

無職転生

異世界行ったら
本気だす

6

Rikujin na Maganote
理不尽な孫の手



MF7y77

MUSHOKU TENSEI

– Jobless Reincarnation –

- VOLUME 6 -

Juvenile Period

– *Homecoming Chapter* –

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無職転生

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Refūjin na Magarotte
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エリスは俺をまっすぐに見ていた。



CHAPTER 1

ROUTE OPTIONS

1

Before I noticed it, I had become 12 years old.

I realized it when I suddenly looked at my adventurer's card.

The number in the age column had become 12.

I wonder when my birthday passed.

While we were traveling my sense of time had deviated.

Nevertheless, it's already been two years since the teleport.

How time flies.

Conversely, you could say that it cost us a whole two years.

After spending two years, you can say that we've finally been able to return to the Central Continent.

If we've made it this far, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that Asura Kingdom is right in front of us.

When I think about the things that happened on the way to the Milis Continent, it seems like the journey from here on will be easy.

We have the money and the means to travel.

If I had any worries, it would just be the fact that my family is still missing... but Paul is searching together with an organization; however, even with that, no one has been found yet.

I believe that they are still alive.

However, even if I were to put in my best effort, at this point it's not like they would suddenly be found.

Currently, we're at the Dragon King Kingdom's most eastern point, the port city, East Port.

It's the same as West Port, a town filled with marine products and transported goods.

After we found an inn we held an operations meeting.

It's the same as usual with all three of us surrounding a map facing each other.

"Now then, let's talk about things from now on."

The two were looking at the map with serious faces.

It's something we've done many number of times, so you'd think we would get bored of it, but for Eris who is bad with the difficult talks, this is the only time when she listens with a serious face.

"In order to get from here to Asura Kingdom there are three routes."^[1]

Just like that I pointed my finger at the map we just bought and started explaining.

It's a simple map that only marks out roughly the locations of villages and the forests.

Creating and selling detailed maps is severely forbidden in this kingdom and against its laws.

It seems they're afraid of other kingdoms acquiring one.

Well, it's fine as long as we understand the general terrain.

"The first route is the general one used by merchants for trade purposes."

Then I followed along the map with my finger.

It's a roundabout route that follows a path around the Eastern side of the Dragon King Mountain Range.

"It's the safest route of them all. With our movement speed, it should take around 10 months to arrive."

It's the one that costs the most time, but since it's the road that has the most maintenance done to it, it's also the safest.

"Why is it bad if we don't take the roundabout way?"

Then Eris raised an obvious question.

No matter what the time is she will come out with obvious questions.

Since she's honest, they're easy to explain.

"The route that circles around West is covered in a forest."

I pointed my finger to the Western side of the Dragon King Mountain Range while answering that question.

To the West of the Dragon King Kingdom, there's a large dense forest area spread out. Essentially, you cannot pass through it with a carriage.

However, if you have someone who knows the details about that path, you can cut your movement time by several months.

The prerequisites include horse riding skills as well.

Eris and I cannot ride a horse.

Ruijerd can probably do it.

However, no matter how small we are, it's impossible to fit three people on a single horse.

Since that's the case, we would have to pass this route on foot.

In the case of going on foot, we have no idea how many days it will take us to get there.

It seems practically everyone chooses the safe Eastern roundabout route.

It might not be all that big of a difference in time, or the Eastern route might even be faster.

If you're in a hurry, going around is the way to go.

That more or less summarizes the explanation.

"I see, then West is no good."

Eris seems to have accepted it.

"Then, the third route is..."

While saying that I pointed my finger to the final route.

Get on a boat and cross over into Begaritto Continent, we can search as we go and pass straight through into Asura.

I don't know how many days this would take.

"Although, this route is already rejected."

"Why?"

"Because it's dangerous."

Begaritto Continent is said to have a stronger flow of magic power than the Magic Continent.

If you look at it, the average monsters are equal in strength to those of Magic Continent, but in addition, there are a large number of labyrinths that exist underground and above ground strange weather phenomena often appear.

That climate can be explained in a single word.

Desert.

The continent is covered in sand.

And then, there are giant scorpions of the same size as the Great Land Turtles, and giant worms that eat those scorpions as their staple food are prevalent.

In the afternoon it's scorching heat, at night it's mid-winter.

There's almost no oasis, you can't take any breaks.

Also, if you head even further into the center of it, the sand disappears and for a while it turns into a snow-covered tundra.

From a desert it suddenly turns into a land covered in ice.

If you make it that far then monsters that you can eat almost entirely stop appearing.

Going to that sort of place to search and cut through... it's not realistic at all.

"Since that's the reason, we're going to take the route that goes around to the East."

"Rudeus is a coward, as usual."

"I am a person of many fears after all."

"I think it would be all right if it was us though?"

It seems like Eris wants to go to the Begaritto Continent.

Her eyes are sparkling.

However, the distance to go through the Begaritto Continent, it can't even be compared to the distance of going from Milis to the Central Continent.

"We would have to take a long boat trip, Eris are you alright with that?"

"Let's not go with Begaritto."

Since that's the case, we decided to go with passing the Eastern route.

3

I'm in a white room.

This feeling of something rising up from within my body.

It's a sensation which I'll never get used to no matter how many times, I'll sum it up in a single word.

Shit.

"Suddenly going with shit, as always, you're vulgar."

A mosaic. It's Hitogami.

Cheh... what do you mean same as always.

I was finally starting to forget and then you appear again.

"It's been a year hasn't it."

Yeah, it's been a year.

It's been a fairly long time.

Could it be you can only show your face once a year?

If that's the case, then I would be able to feel a bit relieved in my heart.

"That's not the case."

I thought so.

The first time it wasn't even a week before you showed your face again after all.

"In any case, as always, you're so cold to me. Even though you managed to get your hands on a demon eye thanks to me."

I didn't ask for it.

These are things which wouldn't really change whether or not I had them, and I'd rather have an essential person that would have helped us on our voyage.

If I'd gotten that, I wouldn't have been thrown into a prison and I might not have ended up missing the information that got me into a fight with Paul.

I am sure it must have been quite amusing to you.

Without acquiring the correct information I got into a fight with Paul, got depressed, received some comfort, then somehow or other we discussed and reconciled; it must have been fun to watch!

"That really was quite enjoyable. However, isn't it fine?"

Fine?

What's fine?

"Well, thinking of it all as my fault."

Cheh...

...Shit.

When I'm in this room, I feel like I returned to the past.

The time when I would always blame everything on others.

I reflected on it.

Reflected... Yeah, shit, I can't remember what kind of reflecting I did.

Why? Shit... damn it...

"Well, that is your flavor as well. After just reflecting on it a bit, you won't be able to advance forward at all."

Cheh, alright.

Just for now.

When I open my eyes I'll remember. I'll be able to reflect.

That's why I'm going to get serious and accept it.

I'm going to get serious and listen to what you say.

"Listen? Ohhh, this time unusually you're going to honestly listen to my advice?"

Yeah, that's right.

However, you know, there's one bit of advice I want to know.

"What is it? If it's something that I know, it's fine if I answer it for you."

I'd like you to tell me the location of my family.

"Isn't your family in a different world?"

Don't make fun of me, Zenith, Lilia, Aisha, those three.

If possible I'd also like to know where Sylphy, Ghyslaine, Philip, and Sauros is as well.

"Hmm."

What is it?

If a person is lowering their head and asking like this.

Quickly tell me.

"I wonder what I should do."

Why do you always take that viewpoint from above?

Just peeping into someone's life, a peeping tom- bastards like that.

What are you?

Do you only tell me things that are convenient for you?

Even though you'll let me meet the Great Demon Emperor, you won't let me meet my family?

"Yeah yeah, sorry sorry. I was going a bit overboard."

It's fine if you understand.

"However, is it okay? This time, I might lie you know?"

Oh, a lie!

Finally I get to hear that kind of talk from you.

That's right, you are the type to lie aren't you.

"No, it's not really about whether I lie or not. I'm asking if you're willing to believe in my words."

No, I won't believe them.

Since right now is an emergency situation I'll move according to what you say, but if you were to lie even once, I would never listen to your advice again?

"Then, I'd like you to make a promise with me."

What kind?

"If in the case that you reunite with your family following my next advice, I'd like you to believe in me from now on."

...

Believe in you, and become a puppet on strings you mean?

Listen to what you say and with a yes-yes, and serve you like a manservant?

"Nope, it's just, each and every time, you're belligerent like this and it's a bit tiring isn't it."

Even if I wasn't belligerent it's pretty tiring.

Don't you get it?

If possible I want to forget the sensation being dragged back into the past that I wish I could fix. I reflect on it and memory that started to fade becomes fresh in my mind. Then, when I wake up in the morning there's this amazingly degrading feeling and I start to feel depressed.

"That true? I've done something bad. Then, do you want to decide on a rule? For example, only getting my advice on a certain day next time."

Yeah, that's a good idea!

How about if we make the next time you appear 100 years later?

"In that case, you would be dead by then."

Never show up again is what I'm saying.

"Hah... Well, I figured you would say that. Then, is it fine? Going without any advice this time."

...No, wait just a second.

I'm sorry about that.

I'll compromise as well.

If by following this advice I successfully manage to reunite with someone from my family, I'll stop being belligerent when I talk to you.

"Will you trust me?"

No, I can't go that far, but at the very least I'll stop with repeating the pointless "will I or will I not" dialogue.

"How positive of you."

That's why you should compromise as well.

Just like this time, don't just suddenly show your face.

Give me some time to prepare myself.

Otherwise enter some other guy's dreams and send me a letter.

"That is difficult. In order to appear in dreams, there are actually some conditions."

Hmmm?

Conditions?

In other words, it's not like you can just show your face whenever you want?

"That's exactly what it means. Appearing in their dreams won't work unless our wavelengths match up. It's considerably uncommon. People who can match up with the timing to receive my advice. You're pretty lucky."

Yeah, I'm so happy that I feel like I'll shed tears.

To the point where I want to let others feel this happiness.

Like those trash bugs around there or so...

But, hmm, is that how it is?

So there are conditions.

Incidentally, what are those conditions?

"Well, I don't really understand them myself. I just think, 'Ah, will it work with this guy on this day' and then it connects."

Oh~.

In other words, that means you can't control it.

Then, we'll have to give up on rules.

We'll have to go with something different.

That's alright I guess.

I'd like if you'd at least give me a bit more details in your advice.

Go over here and then come over there, without knowing what it would be good to do, it confuses me.

It feels like I'm dancing on top of your palm and being played with, which is irritating as well.

"Okay, details. I get it, let's go with that."

Alright, then, I'm depending on you.

"[Cough] Now then, I'll give you this time's advice."

In the next instant, a vision flowed into my demon eye.

<There was a back alley in some country>

<A single young girl was being captured violently>

<The hands that had captured her were from soldiers>

<There were two soldiers>

<A hand that wasn't being used to capture her picked up the paper that the young girl was carrying and tore it into pieces>

<After the young girl saw that, she shouted something>

The vision went up to there.

Wha-what was that just now!?

"Oh~ Rudeus. Listen well. The young girls name is Aisha Greyrat. Currently, she's being detained in Shirone Kingdom. After seeing the scene from just now, you will most likely come across it and save her. However, you must absolutely not use your own name. Use 'The Owner of Dead End' to name yourself and listen to her circumstances. After that, send a letter to an acquaintance in the Shirone Royal Palace. If you do that, you will be able to save Aisha and Lilia from the Royal Palace."

Eh... wai... what.

No, wait, why?

Acquaintance? Letter?

"Was that just a bit too many details I wonder? If I give too many details then it's not as interesting, so it's just going to be like that, I guess. Now then, which of them will you get along with I wonder?"

Eh?

Both Lilia and Aisha are together in the Shirone Kingdom?

Why?

If they're in that sort of place there's no reason why we shouldn't have found them.

What do you mean by get along with?

Does that mean I'll get into discord between either Lilia or Aisha?

"Well then, Rudeus. Give it your best..."

Best... best... best...

My consciousness sank as I continued to hear that echo.

I jumped up from bed.

My head was in pain like it was being smashed.

An overwhelming dizziness.

And then nausea came.

I left the bed, and half ran towards the exit of the room.

After I left the room, I entered the toilet.

After looking into the toilet, I immediately started to throw up.

My head hurts.

A tremendous headache and nausea.

My legs feel unsteady.

I left the toilet.

I felt like the room was very far away.

I put my hand on the wall, the power left my legs.

I slowly drop down to the floor.

I could hear an intense blowing sound from in the dark inn.

Searching the surrounding with just my eyes, I tried to find what it was.

I quickly realized it.

It's the sound of my breathing.

"What's wrong, are you all right...?"

As soon as I realize it, in the pitch darkness a white face is floating there.

It's Ruijerd.

He was looking at my face in a worried way.

"Yeah... I'm alright."

"What did you eat? Can you use antidote magic?"

Ruijerd pulled a cloth from his pocket and wiped my mouth.

The scent from the vomit caused my nausea to get even stronger.

However, it didn't disappear when I threw up- it felt like something was remaining in my chest.

"I'm alright..."

I somehow managed to squeeze those words out from my throat.

"Really?"

In return to his worried voice I nodded.

I remember these headaches.

It was something I tasted in Wind Port.

"Yeah, it seems like I failed to adjust my demon eye when I was half asleep."

When I used the demon eye to try to look further than 10 seconds into the future, I got headaches like these.

When the headaches started was when I couldn't see beyond that point in the future.

However, I understood that intuitively that if it had gotten worse it would become like this.

Then, why it has become like this.

I can predict that as well.

That dream, that advice.

The vision I was shown in there, it's because of that.

Hitogami showed me a vision of the future.

Most likely, using the demon eye.

"Because of that, huh?"

After I slightly whispered that, Ruijerd made a puzzled face.

I remember the details about how I met the Great Demon Emperor in the port city and received the demon eye.

The sudden meeting, for what reason did I get my hands on this demon eye.

In regards to the journey the advice given was completely useless.

After all, the demon eye wasn't really all that useful.

No, thanks to the demon eye I feel like I've kept my life a number of times, but even without that I feel I could have managed somehow or other.

In hindsight, because of the demon eye, I let myself be negligent once or twice.

I could say the balance is zero.

For me it had no meaning.

However, for Hitogami, there was meaning.

Just because of that, for the sake of showing me the future, that might be why he let me meet with the Great Demon Emperor.

I have the feeling that some kind of plan is gradually being completed.

The anxiety is making my neck feel stiff.

Inside of me for the first time a fear was born of Hitogami.

It was the first time I really came to terms with the fact that 'that guy' is holding some kind of large power.

That guy wants me to do some kind of work.

That kind of premonition causes me to shiver.

"Rudeus, the color of your face is bad. Are you really alright?"

Ruijerd is making a very worried face.

And, just like that, I almost started to express my unease.

By the way, ever since the time I met you I've been observed by Hitogami and following his wishes, I've progressed with various things.

However, in that instant I realized a single truth.

(Since the time I met Ruijerd.)

That's right.

The first time I made contact with Hitogami was just before I met with Ruijerd.

And then that guy gave me advice to join up with Ruijerd.

It's a strange talk.

Why had he never made contact until now?

Why did he suddenly come calling right after the magic power disaster?

Why did he not just give the advice to depend on Ruijerd, but also the advice to "save him"?

I feel like everything has a connection.

I think that guy is planning something.

I have no proof, but it's a type of distrust.

However, from one of the unjust suspicions, this thought rose to the surface.

(Maybe, I wonder if Hitogami wants Ruijerd to do something.)

Hitogami said there were conditions in order for him to appear in dreams.

It might be that he's caught in those conditions and can't directly control Ruijerd.

Therefore, he had me who met the conditions, get involved with the magic power disaster and get teleported, lead me into saving Ruijerd, and even had him escort us up to Central Continent?

...No, in that case, I don't understand the meaning in giving me the demon eye and

advice to save Aisha.

I don't know.

What is that guy thinking??

In regards to that guy everything may be linked together, but I can't see those connecting points.

And thus I wonder if I should tell Ruijerd about Hitogami or not.

I'm lost.

"..."

These worries, I really want to talk with someone and have them resolved.

However, I really can't burden this man with anymore than this is what I think.

If by talking to Ruijerd about Hitogami, some sort of condition is put into place, it could allow Hitogami to come into contact with Ruijerd.

This honest man would almost certainly be easily deceived by Hitogami.

I myself can't even think I'm not being deceived by him.

I don't think so, but...

At the very least, the fact that I take a belligerent attitude with him is something that isn't good for Hitogami.

I would like to think that while I'm being belligerent I won't be deceived.

"Ruijerd-san. If during a painful time someone whispers sweet words to you, please do not believe in them. During those painful times, there will be guys who will come along in order to deceive you."

...In the end I didn't say it.

I never put the matters of Hitogami into words.

"...I don't know what you're talking about, but understood."

Ruijerd nodded with a serious face while holding some kind of complicated feelings.
He trusts me.

And yet I keep things secret.

I made the decision that it was better to keep it hidden, but even with that my heart won't clear up.

Just as I realized it the headaches and nausea have cleared up.

With my dizziness and head still shaking, I returned to the room.

The clear eyes and head that has become a whirlpool of thoughts.

After closing my eyes, my thoughts kept rising to the surface one after another.

There were no meaningful thoughts.

It wasn't theoretical thinking.

Like being in a maze with no exit, thoughts without answers rising up and then disappearing.

Even when I was lying down on the bed, I didn't feel like I could sleep.

"What is it nya..."

Suddenly, I heard that sleep talk and moved my gaze to the side.

On the nearby bed Eris is sleeping with her arms and legs spread out to the four corners.

As usual her sleeping posture is bad.

She sleeps with her legs spread out wide.

I can see her healthy legs stretching out from the shorts-like pajama substitute.

There are risky openings in the cloth that seem like they could be looked into.

The clothes getting rolled up and a lovely belly button peeked out.

After looking just above there's hills that you can now tell are her breasts.

Probably because she doesn't use a bra while sleeping, if I concentrate my eyes, pocchi

rises to the surface.

And then there's that drooling face that is grinning and laughing to itself.

"Nfufu..."

I made a bitter smile hearing that sleep talk and got up.

I pulled down the hem of her clothes and covered her in a blanket.

"Ruuudeus sure is ecchi..."

It was a loose face.

While people are being this considerate, of all things you call them ecchi.

Just as you say should I go ahead and grope your chest.

Just as I was thinking that my drowsiness returned.

While yawning I fell onto my bed.

As expected of Eris.

While thinking that I completely fell asleep.

CHAPTER 2

RICE

1

The next day.

While we were eating a meal in the bar, I made an announcement to the two.

"I want to do some searching on the way and make a short stop at the Shirone Kingdom."

The two tilted their head and nodded.

"Understood."

"Acknowledged."

Questions like "why?" or "for what reason?" didn't come.

I'm thankful that they aren't trying to ask the reason.

I want to go in that direction and talk about Hitogami as little as possible.

I decided on that and to keep an eye out, but I honestly have no idea how to explain things in regards to Hitogami, it just causes my head to be full of worries.

Ruijerd saw how I looked last night and it seems he came to his own conclusion.

Most likely, he's realized that I'm hiding something.

While his thoughts might be in the wrong direction, such as I'm hiding some sort of illness. No, Hitogami is like a demon of ill health, so it might not be all that wrong.

Eris is just the same as always.

"Shirone is that place right? The place where Rudeus's shisho is?"

After hearing those words from Eris, the figure of a single girl came to my mind.

Roxy Migurdia.

That's right.

She should be in Shirone.

Hitogami said to send a letter to an acquaintance as well.

At first I was wondering who it was, but if we're speaking of acquaintances who I would send letters to there's only one.

It most likely means to request assistance from her.

Roxy is a person I can rely on.

Hitogami occasionally makes suggestions that make sense.

"Yes. My most respected... sensei."

My shisho is what I was about to say, but I changed the word at the last minute.

Come to think of it, I was forbidden from calling her shisho.

Recently, I feel like I've said "shisho is amazing, shisho is amazing" to a variety of people but...

Well, it's fine.

"That's right, if it's a person Rudeus respects then we need to stop by and visit. They might be able to lend their strength to us after all."

Eris nodded to herself while saying that.

Roxy.

Because she was excellent, if it was her, then we would definitely become a strong power. There's no mistake about that.

Even though I say that, Roxy is a Royal Court magician.

Since she's probably busy I don't want to bother her too much.

It already seems like I'll be a bother and I don't want to show up as her pitiful student.

Although even putting aside using the disaster search as a cover, the fact that I want to see her won't change.

I want to thank her for the Demon God language dictionary as well.

If it weren't for that, I might still be on the Magic Continent.

I regret the fact that it was lost during the teleport.

That was something that should have been made into a manuscript and then sold all around the world.

"I want to meet and see Rudeus's sensei."

"Humu, I'm interested as well."

It seems Eris and Ruijerd are showing interest in going.

Probably because I would let out Roxy's name and give her a high praise during the journey.

I'm proud that Roxy is my sensei. It's natural that I wouldn't be embarrassed to let it be known everywhere.

"Well then, once we arrive in Shirone Kingdom, I'll introduce you."

While making that promise, we set off on our journey.

2

First off we'll advance along the highway and pass by the Dragon King Kingdom's Capital, Wyvern.

From the capital, there are two routes that stretch out along the East and West sides of the Dragon King Mountains.

One route stretches straight north.

And then the other route stretches out to the west.

Naturally, we chose the route that goes north.

We ended up staying in the capital Wyvern for about a week.

If we followed our original plans, we were only supposed to stay for about three days, but the newly bought carriage was in bad condition so it took time to repair it.

After all, cheap second-rate goods are no good.

If it was something made from stones or iron I could somehow or other do something about it, but I can't use magic on wood.

We gave the repairman a bit of a bonus in money and asked him to fix it a bit faster.

We were not in a hurry.

In the scene Hitogami showed me, Aisha was being captured by two men.

I was worried, but Hitogami said I would be present in that place.

In that case, even this incident where the carriage broke, it could be because fate was somehow being manipulated.

Most likely, if I were to rush as fast as I could, I won't encounter that scene.

I needed to calm my heart as much as possible.

While thinking that we looked around and visited various places in Wyvern.

The Dragon King Kingdom is the third largest country in this world.

It's located in the southern part of the Central Continent and has four Vassal kingdoms under it.

It seems that in the past, it was just one of many great countries in the south, but they defeated the ruler of the Dragon King Mountain in the northwest, Dragon King Kajakuto. After obtaining the large amount of mineral resources in his territory, they became the dominant economic power and rapidly expanded to become a strong kingdom.

It's the birthplace of the 48 Magic Swords that are scattered around the world and a place where many stories of the North God hero are told.

It's a place with many anecdotes, but it doesn't feel like tradition is all that essential.

It's a country with a mixed feeling similar to America.

In this town, there are a large number of blacksmiths and swordsmanship dojos.

After taking a peek inside of the dojo, there were a large number of children being taught.

It seems like it's common for people to stay in the dojo until Advanced level.

After one look, Eris flared her nose while saying they weren't anything great, causing Ruijerd to rebuke her.

Well then, we went about gathering information about missing persons in this town. One of Paul's subordinates was in the Adventurer's Guild. He told us this country doesn't have any important information.

