captain of Chronos.”

Which means he’s the second-most important person in this organization? He was a guy in his midforties with white hair. An armband on his left displayed the

Roman numeral II. *Now that I think about it, Emerson has one that says VII. Do these numbers mean something?*

“After hearing about your strength from Em, I was surprised. Naturally, I’m impressed by your mastery over the Blade of Judgment, but I never expected you to be able to take out our elites so easily.”

By “Em,” he probably means Emerson. It’s kind of refreshing that such an unpleasant man gets such a cute name.

“Congratulations, Abel! You can join Chronos as one of our executives—the Numbers. We have an open seat ready for you,” Emerson said.

Hm. Seriously... Do you guys even hear the words coming out of my mouth? I’m tired of repeating myself. Have I ever even expressed any desire to join you? They really love jumping to their own conclusions.

“I’ll pass. Being here’s gonna dredge up some unwanted memories,” I said.

Going on this little tour of theirs had made it clear to me: there was absolutely no chance I’d join them. I wasn’t about to live under anyone’s thumb ever again.

“Heh... I don’t think you get it. You don’t have a choice.”

Perhaps it was just my imagination, but I sensed another change in the air at his words—and it was nothing good.

“Abel, I’m telling you this for your own good—just do as he says. Chronos is an international organization. Defying them is not a wise decision,” Emerson said.

These people are seriously arrogant. They think they’re the strongest, and therefore the entire world revolves around them. While it was true that they did have some talented individuals, that was strictly by modern mage standards. Mages from my time could wipe them out without a second thought.

“You heard my answer. I won’t repeat myself,” I said.

In the next moment, the two of them gasped as I began using Lower Resistance. The target of this magecraft was, of course, my partner of many years. *I guess Chronos mages really aren’t too shabby if they can tell in an*

instant what magecraft I'm using.

“Are you serious? Making enemies of us is tantamount to making an enemy of the world!” Elon exclaimed.

“So what?”

From the start, this sword was too dangerous of an object to be allowed to exist in this world. The curse I'd placed upon it was the strongest of its kind, inflicted on anyone weak who laid hands upon it. I had no faith that any modern-day mages could use it. Now that I knew it was still around, it was up to me as its master to take responsibility and remove it from existence.

As soon as I tapped it with my finger, Mumei crumbled into pieces and faded away, as if receding from my touch. *Farewell, Mumei. It's all because you had a bad master like me that you've been kept locked away here underground. This is the least I can do to make up for everything.*

“You've really done it now, kid!” Elon chuckled menacingly, anger filling his face.

I didn't blame him for his reaction. Even if I'd been Mumei's original owner, from his perspective, the sword had since come into his care. But also, in my defense, swords were meant to be used in battle—not trapped deep underground, watched over like some holy object. That just seemed like a stupid joke.

“You brat... I'll crush you if you're lookin' down on us. Don't think you can get out of this Mechanical Clock Tower alive!”

Hm. I noticed this earlier, but there are about a hundred people gathered here. Really? You need all these people to deal with one measly student?

“It's truly a shame, Abel. It seems you need to be taught a lesson.”

So this was your plan all along, Emerson? I'd thought that this was all a little too elaborate just for the sake of me taking their test. Okay, then. Let's do this—an eye for an eye. If you're going to fight me with reinforcements, I'll have to bring in my own. I snapped my fingers and activated the magecraft I'd composed in advance—and the ground shook as my reliable backup came marching in.

“Intruder detected! Intruder detected!” multiple robotic voices blared.

“Wh-What’s going on?!” cried one of the members of Chronos.

I couldn’t blame them for their surprise. After all, these were all Magic Dolls that should’ve been quietly working in the factory.

“Exterminate! Exterminate!”

On a whim, I’d analyzed the Magic Dolls and found that, by default, they had an intruder-repelling function. A good idea—after all, you never know what might happen in your base. Thus, I’d tinkered with them a bit, hacking them in advance so that they’d be my allies if push came to shove.

“Em! Why are the dolls attacking us?! Explain this!”

“He got me good... It seems that Abel infiltrated my programming and hacked them.”

“H-How?!”

Hm. I already kind of figured this was the case, but it seems that the Magic Dolls are all made by Emerson. As creepy as he was, I had to at least praise his seemingly unlimited motivation to make new toys like these.

The members of Chronos began trying to mount a defense, but...

“Order us to fight them, Vice-Captain!”

“Wait! If we do that, we’ll suffer unprecedented damage! How will we face the board?!”

Good grief. Even in this situation, you’re thinking about money? How pitiful. It truly was sad to see how money-minded mages had become.

“Full speed ahead! Full speed ahead!” the electronic voices called out as the Magic Doll army charged towards the Chronos members.

“Wh-What should we do?!”

“Immobilize them for now! Use Ice Magecraft to stop them in their tracks!”

Though in my eyes, they were lacking in many regards, those gathered here were still the cream of the crop by modern standards. By not fighting the dolls seriously, they were able to avoid damaging them—but the dolls weren’t

playing by the same rules.

“Dammit! There’s no end to them!” one of the members of Chronos cried.

At this point, I had the numbers advantage. The mages here weren’t enough to stop the flood of Magic Dolls. *Now, then. With the enemy in chaos due to their vice-captain’s orders, I’ll use this opportunity to make a swift exit.*



I got out of the room safely and made it to the hall, meeting up with Eliza and Noel, who’d been waiting for me.

Noel spoke first. “Oh, Abel!”

“What took you so long?” Eliza demanded. “Where were you?!”

Most likely, they’d been looking for me this whole time. Fortunately, I’d been able to reunite with them quicker than I’d expected.

“I’ll explain later. We need to get out of here now,” I said.

“Huh?”

“Wha—”

It would be troublesome for the two of them to be here if the Chronos members came chasing after me. With that in mind, I picked both of them up and began to escape.

“Wh-What are you doing?!”

“An emergency?”

Hm. Sorry, but I just inadvertently had a thought that might be quite rude to the two of you. By holding them like this, I knew their exact weights. I was a little worried by how light Noel was...and also worried by how heavy Eliza was.

“Um...Abel? Did something good happen?” Noel asked, after a few minutes of being silently carried along.

“What makes you say that?”

“Your expression looks different from usual.”

I fell silent. *Hm. Now that she mentions it, I feel a lot lighter than usual.*

“That’s true. You seem to be in a better mood than usual,” Eliza said.

Good grief. If even Eliza can see right through me, I must really be slipping up.

“Yeah...maybe.”

I didn’t have any good memories of being under Chaos Raid’s thumb. But by saying goodbye to my old partner, Mumei, I felt like I’d been able to wash those memories away. *Yeah. I’m really happy I came today.* Usually, getting involved with Emerson only ended in headaches, but this time, and this time only, I was thankful for his invitation.

Chapter 4: The Report Afterwards

Approximately half a day after Abel, Noel, and Eliza safely left the Mechanical Clock Tower, its bell rang as the clock struck midnight, and deep in the tower's bowels, the scheduled meeting began. Twelve individuals, said to be the strongest mages alive, sat around a round table which was designed to match the clock motif.

They were the Numbers—the highest-ranked mages in Chronos. The lower the number, the higher the authority and strength of the member. They were constantly battling with each other to ascend the ranks.

And, in the midst of this important meeting, one individual had yet to arrive at his designated place. *Sheesh*, he thought, *the captain loves to work us hard. Why'd she have to call us out in the middle of the night?*

This was Bardo of the Wind, someone very proficient with Ninjutsu—a technique from the far eastern land called Ametsuchi. He had been given the Roman numeral V for his strength. He was known for his great combat skills, and was one of the few modern mages who had experience fighting Abel.

"I can't believe this! It's not possible to break the Blade of Judgment!" As he arrived, he could already tell that the conversation had grown heated. "That sword is beyond our understanding! There's no way a mere student could've done anything to it!"

The name of the person screaming was Kanaria. As someone who followed the rules more strictly than anyone else, she was also the most shocked by this turn of events. She'd entered the upper echelon of Chronos two years ago, and was easily identified by her ponytail and the fact she was in her late teens. Her seat had a IX engraved into its back.

The Blade of Judgment was broken? Bardo thought. *Whoa, come on, now. That's scary.*

Now it made sense that an emergency meeting had been called. As he stood

outside the room, Bardo could tell that today's topic would be very important.

The mages of Chronos were called the strongest in the world, but they still didn't know much about the Blade of Judgment. They had thought that the curse cast upon the blade exceeded what any human could possibly understand of magecraft. Plus, merely touching it inflicted a powerful curse that would melt all your flesh away, leaving nothing but bones. The even trickier thing was the blade's devilish charms. Though they were fully aware of its danger, they couldn't get rid of it even if they wanted to without sacrificing someone.

"Hey—running late, are we? I see you haven't changed."

As soon as Bardo entered the room, Emerson, who was sitting at the table in the seat marked with a VII, addressed him. There were many eccentric members among the Numbers, but Emerson was known to be the strangest of them all.

His specialty was Regalia development, and his presence in the Numbers was abnormal because he was the only one who didn't specialize in combat. Since he contributed greatly to Chronos's earnings, his rank should have been higher, but he showed absolutely no interest in promotion, and instead immersed himself in his research, perfectly content with his current rank.

"Em, what's goin' on? What's the commotion?" Bardo asked.

Emerson chuckled. "We're discussing a topic that should be near and dear to your heart. The 'Abel' problem is finally taking center stage."

"Huh?!" Losing his composure at the mere mention of Abel's name, Bardo dropped the leaf stem he'd been holding in his mouth.

Abel? Abel?! Bardo demanded inside his own head.

Indeed, Abel's name was carved deeply into Bardo's soul. In his close to forty years of life, he'd never lost a fight until he'd met Abel. Bardo had undergone intense training from a young age in the far east country where he was born. With his Shape-Shifting Magecraft, he'd been able to take down many powerful enemies. The defeat that Abel had dealt him was the one blemish on what would have otherwise been a stellar track record.

"Let me guess what's going through your head, Bardo," a woman giggled.

“The sound of his name has brought back unpleasant memories, hasn’t it?”

Bardo wasn’t the only one of the Numbers who’d fought Abel. Myussen of Bewitchment was a woman with a captivating appeal, who was ranked IV in the organization. She’d also suffered a bitter defeat at Abel’s hands.

Of course, Bardo replied mentally. How could I ever forget something that intense?

Though at the time, the two of them had had reservations about fighting a single student, they realized quickly that such qualms had been unnecessary. Abel had made quick work of them—even though they were two of the strongest Numbers in Chronos.

“And that concludes the report of what occurred in the Judgment Hall yesterday. I’d like to hear your opinion on this, Captain,” Elon, a white-haired man, said, from his seat with the Roman numeral II inscribed on it.

He was both a great businessman—the face of the business side of Chronos—and an extremely top-notch mage. Every move he made had a great effect on the world.

“Um, could I ask about a little point of confusion?” said a woman, seated in a chair with the Roman numeral I inscribed on its back.

This woman’s name was Rio. One might have wondered how she stood at the top of Chronos despite not being the strongest mage of them all; however, that was one mystery that nobody knew the answer to. No one in the organization knew the details.

Judging simply by her appearance, she seemed to be little else than a young woman in her teens. However, she’d served as the leader of the organization for decades.



She didn't appear to age, which led people to wonder if she was even human. There was no end to the mysteries that surrounded her.

"Why isn't the boy in question displayed in any of the footage?" she asked.

Everyone gathered there had been wondering the same thing. The footage had shown the battle that'd taken place, but even if one were to be charitable, the video quality was low. It was as if a fog had obscured parts of the footage, making it impossible to discern Abel's figure.

"Allow me to explain," Emerson said, standing up. "From my investigation, I can conclude that he completely took over the Mechanical Clock Tower's systems. Look at this Magecraft Equation. He seems to have decoded my surveillance system, and temporarily gained control over it. Heh heh. This is the first time I've experienced such humiliation. He capitalized on a very small vulnerability. It's a clear demonstration of his remarkable ability..." Emerson launched into an explanation, changing the screen to display the data. As he spoke of Abel's superior magecraft, he looked absolutely euphoric.