After all, now that such a long time has passed, it seems the missing won't be found so easily.

After that, I went with the usual market price investigation.

Wyvern is a town where the specialties of both the Milis Continent and the Central Continent are sold.

There are a large variety of ingredients.

In regards to that market, I finally discovered it. I witnessed rice being sold.

Rice... it's rice.^[2]

It's a little bit yellow in color, but it's certainly rice.

The way it comes out in the stores of this country, using a spoon to make it easier to eat, it comes out as something like a paella or porridge. It was a bit different from what I was seeking.

I want to eat white cooked rice. If there is none, then I'll make it myself, I had such an impulse. I don't have such a skill as cooking rice, but I carefully heard about that from a shop person.

The 3 liters of rice I bought were then carefully placed within a pot I made using earth magic. And then following the recipe I was taught by the store person I cooked the rice.

On the side I had already prepared salt and eggs. With a serious face I was using fire to cook the urchin and partway through Eris came to visit.

"What are you doing?"

"An experiment."

"Hmmm?"

I didn't think Eris would have any interest, but soon after she started her usual behavior nearby, she started glancing toward it. It seems she's interested.

I flipped an hourglass I had the bartender bring out and then strengthened the heat power.

Gradually raising the strength of the heat is the trick, according to man from the store.

After I turned the hourglass over three times, I finally weakened the fire. And then another two turns of the hourglass. In the end I stopped the fire, and turned the hourglass twice.

"It's done."

"Really?"

After whispering that out loud, Eris stopped what she was doing and came over to crouch next to me. I could gently smell Eris's scent drifting about. It's a good smell. However, right now my appetite isn't sexual but for food.

She was looking at the pot with an excited expression. I was excited as well as I lifted off the lid. The flowing scent was the smell of rice.

"It's a good smell. As expected of Rudeus."

"If we don't taste it and see..."

While whispering that I picked up some rice with my finger and put it into my mouth.
...Humu.

"Forty-five points."

The taste and sensation were pretty far from what I remember. If I were to rank it by the current Japanese standards, it couldn't even be called C rank. I wonder if it's after all because rice isn't the staple food in this country.

It's dry and tasteless, and very rough. The color is a bit yellow as well. I'm sure it's also a matter of my cooking method being lousy, but the raw materials are bad as well.

I can't by any means call it Ginshari^[3]. In reality I want to give it 30 points and a red mark, but it's the first rice I've eaten in a long time that wasn't bad.

The nostalgia filled my chest. After seasoning it, it was +15 points. I sure am sweet. ^[4]

"This is what we ate last night as well right? What kind of experiment is this?"

"From here on out is the real thing."

I put the cooked rice into a porcelain bowl I made with earth magic. Then, I picked up the egg that I conscientiously used antidote magic on. Next, I cracked open the egg and poured it into the hole I made in the center of the rice. On top of that I sprinkled salt.

I prepared the chopsticks I made with earth magic and moved both of my hands to match.^[5]

"Itadakimasu."

"Eh? Wait, Rudeus, that egg... Raw..."

I opened my mouth wide and took a good bite of the yellow-stained rice. Umu, raw tasting.

For the time being I tried adding more salt, but there wasn't any real change. After eating it like this, the egg itself has a slightly different taste to it. I guess it would mean that something fresh is different than what you would eat in Japan.

After all, soy sauce is essential. I wonder if I'll be able to find soy sauce in this world. If not, I want to find the ingredients to make it.

While thinking, I gulped down the rice wholeheartedly.

"Hamu... hafuhafu, hafu!!!"

"...Is it good?"

In response to Eris's question, I created a second porcelain bowl with earth magic. There I served rice and sprinkled salt on top and then handed it to Eris.

On the occasion I created a spoon as well and handed it over. One made for beginners to start.

"Hey, is this all, that's it?"

"[Swallow]"

I silently nodded. It is possible to eat rice as just rice. That's why it's considered a staple food. I'm not bragging, but in my past life's golden age, I ate mountains of rice

as my staple food.

There was a time with rice balls as a side dish. As long as there's white rice, it was an age where it could be eaten in any way.

"Hmmm..."

Eris was eating while squirming and making a complicated face. She's still a child. However, after spreading an egg on top...

"Yeah, it's better than just now."

That's how she said it while filling her cheeks and eating it.



After all, tamago kake gohan is the best. It's a complete dish.

We continued to enjoy the rice and in the end even ate the burnt bits at the bottom with a crunch to finish the meal.

The only one who didn't get to eat any tamago kake gohan, Ruijerd, spoke of no complaints. He just smiled bitterly. As I thought, he's an adult.

However, I felt like I did something bad. Next time I'll make sure he gets to eat as well.

3

We departed from the Dragon King Kingdom and went north along the highway.

There are still two countries we have to pass through before we reach Shirone Kingdom: Sanakia Kingdom and Kikka Kingdom. Both of them are vassal states of the Dragon King Kingdom.

In the Sanakia Kingdom, cultivation of rice was popular. It has the correct climate for it and while we were traveling along the road I saw paddy fields on one side.

Around this area there are a number of rivers, the climate could be close to Japan and Eastern Asia.

After trying it out, I found it was the same as the stuff that I ate in the Dragon King Kingdom.

It seems that what was made here was being exported to the market of the Dragon King Kingdom. For the time being, I decided to name this location's rice, Sanakia brand rice.

The meals for the inn were often a mix of seafood and cooked rice. In this world I've always eaten with self-restraint, but I couldn't oppose the charm of rice after all.

Today, I filled my stomach full again. A happy end for another one of my days.

Recently, when it's time to eat, Eris will occasionally look at me with a blank expression.

Since I am one who was relatively fussy when it came to meals, when I suddenly started to eat in silence, she probably had some sort of thoughts about it.

"What's wrong?"

"Rudeus, I always took you as the type who would not eat very much."

Eris said something like that.

In my previous life I was never considered someone who eats lightly. My style was one where I would eat as much as there was and ask for seconds.

The reason why I ended up restraining myself so much in this world is because the staple food didn't match up.

Putting aside the stiff meat from the Magic Continent, the meals in Asura Kingdom were centered on bread and were a bit unsatisfying.

There's no way Zenith's cooking was bad, but the taste of rice was something I had always been seeking and can never give up.

Umu. Rice is good after all.

4

It wasn't just a quest for meals, but we showed our face in the Adventurer's Guild as well.

It would be best if I say as expected of the Central Continent. Even after I let out the name Dead End, no one was surprised.

If I were to say it, it's like even if someone was famous in America, they're not guaranteed to be well known even in Japan.

Even if they know Superman, there aren't many children who know about Captain America.

Even though I say that, they're adventurers as well. They've occasionally heard the name Dead End. For instance, if a celebrity from America suddenly came to Japan, no one other than the core fans would make a fuss about it.

In regards to the Supard race, there was no sign they would make a fuss about it. In the end, I wonder if the important part was the color of his hair after all.

This world's discrimination is something that could easily be understood by modern Japanese otaku.

If a Supard race doesn't have green hair then they're not a Supard race, if a track and field girl doesn't have black hair and a ponytail she's not a track and field girl, that sort of thing.

However, it seems once you get to A rank, they'll pay a certain amount of attention to

you.

"Yo, I've never seen you guys faces around, A rank right? Did you recently form up?"

The one who came to talk to us, was a man who had a very similar atmosphere to Nokopara. Going from experience, I don't want to get along with this kind of man.

However, it could get troublesome if we just ignore him. We're limited to dealing with him in an adequate way.

"The time we formed up was two years ago."

"Oh, it must not have been around here. 'Dead End'. If I remember correctly, that was the name of a demon on the Magic Continent?"

"Yeah, we just got here after traveling from the Magic Continent."

"Hehe... you're kidding. Then that man over there would be that demon?"

"That's right, but could you please not refer to him as a demon?"

"Why? Is it that sort of cover up?"

"Since it would cause a fuss he shaved his head, but he's the real thing after all."

The man laughed and said "you're kidding" again. But I had a serious face. Eris was on the verge of snapping, and Ruijerd was making a displeased face.

After seeing that, the man had a cold sweat going.

"Hey, seriously?"

"Since that's the case, would you like to see the jewel on his forehead?"

"No, no, it's fine. I'm sorry about that. I couldn't have imagined you were really "them". I guess that would mean they really existed, the Supard race..."

It's a good thing we rose up to A rank while we were on Magic Continent. It gave credibility to the fact that Ruijerd is really from the Supard race.

The criticism against Magic Races on the Central Continent is strong, but I wonder why the Supard race is feared less here than the Magic Continent. I guess it would be a matter of danger being close at hand.

A person who says brown bears are safe is a person who hasn't actually encountered a brown bear in the mountains.

Our established reputation became unusable, but if they aren't afraid then methods to recover popularity should somehow or other work.

Our former prospects are looking bright. Even though I say that, it's certain that I can't think of any decent ideas.

Ruijerd figures as well won't be well accepted in the area of influence of the Milis religion after all.

While thinking that, Eris was scowling at the man from before.

"Eris. Please don't get into a fight."

"I know that."

"Then that's good."

Recently Eris hasn't been picking as many fights. During this past year her demeanor has gotten considerably sharper.

The scent of an amateur has left her. Just from a glance people can tell she's an opponent that's dangerous to get involved with.

Also, it seems she's understood adventurer's sense of humor somehow or other.

Whenever she hears something that she realizes is a phrase she's heard before she responds, while making a displeased face, with a similar phrase with enough composure to manage it. Then if the other side laughs, Eris responds with a win face.

She's become like an adventurer. Although, it's not like she doesn't fight if someone picks one with her.

After finding out she's A rank even though she's young, there are guys who get into a fight with her seriously.

The majority of those are younger ones who are best C rank. Even though they have no actual strength, they've even pulled in Ruijerd.

Those who pick a fight like that usually end up falling in one punch. There are these kind of guys in just about every Adventurer's Guild it seems. They're idiots.

Incidentally, people often get involved with me as well, but that's right, thanks to my danna, uhauha is how it is, I just conveniently deal with them like such.

In reality, the reason we managed to rise up to A rank is largely because we were

relying on Ruijerd after all.

It seems like Eris doesn't like that attitude of mine, but there's no way we could have reached A rank on our own.

Let's go with modesty.

5

After moving even further north.

In the Kikka Kingdom, a plant similar to rapeseed was cultivated and popular.^[6]

Along the highway, we could see flower fields filled with white-ish flowers.

Incidentally, rice was the staple food in this country as well.

I understood it only after eating and comparing them, but the further north you go the better quality the rice gets.

With this, the day I meet the rice that I will fall in love with at first sight could be close at hand.

However, unfortunate as it is, in the current northern area of the Central Continent, large countries are always bickering with skirmishes.

In that sort of situation, there's no way they could make delicious rice. It's truly unfortunate.

In this country there's a current craze with a cooking style called "Nanahoshi Frying"^[7]. You coat meat in wheat flour or rice flour and then cook in oil at a high temperature, that sort of thing. In other words it's deep frying.

Recently it's a huge fad that started up from development in the direction of Asura Kingdom, it seems that influence flowed down to here.

It seems many countries have a hard time producing oil for food, but in this country oil is produced in large quantities.

It was something I came to know after arriving in this country, but the cultivation of oil is an industry the Dragon King Kingdom forced onto Kikka Kingdom.

The paddy fields in Sanakia Kingdom as well were under the Dragon King Kingdom's instruction. Being a vassal kingdom must be difficult.

Incidentally, these fried foods are a bit bad tasting.

Even though they use meat, they're largely from sheep or pigs. Also, the temperature of the oil doesn't seem to be appropriate since they're a bit hard. The seasoning wasn't sticking properly either.

Of course, rock salt, dried herbs, and a variety of sauces that can be used to change the flavor in this land exist.

Overall, they're not bad. Rather, it's fine to praise them as well made.

A specialist at eating such as me is saying that but I understood the ingenuity of it.

The cooks of this country are giving it their best.

However, it was still a bit different from the taste I was craving. After all, the fact that there is no soy sauce is not good.

The seasoning should be a mix of soy sauce and garlic, with a bit of ginger on the side. It's not good if it doesn't finish up bittersweet.

"Rudeus, recently you've been making difficult faces while eating."

"That guy is fussy about flavor after all. I'm sure he's got some things on his mind about it."

"I think it's plenty good though."

While the two surrounding me at the table were saying that, I was munching away at my food.

They aren't fussy in regards to their food.

Even I never did comparisons like a champion food gourmet until I came to this sort of place.

However, just a bit more, I can't help but think that just a bit more and I'll have the flavor of soy sauce again.

"However, it's a mysterious food sensation isn't it? It's crispy, and when you chew it overflows."

"Yeah, it's good."

The two who were chomping away after, asked for seconds.

They were happy.

Cooking they ate for the first time, they would think it's good after all.

Since I know of a flavor above this one, I just can't honestly be happy about it.

White rice, soy sauce, and deep fried foods. After adding tofu, seaweed, and miso soup, my craving will finally be satisfied.

6

The never-ending quest for food.

Naturally, during that time we were also looking for missing people; however, naturally as it is, we passed days without gaining any sort of information.

That journey continued on for four months.

We arrived in Shirone Kingdom.

CHAPTER 3

SHIRONE KINGDOM

1

We arrived in Shirone Kingdom.

Shirone Kingdom is a small country, but it's an old country that has 200 years of history.

For this world- which keeps track of history in 1,000 year denominations- speaking of 200 years might not seem all that old.

However, 400 years ago, all human race countries except Asura Kingdom and the Holy Milis Kingdom were wiped out in the war.

Until 300 years ago when the Dragon King Kingdom took control of the southern-most tip, it was a region of intense strife.

Even now, if you go north, the strife zone spreads out.

The Shirone Kingdom is a country that is relatively close to that strife zone.

In such a place, how did the Shirone Kingdom manage to last as a country for 200 years?

Honestly, I don't have much interest in it, but for the most part I do know why.

It's because they formed an alliance with the Dragon King Kingdom early on in their history.

Although even if you were to call it an alliance, the difference in power is clear.

If you were to stop by the Shirone Kingdom on the way to the Dragon King Kingdom it's like the other two kingdoms, a vassal state.

The only fact that I have an interest in is that Roxy is in this country.

That young... No, she's not young.

I wonder if that lovely, slightly clumsy shisho is still in this country serving as magician for the Royal Court.

I had heard that she had burned one of the prince's hands, but I'm sure she's still somehow giving it her best.

I want to see her, as I haven't seen her in a while.

I want to meet her and tell her I'm safe.

I want to talk with Roxy and tell her about how I visited her hometown.

I want her to show me her King class magic.

While thinking that we move along the road towards the capital.

2

This place is like a vassal kingdom to the Dragon King Kingdom, but it's different from the two countries that we stopped by on the way, it doesn't give off the impression of being a colony.

It could be because they are so far apart, or maybe because it's kept as a buffer from the strife zone.

I don't really understand those points very well.

Along the highway, there were fields of crops that had no sense of unity and livestock that were left to freely graze.

There was an area that had something like clovers and grass, perhaps it was left uncultivated.

I have no knowledge about agriculture, but it seems this world's inhabitants are just producing crops without thinking.

While looking at that scenery, moving from side to side, we approached the Shirone Kingdom's capital, Ratakia.

We passed through the castle walls that surround the town.

In this world, major cities are generally surrounded by walls.

Roa and Milishion were both like that as well.

Even in Kikka Kingdom and Sanakia Kingdom, the large towns had walls.

If you look at them, they are reliable walls that give off a fantasy feeling.

The existence of walls wasn't any different on Magic Continent.

Rather, you could say that on Magic Continent where the monsters are strong, they're even more thorough.

There were no towns that had large, natural walls like the town of Rikarisu, but in each of the towns the variety of races living nearby use their unique abilities in order to make solid walls to protect the town.

Also, even in small villages, monster extermination is done on a daily basis in the village's surroundings.

If you were to compare those walls to the castle walls in Central Continent, you would think they were made just for the sake of looking the part.

3

We arrived in the capital Ratakia.

After we entered the town, just as usual, we left the carriage in a stable.

Probably because there are a lot of labyrinths that exist in the surroundings of this country, but there are a large number of sharp mannered adventurers.

A large number of adventurers who want to take part in exploring labyrinths exist.

Paul and Ghyslaine were like that as well, it seems like Roxy went into a labyrinth at one point as well.

Those who explore labyrinths are largely a skillful lot, or at least I have a feeling Paul told me something like that.

There are a large number of labyrinths in Shirone Kingdom.

If you are the first to conquer even one of those, a large amount of money would fall into your lap.

Now, even just among those adventurers wandering around over there, there are many S rank adventurers looking to get rich quick.

We found an inn.

It's the same as usual, an inn aimed at D rank adventurers.

I don't know if it's because this town has a lot of high rank adventurers, but even the low rank inns are fairly expensive.

Even though I say that, the quality of the rooms aimed at D rank on the Central Continent are better than ones aimed at C rank or above on the Magic Continent.

Therefore, it would be fine if we just dropped to a lower grade room, but we have enough money that we don't really need to bother about the price.

Saying it in reverse, we were able to get a higher grade room.

Once before I thought it would be better to get a good room, but even when you actually have enough money to use it leisurely, it's not that good of an idea to be extravagant.

Unexpectedly, I could be quite frugal.

Although over these past few months our food expenses have increased a bit.

"Well then, now that we've arrived in the Shirone Kingdom, let's start a strategy meeting."

With the other two on standby in the room before me, I made the usual announcement.
Clap-clap the usual applause.

They have completely gotten used to it.

"Now then, what should we start with..."

"Meeting with Rudeus's teacher right?"

After hearing Eris's words, I thought.

Remember Hitogami's words.

[Aisha Greyrat. Currently, she's being detained in Shirone Kingdom. The scene from just now, you will likely try to save her. However, you must absolutely not use your

own name. Use 'The Owner of Dead End' to name yourself and listen to her circumstances. After that, send a letter to an acquaintance in the Shirone Royal Palace. If you do that, you will be able to save both Aisha and Lilia from the Shirone Royal Palace.]

It should have been something along those lines.

If I'm to believe that in its entirety.

In other words, it's fine if I walk around looking for the alley I saw in my dreams.

I wonder if it would be better to go together with Eris and Ruijerd.

I seem to make mistakes more often than not when I'm alone, if I go this time alone and then I'm unable to match the specification, I wonder if it's better if we go as a group.

Nevertheless that scene which I saw in my dream.

Two soldiers came out in there.

I've seen their outfit many times around the town.

It's this country's regular soldier outfit.

I'll think about it a bit and then see.

If I believe in Hitogami's words, then Lilia and Aisha should both be in the Shirone Royal Palace.

Then, Aisha should be detained in the Royal Palace.

How did she manage to escape from the Royal Palace? Regardless, the soldiers from the Royal Palace managed to catch up to her.

Then that would be the reason I clash with them there.

If I'm to save her from the front, then that would mean to face the Royal Palace head on.

Which is why he said to absolutely not name myself.

Give a false name here.

It might be good to hide my face as well.

Then while the knights are looking for me with a fake name, I send a letter to an acquaintance... to Roxy in the Royal Palace seeking help.

If Roxy is a Royal Court magician, then she should have some degree of power to act.

I'm sure she'll come to aid us.

She'll end up looking after me again.

Really I can't sleep with my feet pointed at Roxy.^[8]

Conversely, were she to do me the favor of sleeping with her feet pointing at me, I'd clean things up real nice for her while she slept.

Yeah, if I think about it simply, this advice is that sort of flow.

But, it's Hitogami we're talking about.

There's the possibility that he's planning something as well.

After giving this advice he made the statement, "If I make it too detailed, then it's less entertaining to watch."

In other words, in regards to him, interesting happenings could occur.

Most likely I won't be able to avoid those things.

Even though I say that, that guy said "Next time I'd like you to believe in me."

Then, even if some rough developments are waiting for me, I can predict that I won't get a major injury or that no one in my family will die.

Only if I believe in him to the end that is.

This time, he could have made up such a lie just in order to reliably deceive me and he might not even be thinking about next time.

However, even if that is true, if I pointlessly oppose him and the situation deteriorates I won't be able to face it.

I don't like the feeling that I'm dancing on the palms of his hands, but I have to listen to what he said.

In any case, look for Aisha, hide my name, and send a letter to Roxy.

These three are a sure thing.

However, now then, how should I convince these two?

The letter is fine.

A reason to search a back alley and a reason to hide our names, if I don't think about both at the same time it won't be good.

It was something I learned after we departed from Milishion, even if I specify a day as a day off, Ruijerd or Eris will absolutely end up coming along with me as I go around.

It seems the event where I got depressed that time with Paul has stuck with them.

It means I just worried them that much.

I can't apologize enough.

Even though I say that, this time the probability that I'll have to be careful of knights is high, if I bring along these two who suck at acting, I feel like a wild snake will come flying out the bush.

Snakes are hiding in wait all over the place.

Well then, what to do about it.

"Rudeus, what are you worrying about?"

Since I stopped my words for a long period, Eris is tilting her head and asking.

Humu...

They say delivering is easier than worrying, I'll have to try it.

"As a matter of fact, I want to hide our names while we're in this town."

"We're going to act again? Why?"

"...Umm."

Even if I hide things about Hitogami, there's no necessity to hide things from these two.

"Actually, from a certain source I got information, but it seems somewhere in this country my family is being held captive."

"Is that true?"

"Oh?"

Where or who I heard it from these two didn't ask.

In the first place, whenever I went information gathering one of these two was always with me.

If they aren't going to butt in and ask, that's convenient for my situation.

"I see now, if we name ourselves as Greyrat then they'll go on alert right!"

"That is the case."

"Then, who is here?"

"Lilia and Aisha... Our former maid and my younger sister."

Come to think of it, coming from me, I wonder what it would be good, for me to refer to Lilia as.

I don't think stepmother would be correct...

"Rudeus's younger sister? There was one in Milishion as well right? The cheeky one."

"There's one more."

"Hnn..."

Eris made a sour face looking as if it wasn't interesting.

Norn is cheeky, huh.

I didn't think so, but in terms of how Eris looks at it, that attitude would probably look cheeky.

If my younger sister gets hit, which side should I ally with?

"If that's the case then I have no complaints! As expected of Rudeus, he thinks about it well."

Eris let out a hn-hn snort with her nose.

Even if we say I'm thinking about it, it's more like I'm just following along with Hitogami's manipulation.

Humu. It's making me feel bad because I feel like I'm deceiving them.

"We're going to hide our names right. Will we use a false name?"

"A name that is pretty common would probably be best."

"Why?"

"I heard that a false name that is hard to remember is good."

While giving side glances to me as I considered them anxiously, they came up with a variety of false names.

"I wonder what kind of names are famous around this area."

"During our journey I heard the names Shaina and Reidaru pretty often."

Death God Knight Shaina is a female knight that comes out in the story of the North God hero.

She was one of the North God's three swordsmen, and she was one of the companions of the North God.

No matter how harsh the battle was she would always return alive, she was a person like Inou Seizontai^[9].

Although that is most likely fiction.

Even though I say that, among the people around here, "My child got into an unforeseen accident and didn't die", therefore you'll hear them stuck with the name Shaina.

Reidaru is a Water God.

A genius of counters, he froze the ocean in order to create a foothold, he was a hero who defeated the Water Dragon King.

In order to accept that great person's name, the children of the Water God style have passed down for generations the name Reidaru if it's a male and Reida if it's a female.

This name as well has quite a few people with it.

It seems if you learn the Water God style, there are many cases of changing their name.

Just with saying we should hide our names, the two are properly thinking about it.

It's a thankful story.

However, I have the feeling that Hitogami said to name myself as "The Owner of Dead End".

No, that is a name which should be fine in regards to Aisha.

Humu, then it's fine, huh.

Alright, I'll seriously think about it.

"Rudeus, what will we do?"

"I guess, in this case, it would be best if they fully understand that we're using false names."

"Why?"

"Our faces and names aren't known, if we go with naming ourselves using a flashy name, they won't realize our objective, and the other side might get confused."

Or at least I think I heard something like that in an anime from somewhere before...

Frankly, any false name could pretty much be fine, but...

"Then, a cool one would be good."

A cool one huh.

"I understand then I will call myself the knight of the moon's shadow, Shadow Moon Knight."

"Shadow Moon Knight!?"

Eris's cheeks were red and her eyes were sparkling.

The real thing wears an outfit like being on school lunch duty.

Furthermore, he spits out arrogant haiku lines.

If it's Eris she would probably knock him down the instant she sees him.

"I want something like that as well! Ah, but if we use the same one it'll be troubling right, hmmm..."

She liked it that much, huh.

Alright, then I'll grant you a nice/knights name.

"Well then, Eris will be the Shadowmoon's Swordsman [Sword] and then Ruijerd will be Shadowmoon's Spear [Lance], if we go with that it should be fine. If we do that then we'd all be matching."

"That's nice, matching! Let's go with that."

I thought Ruijerd might be embarrassed with that kind of name, but it doesn't seem like he's all that unsatisfied with it.

Paul said my "Arrogant Water Dragon King, Aqua Heartia" was cool as well.

It seems like this world is a bit chuunibyou.

"However, Rudeus doesn't give off a knight feeling."

After we had settled on them, Eris came out whispering that.

I'm not a knight.

Then, should I call myself Magician(Evil) or General(Omega)?^[10]

...Well, I don't know if we'll actually need to call ourselves that, anything is fine really.

We'll decide based on the situation, and if it seems bad then it's fine to just call myself The Owner after all.

"Well then, the false names will be something like that."

"That's right, what are we going to do from here on out?"

"For the time being, I'll send a letter to Roxy in the Royal Palace then we'll gather information until I get a response."

I proclaimed that.

I'll look around during free time and try to encounter that scene.

I'll have to give it my best in order for it to go well.

The next day.

I bought some stationary and an envelope from the market, then wrote a letter.

Starting with seasonal greetings and then say that I'm safe after the teleport incident.

After that I'll say that I'm healthy so there's no need to worry. For the time being I've come to the capital of Shirone so I'd like to meet.

I'll lightly touch on the fact that everyone from Buina village is missing, and fan it with the fact that I'm in the middle of searching and no one has been found so I'm worried. After that, I'll casually touch on the topic of our maid Lilia, and then since it's an important matter I'll finish saying once again I'm worried about my family.

Then I'll position all of the contents so the first character of each word lines up reading, "Please help me."

If I write this much then I'm sure even Roxy would realize it.

Then I'll use the pattern I made of Roxy's pendant, turned into a stamp to seal it with wax.

I hesitated over the sender's name, but I sent them with the name Rudeus many times while I was in Roa.

I thought about using a false name here as well, but if she looks at it and says "I don't know who this is." and throws it away I'll be in trouble.

The fact that Roxy is clumsy like that sometimes is one of her occasional weak points.

"From the favorite disciple who is watching over your life, Rudeus Greyrat." like that.

Most likely even if I were to write a false name, Roxy would realize it's my writing the moment she sees it.

Even though I say that, being a bit scatterbrained at the crucial points and making a mistake is Roxy.

I won't know until I'm sure the letter makes its way into Roxy's hands.

It's Roxy the Schrödinger. ^[11]

Roxy getting inside of a box for me to pick up naturally comes to mind.

Oh~, my God, cardboard boxes are something which you hide in when they are turned

upside down.

Well, putting that aside, I want to try and make sure that the contents actually are read.

"Well then, I'm off to send the letter."

"Yeah."

"Yes, have a safe trip."

Eris and Ruijerd were seeing me off with full face smiles.

I surely thought they would follow after me, but it was a bit of a letdown.

"Oh? What are you two going to do?"

"We plan to look around the town for information on Rudeus's little sister."

Ah, come to think of it, I did say we would be looking for information.

Well, information is power, there's no loss in collecting it.

Rather, I'm shocked at myself who was careless enough to give up on properly collecting information as well.

"I see then I leave it in your care. After I send the letter, I'll try to search for some information as well."

After saying that I separated from the two.

6

Several minutes after I sent the letter to the Adventurer's Guild.

I realized I was being followed.

At first I thought I was being observed by Ruijerd.

Whenever I'm alone I always seem to get into some kind of problem or other.

Which is why I thought he might be on standby in the case a problem occurs?

However, these past few months, Ruijerd hasn't gone out of his way to follow from behind and just acted together with me directly.

In the first place, Ruijerd 's ability to follow is extremely superior.

There's no way I could notice it.

The one who is currently following behind me is too obvious.

There's no way it's Ruijerd.

And then, most likely, it's not Eris either.

Eris is lousy at following. It wouldn't be strange if I noticed her presence from the time we left the inn.

I can't think of a reason why they would specifically choose to follow starting from the Adventurers Guild.

Then who is it.

Someone who would have a grudge against me in this country... I don't have any ideas.

After all, we just arrived in this country yesterday.

There's a high probability something will happen with this country from here on out, but currently we have yet to trouble anyone.

Otherwise, maybe it's related to some incident that happened on the Magic Continent.

Who would go out of their way to follow us all the way from Magic Continent just for revenge?

There's no way that can be the case.

There is the possibility that there are survivors from the smuggling organization of Saint Port.

They might have come across me coincidentally and chosen this chance to try and finish me off.

Although the probability that there is no relation is also high.

The fact that I was able to notice them is proof that their tracking techniques are crude.

While turning around a street corner I stole a glance behind me.

I saw a small shadow quickly hide under cover.

It's a child.

There's the possibility some neighborhood child somehow or other decided that I was conceited and therefore a villain, then started play following me.

I won't even bother thinking for what sake.

I'm sure there are children who suddenly start up with that kind of play.

I wonder if I should hide somewhere, then when they come up and start panicking after losing me, jump out and yell "Wah!"

No, in this world there's also the hobbit race that have a short height.

Negligence is forbidden.

I decided to lose them somewhere.

While thinking that I crossed over two crossroads and turned right into a bit of a small alley.

"...Hnn?"

Suddenly, I felt like something was out of place.

But, without worrying about it much, I created an earth wall.

Using my magic power a 3 meter or so wall suddenly came up out of the ground, turning the alley into a dead end.

On the other side of the wall, I heard the sound of panic and hurried movements.

And then, the sound of hitting the wall without power.

There was no sign that they were going to try to destroy the wall with Magic or Swordsmanship.

I thought it could be Eris chasing after me, but if it were her she could jump right over a wall of this size.

I wonder if after all it was a prank by some children from the neighborhood.

After being satisfied with that conclusion I started to walk away from there.

Well then, I ended up coming a bit deep into this alley in order to break away from that

child.

Which way was it to the main street?

It seems like I'm a bit lost.

Well, if I can find some sort of large road then I'll quickly find my way back.

While thinking that, I walked around various twists and turns of the alley, but I wasn't able to go in the direction I wanted and kept circling around.

The main street of this town is bent and twisted.

It's a huge difference from Milishion which has roads like a Go Board.

Even I, who doesn't have the attribute of a lost child, am surely on the verge of being lost right now.

In the worst case it would be fine if I use magic and jump up onto the roof.

Come to think of it, the scene Hitogami showed me was similar to an alley like this.

"Ah!"

Then, I remembered back to that out of place feeling from a moment ago.

That wasn't feeling out of place.

It was feeling something you've experienced before, déjà vu.

I quickly returned to where I left.

I ran through the many turns of the alley.

While getting lost in the forked roads, I continued to turn around and returned to the path from just now.

"No, stop it!" I heard a young girl's scream.

The earth wall I created entered my field of vision.

"Give it back!"

I put my hand on the earth wall and started to concentrate on my magic power.

Using earth magic I manipulated the wall and created a fissure in it while simultaneously using wind magic to launch a shock wave through the center of the wall.

[BANG] a loud sound let out and the earth wall shattered into tiny pieces all over the place.

In my field of vision that scene entered.

A single young girl was violently captured.

The ones with their hands holding her were soldiers.

There were two of them.

The one who wasn't holding the young girl was tearing up a piece of paper taken from her.

"Don't rip up the letter I was sending it to father!"



The two soldiers looked at me with dumbfounded faces.

"Wh-who in the world are you...?"

Young girl.

Traces of Lilia could be seen in her face, she wore a ponytail with the same brown hair as Paul, while wearing a small maid outfit.

That face gave off the impression of normally being lively and aloof and it was currently distorted with tears and a dripping nose.

Looking down on that, those vulgar faces...

No, the two soldiers weren't making a vulgar face.

If you were to ask which, they were making apologetic faces.

They were just doing their jobs to the end, and their intention didn't seem to be in it.

"Who are you?! Name yourself!"

"I'm that child's..."

Oh wait, I'm not supposed to name myself right.

Umm.

"My name is the Knight of the Moon's Shadow, Shadow Moon Knight!"

"What do you mean Knight, no matter how you look at it you're a magician!"

"Uguu..."

I was hit with a precise tsukkomi^[12].

Damn it.

Next time, I'll make sure to name myself with Magician Ebiru.

Well, it's fine.

"Listen here boy. It's fine to play make believe as an ally of justice, but even if we look like this, we old men are soldiers of the Royal Palace. Since she's lost, we're just trying to take her back home."

In the end they even looked at me with eyes of a rowdy child and gently gave me a warning.

I'm sure these words have a few lies mixed in, but after looking at Aisha sobbing on the side of the knight, she was making a bit of a troubled face.

I'm sure they're not bad guys.

There might have been some problem in the Royal Palace, and even though Aisha and Lilia are being detained, it's not something that the knights consider a bad thing.

It could be that, it would be bad to create hostility with these soldiers.

I might not be supposed to fight, solving this with conversation could be better.

"Even though it seems like you're tearing up the letter she was holding?"

"Ahh~ ... That is, well, what. There's various things, adult things."

That's right isn't it, there are a lot of different adult things, right?

"Ah!"

Then at that moment making use of a single gap, Aisha shook off the hands of the soldier.

"Pw-pwease shave me!"

She ran straight over to me, hid behind my back, and with a crumpled face covered in tears and snot she clung onto me.

After looking at the desperation in that face, I started to feel like it didn't matter if I turned a kingdom or two into enemies.

"Th-those pweople, foshefully, my letta, and teard..."

I have no idea what she's saying, but at least the desperation is being conveyed.

I give up, I give up.

A middle aged adult like me can't do something like a young ally of justice play.

I'll go about it in my usual way.

"...Hnnn!"

I suddenly raised my hand up and used voiceless incantations to send a rock bullet flying.

"Ah!"

The knight noticed the sudden rock bullet, unsheathed his blade in an instant and deflected it.

Uooh, their reaction was good!

Water God style, huh.

That's hard to deal with.

But, well, it's not like rock bullet is the only thing I can use.

With this much distance there's plenty of margin for error.

Fufu, avoiding my rock bullet, that makes you the 4th one you know.

"Voiceless incantations!?"

"Then this guy, could it be Roxy-dono's!?"

"He really came!"

"Call for reinforcements!"

"Under, uooh!"

I created a pit fall at the foot of the knight who was about to run off.

Rejection shot.

Simultaneously I fired off rock bullets in succession at the other knight to keep him in check, while asking Aisha a question.

"We're going to run, are you alright?"

"Hick... hiku, yeah...!"

Aisha nodded while continuing to sob.

Alright, alright.

After this we just need to knock out one more and then break away.

Just at the time I thought that.

[Whistle~?!]

Suddenly I heard a high pitched sound ring out like a birds cry.

The sound came out from the center of a hole.

It's a whistle.

They let out an alarm.

And then, from a bit of a distance away as well as nearby alleys I could hear the same sound of a whistle blowing.

[Whistle][Whistle][Whistle]!!

Each of the whistling methods and sounds were slightly different.

Most likely, they're letting each other know their position so they can meet using the sound.

After checking to see that my hand that was launching rock bullets had stopped, the soldier opened his mouth wide.

"All of the paths around this area have been sealed off! Soon soldiers will come here as well. Stop with the pointless resistance, hand over that girl! We won't treat you badly!"

"..."

This is bad.

He's called for allies.

Most likely, knights and soldiers will quickly be flooding into here.

But, I still have one hand left.

"Aisha, please hold onto me tightly!"

"Eh!!?"

"No matter what you must not let go!"

While Aisha was bewildered, she put her hands around my waist and tightly held onto me.

I grabbed her clothes with my left hand, and with my right hand started gathering magic power.

I released an earth spear [Earth Lance] centered at the flat point below my feet.

Using that momentum I flew into the air like a human bullet.

"Wha-what?!?"

"Kyaaa!"

With the soldiers' voices of confusion and Aisha's scream, I magnificently escaped from that place.

Wa ha ha, see you later foolish fellows!

Incidentally, since I was getting ahead of myself, I flew too high, and I ended up breaking both of my legs with a solid crack on the landing.

This type of dangerous magic is no good unless you practice it on a daily basis.

CHAPTER 4

ABSENCE OF GOD

1

After using magic to escape like a catapult, Aisha cried for a short while.

Moaning and crying while her teeth were chattering and she was trembling, she even wet herself.

I understand her feelings.

If I were to be caught in the arms of a scary man and threatened, I might not go to the point of wetting myself, but my legs would be trembling as well.

At least up until leaking.

Though, those two knights, if you were to ask which side they were on, it would be more gentleman-like, but I guess the stimulus would be a bit too strong for a 5-6 year old child.

The differences in age start to become obvious from the time when you're small.

For example, for elementary and middle school students, high school students appear to be adults, if high school students are gathered together along on the side of a road, even if they aren't dressed like punks, they'll be unusually scared of them.

Even more so if it's two soldiers.

I am sure it was rather frightening.

I absolutely don't want to think that it was because she heard the sound of both of my legs snapping as they broke when we landed nearby.

I quickly fixed them using healing, but that certainly hurt.

I pretended not to notice the fact that she wet herself and swiftly moved to get her panties washed.

The place was our inn.

By the time I returned, neither Eris nor Ruijerd were around.

Since they said they were going out to gather information, they'll most likely return around night.

Well then, here I've once again experienced something mysterious.

Just now, Aisha took off her small, baggy maid outfit, tore off the wet panties she was wearing, wiped down her body, and then put the shirt I normally wear on.

In my hands is a wooden bucket and soap for the purpose of laundry, as well as a primary schoolgirl panties.

If it was the me from my past life, in this situation with these items, I would probably fall into an aroused state.

I'd like you to think about it and see.

On the nearby bed is a little girl who after being stripped once is now wearing my baggy clothes after she just wet herself and is currently crying.

Obviously with no panties.

If it's a gentleman, then anyone who falls into such a situation would normally be excited.

It's not like I can put Eris's panties on her.

Her panties are No Touch.

That's one of the important rules of this "Dead End".

No matter how much of an emergency situation it is, how could I possibly dig through her belongings when she's not around and pull some panties out...

Just thinking about it is frightening.

If I were to break the rules Ruijerd won't come to save me and if I use demon eyes to run away Eris will be displeased for around three days.

Even though I say that, if I get hit defenselessly then my face will change enough that I won't be able to taste meals for around three days.

Well, I could use healing magic to fix it.

In any case, it's a situation where it wouldn't be strange for the wild beast of my heart to be howling.

However, even in that situation, my heart is currently as calm and silent as the surface of a lake

Putting aside arousal, there's not even a single wave.

Clear and serene.

It's a strange thing.

In regards to the sobbing Aisha I felt "She's a troubled child" while embracing her, yet I can't remember any sexual arousal beyond that.

I wonder if I became a Sage while I wasn't paying attention.

Or else, maybe I touched upon Eris's imperial wrath without realizing it, and my Pocket Monster was made incompetent for battle.^[13]

Maybe in order to forget the overwhelming fear of that time, I placed a seal on the memories.

No, never!

That can't be the case, are you alright, My Son?

And while I was thinking like that, the laundry ended in a flash.

The linen panties with no sex appeal and the small maid outfit that appears to be made of relatively high class material.

I handed those over to Aisha who at some point had stopped crying, and she cheerfully started changing her clothes.

I carefully stared at that.

After all I'm not getting aroused.

I wonder if this body won't get aroused by family.

Even though my previous life it was men and women of all ages without discrimination...

The thing known as life is mysterious.

"I am called Aisha Greyrat! Thank you very much!"

Aisha carefully lowered her head while wearing the baggy maid outfit.

In rhythm with that her ponytail shook along with it.

After all ponytails are nice.

Eris occasionally wears a ponytail as well, but her ponytail gives off the feeling of a track and field club girl.

That alone is pretty good by itself, but Aisha's is yet another slightly different charm.

Aisha is terribly lovely, like a doll.

Since her eyes are currently bloodshot so it's kind of like a cursed doll though.

After she raises her face, she took a step closer.

Close.

"If I hadn't been saved by Knight-sama, I was about to be forcefully taken back!"

After hearing the words Knight-sama, I remembered that I named myself "Knight of the Moon's Shadow, Shadow Moon Knight" in front of her.

A line of cold sweat went down my back.

After the conversation with Eris earlier, I might have gone a bit overboard.

At this age I won't roll around after my back itches a bit but...

Around 10 years later this kind of thing will definitely end up as the content of a joke intended to tease.

After thinking that, I regret it a bit.

"Truly, thank you very much."

Aisha bowed deeply for a second time.

How old was she now again, 6 years old I guess?

Even though she's still young, she's a child who knows manners well.

"On top of saving me, I'd like to make a shameless request of you!"

"Ou."

Shameless, she sure knows some difficult words.

According to Paul's story she received special education from Lilia and she's quite clever.

"Please give me the tools needed to write a letter! Also, please tell me the location of the Adventurer's Guild! I'm counting on you!"

After saying that, she lowered her head.

When asking people for things she uses 'please', she's done well.

Yeah, she's a good child.

However, a little bit thoughtless.

"Are just those two fine? Do you have money?"

"...I don't have any money!"

"Weren't you taught by your mother that both the tools to write a letter and sending the letter required money?"

It's important to teach the importance of money from a young age.

I thought Lilia wouldn't have made a mistake in that area, but I'm sure there are things that aren't understood even if they are taught and there are things that can't be taught.

"Mother taught me that if a child like me asks with upturned eyes "I want to send a letter to father", then even without money it will work out."

Oh my, oh no, Lilia-san you mischievous one.

What are you teaching your own daughter?

The method to use her weapons as a woman?

After thinking that, this way of speaking and her gestures start to look like acting as well.

No really, what have you been teaching her.

"We've always been trying to get into contact with father, but the people of the castle say it's not allowed and won't let us send a letter!"

I heard that Lilia was being detained.

It seems they won't let her send a letter as well.

I wonder if it could be that she's being treated badly.

Since Hitogami used such words as "save her", after all.

This could be an NTR development that Paul won't find amusing.

"Aren't there any other reliable people than your father?"

"There aren't!"

"For example, that's right, a blue haired older sister... Or for example an older brother who might be somewhere?"

After casually mentioning that Aisha raised her eyebrows.

It was an unpleasant face.

Why?

"I have an older brother, but..."

"You have one but?"

"He isn't reliable."

Why not!

Just now didn't he magnificently save you!

"Is-is it okay if I hear the reason?"

"Reason! That's fine! My mother has told me about my brother in detail."

"Oh."

"However, all of it was unbelievable stuff! For example using intermediate level magic at three years old, or becoming a Saint Class magician at five. And to top it all off,

becoming the home teacher of a Lord's daughter at seven? It's not impossible, but it's all unbelievable! It's definitely a lie!"

You can't believe it, huh.

I see.

I guess that would be the case.

"However, if you actually meet him, he could be a good older brother?"

"He's definitely not!"

"Wh-Why?"

"In our house we had this small box my mother treated as important. She would always say not to touch it or not to look inside of it for some reason. Somehow, it seems that it contained something precious to my older brother."

...Small box?

Well now, come to think of it I vaguely remember hearing something like that from Paul as well.

"During the time when my mother wasn't around, I secretly opened it and looked inside. And then what do you think was inside of it!?"

"We-well, I wonder what."

"It was panties. Panties belonging to a woman. Also, going off the size they were considerably small. Based on my calculations, they should have been panties belonging to a child around the age of 14. There was none. A person around that age, there was none in that house. I did consider the possibility that my older brother was a sister, but it's a bit much. There was only one person who I could link it to. My older brother's home teacher, a person named Roxy. When my older brother was four or five years old he treated a clearly older lady's panties as a religious object."

Calculations you say.

Wa-wait this child, isn't she just a bit too clever?

Eh? She's still five or six years old right?

How do I put it, from this kind of small child, I'm feeling this amazing gap, huh?

"However, there's the possibility it might be a misunderstanding right?"

"No, I casually managed to get the details out of my mother. My brother would do whatever he pleased like peeking on that lady Roxy when she was bathing or peek in on my father and mother when they were making love. It seemed like my mother was trying to keep it hidden, but there's no mistake. My older brother is without a doubt a hentai!"

A hentai!

A hentai!

A hentai!

Without a doubt a hentai!

And adding it on once more, a hentai!

Please stop it already, Rudeus's mental HP is already zero!

"I-I see, your older brother is a hentai, huh, that is troubling, hahaha..."

Even though they say you get what you deserve, how could this be...

How could it be, this... Shit.

I see now.

It's this sort of thing.

That's why Hitogami told me not to name myself.

Just now, I've understood it in my heart.

As expected of Hitogami-san...

"By the way, Knight-san, what's your real name?"

"It's a secret. Though I'm often called [The Owner of Dead End] in public."

I replied with a stiff face.

It seems like it would be better to wait until a bit after to tell her that I'm her older brother.

I'll be treated as a pervert after all.

"Oh... The Owner-san is it. That's cool! After all can you use things like summoning techniques?"

"No, I just have two vicious dogs on a leash."

"Is that so, that's amazing!"

Aisha was looking at me with her eyes sparkling.

Like a puppy.

Moreover a deceived puppy.

Ah, my heart hurts a bit.

However, for the time being, the result is all right.

If I were to reveal myself as her older brother here, Aisha might not listen to what I say.

However, if it's at this rate, it seems she'll honestly listen to what The Owner says.

We'll go while hiding my identity, and coolly save Lilia.

If I do that, then Aisha will look at The Owner with eyes of respect.

And then, after when she comes to realize I'm her older brother, her impression will rise through the roof.

"Alright. Then I'll save your mother."

"Eh?"

After declaring that, Aisha looked at me with a flabbergasted expression.

"B-but."

"Please leave it to me."

Just like this I met with Aisha.