"Hey, Em. What are you doin' actin' so happy in front of the captain for? This is *your* fault!" Elon said, interrupting him.

Emerson showed no signs of remorse—if anything, he sounded extremely excited. "Well, look, if you have a problem with my work, remove me from my post immediately," he sighed. "You're not gonna find a better Regalia engineer than me, though. It's pointless to blame me."

Emerson had always been like this. Even if a superior was getting on his case, he wouldn't care at all. After all, he fully believed that he was an unparalleled genius.

Elon clicked his tongue in annoyance. "I really hate that about you."

Since joining Chronos, Emerson looked down on everyone else in the organization. That was true even when it came to the Numbers—the strongest mages in the world. Conversely, that Emerson was so obsessed with Abel was proof of just how abnormal the boy was.

"Captain, please direct us on how to handle this boy," Elon went on. "To be honest, he's tarnished our reputation."

In contrast to Elon's angry expression, Rio looked completely relaxed. "Hm... I think I'd like to meet him." She then slowly stood up and issued a command to her subordinates. "Use every last bit of Chronos's power to bring him to me."

Unbeknownst to Abel, various plans were being set in motion...



Sometime after I returned to the student dorms, having successfully escaped the Mechanical Clock Tower, I reported to Lilith what'd happened.

"I see... All that happened inside the Mechanical Clock Tower..." Lilith said, a meek expression on her face as she heard my report.

"Sorry. I might've caused a huge commotion."

I'd been the one to mess up this time. Part of me had been excited to see Mumei after all this time. Though I didn't think I'd made the wrong choice in destroying it, there might've been a way to settle things with less fuss.

"No, I think you did the right thing, Master Abel. The Blade of Judgment is well-known in the underworld as a blade possessing a devilish charm. There've been countless people who've lost their lives after being charmed by its beauty."

Hm. I thought as much. I'd been on guard ever since I'd heard that the book I'd written, now known as the Akashic Record, had become the trigger for war. It really seemed as though my personal effects from two hundred years ago were affecting modern times. And I'd been the one to sow these seeds. It was time I plucked them out.

"You might not be able to avoid a battle with Chronos in the near future," Lilith said.

"Yeah. I don't think it'll be a problem, though."

Even if they came at me all at once, I was sure I could handle them all with ease. It was hard to think that any modern mages could get an advantage over me. I honestly had yet to perceive anyone as a real threat.

"But there's no harm in taking precautions, especially since the school trip begins next week. You should stay on your guard."

“What are you trying to say?”

“They aren’t allowed to use excessive force domestically; however, it’s a different story overseas. Most likely, they’re waiting for you to leave the country to launch their attack.”

I see. So it’ll be easier for them to attack me during the school vacation? Then again, it didn’t matter if they changed the location or their methods—it was still the same people attacking me. Nothing was going to change. I wasn’t sure I understood what had Lilith so worried.

“Just in case, I will accompany you. I will make some preparations so that I can be by your side,” she said, beaming at me.

“Don’t tell me that you’re doing this as an excuse to go on the trip with me, are you?”

“Hm, I wonder,” she giggled.

I fell silent. *Judging by her reaction, I hit the nail on the head.* She usually acted defiant like this when I guessed right. *Good grief.* Maybe this was the pot calling the kettle black, but she could bear to be a little more cautious.

Chapter 5: Eastern Country

A few days had passed since I'd visited Chronos's headquarters in the Mechanical Clock Tower. I hadn't sensed any trace of Chronos making a move just yet, and the days were passing by peacefully.

I was at my seat in our morning homeroom, listening to Fedia speaking to us from the podium. "I'm going to begin explaining the schedule for our school trip. First, I will begin with the most important topic—our destination."

The students were obviously excited.

"Where do you think we're goin' this year?"

"No clue, but I heard that last year they went to the city in the sky, Rahktos, and then the year before that they went to the artificial island city of Minerva!"

"Seriously?! Those are like the biggest tourist destinations in the world! I guess Arthlia is living up to its name as a global powerhouse! I bet this year's gonna be insane too!"

Student after student began buzzing with excitement at Fedia's words. *Hm. If I remember right, Rahktos, the city-state existing at the highest elevation in the world, is surrounded by mountains.* If someone took its name literally, they might have assumed that it floated in the sky, but really, it was just at a high altitude. I'd heard great things about its stunning scenery, so I'd always wanted to visit.

The artificial island city of Minerva, on the other hand, was a man-made city on the sea, in distant waters. It'd flourished as a stopover connecting different continents, and was a melting pot of cultures. It sounded fascinating, and I would've been content if it had been our destination as well.

"Where do you think we'll be going?!" Ted roared excitedly. "Personally, I want it to be somewhere with good food!"

Well, Ted's outburst aside, I've just realized there's a different problem. Regardless of what country we're going to, there's a high chance I've been there

before. However, there was probably no avoiding that.

On our journey to defeat the Demon King, the party I was in spent over ten years traveling the world. Regardless of where we went, I probably couldn't hope to have a fresh experience.

"For this year's trip, we'll be going to the eastern island country of Ametsuchi," Fedia announced.

A silence fell over the classroom. Maybe it was just my imagination, but as soon as the name of the destination left Fedia's mouth, I could've sworn that any excitement that had filled the classroom immediately dissipated. *Hm... Ametsuchi, huh? That's a pretty interesting destination.*

"Seriously? Ametsuchi?! That's so boring!"

"I've heard it's nothin' but rice paddies and mountains out there! Why're we goin' to the boonies?!"

My classmates were being terribly prejudiced...although I will say that they weren't necessarily wrong. From what I recalled of two hundred years ago, Ametsuchi couldn't have been called a flourishing land by any metrics. It was an island in the far eastern sea, without any real resources. In terms of trade, they were at a huge disadvantage because the sea around them was very turbulent.

Even so, there were a lot of naturally gifted Obsidian Eye magecraft users in their country. This had helped to establish their manufacturing industry. Additionally, their overall strength as mages was high. The majority of them were very diligent, studious, and hardworking. Mages with Ametsuchian blood in them were spread out all over the globe.

"In recent years, opinions of Ametsuchi have improved among the international community. I'm sure there's much to be learned from them," Fedia said, supplementing the information she'd given us after seeing the class's unenthusiastic reaction.

Though the rest of the class might not have been happy with our choice of destination, I couldn't have asked for better. After all, Ametsuchi was a country I'd yet to visit. I'd never expected that my first visit there would be for school.



Afterwards, we were given free time to choose groups for the trip.

“There will be two girls and two guys to each group, for a total of four people. You will be accompanying each other during the sightseeing portions of the trip.”

These words brought a little of the excitement back into the air.

“Seriously?! Aren’t these things usually decided by drawing lots?”

“I-I wish it was just random...”

I couldn’t blame them for the commotion. The important part of a journey wasn’t the destination, but the company in which you spent it. The group you were in would determine whether your trip was paradise or hell.

“Two guys? That’s you and me, then, Master—right?”

“Yeah. No objections here,” I replied to Ted.

Though I wasn’t completely satisfied with him as a group mate, I wasn’t exactly acquainted with any other male students. It was at times like these that I wished I was. Either way, that just left the matter of getting two girls into our group, and I already had two in mind.

“A-Abel... I-If you don’t mind, how would you feel about us joining your group?” Eliza asked, nervously calling out to me.

It seemed that Eliza and Yukari had had the same thought. I assumed that it would be more enjoyable traveling with people you knew, rather than those you didn’t, and we’d all been on the same team for Hunt during our phys ed class.

“Abel, have you already decided which girls are gonna be in your group?!”

Hm? What’s going on? A girl came up to me, pushing Eliza and Yukari out of the way. Her name’s... Hm. What is her name? I really can’t remember.

“Hey! No cutting in line!”

“Yeah, because he’s joining *our* group!”

And then something even more surprising happened. For whatever reason, other girls began asserting I would be in their group...and they just kept coming.

“W-Wow, Master. You’re so popular!”

I couldn’t blame Ted for being surprised. It seemed that the world was filled with strange women...but maybe that was just me being presumptuous. Ted was sociable, though, and was—at least in terms of practical ability—achieving high grades. Maybe there was a chance that the one who was actually popular with girls was Ted.

“Hey, Eliza. Wanna join us?”

“H-Huh?!” Eliza was stunned.

“I’ve honestly thought you’re pretty cute for a while now.”

“You’re gonna have a hundred times more fun with us than some gloomy Inferior Eyes.”

Furthermore, it seemed that Ted and I weren’t the only ones to be approached with proposals to join other groups. Eliza and Yukari had attracted various guys who seemed extremely interested in having them in their group. *Well, that makes sense. Based solely off of looks, they’re in a league of their own compared to the other girls in our class.* It made sense that they’d be popular with the guys.

“W-We’ve already decided on a group to join, so—” Eliza stammered.

“Aw, don’t be such a stick-in-the-mud.”

Good grief. If you don’t want to join them, isn’t it better to just flat-out refuse from the start? Though Eliza was strong-willed, she was surprisingly weak when it came to pushy people. *I guess as a fellow member of the Olden Magecraft Research Society, I’ll help her out.*

“How about a trial period? Just one day! Yeah?”

Just as the guy went to touch Eliza’s shoulder, I intervened.

“Sorry, but mind askin’ someone else?”

“Huh?” The guy’s expression soured at the sight of me. “What gives you the right to order me around?!”

“You defective Inferior Eyes! Don’t get full of yourself just ’cuz you get good

grades!”

Good grief. After all this time, you’re still insulting me based on my eyes? That’s not very nice. Though it wasn’t technically a crime, continuing to try to force a girl to do something she obviously didn’t want to wasn’t exactly smart. But I knew that it wasn’t possible to convince these kinds of guys with just words. *My hands are tied. I’m gonna have to use my secret technique.* I proceeded to release a little bit of killing intent, glaring at the boys through narrowed eyes.

“She’s taken. Back off,” I said.

The boys jumped a little, beginning to tremble.

“A-Ah...”

Humans and animals tend to freeze up when frightened. After all, if one runs into a predator, one has a higher chance of surviving the encounter if one remains motionless and escapes notice.

“Wh-What is...this...?”

“I...can’t move...”

Hm. I might be overdoing it. They’ve lost all their spunk. My killing intent had turned them into a bunch of shrinking violets.

“Dammit! This is why I hate transfer students!”

“You’ll regret this! You’re nothing but a dirty poison perch!”

After hurling a bunch of threats, the two quickly scurried away.

Poison perch, huh? I haven’t heard that in a while. This was a term that the continuing students used to disparage transfer students. Though blatant discrimination against transfer students had decreased somewhat since the start of the school year, it seemed that it hadn’t disappeared for good.

“Th-Thanks, Abel,” said Eliza.

“Wow, Abel,” Yukari cried. “As reliable as usual!”

At any rate, we’d managed to get the two of them into our group, which meant we were set for the school trip.

Chapter 6: The Old Capital, Hananomiya

Time passed in a flash, and before I knew it, it was the middle of September. Plans for the school trip were hashed and rehashed over and over during that time, and then, right as the memories of summer heat were finally beginning to fade, the day of the school trip that everyone was (probably) excited for arrived.

Ametsuchi was about two thousand kilometers away from the royal capital, Midgard. The distance was not only so large as to be nearly unfathomable, but due to the terrain in our way, including oceans and mountains, it was also much more difficult to reach than if we were simply traveling over flat land. Back in my day, that kind of journey would've required at least a few months.

"It's finally time! I'm so hyped, Master!" Ted said from the seat next to me. He was as lively as a fish thrown back into water.

In order to get to Ametsuchi, we needed to depart from the royal capital's eastern district. It was an area filled with factories and marketplaces, but most importantly, the port was located there. As students, we didn't come here often; however, the reason we were here today was extremely simple.