Even though she has an awful impression of me, it's not as bad as Norn who saw her father being beaten up in front of her eyes.

Even though I was called a pervert for having Roxy's panties, so what, one day she will

come to understand.

That people all have a time when they need to believe in something.

However, to have the recognition to realize panties=pervert at this age, huh.

It's not an age where she should be able to link together sexual desire and underwear, in the first place it's questionable whether she should even understand sexual desire...

I wonder if someone taught her these things.

It would be no good if I don't grant a severe punishment to the guy who taught my little sister strange things.

"By the way, The Owner-san."

"What is it?"

"Why did you know my name!?"

After that, my desperate explanation started, but I'll leave that out.

3

After that, I talked to Aisha for a short while.

We talked about the last two years.

I listened to the story of these past two years from Aisha.

It was a bit lacking in linguistic ability and an insufficient explanation, but I was able to grasp the outline.

Somehow, it seems that they were teleported into the Royal Palace of this country.

Naturally, they were captured as intruders, but as a result of Lilia telling them all sorts of things, they ended up being held in the Royal Palace on house arrest.

In regards to that front and back relation, Aisha didn't seem to understand it, but it seems there was some kind of reason they wouldn't let her send a letter.

It seems that nothing cruel was done to Lilia as well.

I guess that would mean that her body was not their aim.

Although, it could just be that Aisha doesn't know, and it's possible every night something is done to her.

Although Lilia is at a good age (She was older than Paul so in her mid 30s), it's not like she has a beauty that would make those living in the Royal Palace go out of their way after detaining her.

It doesn't change the fact that they were considered suspicious individuals, so I guess it would just be detainment?

In regards to that there are some slightly strange parts.

It's been two and a half years since the teleport.

I wonder if they would really be detained for that long without clearing up the misunderstanding.

There could be some kind of circumstances involved that I don't know about.

Come to think of it, Roxy's name never came out.

I wonder if she didn't go to save Lilia.

...No, it's possible that asking her to save them might have caused them to fall into this current situation.

In any case, I'm currently waiting for a reply from Roxy.

After listening to circumstances from her, like a puzzle piece falling into place, all of the doubts should be solved.

Incidentally, in regards to that situation Aisha wanted to send a letter to Paul asking for help.

However she got lost on the way, and she thought if she followed after someone wearing Adventurer-like clothes, she would be able to reach the guild.

That happened to coincidentally be me.

Coincidences are scary.

Well, I'm sure it went as Hitogami planned.

Aisha wanted to hear about me.

"Ohh, The Owner-san came here on a journey from the Magic Continent."

"Yeah, after getting involved with the Fedoa region teleport incident."

"What were you doing before that?"

"A home teacher. I was teaching a noble's daughter magic."

"I see, where were you teaching?"

"In Roa."

"Oh, then it would be the same as my older brother! It could be that you passed by each other in the town right!"

"Th-that's right, I guess that possibility does exist on a minuscule level..."

I can't think that her way of speaking is suitable for her age.

It could be that she is trying to act like an adult.

In any case, it seems that Aisha learned a variety of things from Lilia.

Common sense, manner etiquette, wisdom that would be useful in life, essential points of being a maid, etc.

Even I find it mysterious if she can understand everything at this young age, but at the very least she was able to explain it to a degree that I could understand.

She's clever, this child. Seriously.

She's had the power to absorb everything taught to her like a sponge from the time she was small.

I wonder what she will be like in the future.

I wonder if I'll be able to maintain my dignity as an older brother.

"If you're speaking about a noble young lady, then there might be a similar contact point with my older brother's employer, have you heard anything?"

"N-No, I was limited in information, things about such a person are..."

"Is that so. I wanted to hear about the impression of my older brother from The

Owner-san."

"Umm, I've only heard rumors that the young lady of the lord was so violent she was out of everyone's hands."

Here the feeling to leak information about myself sprouted, but I strongly endure it.

It's going to be exposed after anyways.

If at the time she finds out it was a self-created story, her impression of me will drop after all.

After that, since I told her all sorts of things about the Magic Continent, we talked in detail.

For a child of this age, I thought talking about anything would be fine, but strangely she didn't get attached to the topics.

It might be because Aisha's conversation ability is high.

While thinking that, I genuinely enjoyed talking with my little sister on our mostly first meeting.

After a while, Aisha got tired and fell asleep.

Eris and Ruijerd returned after the sun had set.

After asking the two who seemed to have slightly tired expressions, it seems they went all the way to the slums to gather information, and got into a number of fights.

Another fight it seems.

The unapologetic duo.

Well, it's the same as always. I won't bother asking in detail.

Everyone makes mistakes, I do too, if something happens it's fine if we help each other.

I talked about how I met Aisha in the town and how Lilia is being held captive in the castle.

It seems a variety of things are suspicious.

Also, along with that I told them about the fact that I'm hiding my name.

I paid special care to the fact that they don't let Aisha find out that my identity is

Rudeus.

"Why are you doing something so roundabout?"

"It appears that, she has learned some mistaken knowledge about her older brother, so I want to show her my cool parts in order to correct that recognition."

"Hnnn, I already think you're cool just as you are though?"

"Eris..."

After hearing her say something that made me happy, a "Good man" smile rose to the surface.

And then Eris suddenly took a step backwards.

"Uuuu... Why do you make that creepy face when I praise you!?"

It seems my triumphant face looks creepy.

It's a bit of a shock.

Someone please give me a new face.

"However, since that's the case it's an attack from now on right!"

"It's been a while since I last attacked a castle..."

Eris brought that up full of eagerness.

Even Ruijerd raised his spear.

I stopped the two in a panic.

"No, for the time being let's wait for a reply from Roxy."

After saying that, Eris made an extremely bored face.

As always she seems to like acting violently.

Rather than difficult thinking, attacking the castle and carrying off Lilia is certainly a simpler method, but if we were to cause trouble for Roxy then I wouldn't be able to face her.

First off we need to attentively confirm the situation.

It's absolutely not because of a reason like wanting to meet with Roxy.

While I was thinking about that, the day ended.

5

The next day.

It was almost noon.

Soldiers came to the inn.

Soldiers wearing the same outfit as the ones trying to capture Aisha yesterday.

Just in case I left Aisha in the room and interacted with them in the lobby of the inn.

I left Eris and Ruijerd in the room just in case.

"Are you Rudeus-dono?"

"Yes."

"I am the imperial guard attached to the seventh prince of Shirone, Ginger. Pleased to meet you."

"Thank you for the polite introduction. I'm Rudeus Greyrat."

There was one soldier and it was a woman.

After seeing my face her complexion didn't change a bit, and she gave a knight styled greeting and bow.

I responded as well using a noble style greeting.

I don't actually know how I should reply to such greetings, but anyways it's fine as long as the sincerity is conveyed.

"Roxy-dono is calling for you, would you please accompany me to the Royal Palace?"

In regards to me who is a child no matter how you look at it, she's considerably courteous in manner.

It wasn't like she was specifically hiding her face, but it seems like her mask wasn't split.

However, a prince's imperial guard, huh.

Why an imperial guard is what I was thinking, but I did know that Roxy was serving as a home teacher for the prince.

Then, it's not all that strange.

"..."

After being asked to accompany her, I hesitated.

I wonder what I should do with Aisha.

If I were to bring Aisha along then the fact that I attacked a knight would probably be exposed.

After all, the fact that I sent a rock bullet flying could have been a mistake.

...Alright, here we'll have Aisha look after the house.

If I have Roxy become a buffer and just talk with them then properly apologize, it should be fine.

After I decided that, I told them to absolutely not let Aisha leave the room, and left Eris and Ruijerd as her guards.

And then, a grooming check for the sake of meeting Roxy.

Making sure my hair isn't messy and my clothes are fine as the usual robe.

Ah, that's right, pastries or such are essential as well.

I wonder what would be fine to bring when meeting my shisho for the first time in a while in this world.

And there I found the unpopular first edition Ruijerd doll in the bottom of my tool bag. Come to think of it, in a letter Roxy once mentioned the Roxy doll, had reached where she was.

If I show her this doll and say "Actually it was my work" then it might be amusing.

"Considerably careful aren't you."

"It's the first time I've met my shisho in a while after all."

"...You're going to properly introduce us right?"

"Yeah, of course."

While having that exchange with Eris, I completed preparations.

"Are you going to be alright alone?"

Ruijerd said that in a somewhat worried voice.

Problems always seem to occur when I'm alone after all.

I understand his worried feelings.

"There's no problem. If anything happens I'll fly and run away."

With a zoom~

"The Owner-san..."

"It's alright. Please leave everything to me."

I patted and caressed Aisha's head as she was making a worried face, she tightly shut her mouth and nodded.

Alright, good girl.

6

Led by the soldier Ginger, I was walking down the road towards the Royal Palace.

The two of us were walking with a bit of a quick pace down a small corner of the main street that carriages pass back and forth.

The main road is twisted and bent, occasionally to the extent that the pathway is too small for carriages to pass by.

I wonder if it's a counter-measure for when enemy nations are attacking.

In the Japan of my past life I've heard that the town in the region of Mino is twisted like this.

"..."

Ginger was a silent person and she doesn't talk about a single unnecessary thing. Just, if I ask, she always opens her mouth to answer, and her manner is always polite.

"Alright, next is this guy! This guy is an ex-Washawa Country Knight! He's a slave for battle purposes! He's a bit impudent, but he's quite skilled! Starting from 3 gold coins!"

Suddenly I heard that powerful voice so I took a look in that direction.

In a location just off the main road there was a slave market.

On top of an especially high stand, almost like a balcony, there were slaves lined up.

Three human races and one beast race with ears like a rabbit.

Two men and two women.

Both the men and the women's upper body were nude, even from a distance I could see their shining skin.

In order to make the display better, they may have been covered in oil.

I wonder if that beast race was brought up from the Great Forest.

Even though I don't have the leeway or obligation to save her, it causes me to drop my eyebrows a bit.

While my eyebrows were coming a bit closer to my face, after seeing her chest my nether regions were reacting a bit.

I thought it was mysterious that I wasn't reacting to Aisha, but after all it seems I still have plenty of energy.

I could hear the merchant on the side of the slaves explain all sorts of things.

I couldn't follow the contents, but I'm sure it was the slaves' birthplace and abilities sales points.

After a little while, I heard the voice of the audience begin to rise.

It must be an auction system.

If Lilia and Aisha as well were unlucky, they might have been lined up over there.

After thinking that, I can't really say this current situation is all that bad.

...No, in the end, since I don't know what kind of situation Lilia is in right now, I can't really say anything.

After suddenly taking a look, Ginger was raising her eyebrows after seeing the slave market.

She is one of the ones who protect the public order in this country.

It must bother her for them to do that kind of thing out in the open.

"I thought slave markets would happen deeper in the city."

I let such words flow out.

I thought this was one such topic as well.

In other towns the slave markets are always deep in the back areas.

It doesn't seem like slaves are an especially bad thing in this world, but this is the first time I've seen it going on right off the main road.

"That's right, things like that are usually done deeper in the back."

I thought she might say something loathsome, but she responded with a flat tone.

"Is there some kind of event going on today?"

"No. The other day, it seems like there was a fight between adventurers in the place the slave market was originally. And then the market became unusable, so they decided to let them temporarily use this area as the slave market."

A fight...

A fight, huh.

A fight in the slave market.

A fight caused by Eris and Ruijerd.

I have no option but to feel like there's a link between them.

I'm getting nothing but bad premonitions now.

While thinking that I looked towards the slave market, then,

"Please."

Ginger grabbed onto my sides and raised me up so I could see well.

"Ah, thank you."

She's an easy person to get along with.

Her face was ordinary, and she absolutely doesn't give off the feeling of a beauty, but she notices the small details, I'm sure she'll find a good husband.

"Roxy-dono as well, when there were crowds of people she would start jumping up and down to see."

"I see."

"Yes, but when I would lift her up like this she would always make a complex face."

That scene floated into my eyes.

Roxy jumping up and down because she can't see well.

Then a soldier who lifts her up out of good intention.

Then the discouraged Roxy who asks to be let down.

"Were you able to lift Roxy-sensei up?"

"Yes, she quickly got angry and asked me to let her down though."

Of course, huh.

"Where did you hold onto?"

"Even if you ask where, just like now."

I am currently being held from just around my armpits as I'm raised up.

"What kind of feeling was it?"

"That's why I said, she made a complex face and quickly asked to be let down."

What I want to hear is about the sensation around Roxy's armpits though...

Well, it's fine.

"Please let me down."

From what I could roughly see, there wasn't anything especially interesting.

It's just the slaves who are about to be sold inside of a prison.

Since that's the case I had her put me down and we started walking towards the Royal Palace.

Suddenly I thought of it, but normally wouldn't you take a carriage to welcome someone into the Royal Palace.

Well, it's fine.

"What kind of things was Roxy-sensei doing in the Royal Palace?"

Having found a common topic, I asked Ginger.

"Normally she was teaching the prince, but during the times she was bored she would participate in the exercises with us soldiers."

Come to think of it, in the letter I received from Roxy while I was in Roa, I have a feeling something like that was written.

"If I remember correctly, it was exercises to prepare for fights with magicians, that sort of talk?"

According to the letter it was Roxy releasing magic in the middle of a melee and they

were trying to ward it off, that kind of training.

If they can suddenly react to magic fired off and manage to deflect it, then it wouldn't be difficult for that to become the difference between life and death on the battlefield.

"That's correct. We're all Water God style intermediate level swordsmen, but thanks to Roxy-dono we were able to learn to deflect magic cast in an instant."

I see now, that's why the knight yesterday was able to deflect my rock bullet.

It was a bit of a shock for a common knight to deflect that, but if it's the result of Roxy's teachings I can accept it.

After that, I talked to Ginger for a short while about Roxy.

Things such as during magic training, Roxy accidentally scorched a tree and she went pale, all the soldiers were proud or during dinner when bell peppers suddenly came out she suddenly went pale, but still ate them pretending like nothing was wrong.

"I've heard stories about Rudeus-dono as well."

"Oh. Wh-what did she say?"

"A genius who can use magic with voiceless incantations at a young age."

"Sensei said such a thing?"

"Roxy-dono was often bragging about you. That child is not an existence which I really deserved to have taught."

"Dehehe, that's saying too much."

During that conversation we arrived at the castle.

It's a considerably large castle, but it's not as large as Kishirisu Castle of Rikarisu or the White Palace of Milishion.

It's about the same size as Eris's home.

In other words, this country would be about the same as a remote territory of Asura.

As expected, Asura Kingdom is amazing.

"..."

"Keep up the good work!"

Ginger lightly nodded to the guards and the guards stood themselves upright.
Come to think of it, she said she was an imperial guard?
I wonder if she's important.

"This way please."

Just as I was about to keep going straight ahead, Ginger suddenly turned to the side.
Turning around the castle, we came in through something like the back door.

"Please forgive me. Soldiers are forbidden from entering through the front gate."
"I see."

In the back entrance there was something like a soldier's station.
In a corner of the room there were two head desks lined up, and several soldiers were sitting down playing something like cards.
After they saw Ginger they quickly stood up and maintained an upright fixed posture.

"..."

"Keep up the good work!"

Ginger made a single nod again and went further into the room.
I continued to follow along with her while giving them a side glance.

"Ginger-san is an important person it seems."
"Among the soldiers I'm #12."

#12, it's hard to determine if that's high or low...

In this country there are probably some hundreds of soldiers, after thinking that, it's probably a relatively high position.
Most likely not low.

"This way please."

Ginger continued moving further inside.

Her manner of walking felt like it got a bit more cautious.

In regards to the people we would occasionally pass she would stop her feet and use a knight style greeting.

I followed suit with a noble style greeting.

I wouldn't stand for it if they were to say Roxy's disciple wasn't taught properly after all.

The noble like people either returned a greeting, or completely ignored and continued to pass by us.

It's largely different from Eris's home.

Fundamentally, there were no greetings in the corridors there.

I wonder if Roxy felt like it was hard to breathe working in a place like this.

After getting used to these greetings, I wondered if it wouldn't bother her.

Each floor had stairs in roughly three places.

The construction is similar to Eris's home.

I'm sure there's some sort of scheme to prevent it from being invaded all at once.

However, there's no doubt it's inconvenient for normal life.

Ginger stopped at the end of a corridor.

I wonder if this is Roxy's room.

It's a considerably quiet place.

However, you could say it seems like Roxy.

Ginger came to a halt.

Suddenly she looked at my appearance and held out her hand.

"I'll hold onto your staff and belongings."

"Ah, yes."

She even goes to the point of acting as a door boy, how kind.

After receiving my belongings Ginger knocked on the door.

"It's Ginger. I've brought Rudeus-dono."

"Enter."

The voice that replied was a man.

(Hn?)

While some questions were rising to mind, Ginger quickly opened the door, and led me into the room.

Just as lead, I went into the room.

"Oh... This is Rudeus, huh."

"Mogo!!?"

There a man was sitting, looking arrogantly.

He was a man like a small barrel.

On both of his sides were two maids.

The man was sitting awfully arrogantly, but his height was equally small.

It wasn't just his height, but his limbs were short as well.

It felt like he was pieced together out of a hobbit and a dwarf.

However, only his face was huge, it was like one belonging to an adult human race male.

That face as well, if I were to word it based on the first impression it would be, unsightly.

It was a type of face that brought a feeling of familiarity to me.

After looking to the side, I don't recognize Maid A.

She seemed to be in the latter half of her 20s, her chest size was normal, no muscles. A normal female.

Maid B had a face that was the spitting image of Lilia.

Rather, it was Lilia.

It looks like she has aged a bit after five years, but it seems like her skin has a variety of bends in it piled on top, since she got involved in that teleport incident, it can't really be helped.

And then she was sitting in a chair.

The chair itself was wrapped in rope and she had a gag in her mouth.

I don't see Roxy's appearance anywhere.

"What does this mean?"

Even while in the midst of chaos I calmed down and thought to listen.

I thought Roxy should have been here.

Ah, I see. It was a trap.

"Drop him."

I opened my demon eye at the same time as the man's words.

One second in the future I was falling downwards.

I fell.

7

Before realizing it, I was in the middle of a magic circle.

Just as he signaled the floor below my feet was pulled down, I fell into something like a pitfall.

It took a few seconds to realize that.

It's a small room.

About 6 tatami mats or so.

A magic circle was drawn on the ground and it was dimly giving off some light.

However, I quickly created some earth magic.

I was going to raise my body up like an elevator.

"...What?"

However, the magic wouldn't invoke.

Once again I tried with a bit more magic power to create an earth pillar at my feet.

Strange.

I'm sure the magic power is certainly coming out, but the earth pillar isn't invoking.

No, it isn't strange.

This magic circle surrounding me.

It's because of this thing.

I'm inside of some kind of barrier.

"A... barrier."

I stretched my arms out to look around the edge of the magic circle and I touched something like a wall.

I tried hitting to check, but it won't shake a bit.

"Gyahahahaha! It's pointless! It's pointless! That magic circle is a barrier created in order to capture Roxy! Someone like you won't be able to do a thing!"

The circular man from just now came down the stairs.

And then, he stopped in front of me and made a broad grin with a repulsive smile, a feeling like he was elated with his victory.

"You are?"

"My name is Pax^[14]. It's Pax Shirone^[15]!"

Pax.

Ah, the seventh prince, huh.

In any case, this man.

I wonder why in the world he was planning on making this anti-magic barrier to capture Roxy.

No, in the letter it was written that he resembled me.

I'm a gentleman-like man.

Then, without a doubt he will be conducting himself like a gentleman.

Shit. What kind of gentleman-like treatment did this guy have planned?

"Kukuku, that's a good face. Rudeus Greyrat."

After seeing my mortified face the man laughed and smirked.

I put on a poker face and took some deep breaths.

Calm down.

This is the type of situation in which one needs to be calm.

"So I fell into a trap, huh. I understand. I'll officially apologize for attacking the soldiers yesterday. Before that, first off please call Roxy. I'm her former student, she will be able to prove my identity. After that, I'll call a lawyer, and the official trial will be after-"

"Roxy isn't here."

Roxy isn't here.

"What... did you say..."

Those words delivered enough of an impact to surprise even me.

Roxy isn't here.

In other words, it means the Absence of God.

Is there no God?

No, that cannot be the case.

That great mathematician, didn't he just say that our God doesn't exist.

The one who received the life of Ekacherina the 2nd^[16], isn't she a splendid proof of the existence of God. ^[17]

God exists.

I as well, my body itself is proof of the existence of God.

"No, God exists."

"...What? God?"

Pax made a blank face.

That's right.

God exists.

Without a doubt.

If you are to say she doesn't, then it's a crusade.

I don't know what this stuff is about the Milis Church, but anyone who wants to die feel free to come out.

I'll be the opponent of anyone who thinks they might win.

"Hnn, praying to god, huh. That's the correct option. Since there's no chance of you being saved in this situation."

"That seems to be so."

Well then, now that I've calmed down a bit it's about time to end with the jokes.

"And then, going off your statement from just now I can take it that Roxy is no longer in this country, correct?"

"That's right! You're bait in order to lure Roxy here!"

"If I'm going to be eaten in a single bite by Roxy then that is a definitely something to look forward to..."

While looking for a suitable response I was thinking.

In other words, it's that.

Roxy isn't in this country.

This person is trying to capture Roxy.

Why?

Is Roxy guilty of doing something and then escaping?

While I was thinking, Pax declared with his next words.

"I was surprised after seeing the letter. I couldn't have imagined that Roxy's lover would come to this country!"

"Eh!! Roxy has a lover!!?"

Seriously!

Since when. Even though there was nothing written about that in the letters...

"Mu? You aren't?"

Ah, he's mistaken me for Roxy's lover.

"Absolutely not! Such an amazing thing! I am but an unworthy disciple who cannot match up to her in any way!"

I strongly shook my head.

In reality I'm quite happy.

All excited like some kind of reindeer-like rare animal.

I'm excited like the person inside of the Metal Monster.

However, endure it.

"Hnn, even if you're not her lover, if it's her disciple then Roxy will come."

"I wonder if she will come."

"She will come. Lilia was weak as bait, but if it's you who she praised that much, Roxy will come! And then, the time when she comes will be Roxy's end as a woman. I'll keep her forever as my sex slave. I'll have her give birth to five of my heirs."

Speaking of sex slaves.

Getting excited over her displeasure.

Heir? Aren't you the seventh prince, do you have any political power?

However.

I still have on question.

"Umm. Is it fine to ask one question?"

"What is it, ah, that's right. The first time I'll rape her in front of your eyes! And then, I'll go for the second time as Roxy's eyes are stained in despair as your head is lopped off!"

His delusions are considerably strong.

"Until I came here, I never heard any information about Lilia... How do you plan to let Roxy realize that I'm being held captive?"

Pax suddenly stopped.

"Hnn, if it's the superior Roxy, then she'll hear about it from somewhere and come!"

I see now, Roxy is superior after all.

She might be able to find information that I wasn't able to find.

However, the probability of that is most likely low.

"Umm, couldn't you at least leak some information for example, wouldn't doing something like that be better?"

It's not like I want Roxy to be raped.

I don't, but if he would have at least done that much, Paul might have possibly caught onto Lilia a bit sooner.

That's what I was thinking.

"Hnn, I won't fall for that trick! You all have the protection of high class nobles of Asura right! If they were to know that Lilia or you are captured, Boreas or something might turn into our enemy right?"

"Turn into... I wonder...?"

Hnnn?

Something is strange.

Well, if they were to know I was captured, old man Sauros might come to save me...

However, how is Lilia related to that?

"Lilia as well tried to send letters a number of times after all! Like I would let someone come to save you!"

I wonder why he thinks someone will come to save her without letting her send a letter asking for help.

Ah, I see.

This guy is an idiot.

"No, if you don't let the information leak, and don't let her ask for help, I don't think anyone will come."

"Hnn! Didn't you actually nonchalantly come strolling in just now!"

Certainly!

No, no, that reasoning is strange.

"In the first place, wouldn't it have been fine to send the information directly to Roxy!"

"Did you send it to her?"

"We've been looking for her for two years, but we can't find her! However, we'll find

her someday! That woman stands out after all!"

I don't think you'll specifically be able to find her because she stands out...

This is strange, I had a feeling that she wrote saying he was excellent like me...

Or else, could it be, that Roxy's impression of me is something like this?

If that's the case then I'll get depressed.

"Hnhnn, it seems like you've given up. I don't know what it is about the voiceless incantations, but it just means that you can't win against my authority."

Hnn, I absolutely won't lose to something like authority you know. Kii!!

"Yeah, those are good eyes. They give me chills. Will you make those eyes until the end? Yeah, that's something to look forward to indeed. I wonder if Roxy would hurry and come..."

While saying that Pax went back up the stairs.

There's no way she could come...

"Hey, who said you could take off Lilia's gag?"

"Please forgive my rudeness, I thought you should let her say something."

"Don't do unnecessary things!"

"Please, your highness, I'll do anything, so please just Rudeus-sama...!"

"Shut up, I'm not interested in middle-aged women!"

"Ahhh!!"

After hearing those kinds of voices from upstairs I heard a loud and dry noise echo.

Since the ceiling is still opened, I can almost hear it all.

"In any case, you still haven't found Aisha yet!"

"We're still currently searching, your highness!"

"Ku, what were the characteristics of the guy who carried her off!?"

I could hear Pax's irritated voice.

It seems they're talking about yesterday.

However, well, I'm in trouble.

I wasn't hiding my face, so it should be exposed pretty quickly.

The location of the inn was written on the letter as well...

Ruijerd and Eris are in the inn though.

If it's Ruijerd, if it's Ruijerd then somehow he'll lend me a hand.

There's also Eris who is an authority on Offense there.

"According to the report, it was a muscle bound, brawny gigantic man named Shadow Moon Knight. Supposedly he was a pervert that let out a loud laugh as he jumped along the rooftops."

"Why haven't you caught someone who stands out like that? Shit, every single one of you is so useless!"

"Ha, I'm very sorry."

Hey!

Soldier, soldier-san, report properly!

No, but if I think about it realistically, it could have been done out of good intention.

They could have tried to let Aisha get away out of good intention.

He did seem like a good person after all.

Good job, Soldier.

"But, we've already received a report that the letter was torn up."

"You can write a letter any number of times!"

"Even if you left it alone, upper class nobles wouldn't move for a letter from a child?"

"No way, no way! Search, or do you not care what happens to your family!"

"...Ku!! I'll send out a search team immediately."

I hear the sound of running about.

It seems Ginger has had her family taken hostage.

"Hnn, throw Lilia into the usual place!"

"Yes!!"

"Rudeus-sama! I'll absolutely come to save you!"

"Shut up! There's no way you could manage that!"

"Ahhh!!"

"Hnn, you know Roxy as well don't you. I'll slit his throat in front of that cheeky little female magician!"

Bang, I heard another dull sound.

I hear the sound of something being dragged.

"Hnn, Rudeus! Can you hear me! I'm definitely not letting you escape after all!"

I look up to where the voice is coming from.

I saw Pax's repulsive smile.

After giving me a glance, he moved to a place which couldn't be seen from the hole.

After a little while, something was placed on top of the hole I'm in.

It was a cover.

Only silence was left.

In my surroundings the magic circle was giving off a dim light.

"Sigh..."

That kind of ended in a daze.

He probably got angry and hit Lilia, but strangely anger isn't building up.

Probably because that exchange just now was just way too comical.

Or else, maybe it's because I was already told by Hitogami that Lilia would be saved.

Or maybe even though he's distorted it, it's because he's still worshiping Roxy.

Even I might become like him if I were to be thrown away by Roxy.

No, that's wrong.

Probably because he looks a bit similar to me in my previous life.

That's why rather than anger, I feel more lost and confused instead.

Well, when everything has ended I'll make sure he properly gets what he deserves.

"Now then..."

I roughly understand the situation.

In other words, the reason why Lilia was captured by Pax.

The pretense for detaining her could have been anything really. Another country's spy for example.

Then, while they were talking to her, it seems after the prince found out about her relation with Roxy, he came up with this plan.

Using Lilia as bait, then getting into contact with Roxy, and luring her out.

Since he's afraid of the Greyrat name, he's constantly doing it in secrecy.

Well, even if Asura Kingdom found out, Lilia is nothing but Paul's maid, so there's any number of ways to hush it up.

Unable to find Roxy, it ended with Lilia being detained for a long period.

Lilia was seeking help from Paul, but obviously the prince wouldn't allow it.

In that situation, Aisha escaped the castle, she tried to send a letter, but failed. The letter ended up being destroyed.

The mysterious part is after that, for some reason the soldiers' reports went in a direction that seemed to be aiding her.

It could just simply be that they hate the prince, or else there could be some sort of other reason...

It seems like he's holding hostages against Ginger after all, other soldiers might be in a similar situation.

In that situation, I walked straight into the spiders web is what it means. Hitogami did tell me to send a letter to Roxy after all, so it should mean that I would be captured like this is still within the range of assumption.

There's no reason to panic.

For now I just need to act as directed.

However, what am I going to do after this.

Most likely, right now in this instant, some kind of situation is happening in the background.

Then, it might be fine to just do nothing again this time.

If I just wait patiently here, there will be some kind of situation, and then if I go along with that, everything should work out well.

...No, wait.

Did I really move according to instructions?

For example, I named myself Knight of the Moon's Shadow, Shadow Moon Night.

According to Hitogami's advice, I was supposed to name myself "The Owner of Dead End" in front of Aisha.

However, what if in reality it was no good if I don't use The Owner name in front of the soldiers as well?

That's not all.

It's the same with the letter.

I surely thought it would be fine if I "Use my real name", but if I hadn't used Rudeus as the sender name, it wouldn't have ended up like this would it?

If I were to have just met the prince as an acquaintance of Roxy, wouldn't I have been able to talk with him a bit more peacefully?

This is bad, I have the feeling I made some kind of mistake.

No, not yet, it should still be alright I think?

This much shouldn't be outside of expectation, right?

I'm worried...

For the time being, it seems I should secretly try to secure an escape route.

CHAPTER 5

THIRD PRINCE

1

Hello everybody. This is ex-HikiNEET^[18] Rudeus.

Today's topic is...

We're visiting the No Cost Apartment of Shirone Kingdom.

Deposit Zero.

Rent Zero.

One room with zero meals and afternoon naps included.

The construction is made of a reliable stone material, it's been laid out very hard and solidly.

The lack of sunlight and the fact that there's no bed are a couple of the small problems, but even so this price is just far too cheap!

It is zero rent after all.

The toilet is a bit lacking being the diaper-less-diaper model and all, and if you live here for a long period you'll without a doubt catch an illness, but even considering that the price is cheap!

Moreover, just looking at this security structure will give you a peace of mind.

Please take a look at this solid barrier.

Of all things, when you're inside of here, it nullifies all magic and you won't be able to leave!

It won't even budge after an A rank Adventurer like me seriously punches it.

No matter how much of a master at escaping they may be, I'm sure getting in and out of this place would be anything but simple.

Yeah, well, it's fine since this is the second time I've used this material as a joke.

I can't get out.

Someone save me.

Ruijerd quickly come save me, Rujsaveme!

Just like that I've fallen into a situation like the captured Princess Peach-sama^[19].

2

It's been a full day since then and I was still trying to release the barrier.

Speaking of barriers, they are something cruel.

The fact that you can't use magic means that the number of things I can do is almost nothing.

Like trying to beat on the invisible wall, or trying to scratch out the magic circle on the floor.

Like trying to jump up and see if I can reach the nearby ceiling 4 meters above.

I've tried everything I can think of, but I wasn't able to do anything.

If I at least had my staff I might have been able to knock on the ceiling.

However, I left all of my belongings with Ginger.

It's not like I brought anything that great along with me though.

In regards to magic, I tried a variety of things to see.

However, all of them ended in a misfire.

If the magic power is being absorbed then I wanted to try using the maximum amount of magic power I could to try to break it.

I could think like a shounen manga and give it a try, but it doesn't have that kind of feeling.

I can use magic power, but for some reason it won't take shape.

I can't change the phenomenon into the variation stage.

It seems like it will work, but it doesn't.

How do I put it, it might be kind of similar to how a lighter can't be used in strong wind.

The spark comes out, the gas is there as well, but the fire won't start.

Or it could be that the fire starts, but it quickly gets blown out.

It's that kind of feeling.

It seems like a King Class Barrier magic.

It's amazing.

After I recognized that fact, my irritation gradually started to build up.

When the time comes, I can't do anything.

I'm currently in such a situation.

For example, if we were unlucky, even if Roxy were to come here right now, I would be unable to save her.

I would only be able to cry out to abandon me.

For example, if some kind of chance comes up and Eris gets caught, I wouldn't be able to save her.

In that case, I'm sure they would use me as a hostage, Ruijerd would have no choice but to try and do something.

So again, I would only be able to shout out to abandon me.

For example, Pax changes his mind, just having me as a hostage is plenty and he goes to kill Lilia.

After all I only have the option to shout out.

I still remember Hitogami's advice.

However, I didn't perfectly follow it.

It could be that I've already deviated from the advice.

Since it's Hitogami, I would expect him to include that in his assumptions.

However, that advice didn't say anything other than that Aisha and Lilia would be saved.

No, it was advice intended to gain my faith.

I can't imagine that there was something else behind the meaning.

Bad thoughts are circling around.

Shit.

If I don't hurry and escape...

3

I wonder exactly how much time passed while I was trying various things.

I'm tired.

It feels like it's been a long time since I used this much magic power.

The barrier hasn't even budged.

It is a barrier meant to capture Roxy after all.

I guess that would mean it won't be released that easily, huh...

Sigh...

I'll rest for a bit.

I have no watch and I can't see the sun either.

Since that's the case, my sense of time is vague.

I'm hungry.

Since a while ago my stomach has been grumbling.

That prince, he better not forget to feed me.

No that's wrong.

He might be reducing my meals, in order to starve me down into a delicate, phosphorus-like body.

In that case, he'd probably be even more excited at the time Roxy comes.

One meal a day, huh.

Since I'm in the middle of my growth period, it's a bit painful...

I wonder what I can do?

I can't escape using power.

It's probably good to switch gears a bit.

In my previous life, how did people escape from prison again?

For example, that's right playing dead or ill.

In order to bring a doctor or healing magician in they would need to release the barrier for a period of time.

No, there's the possibility they would just leave me to die. Holding someone hostage requires two people.

If it's a Hollywood star then when the guard comes close to the metal bars, arms would stretch out and knock them out in an instant, then they would steal the keys, but it won't work here.

Humu...

Other than that, what kind of methods was there?

In short, it would be fine if I could just get out of here.

If I was able to use magic, any number of things could be done.

Might as well just pretend to swear allegiance to him.

"Actually, I've always disliked Roxy since a while back, bro, guhehe. Actually I know the location of Roxy's family. Having her father and mother in front of her eyes, how does that sort of thing sound?"

If I go with that sort of feeling, he might actually get caught up in it.

He seems like an idiot after all.

...No, let's not go with that.

No matter what situation I'm in I can't speak badly of Roxy.

I can throw away as much as I need of my pride, but I can't speak badly of Roxy.

Clink... clink...

While I was worrying, a sound suddenly entered my ears.

They're footsteps.

They're gradually getting closer.

I wonder if Pax came down to check on me.

Clink...

The footsteps stopped just above me.

And then, soon after crossed the room and I could hear them coming down the stairs.

"Oh, it's just as Ginger said."

The one who came down from the stairway was... An unknown man.

However, I understood he was most likely royalty from a single look.

First, his clothes have a truly arrogant feel to them.

Using black as the basis, and red lines enter into that.

And then gold colored embroidery is mixed into it, I understood it was expensive from a glance.

In terms of age he should be around 20 years old.

Speaking of his face, it's a bit similar to Pax.

However, he has more of a tall and lanky look than Pax.

He's oval-faced, his cheekbones are clearly visible, and he wears glasses.

I haven't seen glasses used very often in this world, but the people who can use them do use them.

In a world where Cupid's existence has been proven through science, NEETs would

have this kind of face most likely.^[20]

"Shirone Kingdom third prince, I'm Zanoba Shirone."

He said it with an excessively sober voice.

The third prince.

In other words, Pax's older brother, huh.

"Thank you for your courtesy. I'm Rudeus Greyrat."

"Umu."

"What kind of business do you have with me today?"

"Umu."

Zanoba nodded exaggeratedly and lifted up the bag he was holding in his hand.

It's the kind of tool bag you hang over your shoulder.

It's a bag I've seen somewhere before...

Rather, it's my bag.

Zanoba placed the bag on the ground, and carefully took something out from inside.

It was the Ruijerd doll.

"Where did you get your hands on this Magic Race doll?"

Zanoba placed the doll right outside of the barrier.

"Speak. From Ginger, I heard that you were the one holding onto it."

It was a demanding tone.

The Magic Race doll.

I brought it without thinking about it too deeply, but after all I wonder if they would consider a doll of a Magic Race to be an evil gods figure around here.

The Roxy doll has no characteristics of a magic race, but you can tell Ruijerd is a magic

race in a single glance.

There is the jewel in the forehead after all.

I wonder how I should respond.

At the very least, it seems better if I didn't say I was the one who created it.

"...It's something that coincidentally came into my hands when I was traveling on the Magic Continent."

"Oh! Then it was made by Magic Race hands after all! Then around where did you get your hands on it? What was the name of the merchant who sold it to you? Do you know who the creator is!?"

Huh?

Isn't he giving off an amazingly good feeling?

His eyes are sparkling.

"We-well, anyways, I liked it from the moment I first saw it so I just purchased it, and I don't know the details..."

"What??"

Zanoba's glasses reflected a bright light with a sharp sound.

It's an amazing pressure.

Without a doubt, those are the eyes of a person who has killed.

"Ah, that's right. During the time the merchant was selling that doll he said it. If you hold onto that doll, you'll be fine even if you are attacked by a Supard race. If you show the doll and recite the chant "Ruijerdlikeschildren, Ruijerdlikeschildren" then suddenly the Supard race will become friendly like a person who you've known for tens of years, and then he'll put his hand on your shoulder in an over-familiar way and say "Hey Brotha" supposedly."

"Oh oh! For it to do that! Anything else!? Anything else!?"

"Umm, it will allow your children to be born in good health, also it might help you get better at swordsmanship?"

"No, not that sort of thing! In other words, that means it was made by someone who

has a deep relation with the Supard race right!?"

I guess that would be the case.

Though the only Supard race I know is Ruijerd.

Even then, I guess if you call it a deep relation, it's deep.

In this world, it seems like the majority of people don't want to get involved with the Supard race very much.

"Humu, then I guess after all the chance should be high it should have the same producer as this?"

While Zanoba was saying 'hmmhmm' to himself, he held the doll in his hand and was rotating it around while looking at it.

Then he placed it on the ground and put his hand back into the bag.

Well now, if we're speaking of things I put in there other than that, it should just be emergency clothes?

"Well then, have you seen this doll before?"

What Zanoba took out was what I once sold to a merchant in the past, the 1/10 Roxy figure.

4

The Roxy figure was placed on the ground.

Zanoba sat down with a plunk in front of that.



I wonder if he didn't think his clean clothes would get dirty.

It doesn't seem like he does his own laundry.

"This magic race figure was discovered and purchased from the market five years ago..."

Zanoba carefully looked over the doll with affectionate eyes.

It's something I understood when I was on missionary trip to spread the Ruijerd figure, but thanks to the Milis Church's influence, Magic Race dolls are a contraband.

After all I wonder if he's going to lay blame for something like that.

Though he doesn't seem to be angry.

"It was something my little brother discovered, it looks really similar to our Royal Court magician Roxy, it was something that he bought from the peddler himself."

Hmm.

"She 'was' the Royal Court magician at the 'time'?"

"Yeah? That's right. It doesn't seem that you know, but Roxy Migurdia is already no longer in this country. She couldn't handle anymore of my little brother's sexual harassment so she ran away."

No, for the most part I did hear from Pax.

I see, she was escaping from the sexual harassment, huh.

"Concretely speaking what kind of sexual harassment was it?"

"Sexual? Like stealing her underwear or peeking on her in the bath."

Seriously?

That's unforgivable.

A person such as that deserves a strict punishment.

That's right, for example destroying his computer with a bat.

Or being forced to live under the same roof with a young lady who will punch you to within the edge of your life for every little thing.

Or being stripped nude and thrown into a prison then having cold water poured on you.

He needs some of that kind of punishment.

Since that's the case, it's fine if I personally use a thick [Earth Lance] to launch him into tomorrow morning as well.

He'll become something like an average traffic cone.

Really.

For him to steal Roxy's panties, I wonder if he thought such a thing was fine to do.

No, there isn't.

There's no excuse.

It's an unforgivable action.

Even if he is a prince, there's things you can and cannot do.

It's natural that Roxy would run away.

...Huh?

If I follow that logic, could it be that the reason why Roxy stopped being my home teacher is my fault?

"Rather than that, let's talk about this doll."

While saying that Zanoba patted the shoulder area of the Roxy doll.

That's right, it's better to change those kinds of gloomy topics.

While thinking that, I nodded with a serious face.

"I don't have eyes for dolls. I've been collecting dolls from all over the world, but..."

Starting with the preface, he started to tell me.

That's right, he should speak.

"Only this doll, both the producer and the place of production are unknown. I can understand it was created by shaving down a stone, but it's heavier and harder than what the skilled Dwarves can make with their stone craftsmanship. In order to shave down such a solid and hard stone, such carving techniques don't exist right now... For example... look at this staff piece. It would probably be impossible for even the most skilled dwarves to shave down such a hard stone this thin."

Zanoba held up the staff the doll was holding in his fingers while saying that.

The thin parts like the staff break easily.

In order to compensate for that flaw, I had to make a considerable number of trial attempts and mistakes.

In return for all those attempts, it gained a high hardness and rigidity.

It's made of the same material as the grip part of Ruijerd doll's spear, but this part took a considerable amount of magic power, concentration, and time in order to create.

If I were to put it into detail, it took about 1 day to create 1 cm.

Even though I say that, you could call it the crystallization of my production technique.

It ended up becoming something that won't break or bend.

It's one of the parts that has a bit of a scheming to it.

It makes me happy to be praised.

"This sort of splendid item was being sold for only 5 Asura Gold coins. If it were me I'd have paid 100 Asura Gold coins for it. Those who live in the town really have no eye for quality, I'm troubled by how spineless they are. Although, I'm sure they took into account the fact that it was a Magic Race figure when the price was made this cheap. If the Milis Church Temple Knights were to find out you were holding such a figure, even a prince of Shirone would be put through a heresy interrogation, and probably end up being killed as a follower of a Demon God cult. If you were to go in for bargaining, then there's many number of reasons you could use."

While holding his head, Zanoba sighed and shrugged his shoulders.

Would they kill you?

It seems like the Temple Knight Group are all fanatics.

"However, I still decided to try looking for the producer of this figure. I don't really

want to get involved with someone related to a Demon God cult, but I wanted to talk to the person who created this figure. During that time, Lilia suddenly appeared in my room. It was the next day after Roxy had left."

Hmmm.

It ended up with them crossing paths without realizing it by coincidence, huh.

"Lilia was captured by the soldiers, a variety of things happened and it ended up that Pax was managing her, but among Lilia's belongings there was this sort of thing."

While saying that Zanoba took a small box out from the bag.

It was a box about the size of a fist that I had no recollection of.

"I found it mysterious as to why she was carrying around something like this as an important item, but well, take a good look."

Zanoba opened the box enough for me to see well inside of it.

He took out a soft looking cloth that had been wrapped up and placed inside of it, Zanoba then carefully opened the cloth.

The thing that was wrapped inside of it was a pendant carved of wood.

I have a feeling like I've seen it somewhere before...

Naturally it was handmade, and it conveys a feeling of the clumsiness of the producer.

"That pendant... What about it?"

"Hmm, this pendant doesn't matter at all."

While saying that Zanoba placed the pendant on top of the bag.

All of his movements are one of carefulness.

You can sense his favorable impression.

However, I wonder what it means for the things inside of the box to not matter at all.

Then I saw it there.

I recognized the cloth that the pendant had been wrapped in.

"Well, it's these panties."

Zanoba said that while spreading the cloth.

There's no mistake.

That is...

The Holy Object of Roxy.

"It seemed like Lilia wanted to give this to you on your 10th birthday."

I see.

In other words, it's that.

The pendant is camouflage.

That cloth being used as wrapping was my precious item, I clearly understood that.

It could be that she intended to send it just like that at first, but she realized the abnormality in sending panties as a birthday present, and especially went out of her way to do something like this.

However, unfortunately it didn't make it.

The Holy Object panties have been cleanly washed.

Roxy's Extra Virgin Olive Oil has disappeared, and it has lost its divinity.

There's already no god residing within these panties.

In exchange, I guess you could say they have devotion packed into them though...

"A-And then, what is it about those panties?"

I asked in order to hide my trembling voice.

Zanoba nodded with an umu, and

"Before I talk about the panties, I'll explain about this doll."

Then Zanoba got onto all fours.

He treated the Roxy doll as a fragile item and his fingers were trembling.

And then, he started to talk.

That's right, he started to talk.

"Look at this from the front.

If you look at it closely, this is a normal magician preparing their staff.

However, it has a certain liveliness to it.

Look at this normal robe.

If you move one leg forward, then push out the staff, in that instant you'll distinctly understand.

And then, and then if you look in the sleeve and hem of the robe, it's the wrist and ankle!

The amount of skin being exposed is just a little bit.

It's just a bit, but it has an immeasurable erotic side to it.

With just this small bit, you can understand this young magician girl who appears skinny and definitely not voluptuous body is being hidden by the robe.

Even though it's this baggy, do you get it!

And then, you go like this, this time and look at it from behind.

The baggy robe originally doesn't extend beyond the body's line.

However, if you move the leg to the front and pulls on by the cloth, and just a little bit of the butt line will rise to the surface.

It's a small butt. Most likely even if you saw the real thing, it wouldn't be all that erotic.

However, just like this, having it rise to the surface in this baggy robe, it's extremely erotic!

I definitely want to see, I want to strip it and see, it's a butt which makes you think as such.

After thinking that, of all things, this robe can be removed.

If you carefully remove the part that fastens the robe, the appearance of an innocent young girl in her underwear comes out.