"Phew... No matter how many times I see it, I'm in awe. The Magic Railway's so cool!" Ted said.

The Magic Railway was a convenient, modern-day method of transportation that could be used for easy international travel. As I was admiring this technological marvel, however, I suddenly remembered Lilith's warning from the other day...

"But there's no harm in taking precautions, especially since the school trip begins next week. You should stay on your guard."

Apparently, domestically, magecraft companies were put on a tight leash, and what they could do to me while I was within the country was limited. If they wanted to get at me, waiting until I'd left the country was perfect. At the

moment, I didn't really sense anything to be worried about, but there was nothing wrong with me keeping my guard up a little bit either.

"Something wrong, Abel?" Eliza asked. "Thinking about something?"

"Are you feeling under the weather?" Yukari added. "You look a little sickly."

The two of them were seated across from me and Ted, and were watching me with concern. The entire train had been reserved by the school for this trip, so our surroundings were very loud and energetic.

"No, it's nothing. Just got something on my mind," I said.

I was worried that Chronos's attack on me might put the rest of the students here at risk. At this point, the only thing I could do was rely on Lilith's help to try and prevent anybody from getting hurt.



Around an hour after we'd boarded the Magic Railway, we were off on our bustling train ride out of the country.

"Um, I actually made some cookies for the journey. Would you all like some?"

"Whoa! You made all of these, Yukari?!" Eliza exclaimed.

"Yep! I hope you like them, Eli."

"Yum! These are so good! They're so yummy! They're totally Yukari quality!" Ted said happily.

"Hey, acorn-head! Why are you eating them already?!"

"It's okay, I made a lot more," Yukari said happily.

Good grief. Never a moment of peace with these people. It reminded me of the train ride to our summer training camp. However, we were short a member from that time, as Noel had decided not to participate in the school trip. Having to spend a night with people she didn't know was too much for a huge introvert like Noel, in many different ways. Even so, she did seem disappointed that she couldn't participate, so I thought maybe I could bring her back a gift or something.

"Oh, there it is!" Eliza said, suddenly pointing out the window.

Outside, there was a strange, man-made, egg-shaped vehicle with wings sprouting from it. *Hm. I've read about this, but this is my first time seeing it in person.*

"Whoa! That's an airship... I've never seen one before," Eliza said.

Like its name implied, an airship was a vehicle capable of traversing the skies. It was equipped with special Enchantments that allowed it to manipulate its weight to float. Furthermore, it used wind magic stones for energy, propelling it forward powerfully.

I'd wanted to see one for a while now, but I hadn't expected that moment would come so soon. Airships were truly a testament to the capabilities of modern magecraft technologies.

"So it's a straight shot to Ametsuchi if we take one of those? That's amazing!" Eliza said with wonder.

She's right. It really is amazing technology. Back in my day, you had to risk your life to get to Ametsuchi. After all, it was a solitary island to the far east, in a distant sea. You had to cross all sorts of treacherous straits before you could arrive. Though the strength of modern mages had significantly weakened, the advancements in transportation truly deserved praise.

"What's the matter, Ted? Where'd all your energy go?" I asked.

I was slightly disturbed by how the normally talkative Ted's mouth had stopped moving. Usually, I'd have expected him to be freaking out over having discovered something he'd never seen before, but he was completely silent.

"Well..." he said. "Now that I'm seeing it up close, I'm kinda nervous. Can it really fly through the air?"

I see. So that's what it is. Though Ted was all over the place, he was also surprisingly sensitive to change, more so than he seemed—the type of person who couldn't sleep if he wasn't using his usual pillow. Clearly, riding an airship for the first time scared him a little.

"There's probably a nonzero chance that we drop out of the sky."

"Oh, come on, Master! Don't freak me out!"

“That’s not what I mean. I’m just pointing out that no new technology is foolproof.”

Maybe I was just imagining things, but my words seemed to have made Ted clam up again and go pale. I decided to keep going. “I heard there was recently a case where one of these got into an accident because it was attacked by bird monsters.”

We didn’t have to worry much about the threat of magic beasts where we lived, but there were still a lot of them in other places of the world. If we were going to be flying over the water, I wouldn’t have been surprised to encounter a bird monster or two.

“Master, my stomach’s starting to hurt! Can I get off?!”

“It’s too late for that. Man up.”

Well—in the unlikely event that we were attacked by magic beasts, there was absolutely no chance we’d crash, since I was on board. However, if Ted being frightened meant a little peace and quiet, I thought it was better for me to keep this fact to myself.



After about ten hours on the airship, we arrived at the island of Ametsuchi, having passed over a number of oceans and mountains. *Hm. I’m a little surprised. I had my doubts about how quickly we’d arrive, but this didn’t even take half a day.*

“Hey, Ted, wake up. Looks like we’ll be landing soon,” I said, giving him a shake.

“Wha?! Eek! Huge bird! The bird monster’s gonna attack us!”

It seemed that Ted was still half asleep. “Snap out of it. Hurry up and get ready.”

At that moment, an announcement rang across the airship. “Attention, passengers. We will soon be arriving at our destination, Ametsuchi. Please remember to gather your belongings before exiting the aircraft.”

Everyone began to bubble with excitement. *Hm. Personally, I would’ve liked*

to have seen at least one magic beast, but I guess I'll have to look forward to future opportunities. I'll just be happy that we got here without encountering any problems, I suppose.

The doors of the airship opened, and a rush of humid air flooded in.

“Whoa—this is Ametsuchi?! So that means when I step outside, I'll be in a foreign country?! That's so cool!” Ted said, as he stood at the exit.

“Then get out already,” I said, pushing Ted forward and out.

It was hard to believe that not too long ago, he'd been shaking at the knees at the thought that we might crash. His emotional state was so mercurial.



Afterwards, we went to the inn and put our luggage in our rooms. The trip was just for a few days, so I'd only packed some changes of clothes and books I'd been reading. I didn't have much to unpack, so I was done pretty quick. After putting my bag down, I left the room and waited to meet up with the girls at the front.

“Hope you didn't wait too long!” Yukari said, as they arrived.

Eliza was beside herself with excitement. “Abel, acorn-head, let's go!”

Since we now had free time, we set off to explore. We were currently in the old capital of Ametsuchi, Hananomiya. There were a great many historical buildings here.

After walking for a bit, we finally came across a large, crowded street.

“Look! There it is!” Eliza cried, pointing.

Hm, I'm not sure how to put it, but this place definitely has the atmosphere of a different country. There were well-maintained sidewalks, and the leaves on the trees were crimson. A large red bridge stretched across a nearby pond.

As much as I'd like to jump in and enjoy this very atmospheric place, personally, there's one thing holding me back... I'm being watched by two assassins. One of them is close, while the other one's a little bit farther away. They were most likely members of Chronos who'd followed me all this way. *They're so devoted to their jobs.*

“Wow! They’re all wearing such interesting clothes!” Eliza said, marveling at all the unique outfits around us.

Foreigners like us called such getups “wafuku” or “kimono,” but to the people here, they were just regular clothes.

“They’re kinda like the clothes you wore before, Yukari,” Eliza said.

“Well...actually, my ancestors were apparently born here.”

“Huh? Really?!”

“Yep. It was my grandmother’s grandmother, though, so it’s kind of hard for me to feel any real connection.”

I see. Now that she mentions it, she definitely shares some physical characteristics with the people around here. The clothes she wore were similar, but also her name had a certain Ametsuchian feel to it. Plus, Obsidian Eyes were the specialty of people from Ametsuchi.

“Wow! Look, there are some really pretty fish in this pond!” Yukari said, pointing to some beautiful red, white, and black fish.

“I read about these in a book before. They’re called koi fish.”

Though these fish had originated here, they were now becoming popular across the world. Their colors could be passed down through their genes. Apparently, there were enthusiasts who wanted to see who could make the koi with the most beautiful patterns.

“They’re very beautiful and elegant fish,” Yukari said.

Most likely, Ametsuchi was a little more geared towards tourism than other countries. It’d be great if our royal capital could take a page out of their book and improve the ponds back home, which stunk of mud and were really only filled with poison perch.

“Yukari, look at this! They were selling some strange food over there!”

“It was super cheap!” Ted said.

It seemed that, while we were looking at the fish, Ted and Eliza had bought some food. *Hm, wait. What is this?* They’d come back with food that looked

sort of like beans, packaged inside a clear case. Despite there being so many sights to see, I wasn't surprised that they'd immediately gravitated to food. I was astonished by how much they loved eating.

"Eli...isn't that fish food?"

"Huh?!"

Surprised, Eliza began checking the packaging of what she'd purchased. *Hm. I don't blame them for not noticing.* The store they'd bought it from did have a warning about the food being for fish, but it was written in their native language. It had probably been cheap because it wasn't meant for human consumption.

"Well, whatever. As long as it tastes good!"

Come on, Ted, really? Leave it to him to not care. I watched as he stuffed his face full of the fish food, seemingly enjoying it.

"Master, wanna try some? It's nice and crunchy, and tastes pretty good too!"

It took me a little while to answer. Usually, I wouldn't have gone along with his ridiculous fancies, but in this particular instance, there were mitigating circumstances.

"Sure. I'll take one."

Of course, I wasn't about to willingly eat fish food like Ted, but regardless, I took one of the bean-like pieces of food from him. However, I had no intention of consuming it. It was because there was a Chronos member in the pond, and I needed something small and hard.

"So you *do* want some. Aw, come on, why didn't you just say so?" Ted said proudly.

Just ignore him. I stayed silent, not wanting to be associated with his humiliating behavior. I moved to quickly take care of the Chronos member, vengefully flicking the bean into the hole of a stick of bamboo that was floating in the pond, looking rather out of place.

It seemed that I'd succeeded—I heard a splash and could tell that I'd hit my target perfectly. *Good grief. It'd be great if Chronos just quietly gave up after*

this, but also, if they're all this stupid, I won't have to resort to using magecraft.

A small bean like this was more than enough to show them the difference in our strength.



Going back three days before Abel and the rest arrived in Ametsuchi, a certain man, who had received orders from his organization to take down Abel, was remaining vigilant for the boy's arrival. His name was Bruno, and he was an assassin known as the Demon Dragonfly.

He was one of the Numbers, the strongest mages in Chronos, and was bestowed with the number XII. As an assassin, his philosophy was "one shot, one kill." He was a true hunter, and would spend extraordinary lengths of time in the same place, stealthily waiting for his target. Patience was his forte. As such, Bruno had arrived in Hananomiya far in advance, and had concealed his presence in the pond, waiting for his target's arrival.

I can't believe someone like me had to come all the way to a place like this, just to take out a single kid.

While cursing his circumstances mentally, he stopped his breathing, blending into his surroundings. The number of targets Bruno had stealthily eliminated was already in the double digits. He'd eliminated politicians, holy knights, big merchants who traveled the world, assassins hired by other political institutions, and so on. They were all people with the power to influence society. It was hard for Bruno to imagine that the day would come where he would need to use his talents on a mere student.

There's nobody in the world who can beat me when I'm using Water Magecraft. As soon as they fall into my territory, it's over for them.

The best chance for Bruno to strike on his current mission was when his target crossed the bridge. He'd already spent three days and three nights constructing a magic circle at the bottom of the pond. This was something Bruno was proficient at, a technique known as Affixation. This magecraft only worked within a limited range and took a lot of time to set up, but its power was second to none. Mastering Affixation allowed one to defeat enemies stronger than oneself.

I can't wait! I love seeing people painfully struggle in my Water Prison!

According to his predictions, his target would no doubt cross over this bridge, which meant that his plan was flawless. No matter how excellent the mage, once they were caught in his specialty, the Water Prison, there was no escape.

This is gonna be an easy mission, as always. I don't get why Bardo's so scared of some brat!

Then he suddenly remembered the advice that Bardo, who was his mentor, had given him. *"Listen up, Bruno. That kid...Abel...he isn't normal. Go all out! If you don't, you're one hundred percent gonna fail!"*

Bardo was a very skilled mage. Ever since Bruno had joined the organization, he'd respected Bardo and acknowledged his strength. That was precisely why he couldn't understand how such a powerful mage couldn't beat a boy who was barely fifteen years old.