Moreover, this young girl is not wearing a bra over her chest.

Going off the chest size of the person known as Roxy, this choice was correct.

And then if you look at it from the side, of all things, the left hand is hiding her chest. Strange, just a minute ago her left hand was supposed to have been holding her staff. While thinking that, take a look at the robe, of all things it has the left hand attached to it.

That's right. This figure has three arms.

The appearance while wearing the robe and the underwear appearance. This gimmick makes this figure have two figures in one.

It's truly ingenious.

The fact that you can strip the robe means that the body's various poses were fixed.

However, by manipulating the arms position into the inside and outside like this, it raises the pose's degree of freedom.

That's not all, this time look at it from the side.

During the time when it's wearing the robe its back is straight, it's a pose like she's sticking her forefoot out.

However, if you remove the robe, for some reason she turns into a slouch.

It's almost like she's trying to conceal her chest and body.

In order to confirm that from above, look at the face.

During the time she has the robe attached, it's a dignified face, but now doesn't it seem like she's desperately trying to bear with her bashfulness.

I understand the one who created this. I understand it, that the expressions are the same.

Something that no one can imitate, "Supremacy" is here.

Certainly, you could say it's far from the skillful work of the Dwarves on various main parts.

You could even call it the work of an amateur.

However, this doll is certainly in a domain that the rough Dwarves can never reach their hands!"

I listened to that every single word in detail.

Normally one might listen with a blank expression.

However, I am this doll's producer.

Without missing a single word I reflected it on as I listened.

And then I felt satisfied.

Isn't that right, something that I created myself, is being told about with such passion.

There's no way I wouldn't be happy.

Regardless of this situation, the center of my chest has become warm.

That's right.

Of course, that's the case.

This Roxy figure is something I poured all of the technique I had at the time into.

Even though it's definitely still an amateur creation, if a person who can see looks at it they'll understand.

It's something to be happy about.

For him to have even realized the tricks in the minor parts...

However, one part is missing.

Why would I make her hiding her chest with her hands...

"Huh?"

Then I realized it.

"The black on the underside is starting to fade."

"Hn?"

While saying that, Zanoba turned the Roxy doll around again.

"Ah, the black spots on the side? However, that hurt the beauty of the figure so I erased it."

Zanoba casually said it.

I froze after hearing those words.

I was frozen.

I opened my eyes and stopped my movements.

"Er-erased it...?"

"Hmm, the fact that you knew there were dots here means that after all you know something about this figure?"

"...Please turn that figure around and look at for a bit."

"Before that answer my question."

"It's fine so turn it around."

I made a voice so cold that it surprised even me.

Zanoba faltered with an "Uu" and following what I said he turned the figure around.

"Stop it there, please look at it from that angle."

I had him stop at the position where the mole was, at a position where Zanoba could just barely see it I had him stop.

"Please look at the position of the hand."

"What is it?"

"It's fine, so please take a look at it."

I understood that my somewhat strong tone was irritating Zanoba.

However, he honestly looked at the doll.

"Do you understand that her hands can't hide it?"

"...Hmmm?"

"Do you understand that the hands don't reach?"

".....Ah."

Zanoba let out a small voice.

It seems he finally understood it.

That's right, the reason why I had her hide her chest with her hands.

In regards to this world that doesn't have forbidden 18+, why I didn't make the lovely and reserved Roxy's chest go exposed.

"Do you understand that even though she can hide her chest, she wasn't able to hide her mole?"

"...How... could... that be?"

Zanoba was trembling and shaking.

That's right.

The reason why I put the moles on was certainly there.

The mole acts as a second nipple, and it expresses the bashfulness that she can't hide it.

That mole is the most erotic point of this figure.

"I... I... I didn't understand a thing... And yet... to this work... I defiled it..."

Zanoba's eyes were hollow, his body started to convulse.

Bubbles started to appear from his mouth.

Isn't his reaction just a bit too oversensitive I wonder?

"Well, something like moles can be added again to fix it and it's fine, but then what was that about panties?"

"Pa... panties are... the same..."

Then after comparing the panties on the figure to the Holy Object, they were the same thing.

I get it now.

I equipped the thing I was most familiar with to the figure.

If Lilia was planning to send these panties to me, then it's normal to think there's a connection between them.

Incidentally, Roxy of that time had four other panties, but the details were all slightly different.

Yeah, I see it, Roxy is fashionable.

"Is that the case? And then, what would it be fine for me to talk about in regards to that figure?"

Well. It should be fine.

It seems Zanoba was treating this figure preciousy.

He shouldn't suddenly push me off onto the Temple Knight Group.

"Nuuuuohh!"

Zanoba suddenly erupts into a large shout.

He threw his entire body to the ground.

I was surprised.

"So you were the producer of this figure!"

As expected this even made me go blank.

Why is this guy suddenly bowing down before me?

About the only thing I understand is Roxy's Greatness.

"As expected of the 'Water King Class Magician' Roxy's disciple! This figure was created using magic right!"

Don't use Roxy's name without honorific.

Add a -san.

"I've looked at your creation everyday. Every time I look at it I discover something, and the feeling of respect became stronger. Please, allow me to call you shisho."

While saying that he crawled on all fours with a rustling movement and tried to kiss my shoes, however, the barrier obstructed him, so he let out a roar "Uoooh" and started striking the barrier.

That appearance was just like the dead that gather for new publications on the 3rd

day of summer^[21].

He was throwing away his pride and dignity as a person, it was the appearance of one who lives true to his desires.

"Uoooh! What is with this barrier?! Who put up something like this?! Shisho! Please allow me to worship those godly handsaaaaguooooahhh!"

Just like this, I gained a slightly creepy disciple.

There were guys like this in my previous life as well.

They only ever interact on the net, it's a relationship you can't quite call friends, but they're there.

That's right, that guy, had this sort of face.

For someone to adore me this much is a first... However, it's convenient.

I'm sure, Hitogami predicted this.

The fact that I would be captured in the castle, I would become friends with him, then I would escape after receiving his help.

Alright. I can see the ending!^[22]

I told him with a normal face.

"Oh disciple. In the room there should be a magic crystal that maintains this barrier. Find that and destroy it!"

"I understand shisho! After I execute that, please, please bestow upon me the method to produce such figures?!"

"If you cannot find it, you will be excommunicated. You will not be allowed to call me shisho ever again."

"Of course I will comply!"

Zanoba stirred himself up using those words.

He started wandering around the room searching.

He also went around searching the room upstairs, I heard rustling like a cockroach creeping around the surroundings.

Throughout all that, about one hour passed.

If we were to speak of things he was able to find, it would only be an A4 size square hole in the ceiling.

It seems like Pax had intended to dump in the meals from there.

That's fine for meals, but I wonder what he was planning to do for excrement and illness.

Maybe he planned to use sleeping gas from above to put me asleep and then secretly release the barrier.

No, I'm sure he never thought about it.

That man known as Pax probably thinks as long as you feed your pet, everything else is fine.

For the time being, I received the bag and a bottle that Zanoba didn't need.

If I use that, then I can dispose of my own excrement.

No, I was already on the edge of leaking after all.

For the time being, if he can at least remove the trapdoor, I thought escape should be possible.

The ceiling is high.

About 4 meters.

However, if he were to hang a rope down, it should somehow reach.

However, it seems that the heavy stone plate is welded on almost like a manhole and since it's fixed in place it would be difficult to remove it.

It seems that there was a magic circle drawn above the cover as well.

I wonder if it's one set.

It seems difficult to destroy.

"Isn't there someone who is knowledgeable about barriers among your highness' followers?"

"No, since I have no followers!"

"Is that so? Even that Pax had an imperial guard though?"

"I traded the last one for the Roxy figure! Heeh, it was a good deal!"

This guy is an idiot as well, huh.

Not to mention, trading his imperial guards, what is going on in this country.

Well, in any case, there was one thing we confirmed.

"Alright... I understand."

"Oh, do you understand, as expected of shisho!"

"Yes, if we continue like this, then it seems you're going to be excommunicated."

"How could this be!?"

For my slightly creepy disciple, he will be excommunicated at an unprecedented speed...

Is what won't happen.

I have no intention of losing my long awaited collaborator.

"I'll change the condition. Help me get out from here, at the time when I get out you will become my disciple."

"Oh! Is that fine! For a short while, for a short while please wait!! Right now I'll use my fists to smash in the ceiling!"

"Please stop with being unreasonable."

I panicked and stopped Zanoba as he tightly gripped his fists and glared at the ceiling.

It was a serious face.

It was a face which would continue to strike at the cover until his bones shattered and tore away.

He's a dangerous guy.

Zanoba was restless for a short while, but suddenly it seems he realized something and raised his face.

"Shisho, who was it that created this barrier?"

"Ummm, if I'm correct it was the seventh prince his highness Pax."

"Hmmm, come to think of it I remember Ginger saying something like that..."

"Did you not hear about the situation in detail?"

"Since my head is filled with thoughts about the figure."

"Ah, I see."

For the time being, it seems like there's something with Ginger and this prince.

I wonder if Ginger is moving around behind the scenes as well.

It seems like that person doesn't want things to go well for Pax as well, it might be good to have him help in that direction.

No it's the opposite, he said he came here after being told by Ginger.

In other words, Ginger wanted to put Zanoba and me together.

I wonder if she thought our interests matched after seeing the Ruijerd figure.

However, I wonder what Ginger wanted me to do by getting this unreliable prince as an ally.

I can't see what moves I should make.

"In other words, shisho, Pax would be able to do something about it right?"

"Hnn? Yeah, that is what it means I guess."

Zanoba thought about it for a bit there, and then afterwards, said in a quiet voice that had been frolicking around in high spirits until now,

"I understand, please be patient for a short while."

It seems he thought of something.

However, it doesn't seem like this prince is very smart.

If he makes some sort of weird move, I wonder if a snake will come out of the bush.

"Ummm, before you take any actions you should properly consult with someone. That's right, for example Ginger-san. I'm fine as well."

"Hahaha, shisho is of the worrying nature I see. Please rest easy, leave everything to

me."

"Hey, wait just a second, where are you going, listen to me. What are you planning to do?!"

Zanoba went up the stairs while laughing.

"Seriously..."

At that moment I had the feeling like "Ah I've done it now."

For that unreliable prince with no followers to take up that attitude, I thought I had told him to poke around in a bush filled with snakes.

I thought the situation was heading in an extraordinarily bad direction.

A bad premonition was haunting me.

Ah, if it was going to be like this, it would have been fine if I had at least had him bring me something to eat beforehand.

Is what I thought.

However, I would soon come to understand that was a mistake.

The person known as Zanoba Shirone.

I completely misread that.

After thinking about it later, from the point that Zanoba knew I was the figure's producer, everything was already decided.

CHAPTER 6

SPEEDY RESOLUTION

1

In this world there are children who are born with an abnormality in their magic power.

Speaking of [abnormality] something like a birth defect might come to mind, but many of them will appear normal in terms of outward appearances.

Just that only their appearance is normal.

Those children hold a special ability from the time they are born.

Abnormally fast legs,
superhuman strength,
hearing better than other people,
their body weight is as light as a feather,
or much heavier than normal.

Killing everything they touch,
spitting flames from the mouth,
poison coming out from their fingertips,
being able to teleport short distances,
being able to shoot beams out of their eyes.

Or the ability to nullify all kinds of poisons, or not getting tired even after not sleeping ever, or the ability to simultaneously embrace many hundreds of women and still not lose strength...

Such children who are born with exceptional abilities in this world are called "Miko".

On the other hand, if they aren't useful, or if they are abilities that inconvenience others or themselves, then they are called "Cursed Children" it seems, but let's put that aside.

Well then, now that we have that as the basis let's talk about things in the Shirone Royal Palace.

Currently, there are five princes in this Royal Palace.

The oldest prince is 32 years old and the youngest one is...

Well, their age really doesn't matter.

In regards to this country, when princes are born they're granted direct control over imperial guards.

They're granted in order to move as one's hands and feet since they are young, and it holds the design to let them learn to move people.

And then as they're raised and live, if they do good things the number of imperial guards they have are increased, and if they do something bad they're decreased.

When the King dies, the one who has the highest number of imperial guards at that time ends up becoming the next King.

Or at least that is the tradition in this country.

The more imperial guards you have, the more power you hold basically.

I think there are many problems, but among them the one who has the most imperial guards is the first prince.

The one who has the self-awareness as the eldest son, he might be a bit arrogant, but in regards to royalty it's an appropriate conduct.

Which is why, he holds close to 30 imperial guards.

Then, who is the one who has the fewest.

It's the one despised by the soldiers, the seventh prince Pax Shirone.

Certainly he has a few imperial guards.

Currently, he has around three.

For a period it had decreased down to one, but since he was able to create a connection with the slave market in the strife zone it increased by one.

The final one I'll mention later.

Three people.

Just three people.

His imperial guards are few.

However, there's someone even further below.

That is the third prince, Zanoba Shirone.

The number of his imperial guards is zero.

Zero.

0.

Not a single soldier exists that he can move himself.

Before he was alone, he had the imperial guard known as Ginger, this country's #12 in skills as an imperial guard.

However, eventually that last one as well, was traded for a certain figure, and ended up becoming Pax's belonging.

It seems that at that point Ginger applied for a resignation, but Pax panicked and held her family as a hostage, so she unwillingly ended up becoming his imperial guard.

Well then, this third prince Zanoba Shirone.

He was a Miko.

He's had superhuman strength and a sturdy body since he was born.

Just by holding that ability alone, he became one who had a special existence.

It wasn't a significant ability, but the king was delighted.

A Miko will definitely be a useful person to the country in the future.

Especially, in this country which is close to the strife zone in the north, an existence which could become a war potential is something to hold with both arms into the air and congratulate.

The one who gave birth to Zanoba was a concubine, but with this she was seen as accomplishing her part, and felt relieved.

The time when the king lowered his raised arms was after three years had passed.

When Zanoba was three years old, the fourth prince was born.

He was the fourth prince, but in regards to the royal consort it was the first child.

It was a child like a ball and everyone was delighted, the country held a ceremony party.

In that party Zanoba walked and walked to the place where his own brother was.

And then, he started to touch his little brother stretched out on the bed, and said he's cute, like a doll.

Everyone who heard those words was laughing with smiles.

Since Zanoba was three years old he liked dolls after all.

The fact that he wants to liken it to something he likes is... pleasant.

In the next instant, Zanoba tore off his little brother's head.

Like a doll.

The party turned into a hell of agonizing cries.

The king and royal consort went mad and exiled Zanoba's mother outside of the country.

However, Zanoba remained within the country.

Part of it was because he was still young and it was also because he was a miko.

It seems that in regards to this world, miko are very important individuals.

After that incident Zanoba's imperial guards were reduced to three.

It was originally eight, but it became three.

Never increase it beyond this, is what the king declared.

The next incident happened during the time he was 15 years old.

Around this time, though he was suffering from a doll disorder, Zanoba possessed judgement.

Since that was the case, it was decided he would accept a bride.

She was the daughter of a powerful family from a place somewhere to the north.

In regards to the king, during a time of war, he intended for Zanoba to bear the full brunt of it and stand strong.

The wedding ceremony completed safely.

The next day, after the first night...

The bride was discovered in the bed as a corpse without a head.

Zanoba tore it off.

The fact that a powerful family's daughter was killed caused a civil war which had to be suppressed.

The king took two imperial guards from Zanoba, and decided to confine him to the inside of the castle until a war starts.

On top of that, he tried to have Zanoba's favorite dolls taken away, but all the soldiers who took on that job had their heads torn off and died.

[Head Ripping Prince] Zanoba Shirone.

After that incident, Zanoba became called as such.

As expected, if he were to push things that far, the king must have tried to think of doing something.

However, as long as he had dolls he was fine.

As long as dolls were granted to him occasionally, then Zanoba had no harmful intent.

Which is why he thought that this is a dangerous weapon in the shape of a person, so he decided to act as such.

Since then, Zanoba was treated as a tumor, and we arrive at the present.

Although I'm arrogantly talking about it right now, the time when I heard this story was afterwards.

That time I still didn't know that Zanoba was the Shirone Royal Palace's greatest war potential.

2

Zanoba was standing there with a thoughtless smile on his face.

I looked at that with a drawn back face.

My gaze was not on his smiling face.

It was on the thing that he was holding in his hands.

"Shisho, how is this, with this you'll make me into your disciple right!"

"Ouchowowowow! Stop! Please stop older brother!"

"You're loud Pax."

"Ahhhghhhh!"

That was the face of the captured Pax Shirone.

The places he was being held at had blood dripping from them.

It wasn't Pax whose blood was flowing.

Zanoba's entire body was covered in blood.

"..."

I was lost for words.

I don't understand the meaning.

I thought we were having a light talk about disciples and what not, then at some point unknown to me it had become a blood splattered horror.

No really, I have no idea what is going on.

Zanoba is smiling away.

It's an innocent smile. Scary.

A bloodstained smile is something that a beauty is supposed to show.

If this otaku-like gangly older brother does it, it just seems bizarre.

"Stop it Zanoba! Release your hand!"

"That... that's right Zanoba, get a hold of yourself!"

In this small room there are currently several people.

Ginger wielding her sword and three soldiers confronting her.

And hiding behind the soldiers, wearing expensive looking clothes, were two princes.

Even though they're both princes, one of them was considerably aged.

Inside of this small room there were nine including me. It's a bit cramped.

"Older brothers. Were you aware that Pax had taken his own soldiers' families hostage in order to manipulate them?"

"N-no..."

"It wasn't an imperial guard, it was something belonging to father, this country's soldiers."

Zanoba was smiling.

He was saying it as he smiled.

"Ginger as well, she had her family taken hostage."

"...Is that so?"

"Yes."

Ginger responded to the prince with her sword still drawn.

It was still with her sword drawn, but I wonder if that's fine.

Zanoba was without change wearing a smiling expression,

"Older brothers, do you remember Roxy?"

"Y-yeah. Pax's tutor..."

"She was a Water King Class magician who trained our Shirone soldiers in anti-magician fighting, a person who we owe a great favor. Didn't father officially invite Roxy into the Royal Palace? Thanks to this Pax's shallow actions, he completely destroyed that opportunity and she left."

"Y-yes. I guess so, certainly Pax is in the wrong, but you..."

"Even though that's the case... Please take a look. That person's disciple... Rudeus-sama is being put through this disgraceful situation. By Pax's hand. According to Roxy, she was boasting that he was a disciple who had more talent than herself. He's someone who should have a wonderful talent."

Zanoba still hadn't changed his smiling face.

In some ways you could call that a form of poker faces.

"Y-you, during the congress you always make such bored faces as you listen. As an older brother I'm feeling relieved. I surely thought you didn't have any interest in the country..."

"Older brother, I have no interest in anything other than dolls. I'm just pointing out the illegitimacy of Pax's actions. There is just one reason why I'm doing this."

Zanoba clearly declared that and raised Pax up.

"Owowowowow!"

"Rudeus-sama is a great person who has created a wonderful doll with no replacement in this world. Such a great person, being used in Pax's worthless revenge, that is something that shouldn't happen!"

"Aaahhh! Breaking, breaking, breaking!"

Pax's bitter screaming was echoing throughout the room.

"Older brother, if you intend to side with Pax, then I will act violently."

The three soldiers and the two princes started to rustle.

I thought, aren't you already acting violently.

They were all surprised and shaking over that.

In my previous life, when I acted violently in my parents' house, it never became like this.

"I'm not saying anything difficult. I want to save the producer of this doll, but Pax's

crime is getting in the way of it."

"However, Pax and the slave market..."

"Older brother, please don't make me say it again. I feel like I'm about to uproot my little brother's head."

Zanoba had already stopped laughing.

I still had no idea what was going on.

I was just bewildered over how or what kind of metaphor uproot was.

I just understood that Zanoba had control over this situation.

Give it your best my disciple.

You're a bit scary though...

"N-n-no way! Stop it! Save me Ginger! Save me! Your family, don't you care what happens to your family!"

"If it's about my family, last night Ruijerd-dono saved them."

"What!?"

Pax was struggling and Ginger coolly replied.

I wonder who Ruijerd saved.

He's always saving someone.

Even though I say that, after all it seems like something was moving in the background that I didn't know about.

"It's just like this older brother, since among the princes I'm the one with the least authority, I had no choice but to ask older brother in this way, if you were to turn me down, I'll act violently to the limits of my power. What, I'm sure with this distance, one of the older brothers or otherwise both will have their heads twisted off. After that, I might be burnt to death by the Royal Court magician, but..."

"Your highness, I'll follow you to the death."

A gangly man like you has quite a bit of confidence, huh.

I seriously thought about it.

It's dangerous to be under the impression that I'm strong, I'll thrillingly look over that

in my heart.

Even saying that, most likely it just worked on the first prince and the second prince.

"U-understood! We'll do as you say!"

"Older brother, please properly investigate it? After that, somewhere in the castle should be the two who just caused an uproar before and captured Lilia. I would like you to guarantee their safety as well."

"Of course. We'll put in a word with father..."

I wonder why these two princes would defend trash like Pax.

I seriously considered those doubts.

However, it's different.

They're afraid of Zanoba.

They're afraid of what to do, like a bomb when it's about to go off.

While not knowing what was going on, I was let out of the barrier.

It seems like the magic crystal was hidden in the ceiling.

Pax was arrested and Lilia was released, while still dumbfounded the incident ended.

3

From here on out is a later day, revealing the trick of the incident.

From the flow of events where Lilia was detained.

It seems that at first she was suspected of being a foreign spy.

At the time when she was interrogated, since she let out names like Roxy and Paul, she managed to avoid prison and was instead held in confinement.

Then at the time when information on the teleport incident started to flow in, it seems she was about to be released, but Pax interfered and restricted the information, then locked her away in the castle.

After Roxy ran away, Pax supposedly created a connection with the slave market.

Then, through that slave market connection he employed a private army, abducted the families of the soldiers and kept them confined.

[If you care for their lives listen to what I say] is how he supposedly threatened them.

The soldiers wanted to try and do something, so they dug around in the slums.

For the most part they figured out the location of the hostages, but there were many strong guards, so rescue was difficult.

In the middle of that, Aisha escaped, and they received the pursuit order from the prince.

They unwillingly pursued the fleeing Aisha.

Then and there I appeared and magnificently carried off Aisha.

Adding to that, the soldiers were trying to save Aisha, from the moment they saw the voiceless incantation magic they realized I was Roxy's disciple.

Therefore, the soldiers began their plan.

First, start a fight at the slave market and make the market unusable.

Then, claiming that Aisha was taken away by a mysterious man, they started in pursuit of the private army.

After that they would talk to me about the situation and ask me to participate in rescuing the hostages.

They would launch an attack on the safekeeping place of the hostages when the security is weakened and save them.

And then, in return they would somehow save Lilia, that sort of flow.

Incidentally, before that plan could be realized, I came under the impression that Roxy was in the Royal Palace and sent a letter. After seeing that, prince Pax ordered me to be confined.

At least, if I had waited just another day before I sent that letter, I would have heard about the situation from them and in reverse Pax wouldn't have been able to spring that trap on me.

After all, the Hitogami's advice was to send the letter after saving Aisha.

Then, in regards to the rescue plan, they thought it would be setback, but it was realized.

When I wasn't at the inn, Ruijerd was there.

He heard the situation from the soldiers, it seems that it stirred him up and he saved the hostages in no time at all.

For the most part, it seems at that time he was using a false name.

After seeing the hostages home safely, Ruijerd planned to assault the castle, but the soldiers there said they would do it. Pride so to speak.

According to the soldiers' plan, after reporting that the hostages have returned, the prince would then hear about this in the slums and was planned to be murdered then and there.

If it's a murder in the slums, then he won't be quickly discovered, and they'll supposedly be able to hide the body.

It was a bit reckless of a plan in my opinion, but it seems there was a chance of success. Ruijerd broke it.

Incidentally, these plans, it seems Ginger didn't know about them until they ended. She was ostracized, or rather because she was an imperial guard, they thought it might be dangerous to include her.

How pitiful.

Then, at the time when the hostages were released, Ginger's family was discovered and following that flow they realized that Ginger was the same as them.

Meanwhile, Ginger thought this time was a good chance, so she handed the doll over to Zanoba.

Zanoba who holds the strongest combat power in this kingdom.

After handing the doll over to him, he would be interested in me.

If I were to speak about that doll, he might join my side after seeing a precious source of information.

There was that sort of calculation as well, but the fact that Ginger simply swore loyalty to Zanoba is another of the reasons.

If she could be released from Pax using this incident, she wanted to return to Zanoba's side it seems.

Even though she was sold for a doll, I wondered why she still swears her loyalty, but

I'm sure she has had her own tearful episode.

Then...

The next day.

Zanoba killed two of Pax's imperial guards, and took him hostage.

No one beside Ginger predicted this flow it seems.

4

The king had a clearly tired face as he sentenced Pax to be exiled outside of the country.

It seems that the connection to the slave market was a bit wasteful, but taking the soldiers' families, moreover the imperial guards' families hostage, then capturing me who they would normally try to win over as a court magician, and even more so in order to try and lure out Roxy to rape and kill her.

He really had no choice but to discipline him there.

Since there's the matter of appearance, up front it would be studying abroad.

In reality, he was sent as a hostage, that could be killed, to the Dragon King Kingdom.

Zanoba was also being exiled from the country.

This side as well was being covered up as studying abroad.

The ones who proposed this were the first and second princes.

Their methods weren't really smart, Zanoba did actually make a mistake as well is what the first and second princes said, but in reality they were just afraid of having an unpredictable nuclear warhead around.

It seems like the king didn't want to send Zanoba away, but if the strings manipulating him are unreliable, then he probably thought keeping him outside of the castle is safer.

Then, Lilia was released, even after this there are people who were calling her a foreign spy.

Lilia was taking care of Pax, and in the back she was stealing information from Shirone.^[23]

While being confined she was able to do something like that, our Lilia sure is amazing.

Then, in order to prove her innocence, until Lilia makes it to Paul's place she is to be "escorted".

Not to Asura Kingdom, but Paul's place.

Well, even if she was taken to Asura Kingdom, there's no one who could prove her identity there, after all.

Ah, for the time being, Asura Kingdom was her birthplace.

She did try to take remittance, after all.

However, since they do have the relation of husband and wife, it seems she'll be taken to Paul's place.

It seems like the current Paul has stronger ties with Holy Milis Kingdom if you were to ask as well, I'm sure the Asura Kingdom has some weird suspicions about it.

Well, those are all political problems.

If it were up to me, I'd be worried about being killed to have my lips sealed on the way, but it seems Ginger is participating as an escort.

Protecting his shisho's family was supposedly an order from Zanoba.

For others, it seems soldiers saved by Ruijerd are also participating.

So I can feel relieved.

Then, in regards to me, king-sama directly asked if I wanted to be the Royal Court magician and said he would give me status if I stay in this land.

That's how he came to ask.

Judging from his tone, it felt like a sigh was mixed in with it, it seems like he wanted to ask even if it was no good.

Naturally as it was, I turned it down.

And then the king clearly sighed and took a breath, then he said it was fine to take my leave.

That's it.

Well, it's fine though.

From the start I knew something like that would happen, it's not like I'll ask for

medical expenses.

5

When I was going to leave the Royal Place, Zanoba came begging in tears.

"Shisho!!! Are you going to leave without me? Are you planning to leave behind your disciple?"

"I'm very sorry. Since we're in a hurry on our journey..."

"Then the doll, will you please make a doll for me?"

"It takes quite a bit of time to make those, so that's a bit..."

"Of all things!"

It seems like Zanoba was saddened by the fact that he couldn't see me make a doll, he was clinging onto my hand sorrowfully crying.

It was at this time that I heard that this person was a miko.

He could dismember and scatter people's limbs and tear off their heads, the Prince of Massacre.

Honestly, I was considerably afraid.

I was nervous over whether my head would suddenly be torn off.

I'm afraid of a guy who I don't know where his kill switch is...

No, I really am thankful to him though.

Scary things are still scary.

"Next time we meet, I'll teach you the way to create figures from the start."

"Eh! That, but, I, umm, is it fine? Isn't there some secret point?"

"What am I supposed to do if I'm not going to teach my disciple the method to make them?"

"Uoooooh, Shisho!"

Zanoba threw my body in the air while crying.

I hit the ceiling solidly.

"O-.oh shit!! Ginger! Healing magic!"

"Yes!!"

Ginger started the incantation for healing magic, and quickly sealed my wounds.

Zanoba made a pale face when he came dangerously close to killing me, but when I stood up okay, he made a relieved face.

This guy, does he want to be excommunicated!?

No, let's not do that, I'd rather not have my head torn off.

"Well then, shisho, take care of yourself! I don't know where I am being sent to study abroad as punishment, but I have a feeling that I'll eventually see shisho again!"

"Gehooo... Yes, take care."

While crying a great deal Zanoba saw me off.

While watching, that Ginger also shed a few tears.

6

Just like this, the incident related to Shirone came to a close.

We were able to save Lilia and Aisha and are sending them off to Paul.

Pax was exiled from the country.

And I made a disciple by the name of Zanoba.

I had just intended to move according to the Hitogami's advice.

More or less, there were some points that I didn't arrive at but...

You could say the result calmed down in the best shape.

How do I put it, I can't shake the feeling that I'm still dancing on the palm of his hand.

No matter what kind of moves I make, if I roughly follow the advice, then I feel it will still end up with a similar result.

It's a feeling like I'm watching a farce.

However, certainly everything ended up going in a good direction.

Lilia and Aisha are both fully intact.

I don't really get Zanoba, but I didn't feel any animosity.

I felt plenty of animosity from Pax, but he was completely removed as a piece outside of the country.

Putting aside the process, at least it was a convenient conclusion for me.

All of the advices until now as well, they went in a direction that wasn't inconvenient for me I think.

It could be that it's fine to believe in the Hitogami a bit more.

No, when it comes to swindlers, the moment they feel they've got a hit the exploitation starts.

I'll keep going with caution while trying to see through him.

Well, a promise is a promise.

The next time he comes out, I'll stop being belligerent.

CHAPTER 7

THE DAY THE LITTLE SISTER MAID WAS BORN

1

This is a small town in Shirone Kingdom.

There's a certain inn.

Whether you're going to Asura or Milis, it's the same up until this town.

The road separates here.

Which is why, here we'll part with Lilia and the others.

I was at a table facing Lilia.

Outside the window, I could hear Aisha and Eris talking.

2

"That's right! Ru... The Owner is amazing! If he gets serious he can even freeze heavy rain and the forest all at once!"

"Is that magic? That's amazing!"

"Of course! Rather than that there's a more amazing story, do you want to hear it?"

"Please tell me about it!"

3

Eris is telling about the exploits of The Owner full of pride.

I was making a bitter smile listening to that conversation, while facing Lilia with my awareness.

She was sitting on the other side of the table.

If it's her, in the past I've only talked to her bit by bit.

Well, I wonder what I should talk about.

While I was hesitating, Lilia started the conversation.

"Let me thank you once again, Rudeus-sama. To have my life saved by you not just once but twice, I am deeply moved."

"Please stop. This time I didn't do anything."

"No, I heard that from faint bits of information Rudeus-sama especially came to Shirone to visit."

While saying that Lilia deeply lowered her head.

I just did what the Hitogami said.

After that, I really didn't do anything at all.

I just disgracefully fell into a trap and had to wait for help.

If you're trying to say I deserve gratitude for that, the me in my past life would have been a big-shot.

"Please show your gratitude to Eris and Ruijerd. Thanks to their skillful actions things ended smoothly."

"I did talk to them for a bit longer, but they said it was all Rudeus-sama's scheme."

"There's no way that was the case."

"...If Rudeus-sama says so."

She looks dissatisfied.

It's not like I've called out black as white or anything.

"By the way, has Aisha said anything impolite to you?"

Lilia took a glance outside the window, sighing a bit while coming out saying something like that.

"Not at all. She's an excellent child. To be able to think and act like that at six years would normally never happen."

Well, her claws were just a bit too skilled though.

I'll keep silent.

I can't really talk about other people.

"I don't think it's to the extent of Rudeus-sama... These past few years, I had intended to teach her as much as I could. Even now she's still a stupid daughter that hasn't come to understand how wonderful Rudeus-sama is."

"Stupid is saying too much."

In the first place, I'm an exception.

Since I still have memories of my previous life.

I thought there might be a possibility of my little sister having them too, but as a test I tried talking a bit about the existence of televisions and cellphones, but she just fell into confusion.

My little sister is just simply a genius.

Paul's genes are unexpectedly amazing.

"Rudeus-sama, what do you think about Aisha?"

Suddenly, Lilia looked like she came up with an idea and asked that.

"Eh? Like I said, she's excellent."

"Not like that, in appearance."

"I think she's cute."

"She's my daughter, when she grows up her breasts will most likely be big as well."

Oh, her chest will...

No-no. I don't have any interest in my little sister's chest.

Or rather, what's this? What is she talking about?

"Rudeus-sama, if you're going to continue on your journey to Asura, please take Aisha along with you. I have no choice but to return to danna-sama, but would it be alright if I leave Aisha to you?"

"Do you mind if I can hear the reason?"

I asked in return on reflex.

"Rudeus-sama, I've always been teaching Aisha on a normal basis in order for her to serve Rudeus-sama in the future."

"That seems to be the case."

"I've taught my daughter every single thing that I know. She's still young now, but in another four years she'll surely have a good attractive body."

Attractive to men.

"Please wait just a moment. She's my little sister?"

"I know of Rudeus-sama's fondness for women."

Do you know of it, I see.

Though you know.

It seems that I'm different from my previous life, it seems like I'm not really interested in desire towards those linked to me with blood.

That's why, even if you say, "Aisha has grown up, now eat up", it will just trouble me.

Though, well, that sort of reason is just one of my real intentions.

There is one more intention.

"That child is still six years old, right? It's an age where she should remain with her parents."

"...If Rudeus-sama says so."

Lilia was disappointed.

I don't think I've said anything incorrect.

Aisha is still young. Isn't it better for her to remain together with her parents?

It's limited to my feelings as a Japanese, but it's desirable to be together with both the father and mother during the time they're small.

I do think that it's fine if it's either, but if it's neither then that's clearly no good.

"I understand. Certainly, Aisha is still a bit inexperienced. I can't very well let someone inexperienced serve by the side of Rudeus-sama."

"Umm, please don't teach her anything too weird? Umm, something about a pervert or other."

"I've only ever conveyed to her that Rudeus-sama is a wonderful person."

"Thanks to that, it seems she's being a bit rebellious though..."

"I guess that is true. Well, that's just for now."

Lilia abruptly made a small laugh with her breath and raised her face.

It was a bright face.

I can't take Aisha.

However, I've already received something important from Lilia.

One of those is hanging around my neck with a leather string attached, and the other one is precious stored in a box.

I will never let go of them again.

"This pendant (and panties), thank you very much."

"No, since I had heard that it was something precious to Rudeus-sama."

I could hear the parts she didn't let out with her mouth.

Lilia has really looked after me quite a bit.

"...Umm, after all does holding onto panties make me into a pervert I wonder?"

"Pervert? Is that what you heard from Aisha?"

Lilia suddenly stood up.

Woah woah, stop stop.

Please sit.

Lilia made a small sigh.

"Since that child was allowed to move around relatively freely, someone may have taught her something weird I guess."

It's something strange, yeah.

That's right, it is something strange.

"If she considers you a pervert for something like panties, I can't imagine what would happen if she was employed in the Asura Royal Palace..."

"The Asura Royal Palace? Come to think of it, you used to work in the inner palace^[24] didn't you."

"Yes. If I were to compare it to that place, danna-sama and Rudeus-sama wouldn't even qualify to enter as a pervert."

"I-is that so..."

I had always considered myself as considerably that, but I see... It's even more than that, huh.

I wonder if the Asura Royal Palace is that sort of place.

After thinking about it, even the nobles of the remote regions were into the race-race after all.

No, it's not limited to the Greyrat family, the Shirone Royal Family was pretty bad as well.

"Inside there were cages for women as well."

"No, it's fine without telling me the concrete details."

Anymore than this is no good.

"In any case, for the higher ranked nobles and royalty, many of them have perverted interests. If I were to compare you to them, having an interest in the underwear of the one you're longing for is still normal."

Lilia made eyes looking far into the distance.

I'm sure she's remembering some bad things.

"Please take good care of father."

"I understand and will comply."

"Ah, I'll give you some travelling money, but if it seems like you're lacking then try to find one of fathers' subordinates in the Adventurer's Guild."

"I understand and will comply."

"I think you can trust the soldiers escorting you, but since the other side is unknown, please take care of yourself."

"There's no problem. We're already acquainted."

"Ah, I see, ummm..."

"Rudeus-sama."

While I was thinking of various things, Lilia suddenly stood up and walked over.

And then she hugged me with my head in her chest.

Her voluptuous chest was being pressed against my face.

Reflexively my nasal breathing got rough.

"Umm, Lilia-san, it's touching?"

"Rudeus-sama hasn't changed since the past."

While Lilia was saying that she made a small laugh.

4

The next day.

Just before we were about to depart.

Eris, Ruijerd, and I were doing final checks on the carriage to make sure if there were any deficiencies.

If it were to break down on the way, we would be in trouble after all.

Lilia and the others decided to leave ahead of us.

It seems they have a person who can repair the carriage.

I wonder if it would be good for me to learn when I have spare time.

"The Owner-san, The Owner-san!"

Aisha came trotting along.

"What is it?"

"Just a bit."

Then she started to pull on the hem of my clothes, she's trying to bring me somewhere.
I wonder why.

For the time being, I exchanged a glance with Ruijerd and followed after her.

The place I was taken to was a thicket by the roadside.

Aisha crouched down then made a gesture for me to sit down as well.

I crouched.

It's just like a secret talk.

No, it is a secret talk.

"The Owner-san, to be honest I have a secret request to make of you."

"A request? If it's something I can do."

If it's a request from my cute little sister then, I want to try to grant it as much as possible.

I'm hated by Norn, but I don't want to be hated by Aisha too.

Up until now it seems to be a good feeling, but that is because I'm The Owner after all.

If I were to open up as her older brother, she might look at me with eyes as if I'm trash.

"Somehow, please allow me to join you on your journey as an ally."

After hearing that, my eyes turned into dots.

.....Lilia, huh.

"Were you told that by your mother?"

Since she was rejected directly, then this time she's going with the plan to have her daughter ask in tears.

She can do it surprisingly well, that person.

"No, there's no way my mother would say its okay."

"Hnn?"

Oh?

Just the other day Lilia asked if she could go together with me though.

What does this mean?

"My mother has always said it habitually. In the future, I will be serving my brother born of a different mother."

"She has said that."

"However!"

Aisha pounded the ground with her fist.

"I have to say sorry to that!"

It seems that things about me are greatly sorry.

Probably because I get excited from panties.

I'm sorry.

"We just talked about that the other day, right. My older brother is a pervert. I understand what The Owner-san said, but I definitely don't want to serve that kind of person."

"Is that so?"

I don't think you should say that much though...

"Please without fail save me. Like you just saved me the other day. From the hands of

the pervert demon, gallantly!"

"I'll have to turn that down."

Don't joke about that.

If we were to journey together, my name will be exposed won't it.

If at the time when it's exposed she were to know about the lie then...

Oh?

However, since she's family, one day it will be exposed right?

"Why not? He's a pervert!"

"That is, something in your imagination, it isn't reality."

Alright. Here we should clear up a bit of the misunderstanding.

If I leave it to Lilia, I'm sure I'll always remain as a pervert after all.

She said there was something more amazing in the Royal Palace, but unless you actually see it you wouldn't understand.

"It's not like you've actually met right?"

"However, the panties were certainly there!"

"There could have been some sort of reason for them."

"What kind of reason could there be for treating panties preciously!?"

Even if you ask why? Why?

Look, for example a certain religion, if a Sage keeps a Holy Object on their body then it raises its divinity right?

Not to mention it's panties you know?

It's the panties Roxy used during her time of solo play you know?

It's the item of a first class player you know?

If you were a listener paying attention to the scene then, what would you do?^[25]

You take care of it with the utmost devotion of course!

The motto of my sect is "Let's take both sexual desire and study seriously!"

It's the double standard of erotic study.

Well, putting that aside.

"That Roxy person was the home teacher to your older brother right?"

"Yes."

"In other words, she should be a person who had a great influence on your older brother."

"I wonder if that is the case..."

Of course, I'm the one saying it so there's no mistake.

Something that I wasn't able to do in nearly 20 years, she's the person who allowed me to do it after all.

The reason why I'm living like this right now is all thanks to her.

"If it's something that person kept on their body then, all the more reason you would want to keep it, is what I think."

"Yeah..."

It doesn't seem like she accepts it.

Well then, I'll try giving her something belonging to The Owner-san who just saved her life and see.

I took a single thing out of my bag.

"This forehead protector^[26] is something I've always been using."

"What is this, suddenly?"

"I will give this to you."

I took out the forehead protector from my luggage and handed it over to her.

In the past, it's something I bought in the Town of Rikarisu.

It was put through the laundry, but since I've used it quite a bit, you could say it's got my sweat soaked into it.

After putting that into her hands, she made a bit of a taken back face...

"Ah! Somehow, I think I get it."

"It's not something with words, have you understood with your heart?"

"Yes, I've understood it! My older brother was not a pervert right!"

Since that's the case.

I decided to part with the old forehead protector.

This child sure is easy.

"The Owner-san is truly a good person right!"

"I wouldn't say all that much."

Sparkle, Rudeusmile.

Aisha was looking at me with sparkling eyes, but she suddenly seemed to realize it and whispered "Ah, that's right."

"Right now, my older brother is missing. If he were to die somewhere, would it be alright for me to serve The Owner-san?"

"No, I wonder about that."

"Is that no good? If I tell mother I think she will understand though, I think I'll grow pretty well! Into a body that attracts men!"

"Attracts men... do you understand the meaning of that?"

"It means a body that makes you want to make children, right?"

"Children shouldn't talk about making children."

You might be abducted by large fiends and your red rice day might be annihilated.
Really, who was it that you taught this.

"Is it absolutely no good...? Do you hate me?"

My little sister with her eyes watering.

Humu, adorable.

Of course I don't hate you.

"I understand, if you can't find your older brother, it's fine."

"Really?"

It's painful to deceive.

By the time she has grown up the journey will be over, we'll be able to live together getting along as a family again.

"Then, you're not angry that I said you were a pervert, right?"

"Yeah, of cour..... eh?"

What did she say, just now?

"Thank you older brother!"

In the end, she said that, and suddenly stood up.

Then she just ran over to the three guards waiting at the carriage like that.

I proceeded to the carriage in a daze.

Aisha was waving her hand, Lilia as well slightly lowered her head.

And then finally.

"Bye bye, older brother! We'll meet again! It's a promise!"

The carriage went.

I watched that and returned to our carriage.

Still in a daze.

Eris was making a spoiled face and said.

"What's with that, after all it's already been exposed, hasn't it?"

"E-eh...?"

Ruijerd pulled on the reins of the horse.

The carriage started to move.

In the first place, if I think about it, there were many places to realize it.

In the beginning they yelled out my name as well, after that there was also the time she talked with Eris and Ruijerd, there was probably a time when they suddenly leaked Rudeus.

That means it was already exposed.

Then... why was she pretending not to know?

Think, think.

I quickly realized the answer.

Most likely she wants to make sure if her older brother was a person she could trust. If I had continued to call myself The Owner there and tried to bring her along, there's no doubt she would have abandoned me.

"Ha ha."

After realizing that, I laughed.

Aisha is really clever, a smart child.

I'm looking forward to her future.

CHAPTER 8

BECOMING AN ADULT

1

We are heading off towards the Asura Kingdom.

Heading west from Shirone Kingdom and continuing further.

It's a flat path and the weather is so good that I feel like I'll casually fall asleep.

On the sides of the road, there are plains as far as you can see.

In front, you can faintly see the Red Dragon Mountain Range.

I saw three shadows slowly circling above the Mountain Range.

It's peaceful.

Occasionally thieves who can't read the mood come out and tell us to leave our money and go, or say other things of similar nature, but just as they wished for, Eris gives them her fist and they run away in shame.

It seemed like at first Ruijerd was just going to go with slaughtering them all, but after listening to the situation, it seems most of them were just troubled being unable to eat, so for the time being we let them go.

Just once though.

Even though it's the Central Continent, the road around this area seems to have some slightly bad public order.

I wish they'd learn from the Magic Continent.

Thieves would never come out there.

Although, 10x as many monsters would come out compared to thieves.

I wonder if people being able to do as they please is proof of peace.

It seems if you head a bit further northward, a lot of small countries are jumbled together at war, and the thieves increased thanks to the influence of that war...

In any case, it sure is peaceful.

2

The Red Dragon Mountain range is a very long mountain range that covers the Central Continent.

The mountains are stretched out splitting the Central Continent into three parts, and throughout the range there are Red Dragons inhabiting it.

Red Dragons could be called the strongest monsters of the Central Continent.

They could also be called an absolute strength.

Each one holds S rank strength individually and yet they create packs of several hundred.

What is worth a special mention is their detection ability.

They'll absolutely never overlook a living organism that enters their territory.

Absolutely.

They won't even let a living being the size of a dog pass by, no matter how strong of a monster it is, if it enters into the territory of the Red Dragons, the swarm will eat it without even leaving a bone behind.

It's unknown how they manage to detect things that enter into their territory.

If you enter their territory, you die.

That's common sense in this world.

There are a number of categories of Dragons in this world.

Pretty much all of them are over A rank individually.

Among them, the ones that are said to be the most dangerous are the Red Dragons.

Individually they're said to be at lowest S rank, the scale of their territory is just too large, and at any rate they move in flocks.

The Red Dragons have settled down there; therefore, the Mountain Range was called

Red Dragon Mountain Range.

It's a mountain range that is impossible to pass.

That is the Red Dragon Mountain Range.

Even with them being that much of a dangerous being, as a matter of fact the Red Dragons have a single weakness.

Their combat ability is high, but their flight ability is crude, therefore, they can't take off from a level ground.

They normally jump off from a high cliff in order to fly, otherwise a somewhat long slope is required to build up speed.

While the mountains in Central Continent are high, fundamentally it's nothing but plains and forests.