Well, whatever. Either way, it's to my advantage that the organization rates Abel so highly. This will be the day that I surpass Bardo!

Though Bruno was a member of the Numbers, he had been given the number XII, which meant he was ranked the lowest of them all. If he was able to take out Abel, then he would most likely shoot up in rank.

Well, well. Looks like the target's finally here.

The boy in question had black hair, was wearing a school uniform, and had Amber Eyes. He completely matched the description that Bruno had received. But right as Bruno tried to activate the magic circle, something strange happened.

"Mmph!" Suddenly, it was as if he'd been hit with electricity. It didn't take long for him to realize that his target's malice was washing over him. *I-I can't move! Wh-What is this?!*

It had become hard to breathe. Though Bruno could usually hold his breath for close to thirty minutes on end, the extreme fear he was experiencing had increased his need for oxygen.

Impossible! I'm being pressured by this brat?!

He whipped out a bamboo stick to breathe through so that he could settle down and think more clearly.

Okay, calm down. Don't forfeit your composure, or you lose. It doesn't matter how strong he is. I win as soon as he gets locked in my Water Prison!

A calm emotional state was vital for making the most of one's strength as a mage. Bruno's Water Prison worked precisely on that principle, depriving whoever was caught in it of their ability to stay calm. As soon as his victims were caught, they would be marked for death, all while remaining unable to unleash their usual strength.

"Gah!" Suddenly, Bruno once again found it hard to breathe—the bamboo stick he was using was no longer producing any oxygen.

What's going on?! I didn't see him use magecraft or anything!

Bruno had been prepared to counterattack as soon as his opponent used magecraft of his own, which is precisely why he couldn't understand what was happening. He'd been waiting for his target to use magecraft, but hadn't expected to encounter a method of cutting off his oxygen supply that didn't use magecraft.

However, Abel's method was incredibly simple and primitive: all he'd done was lodge a bean in the tube that Bruno was breathing through. Sadly, Bruno never realized this, and then it was too late.

"Gah! Graaaaah!"

A little while later, Bruno succumbed to oxygen deficiency and floated to the top of the pond.

Chapter 7: The Sweets Shop Incident

Thirty minutes after we'd arrived in Hananomiya, the old capital of Ametsuchi, we continued our uneventful exploration of the place.

"We have some freshly steamed buns with your names on them here! Come and get 'em!"

"Get your homemade sweet sake!"

Hm. It seems that we've found our way into the food district of this town. Vendors dressed in wafuku were energetically calling out to customers. A sweet smell wafted over the area.

"Um, are you all hungry?" Yukari asked.

"Starving!" cried Eliza.

"Famished!" Ted added.

Given their responses, we decided to take a break and head to a nearby restaurant, which was named Sweets Shop: Skewered Rice Dumplings. It was an old-fashioned café and had a rustic charm to it. The exterior looked old, but the interior was very clean and well-kept. There was little to complain about. We were guided to outdoor seats on the terrace with a great view.

"Wow, so this is the menu?" Yukari said, as she read it. "There are so many desserts I've never heard of!"

"Handwritten menus are really exciting, aren't they?" Eliza replied.

The moment we sat down, Yukari and Eliza began perusing the menu. Meanwhile...

Hm. It looks like we're being watched by...one person, from rather far away. There was a building about four hundred meters in the distance. At the very least, this opponent was a little stronger than the small fry in the pond, but they still weren't anything to write home about.

Eventually, our orders arrived. "Thank you for waiting! Here's four orders of

the special Anmitsu!”

“Whoa!”

“Anmitsu” was a mysterious food that none of us had heard of, but after much agonizing over the menu, it was what we’d decided on.

“How intriguing!”

“It looks so exotic!”

Just as I was about to take a bite, there was a sharp *whoosh* as an arrow flew at me. *Good grief. I’m just about to eat. How rude.* I deftly caught the arrow with my chopsticks.

“Wha—?! Master! Where’d you get that arrow from?!”



Not bad, Ted, your primal instincts are as sharp as ever. I'd tried to catch the arrow as silently as possible, but it seemed like Ted had still noticed. *Good grief. What should I do?* Telling him the truth would have been simplest, but if at all possible, I wanted to hide the fact that I was being attacked. After all, I was Chronos's target, and no one else. I didn't want to put a damper on the school trip that they were all enjoying and make them worry about me.

"It's so cool! Where'd you buy it?!"

Huh? What's going on? I had no words for his reaction. It seemed that Ted was now studying the arrow with some excitement.

"This texture and design... The quality is so much better than the stuff you can find at the gift shops! It's so cool!"

Well, of course it's higher quality. It's a professional assassin's arrow. At any rate, by examining the Enchantment in the arrow, I could more or less guess the strength of the mage. *Hm. Looks like they're not too shabby, but also not that great. Maybe a little below average in terms of skill, at least compared to the Chronos members I've fought up till this point.*

"Master, can I *please* have that arrow?! I'll trade you this dragon sword key chain I bought!" Ted said, pulling out a strangely designed key chain. To put it bluntly, it was not particularly cool. It was nothing but a dragon coiled around a sword.

"Pass," I said bluntly.

"Aw, come on!"

Now that I think about it, there were a good number of similar key chains in the gift shop. I'd been wondering what kind of people would buy them, but now that mystery had been solved.

"Hm? Going somewhere, Abel?" Eliza asked, worried, as I got up with the arrow in my hand.

"I just remembered something I need to do. I'll be back in five minutes."

When you find something someone lost, you have to return it to them. And judging by the strength of the person who'd shot this at me, the battle wouldn't

last long.

“Eliza, come on, that’s bad manners! Master’s a human too! That means he goes to the bathroom, just like the rest of us!”

Ted...I’m just gonna ignore that entirely.



Elsewhere, about four hundred meters away from the Sweets Shop that Abel and the others were visiting, there was a four-tiered pagoda. It was a popular tourist structure in Ametsuchi, and had four roofs stacked on top of each other. Waiting at the very top of it was one of the assassins that Chronos had dispatched.

So that boy is my target?

While observing Abel, Kanaria readied her bow. She was a hakama-wearing girl with a ponytail, in the latter half of her teens, who’d entered the Numbers two years ago. She’d been given the Roman numeral IX. She was probably the most serious member of them all, one who executed her missions with calmness and certainty.

He’s approximately 372.45 meters away. The wind is blowing about two meters to the southeast...

She shaped her fingers into a circle, then looked through them to measure the distance to her target. The bow, after all, was a uniquely delicate weapon. There weren’t many other weapons whose capabilities changed so drastically depending on the proficiency of its wielder. A novice wielder might not even be able to fire an arrow. The even harder part was reaching the target—this involved accounting for the wind and weather, which had a great effect on one’s technique.

All the conditions have been met. It’s the perfect day for an assassination.

She pulled out an arrow from her pack and cast an Enchantment on it. The weapons she used were specially made. They were called Purging Arrows—unique arrows made from a tree that was over a hundred years old, and passed down through her clan. They were much more mana conducive than normal arrows. And by bringing out the full power of Enchantments, bows could get a

leg up over guns.

Once I loose this arrow, I'll have separated his head from his shoulders in less than a second.

The arrow she was about to use was known to fly faster than the speed of sound. The many Enchantments within it helped raise its speed. There wasn't a single individual who'd survived once Kanaria had them in her sights.

I don't understand why Lady Myussen issued such a strong warning about him...

She began to remember the advice that her mentor, Myussen, had given her the day before she came here.

"Listen carefully, Kanaria. Abel...that kid is not normal. You will definitely fail this mission. That's why, when it comes down to it, you should prioritize your own life."

Myussen was an exceptional mage, and Kanaria had looked up to her even prior to joining Chronos. That was why she was so fired up to fight Abel, whether he welcomed the challenge or not. Myussen barely ever praised other people, so Kanaria was jealous of him.

"Hawkeye Kanaria commencing battle! Your life is mine!"

Her goal was the instant their food arrived at their table—it was the exact moment that his guard would be lowered. There was a loud whoosh as her arrow flew out, coiling through the air towards Abel.

"Huh?!"

However, a moment later, a completely unexpected sight met her eyes. For some reason, the arrow had stopped right before hitting her target's head. It took her a while to realize that he'd caught her arrow with his chopsticks.

"Th-That's not possible! Did he know I was here the entire time?!"

There was no other way he could've stopped her attack. The arrow had been traveling faster than sound, not to mention she was almost four hundred meters away. She couldn't help but be surprised.

"Wh-Where'd he go?!"

Before she knew it, Abel had disappeared from the table. While she'd been paralyzed by confusion, Abel had already left.

"Hawk's Eye!"

Kanaria raised her focus as high as it could go, then carefully scanned the area. Her eyes were special. Even without using mana to strengthen her vision, she could see two kilometers into the distance. With her superhuman vision, plus the extreme speed Imbuement Magecraft gave her arrows, she was an exceptional assassin.

"Calm down. If I lose my composure, then I lose everything. He can't have gone far..."

The most important thing while hunting was making sure you weren't shaken by unexpected events. Even if you missed one of your shots, you would just need to make sure that you killed your target with your second one. A hunter's mettle was tested not by the first shot, but by the second. It was the same whether you were hunting game or humans. Due to her family circumstances, Kanaria had undergone intense training from a young age to master the bow. She had nerves of steel that allowed her to keep calm in all kinds of situations.

"Did you need something from me?"

A voice behind her made her jump, and she yelped out loud. *H-How did he get here?!*

Since she was at the top of the four-tiered pagoda, there should've been at least four hundred feet between her and ground level. Not even ten seconds had elapsed since she'd fired her arrow. Kanaria couldn't comprehend how he'd reached her in that short time.

But at this distance, I can do it!

This was a dire situation for Kanaria, but also an opportunity. Her target was only two meters away. And the closer a target was, the more force and speed there would be behind her arrow.

"Purging Arrow!"

She quickly fired the arrow she'd hidden at her feet. This only took her half a

second, and there was no one who could have reacted to it fast enough. At the very least...that's what Kanaria had thought until this day.

"Hm. Yeah, it's kinda fast at this range, huh?" Once again, Kanaria was struck speechless, this time at the incomprehensible sight of Abel having caught the arrow between his index and middle finger. "You were close...but no matter how fast the arrow, if it takes you that long to fire it, then it's nothing special," he said, providing a calm analysis of Kanaria's offensive capabilities.

She couldn't believe it. Even if the target knew the attack was coming, it shouldn't have been possible for him to react this quickly. It *should* have been undodgeable...

"Well, it's my turn now," Abel said coolly, before flinging the arrow he was holding back at her.

With a flick of his wrist, he sent the arrow flying at nearly the same speed at which she'd fired it, or maybe even faster. There was a loud *whoosh* and the arrow whizzed past Kanaria's ear, far into the distance before disappearing past the horizon.

"Aha... Ha ha..."

Kanaria felt nothing but regret for having stepped on the tail of a monster whose powers she couldn't even fathom. Though it was late, she finally realized that she was out of her league in this fight, and completely lost the will to continue.

Chapter 8: Like a Significant Other

Many things happened, and the first day of our school trip was coming to a close. *Sheesh. I know I have to be on my toes because of Chronos, but they really don't even come close to being a threat.* I'd spent the day dispatching the assassins sent after me while also taking in the sights. By the time I realized it, night had fallen. Now, we were all gathered in the dining hall, eating dinner as scheduled.

"Whoa!" cried a student nearby. "Ametsuchian food is so good! It's amazing! Godly!"

I had no complaints about the quality of the food either. My interest was also piqued by the savory steamed egg custard dish in a tea bowl. I hadn't the faintest clue what it was. *I need to look into this when I get back to the royal capital.*

The other students seemed to have gotten an overall positive impression of the food, and the compliments kept coming.

"The seasoning really screams 'countryside,' but the food's pretty good!"

"Yeah. Ametsuchi's a much better place than I thought."

Ametsuchi's culture must have been quite refined if it was able to silence even the fussiest of nobles. Still, though, there was one thing I couldn't personally get over.

"Listen up, all of you! Just 'cause this is a trip, it's no excuse to cut loose! Any illicit relations are forbidden! It's an unforgivable sin!"

Sadly, I couldn't tune out Kantre, our physical education teacher, who kept coming around, repeating the same warning over and over again during our meal. Currently, the boys were in the dining hall, while the girls were elsewhere—we were to dine separately. And unfortunately, our wonderful meal was being spoiled by the overbearing, vulgar comments of a teacher.

"Hey, did you hear that rumor?"

“Yeah, the class from last year did somethin’ or other. Now they’ve beefed up security, right? Ugh, so annoying!”

Hm. Judging from what they’re saying, I can deduce that the reason the guys and girls have been split up is some kind of problem caused by students on last year’s field trip. “Illicit relations,” huh...? Personally, I was of the opinion that matters of romance should be given a pass, but since this was a school attended by nobles, they apparently wanted to keep everything tame. What a stupid problem to have.

“Cut us some slack, Kanty! We’re on a trip with girls, but we can’t even talk to them at night! It’s too depressing!”

“No means no! Any contact with girls at night is forbidden! *Absolutely* forbidden!” Kantre roared, putting his foot down.

“Aw, come on!” multiple guys groaned.

Good grief. It’s not like you’re gonna die if you can’t talk to girls. I was almost envious of how they could derive so much joy from something so trivial. As always, life as a student was so peaceful.



Around nine o’clock at night, we were instructed to go to sleep for the convenience of the teachers. Realistically, though, there was no way that young, hot-blooded boys like these were going to be able to sleep so easily.

“Come on, who’s your crush?”

“I-I don’t have a crush on anyone. I bet *you* do, though!”

“Heh heh. Yeah...but I’m not telling.”

“But you wanted *me* to tell?! That’s messed up!”

This was the kind of lowbrow conversation the guys in my room were having. *Good grief. I give up. I might be lying down, but I’m never gonna get to sleep like this.* Apparently, I was the type of person who couldn’t sleep well if I was with strangers. Ted had been assigned to a different room, leaving me feeling like I was even more alone than usual.

“Anyhow, aren’t the girls in our class, like, really hot?”

“Yeah, I totally agree.”

They seem to be rating the appearances of the girls in our class very highly. Most likely, Eliza and Yukari were raising the average. I usually didn’t engage with the guys in our class, so this kind of conversation was new to me.

“Hey, whaddya guys say to headin’ over to the girls’ rooms?”

“We’ll get in a lotta trouble if we’re caught!”

“It’s okay. I overheard the guys in the room next to us when I was walkin’ by. They’re gonna try their luck too!”

“Seriously?! Then maybe it’ll be okay...”

I remained silent. *Seriously? Just what, exactly, makes them think it’ll be okay?* Going as a group didn’t change the fact that they were breaking rules. Having multiple offenders didn’t dilute the crime.

“Hey, Abel. Why don’t you join us?”

For a second, I didn’t even understand what he was saying. *Me? A peerless mage prodigy from two hundred years ago, sneaking into the rooms of young women at night? That’s the dumbest thing I’ve ever heard.*

I declined at once. “Sorry. Not interested.”

It worked in my favor if all the noisy people left—I’d finally get the opportunity to sleep. And usually, whenever I refused an invitation they’d back down, but for some reason, this time, one of the guys persisted.

“Come on, Abel. You need to change that about yourself. You don’t have any concept of working together with others! Sure, you might be book-smart, but when you get out into the real world, you’re not gonna survive if you can’t cooperate with others!”

To this, I had no reply. At first glance, it sounded ridiculous, but I slowly realized he might’ve actually had a point. The logical link between infiltrating the girls’ rooms and cooperating with others was weak, but at the very least, up until now, I’d always avoided working with the rest of my class. That much was true. As much as I preferred to be around people to whom I could relate, that wouldn’t help me grow as a person. Occasionally, it might be good to branch

out and interact with students I didn't know yet.

"Fine. If you insist, I'll cooperate. What's your name again?" I asked.

"Zyle. At least *try* to remember the names of your classmates! Sheesh!"

"Hm. Sorry, Zyle. I'll be more careful in the future."

I was a little surprised. Up until this moment, I'd never bothered to try and learn their names because I'd never expected to have to speak to any of them. Two hundred years ago, people like me, with Amber Eyes, experienced discrimination. Years had passed since then, and though people no longer feared us, the tendency to discriminate remained.

"Seriously? You're inviting the Inferior Eyes?"

"I've known you for a while, but I really don't get what goes on inside your head, Zyle."

As proof that the attitude towards those with Amber Eyes hadn't changed, Zyle's lackeys began mouthing off about me, complaining left and right. It was honestly sad how part of me secretly took comfort from how they were treating me.



You really never know where life will take you. I challenge anyone to find someone who could've predicted that I, an individual once known as a peerless mage prodigy, would be trying to sneak into a girl's room two hundred years down the line. That being said, now that I'd agreed to do it, I wasn't about to back down. I planned to cooperate with the guys from my room. After coming up with a plan, we put on our shoes and began making our way to our objective.

"There it is! That's the west building where the girls are!" one of the guys said, pointing it out.

According to Zyle, up until last year's illicit relations incident, the guys and girls had slept in the same building. Now, it was policy for us to be separated.

"Urgh, I can't forgive them! They stole our fun!"

"In the first place, Kanty and Professor Fedia are just taking out their

frustrations on us because they have no luck in their love lives! It's not fair!"

"Totally. Kanty's a lost cause, but Fedia would be a knockout if she just kept her mouth shut. What a waste."

The guys from my room kept up their lowbrow, pointless conversation. But perhaps this was how guys spoke to each other at this age. Maybe fitting into society was just an extension of this. Since I didn't get many opportunities like this, I decided to study what it meant to be "one of the guys."

"Abel, do you have a girlfriend?"

"By 'girlfriend,' do you mean a significant other?"

"What else would I mean?"

Zyle's question made me fall silent, as I considered what would be appropriate to say. *Hm, a significant other, huh? The closest thing I have to that would be Lilith, but I get the sense that what we have is a little different from what one would generally consider a romantic relationship.* If anything, we were strategic partners who supported each other and shared the same goals. Maybe putting it that way made the most sense.

"I don't have one," I said.

"Huh? Really?"

"So you're one of us?!"

Once again, I fell silent—this time because I had to do a double take. *Telling them the truth seems to have made them feel friendlier towards me.*

"But I have someone who's *like* a significant other," I said.

"*Like* one?!" they all exclaimed.

I had to pause for another double take. *They seemed so happy just a second ago, but their faces have all gone sour.*

"So by that, you mean that you're already in an adult relationship, right?"

"Dammit! It really *is* all about looks!"

Now they were coming to all sorts of wild conclusions. They began asking me all sorts of questions after that, but I just fobbed them off with vague answers.

After all, I wasn't about to tell them the truth about me and Lilith.

"One more step, and we'll be in the girls' territory. Men, are you ready?" Zyle asked.

"Yes, sir!" the rest of the guys answered in unison.

Thus, we entered the girls' building. Looking at it from the outside, I was able to confirm my assumptions—the west and east buildings had completely identical layouts. Most likely, Lilith, who was helping with another class, was in this building.

"So that's why you should be on your toes. There's no telling what they're plotting," said a male voice.

"Thank you for your report, Professor Kantre," a woman replied.

We arrived in the lobby and spotted some familiar faces. Fedia was relaxing on the couch in a yukata, while Kantre was nearby in his usual tracksuit.

"Heh heh. To be honest, I heard them scheming while I passed by their rooms earlier. Some of the boys are planning to sneak in here tonight. Boys at this age are such disobedient deviants," Kantre said, with a smug look on his face.

Judging from the conversation, Kantre had spilled the beans about the guys' plans to Fedia.

"Kanty, you bastard! You're selling us out?!"

"Unbelievable! I trusted him!"

It seemed that Zyle and the others had been thrown off their game by Kantre's perceived betrayal. However, for my part, I had never thought he was trustworthy in the first place, so his leaking the plans didn't surprise me one bit.

"Well, then," Kantre went on. "We know all the dirty details of last year. Maybe I should go warn the girls about the potential danger."

"There's no need for that." Just as Kantre began casually walking towards the girls' rooms, Fedia reached out and pulled him back by the back of his shirt, stopping him in his tracks. "So long as I remain in this lobby, not even a mouse will get by me. Feel free to return to your room."

She must've sensed Kantre's ulterior motives, because her gaze seemed colder than usual. But no sooner had that thought crossed my mind than Fedia reacted.

"Who's there?!"

Hm. Seems like she's sniffed us out. None of us had slipped up, though. The problem was that the others were novices when it came to concealing their presences. Kantre might've been a fool, but Fedia was very vigilant—it was difficult to get anything by her.

"It's over!" Fedia barked, approaching us. "Prepare to be punished!"

"Guys, hide!" Zyle frantically whispered.

"But where?!"

There was nowhere to hide, which meant that it was only a matter of time until Fedia found us. We were out of options; we were cornered like rats. *Good grief.* Usually, I would have thought of myself as having no obligation to help these guys, but this time, I'd decided to lend them a helping hand as their partner in crime. *I'm not a huge fan of this idea, but I guess I'll get them out of this.*

If there was nowhere to hide, then all I had to do was make it so that she couldn't see us. With that in mind, I analyzed the hotel's lighting system. Then there was a click, and everything went dark.

"Wh-What's going on? A blackout?!"

Taking over this system was like taking candy from a baby, especially compared to the system I'd had to infiltrate at the Mechanical Clock Tower. This one was incredibly simple.

"Let's run," I told the others.

"Y-Yeah!"

With her vision obscured by the darkness, she shouldn't be able to pick us out. It would've been great if the guys learned from this and stopped trying to pull strange stunts, but also, in this world, there was such a thing as karmic retribution. I was sure they'd realize that breaking the rules and sneaking into

the girls' room had been a mistake, and that they'd use this opportunity to retreat.



...Or at least, that's what I'd thought, but life never really goes the way you think it will.

"Heh heh. There's no turning back, especially after we were just thrown a bone here!"

"It's the perfect opportunity to infiltrate the garden of maidens!"

I'd saved these guys on a whim, and it seemed to have only emboldened them. *Good grief. If I knew things were gonna turn out like this, I would've just let them get caught.*

"Stop! Illicit relations are forbidden!" Unfortunately, Kantre was pursuing us from behind, his huge belly jiggling with every step. Cries of dismay arose from the boys.

"Eek! Why is this happening?!"

"It's your fault! I told you we shoulda just stayed in the room!"

Good grief. If you're gonna argue about it, you shouldn't have done it in the first place. Fortunately, the one chasing us was an idiot, so he hadn't seen our faces, but it was time to start preparing for the worst.

"Heh heh." Then I heard another voice, one that I considered far more dangerous. "You really think you can get away from me?! Get ready for your punishment!"

Well. It seems like Fedia's looped around to cut us off. Kantre was easy to ignore, but the others couldn't escape Fedia. With one teacher in our way and the other cutting off our retreat, we were in dire straits.

"They're gonna pincer us! What do we do, Abel?!" one of the guys begged me.

Having analyzed the situation, I decided to demonstrate to them the best possible solution. "Well, this is what I'd do."

Hm. The perfect time and place. I saw an open window and moved to it, which elicited sounds of surprise from the guys—but that didn't compare to the gasps they let out when they saw what I did next. I stepped out of the window and tumbled to the ground below, the night air rushing past my shoulders as I fell through the air.

"No way! We're on the third floor!"

"You traitor!"

The guys cried after me. *Hm. It doesn't seem like any of them have the courage to follow me.* If they'd been training daily, they should've been able to handle this and avoid taking any real damage. *Sorry, but you all brought this on yourselves. Now, then, though it's unfortunate for them, I'll be able to get away without being found. I shall gratefully take this opportunity to return to our room.*

But just as I was thinking this, someone called out to me. "What might you be doing, Master Abel?"

"Lilith, huh?"

I'd run into the worst possible person, at the worst possible time. I might've been able to squirm my way out of trouble with the other teachers, but with Lilith, I got the feeling that making up any kind of excuse would only backfire.

"I'm surprised. The teachers were told to be on the lookout for guys trying to sneak in, but I didn't expect *you* to be the culprit."

She must think this is a good opportunity to toy with me. I can tell from her expression that she's enjoying this.

"It was just a whim. There was no ulterior—"

"If you wished to see me so badly, you could've just told me. I'm always prepared to receive you."

At these words, it was as if visible question marks were floating around my head. *What is she saying?* I wasn't here to meet her; I'd come along because of the other guys in my room.

"Or perhaps...you had a different objective?" Suddenly, her gaze became

slightly cold. Perhaps it was my imagination, but her mood seemed to have soured. “You wouldn’t happen to be trying to visit some other girl’s room—going out of your way to sneak past everyone to see her—would you?” Lilith pressed me sharply.



“Nope. Yeah, you’re right. Of course I came to see you.” *This is a little troublesome, but I don’t have a choice. Things will be easier on me if I play along.* Then, all of a sudden, I sensed a strange presence not too far off from us. *We’re being watched.*

“It’s gotten cold. Let’s talk somewhere else,” Lilith went on, having also noticed our observer.

“Yeah. Let’s.”

Most likely, we were being watched by something related to one of the assassins from earlier today. However, there was a sensation of being inorganic coming from it, which led me to believe that it wasn’t a living thing. It might have been some kind of Regalia. Either way, though, continuing our discussion elsewhere seemed like the best move at the moment.

“What an annoying bunch,” Lilith said to me. “Shall I deal with them?”

“No need. They’re a good way to kill time. Let them run around for a bit,” I said.

From what I could tell, Chronos didn’t seem to be trying to get any of the students involved in their attacks on me. Their target was me and me alone, so there probably wasn’t any harm in leaving them be.

“I’m so happy! I have you all to myself tonight, Master Abel! Let’s engage in all sorts of illicit relations!”

“Just as a reminder...you’re supposed to be *discouraging* those kinds of relations.”

It went without saying, but as a teacher, Lilith should *not* have been aggressively pursuing such relations with a student.

Chapter 9: The Melancholy of Elon

Four hours before Lilith caught Abel, about a kilometer away, there was a man inside a room of a simple lodging facility, surrounded by countless monitors. He was using a recording Regalia to surveil Abel's lodgings around the clock.

"This can't be! Both Bruno and Kanaria were defeated?!" Elon gasped, an expression of surprise crossing his face as he received the report from his subordinate. For some reason, Elon had a skewered sweet dumpling in his hand. "Are you certain?"

"Yes. Actually, they both came by earlier to drop these off."

Elon's eyes widened as he looked over the papers he'd been handed. Both had the words "Resignation Letter" scrawled across the top.

You're kidding me. They didn't just lose—their spirits were crushed!

He read the letters, then clutched his head nervously. He could feel the overwhelming sense of defeat from what they had written. It was true that neither Bruno nor Kanaria were exactly high on the Numbers totem pole, but they were both young and ravenous to prove themselves. The reason Elon had given them this mission had been so that they could do exactly that. And yet...

"Vice-Captain, should we...continue the operation?"

"Let's wait for further instructions from the captain."

The situation had devolved to the point where Elon could no longer make decisions on his own. As the leader of Chronos, only Rio could call the shots.

Then, a young girl's voice rang out, seemingly from nowhere. "No need for that."

They soon realized that the source of the voice was, in fact, their captain, Rio. But they couldn't tell where the voice was coming from, which didn't sit right with them. After all, there was no one in the room apart from Elon and the

subordinate from whom he was receiving the report.

Suddenly, there was the sound of flesh ripping, and a young girl with blonde hair emerged from inside the body of Elon's subordinate.

"We're canceling the plans to capture that boy," the girl said to Elon. "It seems that he has no animosity towards us. He is not our enemy either. I've confirmed he is not a threat."

Elon had no words for what had just happened. Every now and then, the thought had crossed his mind that perhaps the individual standing in front of him right now was actually an enemy of humankind. He had found himself wondering if she had their organization dancing in the palm of her hand, and they were but pawns to her cause.

Rio was a mage who could pop up anywhere, at any given time. There was no indication whether she was human or demon—it was impossible to tell what, exactly, she was, and there wasn't a soul alive who had any clue about her identity either. Governments, royalty—nobody could go against her. The only thing that was certain was that Chronos as an organization revolved around her, meaning the only thing Elon could do, as her subordinate, was follow her orders.

"Very well. We will stop pursuing that boy," Elon said.

"Good. However, I've found a new target we need to be wary of." On the screen, there was a grown woman standing next to Abel. "She's a demon, and a very high-ranking one. I've discovered that she possesses great strength, and that she's too much of a danger to be left to her own devices," Rio said expressionlessly, wiping blood from her face. "We must erase her from existence with our strength, for the sake of world peace."

Once again, Elon had no words. This wasn't the first time that he had been left clueless of Rio's true intentions when she issued an order.

Using his authority as vice-captain, Elon had looked into a certain incident from Chronos's history. Over the past ten years, four different people had served as the number II in Chronos before disappearing. The details behind their disappearances weren't clear, but Elon posited that they'd all tried to rebel against Rio. However, she had many disposable pawns at her fingertips.

Opposing Rio was the same as signing your own death warrant. With this in mind, Elon cleared his conscience and followed Rio's orders.

Chapter 10: An Obvious Stalling Tactic

The first day of our trip had been accompanied by various annoyances, but it was now over, and the second day had arrived. It was effectively the last day we'd have for sightseeing, since we'd be getting on the airship to go home tomorrow afternoon.

Today, we found ourselves visiting a so-called historical village. Even in an exotic land like Ametsuchi, the concept behind this place was exceptionally unique. Though the place we'd visited yesterday was rife with points of cultural interest, these historical villages tried to recreate the ambience of Ametsuchi from over a hundred years ago. It had a slightly artificial feel to it, but it felt uncouth to nitpick such details. It was better to accept the place for what it was so that we could fully enjoy it.

"Look at that!" Eliza called out as we walked. "What a fun-looking store!"

We stopped by a shop that had traditional Ametsuchian garb. It seemed that they had a rental service with low prices, geared towards tourists. *I believe this is what's called "cosplay."* This was a good opportunity to try on some of the outfits that the store clerk recommended.

"Ted... That outfit..." Yukari started to say, before falling speechless again.

"Huh? Does it look weird?!" Ted exclaimed.

I won't go into details, but at the shop clerk's recommendation, Ted was trying a hairstyle called a "topknot." At the very least, I could say that it was a match made in heaven.





Time flies when you're having fun, and soon the day was coming to an end. By the time we'd finished looking around at the various tourist spots, night had already fallen.

"Today was a blast!" Eliza sighed.

"Agreed!" Yukari said happily. "Personally, seeing Eli in a kimono was a sight for sore eyes."

"I had such a great time!" Ted nodded along. "I wanna go on a trip with you guys again!"

With the sun at our backs, we went down the stairs, chatting among ourselves. However, I soon realized that we were being followed. A quick estimate told me that there were about ten of them, and each one of them had a mana signature that was more evil than anything I'd felt before. Most likely, they were following up on the assassins that Chronos had dispatched yesterday. And if it were at all possible, I wanted to settle things with the assassins far away from these three.

"Huh?" Yukari looked up. "Was that rain right now?"

Eliza paused, following her gaze. "Wait, really?"

"Ack!" Ted cried. "I just felt a cold droplet on the back of my neck!"

Hm. Looks like the weather's taken a turn for the worse. The weather in Ametsuchi was very fickle, and could change at the drop of a hat.

Then, Yukari turned her gaze towards the road. "Oh, looks like we're in luck! The bus is coming right now."

"Phew!" Ted smiled at the sight. "What a relief!"

"Aw," Eliza complained, "I'm getting drenched! I'm gonna have to take a shower when we get back!"

A single vehicle came to a stop before us, kicking up water in its wake. This was an Ametsuchian vehicle called an "automobile" that used magic stones as fuel. Though many people looked down on Ametsuchi for being a backwater

island country with nothing but rice paddies and mountains, the truth of the matter was very different. At least, with regard to transportation, one could say that they were far more advanced than us, since we still used horse-drawn carriages.

The bus let out a hiss as its doors opened—this was the unique sound of magic stones being expended in the process. Ted, Eliza, and Yukari all jumped into the bus to escape the rain, but I stayed behind. I stood still in front of the doors before turning on my heel.

“Sorry, but I forgot something. Go on ahead of me,” I said.

“Huh?!” Eliza’s eyes widened as she turned to face me, but the doors had already shut behind her, and the bus quickly drove off.

Hm. I’m lucky that it started to rain. There was no one near this bus stop, which was at the bottom of the shrine’s stairs, but me. The rain had conveniently cleared the place out. And with things like this, I could fight to my heart’s content.

“Come out already. I know you’re there,” I said, extending an invitation to my enemy.

In the next moment, something emerged from the muddy ground. *Hm. Definitely not human. Must be a type of doll created by Obsidian Eye magecraft.* My Wind Magecraft sliced the doll’s head clean off, sending mud flying in all four directions. *Hm. They’re pretty fragile.*

But at the same time, they weren’t that easy to face. After all, mud dolls could immediately regenerate and get back up again. *This battle might be longer than I expected.*

“Bravo! Seriously, hats off to you!”

A familiar voice came from the shadow of the trees, followed by the emergence of a familiar face. *Hm. If memory serves, I met him in the Mechanical Clock Tower. I think his name’s Elon—he’s the vice-captain of Chronos.*

“You really are fantastic. It’s no surprise you handled my subordinates with ease,” he said.

At first, I thought he was here to avenge said subordinates, but something about the way he was acting told me that wasn't the case. I sensed no trace of animosity in his voice. If anything, he was relaxed, and showed no signs of interest in going on the offensive.

"However, cleaning up after one's subordinates is the boss's job. Mind sparring with me for a bit?" As soon as these words had left Elon's mouth, countless small balls floated up around him. "Here's a taste of Chronos's special Regalia—the Nine Ball."

I've never seen this before. At the very least, it's of a different quality from the mass-produced Regalias I saw in the factory. It must've been one of the custom-ordered Regalias that Emerson had spoken of. At any rate, if he was using the company's products in battle, he must have been rather fond of the company itself.

"Face judgment from the heavens! Space X!" Elon yelled.

At his words, a total of nine balls flew towards me, raining down like a meteor shower. *Hm. It seems that I might need to be a little cautious.* In tandem with his attack, I sensed the presence of countless *things*.

While his attack menaced me from the front, I heard the *things* screech at me from behind. Elon was a mage with Verdant Eyes, meaning he was proficient with Wind Magecraft. Thus, it was logical to think that the mud dolls had not been created by him. Also, whoever *had* made them was very talented. I was extremely surprised that someone this talented existed in the modern day. To be able to not only create this many dolls but also control them all from afar must have taken a considerable amount of skill.

"What're you after? Why are you coming after me?" I asked on a whim, as I stopped his assault by catching the balls in between my fingers.

The most unsettling thing about all of this was that I sensed he had zero intention of killing me with his attacks. It was as if he wasn't even trying to fight me—as if he was merely trying to keep me here. The knowledge that he was trying to stall me was very unpleasant.

"Heh heh. Color me surprised. I didn't think you'd be able to stop that one. It's my specialty," Elon said, clearly disappointed by how I'd stopped his all-out

attack. “But let me ask *you* something, Abel. Who are *you*? How did you get your strength, and where does it come from?”

Good grief. Really? Answering a question with questions of your own? Can't say I'm a fan. “If you're not gonna answer me, then I'll just have to get the answer out of your head,” I said.

Most likely, he was under orders from someone else to keep me here, and if he wasn't gonna give me answers, then he'd left me no choice. *I'll use you to find out who's really pulling the strings.*

Chapter 11: Encounter with a Witch

Around ten minutes before Abel's group began looking to board the bus, Lilith was by a deserted creek, some distance from their lodgings.

This should be far enough that no students will be hurt. A very troublesome enemy seems to have set their sights on me.

Lilith could sense the presence of this enemy trailing her—and it was accompanied by an unprecedented sense of disquiet. As such, she'd decided to find a desolate area to prepare for the ensuing battle so she wouldn't have to worry about any innocent bystanders getting caught up in it all.

She looked up. Dark clouds lined the horizon, heavy with rain. *I don't like this weather... A downpour might start at any minute.*

Lilith hated rain. The mere sound of it made her remember the events of two hundred years ago, whether she wanted to or not.



On the day that Abel and the rest of the Hero Party infiltrated the Demon King's castle, the Demon King's forces were certain of an overwhelming victory. After all, demons were naturally superior to humans with regard to mana, stamina, intelligence, life force, and so on. The difference between the two species should have been insurmountable.

But even so, their forces were put on the back foot by the very same beings that they'd looked down on. Abel's prowess in the fight against them became the catalyst for the great progress that the rest of his party was able to make.

"Gaaaah! You lowly humans!"

If Lilith strained her ears, she could hear the cries of her fellow demons as they were slain. Slowly but surely, the Hero Party was making their way through the Demon King's castle. Even if she wanted to go and help, she was too young to make a difference. All she could do was cover her ears and stay in her room, sobbing—but as quietly as she could.

Then there was a soft knock at her door; the sound echoed across her room. Instinctively, she knew that the reaper had come to visit.

“Why, hello there. What’s a cute little thing doing all by yourself here?”

A man in his late twenties with silver hair stood at the door. This man’s name was Cain. He was known as the Demon Killer, the most cold-blooded of the Hero Party, and the demons told cautionary tales of him among themselves.

“Aw, you’re afraid. You shouldn’t be. I’m on your side.”

Though he smiled, it didn’t hide the cruelty lurking deep inside his eyes. Perhaps it was just because he’d come from a fierce battle, but each step he took towards Lilith dripped blood onto the ground.



Every time it rained, Lilith was reminded of this traumatic experience. That being said, this was the first time she’d remembered that day so vividly. And the reason for that was, most likely, the unsettling presence that was pursuing her.

All of a sudden, she heard a giggle from behind her. “This must be a joke. A demon deliberately putting humans out of harm’s way?”

Lilith gasped silently, and turned. A blonde girl in a white coat was standing before her. Lilith recognized the insignia on the woman’s coat—each of the ranking mages of Chronos, elevated in the hierarchy for their special powers, were given coats with numbers on them. This girl’s had the Roman numeral I.

“You’re from Chronos, aren’t you?” asked Lilith. “What do you want?”

Lilith’s expression was taut. Out of all the Numbers, this was the one mage she didn’t have any data on. Even after two hundred years of gathering information, to Lilith, this woman remained shrouded in mystery.

“I’ll keep things short,” said the girl from Chronos. “Please stay away from *him*.” Lilith fell silent at the woman’s words. Though the woman hadn’t said his name directly, Lilith immediately understood who she meant. “My master’s pretty angry about how your very presence corrupts him.”

Lilith had no clue who this “master” was, but she wasn’t interested in complying.

“I refuse. I don’t care about the opinions of strangers who don’t understand our relationship.”

The woman giggled. “You think I’m a stranger to him? That’s rude,” she declared, before adding cryptically, “especially considering I’ve spent more time with him than you have.”

The woman kicked off the ground, leaping at Lilith. She was clearly in a completely different league from the modern mages who’d grown so weak, and a regular demon would’ve been neutralized by her attack. However, Lilith simply dodged. Even among modern demons, Lilith’s strength was of the highest degree. She could’ve held her own against Abel in his early teens, post-reincarnation.

“You really do have monstrous physical abilities. I guess that’s no surprise for the daughter of the Demon King of Twilight.”

A jolt ran through Lilith at these words. The only person in this day and age who should’ve known her true identity was Abel, and yet...

“You’re the first human who’s challenged me, despite knowing who I am,” Lilith said coldly.

It had been quite some time since she’d heard a stranger speaking her father’s name. Most feared it so much that they didn’t dare to give voice to it. After all, it was the name of the evil Demon King who’d killed countless humans. He was a symbol of fear for many, even now.

“I’ll give you a chance to flee,” Lilith said angrily. “I’m not as kind as Master Abel. I won’t hesitate to kill you.”

If this girl knew Lilith’s true identity and still insisted on challenging her, then she was presumptuous to the extreme. Unlike two hundred years ago, modern mages were too weak to last even a second against the Demon King of Twilight.

Things hadn’t been any different for the Hero Party, and they’d been the strongest mages in history. The only one who’d really been able to fight him had been Abel. The silver-haired man who’d visited Lilith’s room that night might have been able to put up something of a fight, though.

“Well, that’s certainly interesting. Why don’t you give it a shot? Kill me.”

Seeing that her opponent had chosen to throw caution to the wind, Lilith made up her mind up and immediately decided to attack for real. She transformed her arm into that of a monster's and swung it, aiming to separate the woman's head from her shoulders in one swift strike.

It was a critical hit. The sensation of the bones in the woman's neck snapping reverberated through her hand, and the woman's body flew through the air before rolling across the muddy ground. If she was human, that would've been the end, but if she was a demon, Lilith's attack wouldn't have been enough to be fatal.

"Well, that certainly hurt. Really felt that one."

The sight that greeted Lilith's eyes confused her to no end. It made no sense how the human standing before her could have survived an attack like that, which broke all the bones in her neck. Unless...

"You're not human, are you?" Lilith asked.

"Matchies! Right?"

Lilith's attack had confirmed that the woman was not human. However, she wasn't a demon either. Lilith had never encountered a being like this before. The uncertainty made Lilith's expression tighten.

"And now...I've caught you."

A warm sensation suddenly wrapped around Lilith's ankles and wrists, and she gasped. Thin, snakelike creatures made of mud had burst from the ground, constricting Lilith. It seemed that the woman was an Obsidian-Eyed mage, proficient in the manipulation of matter, and it was obvious that these snakes were of her creation.

"Well, now, Witch of Twilight, why don't you show me your true form?"

The mud snakes suddenly constricted, robbing Lilith of the ability to make even the slightest movement. Demons had both human and monster forms, but Lilith loathed using the latter. To her, it was disgusting and unsightly, and every time she saw it, she hated herself.

However, she was aware that she couldn't continue this fight without

transforming. Her human form put her at a disadvantage. As such, with no other options, she began to contemplate transforming into the monster which she'd long since sealed away...





As I made my way towards the inn after getting rid of the mud dolls, I recalled what Elon had said during our fight.

“I surrender. You win.” Having realized the gap in our strengths, Elon had quickly admitted defeat. “You truly are strong—I’ll concede that much. But no matter how strong you are, you don’t even hold a candle to our captain, I can assure you of that.”

When I’d asked him what their objective was, he’d mentioned the name “Rio.” As far as modern mages went, Elon was certainly one of the more formidable ones, and such mages were able to accurately discern their opponent’s strength. If there was someone that he feared that much and rated that highly, then I couldn’t help but be interested in them as well.

“As you guessed, all I was asked to do was keep you busy. Our captain’s worried about a woman named Lilith. I’d be careful if I were you.”

Hm. I doubt I have to worry about Lilith losing to anyone, but there’s no harm being careful. Lilith was about as powerful as you could get for a demon. Considering the strength of all the modern mages I’d fought so far, she could easily wipe out ten such mages in an instant. I’d never seen Lilith in a tough spot before, and couldn’t even picture such a thing.



I arrived at the inn, then made my way to the place where I could sense mana concentrations that were on a whole different level from those of modern mages. One of them was clearly Lilith’s, but I had no clue who the other was. *I’m surprised. Even two hundred years ago, I don’t remember having sensed a mana signature this steeped in evil.*

Suddenly, a bolt of lightning struck the side of a creek not too far away. *This confirms it. Without a doubt, that’s Lilith’s magecraft.* As I made my way in that direction, I saw an unfamiliar blonde girl. As for Lilith, she had fully transformed into her monster form, but what was more surprising was that she’d taken a good amount of damage, and was clearly exhausted.

I’d known Lilith for two hundred years, but this was the first time I’d seen her

fully transformed. My assessment had been off the mark. I hadn't expected a modern mage to be able to drive Lilith into a corner like this. Elon might not have been completely off the mark in putting Lilith's opponent above me in terms of strength.

"Hello there. I've been waiting to see you again, sir!"

Huh? What's going on? As soon as the girl had laid eyes on me, she started acting like she knew me. "Sorry," I told her, "but I don't remember being acquainted with anyone like you."

At these words, the girl silently put a hand to her face. In the next moment, her flesh began to melt and shift, as if it were made of clay. Her blonde hair turned black, and as I watched, I began to recognize the face that was appearing before me.

"Gotta say, I'm surprised you're still alive and kicking, sir!"

Right back at you. I could hardly believe who I was looking at—here she was, one of my old comrades, but two hundred years into the future.

"Ayane, huh?"

I'd been her mentor during my days in Chaos Raid, two hundred years ago. She was a very talented Obsidian-Eyed mage. Back then, when mages weren't so weak, she was at the very top of the food chain. Then, after Chaos Raid fell apart, Ayane joined our Hero Party as a support.

I had no clue what had happened to her after we defeated the Demon King and restored peace to the world. I'd reincarnated myself into the future, but it seemed that she had used some other method to stay alive all this time.

"Your personality's changed since we last met."

She giggled at my observation. "Women are creatures of many faces. Kinda like that monster over there."

Why is she showing Lilith so much animosity? Then again, it wasn't too hard to come up with a reason. After all, Lilith was the descendant of the terrible Demon King who'd had humanity on the ropes two hundred years ago. There was no denying that leaving Lilith alive ran the risk of her becoming another

Demon King who would threaten humanity all over again. In fact, the rest of my party had all been against letting her live. In that sense, maybe Ayane's beef with Lilith was inevitable.

"As old friends, I'll give you a special deal," I said to her coldly. "Surrender now, and I'll at least let you decide how you want to die."

"No deal! You're being deceived by this horrid woman, sir!"

Am I, now? Well, maybe she was right. I was defending a demon. From another perspective, one could say that I was a criminal putting humanity at risk.

"If you're gonna get in my way, I'll have to stop you by force," Ayane went on, clearly ready to fight.

I guess I have no choice. We weren't going to see eye to eye. And if discussions broke down, we had no choice but to fight.

"You talk a big game for someone who's never beaten me once."

"Piece of advice: It's been two hundred years. A lot can change," Ayane shot back.

In the next moment, Ayane whipped out countless weapons from inside her coat. As I knew from the past, she fought with origami. This Ametsuchian technique was called Shikigami Magecraft.

"Shikigami Magecraft: Venomous Bee Form!"



Suddenly, a swarm of bees was flying at me. *Never seen this one before.* It seemed that she'd learned a few new tricks over the past two hundred years. As for me, though, my body was still that of a child. I was nowhere near how strong I would be once I fully matured.

"So what?"

I used Wind Magecraft to easily knock the venomous bees out of the air. *How childish.* Though Ayane's appearance might've changed, I still knew the ins and outs of her magecraft. She'd been able to lead Lilith around by the nose, but she wasn't about to replicate that with me.

"Not bad, sir! You might be in a kid's body, but that's not slowing you down at all."

Next, Ayane began composing a magecraft equation I'd never seen before. It must've been something that she'd tinkered with over the past two hundred years. *I should stay put and observe it.*

"Quiz time, sir!" Ayane said jokingly. The damp ground began bubbling as if something was threatening to burst out from underneath. Then, unexpectedly, multiple Ayanes sprung out of the ground, all made of mud. "Who's the real one?!" Each was a perfect replica of her, making it hard to tell by looking which was the real Ayane. She didn't give me time to think about it—at once, she and her clones attacked.

Fortunately, I didn't need to think about it. "What a stupid question." I used Obsidian Eye magecraft to make a sword out of mud and cut through every last one of the Ayanes that'd appeared. Instead of blood, mud leaked out of them from where they'd been struck. *"All of you are fake."*

Ayane had never been here at all. This whole time, I'd been getting a strange feeling from her mana—it felt man-made and artificial. I couldn't sense anything organic from it. As soon as I saw her use her Doppelgänger Magecraft, I realized the truth. The first Ayane who'd addressed me was nothing more than a doll as well.

"Sharp as ever, sir! Seems like I underestimated you," Ayane said, one of her heads rolling across the ground.

No. I'm the one who underestimated you. This isn't a magecraft I know. She must've perfected it during the time I was asleep.

"See you around, sir. Hope we meet again soon."

With these words, her body turned back to mud and her presence dissipated. *Hm. Maybe I shouldn't be saying this, but I really have a troublesome mentee.* Ayane had just become a huge obstacle to my goal of living a peaceful life. But that was neither here nor there. Now that the battle was done, I needed to check on Lilith. Transforming into her monster form was easy for her, but shifting back into a human form took time. She could probably do nothing but wait as she slowly took a human form again.

"Lilith."

She didn't answer at first. *Strange. I know she's hurt, but I don't think it should have affected her ability to speak. Maybe she's in a bad mood...?*

"Don't..." Lilith said quietly. "I don't wish to speak with you right now, Master Abel."

Hm. I don't know why, but she seems to be sulking. I'd known her for a while, but this was the first time in ages that I'd seen her acting so weak-spirited.

"You must hate me now that you've seen my true form. I'm disgusting and unsightly... Nobody could love me in this form..."

I see. I get the gist of what's going on here. She's in shock after showing me her monster form. "Don't be stupid. You really think I care about that? It's what's on the inside that counts, right? Looks be damned."

I couldn't help but remember the first time I'd seen Lilith fully transformed. Her appearance matched the form of the Demon King of Twilight, whom we'd slain. Lilith was a demon without a defined shape, like a shadowy figure without a solid form. And sure, beauty was in the eye of the beholder, but her current appearance was objectively frightening.

"You're just lying to me because you're kind. There's no way you mean that."

Good grief. You're acting like a little kid. "Listen, Lilith. I'm not sure if I'll feel like saying this again, so if you miss what I'm about to say, you might have to

wait another two hundred years.” *Right now, what she needs is words to reassure her. That’s why I’ll give them to her, even if I would never normally say such things.* “I’m in love with you, Lilith.”

I couldn’t read the emotions on the face of her monster form, but even so, I felt these words should be more than enough to reassure her, and prove the idea that nobody could love her wrong. At the very least, there was a single oddball out there who’d ended up falling for a demon.

“I...I love you too, Master Abel.”

Thinking back, this was the day that she’d changed from something *like* a significant other to an actual significant other in my mind. Up until now, I’d always intentionally avoided romance with others.

Opening yourself up to others only sets you up for betrayal. When I was young, my days had been filled with such betrayals. *But now, in this peaceful age, maybe believing in someone and falling in love with them might not be too bad.* And if it was Lilith, who’d supported me for two hundred years, if I was betrayed by her, perhaps I wouldn’t even regret it.

Epilogue: The Hero of Ash

At the same time, elsewhere, about an hour after Abel and Ayane had reunited, there was a man. He was in the Austra Archipelago, roughly five hundred kilometers south of Ametsuchi. This was one of the few areas still ruled by demons. After several hundreds of years, the demons had converged here and fought against the native humans. This was one of the few places in the modern world that was overrun with powerful demons.

“Good grief. You call yourself the king of demons when you’re this weak? That’s quite presumptuous,” a man in his late twenties said, stepping on the corpse of a demon that’d once called himself a king.

This was Cain, one of the members of the Great Four—the party of heroes that’d defeated the Demon King of Twilight. Cain was an expert in Ashen Eye magecraft, one who even surpassed Abel. Ashen Eyes were known as the second-strongest eyes due to their control over a wide range of different powers, including regeneration, fortification, and modification.

“How... How could a mere human be so powerful...?”

One of the reasons that humans were weaker in a fight than demons was their short life spans. However, Cain was an exception. After all, he’d completed the world’s first Immortality Magecraft.



This young man with Ashen Eyes had used a different path from Abel's to arrive in the modern world.

"Master Cain, I have a report," Ayane said, as she strolled past piles of demon corpses.

Only minutes ago, she'd been locked in battle with Abel. Due to Cain's Immortality Magecraft, however, Ayane had also been able to live to the modern age. Now, she served him as his faithful servant.

"I see... I knew it. He's still alive." As he heard Ayane's report, a single tear rolled down Cain's cheek.

Cain saw Abel as his savior, as well as his teacher of magecraft. He revered Abel, or at least he had—until he perceived Abel as being corrupted by Lilith, the daughter of the Demon King.

"Now that I know...I need to save him from that witch's clutches. Things will get rather busy."

In Cain's mind, he couldn't forgive Lilith for stealing Abel away from him. That was something that hadn't changed.

And, unbeknownst to Abel, this was the chain of events his former comrades were setting in motion...

Afterword

Hey, it's Yusura Kankitsu. Thanks to all of you, we've reached the fifth volume. There was technically a little bit of a detour with the last volume, so it's been a while since I've written a volume for the main series. This volume focuses on two arcs: the "Employment" Arc and the School Trip Arc. I had a lot of fun writing this, especially as I put some of my own experiences into it.

Plotwise, I think there's been a lot of development this time around. Starting in this volume, story threads from the past will come back into play in modern times. I'm aiming for a cool mixture of past and present storylines. For anyone who wants to know more about Ayane and Cain, be sure to read volume 4.5! It'll double your enjoyment of the *Reincarnated Mage* world.

Advertisement for My New Series

The very same month that this volume is published, a spinoff manga will also go on sale. The title is *Reincarnated Mage with Inferior Eyes: The Strongest, Oppressed Orphan Is Invincible in a Different World*.

As you can probably tell, its subtitle is a little different from usual, and that's because this manga focuses on what happens in volume 4.5. Yaya Hinata will be in charge of the art! I've been working with them ever since my debut piece, and this'll be our third time working together.

If you're wondering how we keep ending up together, it's because I personally really like Yaya Hinata's art and push my editor really hard to let me work with them. Regarding the manga versions of light novels, I think they are the absolute best, and I hope all of you give them a read too!

- Yusura Kankitsu

Yusura Kankitsu

Illustrator
Ruria Miyuki

vol. **5**

Reincarnated Mage *with Inferior* Eyes

Breezing through the Future as an Oppressed Ex-Hero



Abel

A genius mage with Amber Eyes—the strongest you can have. He reincarnated into this world from two hundred years ago.

Ted

A spoiled noble who looks up to Abel as his magecraft master.

Yukari

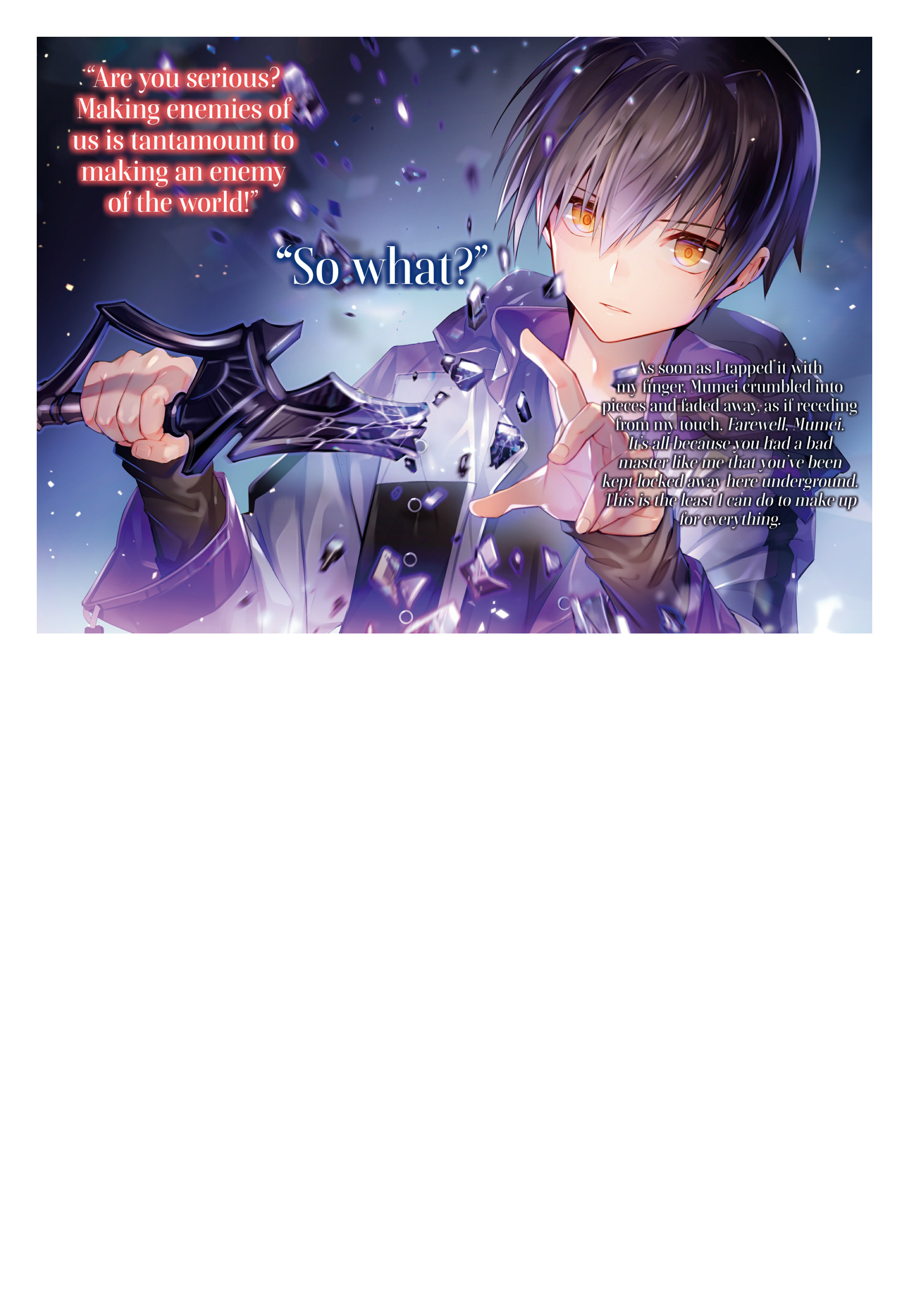
A classmate of Abel and the others, and Eliza's best friend.

Eliza

The descendant of the Hero of Fire. She loves delicious food.

Lilith

The daughter of the demon king. In the past, Abel saved her.



“Are you serious?
Making enemies of
us is tantamount to
making an enemy
of the world!”

“So what?”

As soon as I tapped it with
my finger, Mumei crumbled into
pieces and faded away, as if receding
from my touch. Farewell, Mumei.
It's all because you had a bad
master like me that you've been
kept locked away here underground.
This is the least I can do to make up
for every thing.

Hm. Sorry, but I just inadvertently had a thought that might be quite rude to the two of you. By holding them like this, I knew their exact weights. I was a little worried by how light Noel was...and also worried by how heavy Eliza was.

"An emergency?"

"Wh-What are you doing?!"

"I'll explain later. We need to get out of here now."





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Reincarnated Mage with Inferior Eyes: Breezing through the Future as an Oppressed Ex-Hero Volume 5

by Yusura Kankitsu

Translated by Geirrlon Dunn Edited by Momo

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

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