Therefore, the people living in the plains are rarely afraid of being attacked by the Red Dragons.

Although, it seems there are occasionally foolish individuals.

They might get involved with something like turbulence and fall down into the plains.

Such dragons are known as Stray Dragons.

Even if the lord of the skies falls to the ground, it's still a strong upper A rank.

With their overwhelming power, when they go into a rage, it seems that an enormous amount of damage is done.

If they fall near a human village, it's something the country raises an army to subjugate.

Emergency jobs are sent out, it's an uproar almost like poking a beehive.

Although, generally they will fall a good distance away from human villages.

Even though the rank of the job is S rank, in order to play it safe, seven or eight parties gather together, set traps, and hunting it is unexpectedly simple it seems.

Incidentally, it seems the Dragons' meat and bones are close to the highest quality of materials for equipment.

Also, the skin of Dragons has a high value as an article of art.

Of course, it's not just the skin, the entirety of the Dragon isn't spared and everything is used.

If 10 people were to equally split up the reward for subjugating just 1, it seems they'll earn enough money to go crazy for at least a year.

Putting it into detail, it seems one dragon is worth about 100 Asura Gold Coins.^[27]

Since the raw materials are valuable as well, it seems even freshly raised C ranks who can't accept the job, recklessly attempt to challenge it.

It seems that most of them are turned into fried meat and suppressed with a chomp.

The Red Dragon Mountain Range is such a place that has large amounts of those Red Dragons inhabiting it.

There is a single place that can be used for passage there.

Valleys surrounded by steep cliffs known as the "Red Dragon's Upper Jaw" and "Red Dragon's Lower Jaw".

These are valleys that have existed since the time of the second Great Human-Demon war and even at that time it was the only path that had a width which armies could pass through.

It seems that Laplace anticipated this and released the Red Dragons in the Red Dragon Mountain Range.

Since Ruijerd is the one saying it, there's no mistake.

We're heading towards the part that connects the southern and western parts of the Central Continent, the "Red Dragon's Lower Jaw".

After we pass there, it's Asura Kingdom.

3

However, the fact is that we have to circumvent the mountains. In other words a roundabout way.

There's one young lady here that doesn't like the roundabout way.

"Even without having to take a detour, since we have Ruijerd here we should be able to pass something like the Red Dragon Mountain Range!"

In other words, it's Eris's rash manner after seeing the small Red Dragons circling above the Red Dragon Mountain range.

"Don't be unreasonable."

Ruijerd replied with a bitter smile.

Even I thought it might be possible if it was Ruijerd, but it seems as expected even he wouldn't be able to pass the Red Dragon Mountain Range on foot.

Then, it's impossible for me as well.

Since I can't win against Ruijerd, after all.

"But Rudeus might be able to do it right!"

"No, that's impossible, what are you saying."

It seems that somehow or other Eris wants to experience exterminating a dragon.

It's not that I don't understand her feelings, but I'd like to say "wait just a bit."

As expected we have things we can and cannot do.

"Although, Ghyslaine said once before she defeated a Stray Red Dragon!"

"Is that true?"

I never heard that story.

It might not be a story from her Adventurer days.

If it were a story from her adventurer days, then I'm sure Paul would have bragged about it at least once.

"It seems before she became a Sword Saint she fought with a Red Dragon!"

"Ohh, alone?"

"Umm, I think she said it was together with around five other Advanced level swordsmen."

"Then, how many died?"

"Just two."

You idiot.

Doesn't that mean there's a 40% mortality rate?

Then why do you think I would be able to win against a Red Dragon?

"In the first place, the difference in strength between a Stray Dragon and the Dragons in the mountain is completely different. After all, they fly in the sky you know?"

The fact that they're flying in the sky means that they have a large advantage over people.

The fact that they possess the flight attribute means they're not weak against the bow. Not to mention a flock.

Among the monsters that make a flock in this world, generally they all know the method to hunt with the flock.

Never mind the Dragon Kings that make flocks of at most a few in number as they act, or the Black Dragons that don't even make a flock in the first place, there's no way I could do anything but give up and be torn to pieces by the Red Dragons that come to attack in the hundreds.

"Right, Ruijerd-san?"

"Yeah, there's no one out there who can do anything to a flock of Red Dragons. If there were, it would only be the upper-ranked gods of the [Seven Great World Powers].

Most likely, even if it were the North God or Sword God they would be forced to go back the way they came from before they even make it halfway."

"Is that the case?"

If it were the [Seven Great World Powers] then I thought something like a Dragon would be a simple opponent though...

"Yeah, most likely they would be exhausted on the way. Since you wouldn't even be able to sleep."

I see now.

Several hundred dragons would continue to attack you throughout the night preventing you from sleeping.

Before it's even a problem of combat ability, the amount of resources they crush you with is overwhelming.

"Although, the King of those Red Dragons obeyed Laplace. Therefore, if it's the upper ranks of the [Seven Great World Powers] then they could probably do it.

Although, if it was the [Seven Great World Powers] of the past, then any of the seven would probably have been able to pass through the territory of the Red Dragons."

I get it now.

The currently sealed fourth, "Demon God", and the current fifth, "Death God".

It seems around there is a wall that can't be overcome.

"However, someday you want to try hunting at least one right?"

Today, Eris is just as dangerous as always.

Then someday, I'm sure I'll be dragged in as well.

In order to prepare for the day that is destined to come, I should start preparing counter-plans now for Red Dragons.

4

It's peaceful every day.

A certain day when we were still several days away from arriving at the Red Dragon's Lower Jaw.

I was thinking about Hitogami while making food.

The things that happened the other day at Shirone Kingdom.

I was comparing that advice and my own actions.

And then, I was threading it together with the information I heard after.

For example, when I escaped at the start using Earth Lance, if I had listened to the

story of the soldiers.

I might have found out at that point that Roxy wasn't in the castle.

Then, I would have been able to avoid Pax's trap.

In reverse thanks to that I managed to be caught in the trap.

I'm sure the letter content would have been different as well if I had earned Ginger's cooperation.

In that case, I most likely wouldn't have made contact with Zanoba, but after all things should have still progressed smoothly.

Hmmm.

Honestly, the fact that I managed to meet Zanoba, as expected, was something I thought was strange afterward.

It allowed me to advance forward in a direction that was convenient for me.

It could be that besides just having the ability to see the future, Hitogami has the power to change the future as well.

No, regardless of the circumstances, Zanoba was in that place.

It's not like Zanoba's personality abruptly changed.

Even if for example I wasn't holding onto a doll, I have the feeling that Ginger would have drawn in Zanoba to me somehow.

Zanoba was holding onto the Roxy doll after all and he wanted to talk about it as well.

I'm sure I would have still pointed out the matter of the moles.

What about the false names?

At the very least thanks to the fact that I didn't name myself with my real name, I was able to get along with Aisha.

However, that itself wasn't really related to the incident was it...

In reverse, if for example I had used my real name there I wonder what would have

happened.

It seems like Aisha thought I was a pervert.

In the end, we were able to clear up the misunderstanding.

However, at the very least by the point we arrived at the inn, she shouldn't have been sure I was her older brother yet.

Alone together in an inn with just her pervert of an older brother.

If it were me then I would recognize the crisis to my chastity.

For example say you're going to the bathroom then run away through the gap.

I wonder where she could have run away to.

Since she said she wanted to send the letter, she might have gone to steal some money.

If she has money, then she would be able to send the letter is what I told her.

If it's the clever her, then she could have used that money to buy some stationery, then asked someone on the path the way to the Adventurers Guild, and then send the letter there.

No, the soldiers found her once.

If she had gone to the Adventurer's Guild she would have been found by the soldiers.

I'm sure she could have entrusted it to another person.

However, she has no acquaintances.

If she hadn't been found by the soldiers in a dangerous situation, aimlessly walking around the town.

I would have searched for her.

I wonder how I would have searched for her.

With Ruijerd, I'm sure.

If I were to know that Aisha had disappeared, I'm sure I would have panicked and without thinking about the consequences fired an explosion magic into the sky, and then made contact with Ruijerd.

And then I would have said I found my little sister but she ran away, then we would have searched.

And then the lost Aisha would be left in the care of Ruijerd.

Ruijerd is kind to children.

I'm sure Aisha would have trusted him.

Yeah, after all, there's no problem.

The more I think about it, there's meaning in Hitogami's advice.

Even in the rough flow of my actions, it was made to reach a single conclusion.

Even until now, most likely it was the same.

The fact that we had Ruijerd save us and even if we hadn't accepted his help as well.

It still would have ended with us going on a journey together with Ruijerd.

After meeting Kishirika, no matter which Demon Eye I had received as well, I would have still gotten captured by the Dedorudia race in the Great Forest.

That guy is giving advice after thinking about a variety of things.

However, as usual the only thing I can't see is his objective.

If he would properly tell me about that, then even I would be a bit more honest.

Just being honest that is...

Just like that I was thinking while glancing at the sky.

5

Eris and Ruijerd are training again today without fail.

I was watching that as I made food.

In the start I was mixed in as well, but probably because of the difference in basic strength, I gave up halfway through.

Recently, Eris's strength has been eye opening.

One year ago, as long as I used my Demon Eyes, I could leisurely win.

If it was the Eris from that time, I could have probably pulled down her panties in the

middle of battle.

However, now it's impossible.

If I give it my all while putting magic power into my Demon Eyes the one who is standing at the end may be me, but most likely it will be a very close match.

Of course, if it's a fight with a certain distance, then my chances of winning go up simply through tactics.

The possibility of slipping into and touching her breasts in the confusion has been picked off.

However, I wonder if it's the thing called talent.

I think I'm giving it quite a bit of effort in my own way, but Eris is going above that.

The amount and quality of her hard work are both above me.

I think I need to work harder myself, but my body can't keep up.

It could be that this body doesn't have all that much physical strength.

I thought about it according to my previous life's standards, but according to this world's standard, I would fall short of average.

Since there's no one else around the same generation as Eris it's hard to tell.

While I was thinking about that, it seems the training for today has ended.

Recently Ruijerd has stopped asking Eris, "Understand now?"

I'm sure she can understand now even if he doesn't ask.

Eris is absorbing it well.

"Eris."

By the time they had returned to where I was, suddenly Ruijerd called out to Eris.

"What?"

Eris took a well-squeezed cloth from me and put her hand inside of her clothes to wipe

up the sweat.

Previously she would have wiped down the sweat of all of her upper body with her bra, but since I would get excited it turned into the current situation.

I'm sure she feels disgusting being covered in sweat.

I'm sorry about that.

"It's fine if you call yourself a warrior from today on."

Ruijerd said it while plunking down on the ground with his back.

A warrior, huh.

Not a swordsman but a warrior.

Those known as warriors in this world are just not simply swordsmen and there's no large difference between their combat ability.

Therefore... Hnn?

Then I realized the meaning of Ruijerd's words there.

Eris as well, with her hands raised around her armpit stopped moving.

".....That means."

"You've become an adult."

Ruijerd said it quietly.

Eris made an awkward movement and threw the cloth in my direction.

I caught that, and then used a water technique to wet both sides, then wrung it out and dusted it.

Eris came to sit by my side.

I have recollection of this expression.

It's the face she made when she handed over my staff.

It's the kind of face she makes when she's so happy she wants to grin, but she feels she has no choice but to make a quiet face.

"Bu-but Ruijerd, I still haven't been able to win against you at all?"

"No problem, you already possess more than enough power as a warrior."

This is that.

If you were to ask and see, it might be something like a license.

Similar to how Ghyslaine is authorized to name herself as an Advanced level of the Sword God style, Ruijerd has given permission for her to name herself as a Warrior.

I guess this would be something to congratulate her on.

"Eris, congratulations."

Eris's eyes were reflecting black and white, she might not have felt that was the reason she did her training.

"Ru-rudeus, could this be a dream, could you please pinch me a bit?"

"You won't hit me if I pinch you?"

"I won't hit you."

Since I got a promise, I tightly pinched her nipple.

Obviously, gently.

Oh wait, in this case it would be indecently, I guess?

Eris's fist was not gentle.

"Where are you pinching?"

"Please excuse me? But it's not a dream. If it were a dream it wouldn't hurt this bad."

I with a pale face holding my jaw said that to Eris who had a bright red face while holding her chest.

"I see, a warrior..."

Eris was looking at her own palm while coming to some kind of realization.

"However, don't be conceited. It just means I won't treat you as a child anymore, got it?"

He said it in a style almost like a parent warning a child about something.

".....Yes!"

Eris said that while making a meek face.

Well, the area around her cheeks is twitching like it's about to turn into a grin.

The food on that day was somehow a little better tasting than usual.

6

That night, around the time Eris fell asleep, suddenly something was bothering me so I opened my eyes.

I started talking to Ruijerd who was keeping guard while half-sleeping.

"Why did you say that sort of thing to Eris?"

Ruijerd opened his half-open eyes and looked at me.

"Because no matter how long has passed, you continue to treat that girl as a child."

...Well now.

Whether Eris is a child or not.

Well, she's a child.

If we were to compare to me in my previous life, she would be my junior by 20 years.

Not to mention, since the time when she was much smaller, I've been leading her around holding her hand, while being hit, and teaching her various things.

If you were to call it a child, it would be a child.

However, certainly Eris has grown-up recently.

It's not just her figure.

Just a bit, she started to bear in mind her judgement.

I feel like she's gone around acting violently without thinking about it less, compared to the past.

She still has ways to go when it comes to similar things, but I think the frequency has definitely decreased.

If you say it then I guess so.

I wonder if it's part of the process for her to turn from a child to an adult.

I can't really say with the compliment that I'm a splendid adult as well.

However...

"Hnnn..."

I was thinking about it and Ruijerd quietly closed his eyes.

"Well, I guess it can't be helped, huh..."

I wonder what it is that can't be helped.

I didn't properly think about the meaning of it.

I don't know, but I felt some kind of bad premonition.

"Ruijerd-san."

'What is it?'

"Please put one of these gold coins in your chest pocket."

After saying that, I took a gold coin out of my bag, and threw it to Ruijerd.

He hesitated.

Since his coat didn't have pockets.

Even so it seems he managed to succeed in sticking the gold coin in a seam near his chest.

"And, what is this?"

"A good luck charm."^[28]

I was satisfied with that and fell back to sleep.

7

Several days later.

Four months after we departed from Shirone.

We've arrived at the "Red Dragon's Lower Jaw".

We arrived in Asura Kingdom.

And then, we came to realize.

All things happen abruptly.

Bad things happen at times when you're unable to predict or prevent them.

Suddenly parents can die,

Suddenly your siblings can come to beat you up,

Suddenly a truck can come to hit you,

Suddenly you can be reincarnated in another world,

Suddenly your father can come to attack you and then force you into being a home teacher for a young lady,

Suddenly you could be thrown to another continent as well.

Most likely everything is a result of chance.

Furthermore, we would come to realize.

The severity of this world.

The fact that people can simply die.

The fact that any person anywhere can all too easily die.

The fact that there are no exceptions.

Only myself.

Or the fact that only people in my surroundings aren't conveniently allowed to live long lives.

Finally, at this late point.

We finally came to realize this reality.

The origin of the phenomenon known as death, the fact that a person nearby can suddenly disappear.

And then foolishly.

I was unable to connect that together with the truth at that time.

If at that time, I had properly understood the truth, if I had been thinking of acquiring a strength that wouldn't lose to anyone.

I may not have regretted it that much.

If here with this event, I had aimed to be the strongest in the world.

I may not have regretted it so much.

Even after such a thing happened, I was unable to get my hands on the desire for power.

There is just one thing that I can say.

As expected of Eris.

CHAPTER 9

TURNING POINT 2

1

Red Dragon's Lower Jaw.

A valley with just a single main road continuing down it.

It's not straight like the Holy Sword Highway.

However, that doesn't change the fact that it's a single path with no forks.

In the space between national borders is a region that doesn't belong to any specific country.

After passing by here it will be Asura Kingdom.

That guy came, just normally walking by.

On the opposite side of the road.

Silver hair, golden eyes, no particular equipment, wearing a simple white coat made out of some kind of fur.

Neither riding on a horse, nor riding on a carriage, just walking along.

It was a man.

Going from my impression it was at most, "A guy with a bad look in his eyes."

This man had a serious case of Sanpaku eyes.^[29]

Rather than that, what my eyes stopped on was.

At his side.

There was a single black haired young girl.

I had a feeling I had met her somewhere before, but I can't remember.

There are few people with pure black hair in this world.

Even if it looks black, after taking a closer look it's a blackish-brown or closer to grey. I had no intention of remembering a stranger based on their hair color, but I have a feeling it wouldn't be strange for me to remember her black hair. Even though that's the case, I can't remember.

There's a reason why this young girl especially entered my sight. That face.

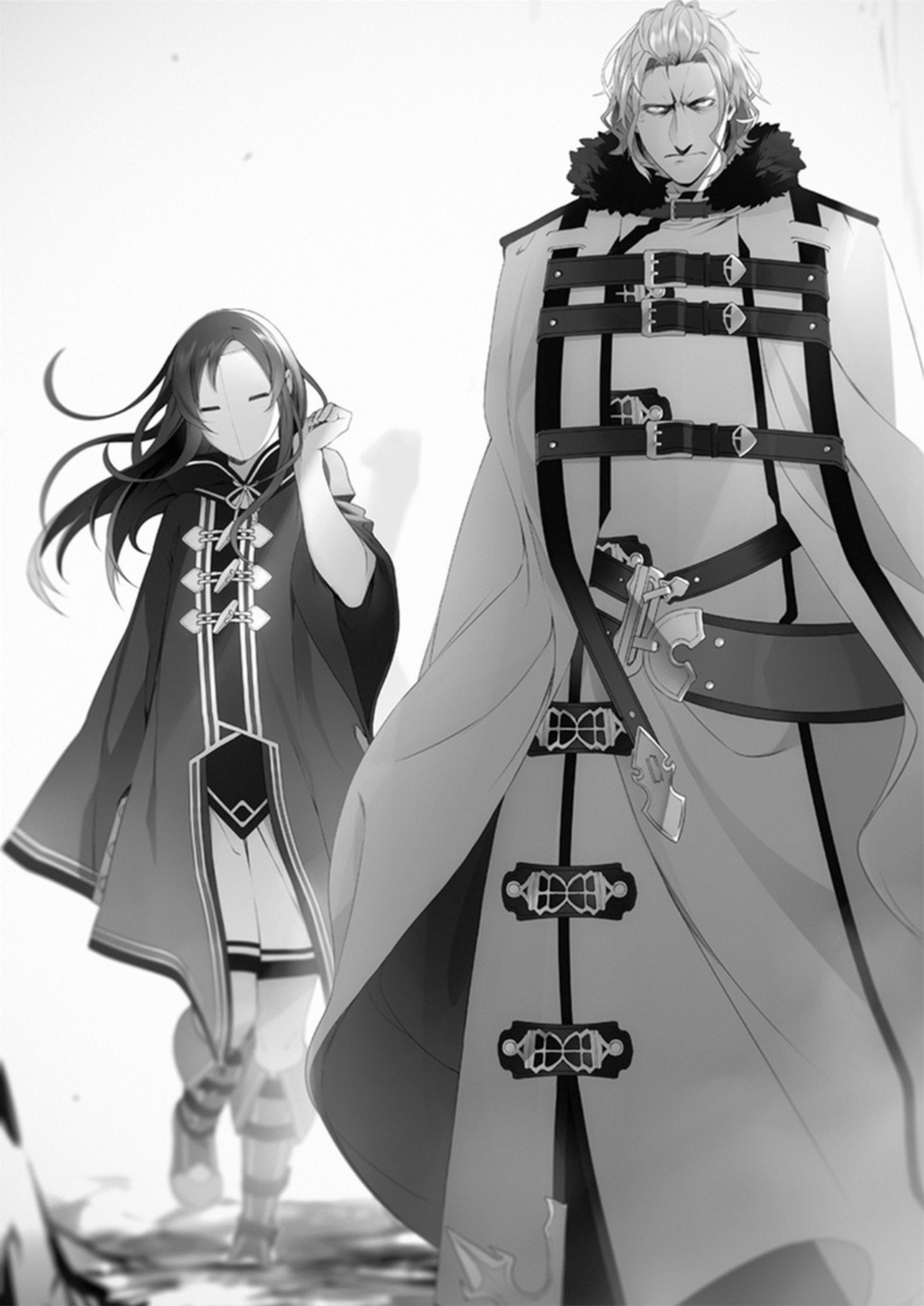
There was a mask worn on her face.

If you were to ask if there's a characteristic, there would be but if you were to ask if there wasn't any, there wouldn't be.

It was pure white, with nothing written on it, a mask with no kind of ornament on it.

If I were to compare it then it would be like the mask from Dirty Mask. It just stood out.

In regards to this world, I've never seen a person who wore a mask like this before. It doesn't seem like fashion.



"...!!!"

It's not like I was charmed by the girl, but at this point I hadn't realized that Ruijerd in the driver's seat had a pale face.

Eris was the same.

Each step closer the man took, that expression became even more severe, while holding onto the handle of her sword with enough strength that it had become pure white.

When the man recognized our figures he tilted his head with an "Oh?"

"Hmm... You, could it be you're from the Supard race?"

The man narrowed his Sanpaku eyes.

When I saw that I thought of a doubt.

The current Ruijerd has no hair and the jewel on his forehead is hidden.

How did he know I wonder?

I don't know, does he exude some kind of Supard smell?

While I was thinking such, Ruijerd turned around.

"Is he an... acquaintance...?"

My question paused partway through.

Ruijerd's face was different.

It was far too excessively different from normal.

All of the blood from his white skin had been drained.

The cold sweat was pouring, the hand that was holding his spear was trembling.

This is... I have a recollection of this expression.

It's terror.

"Rudeus, absolutely do not move, Eris as well."

Ruijerd's voice was trembling.

While I continued not knowing what was going on, I silently nodded.

Eris's face was bright red, it seemed like she was ready to jump out at any moment.

Both the arms and legs were trembling.

Are they frightened?

I'm sure there's that, but even more than that, Eris is showing hostility towards him.

However, he's an opponent who I don't know.

During some point when I don't know, did these two come across this man?

For the time being I continued to watch over the situation.

"Hnn? That voice, is it Ruijerd Supardia. Since you don't have any hair I couldn't recognize you for a moment. Why are you in this place?"

The man casually approached us.

Ruijerd prepared his spear.

I don't know.

Why is Ruijerd being so cautious of this man?

I don't know.

For the time being since the two were afraid I opened my demon eye.

Putting it frankly, it was with light feelings.

<The man's figure turned into several tens of blurs>

It was so blurred that I couldn't even tell where the silhouette was.

What is this?

"Hnn? That red hair over there is Eris Boreas Greyrat, huh. The other one is... Who? Well, it's fine. I see, I've seen it Ruijerd Supardia. For someone who likes children as much as you, you've come this far bringing these two, who were thrown to the Magic Continent in that teleport incident, back home."

Eris yelled in a surprised voice at the man who nodded with a face that appears to know everything.

"Wh-why do you know my name?"

Eris's words brought me even further into confusion.

Is it someone you don't know?

Is it your first meeting?

No, it's Eris, it wouldn't be strange for her to have forgotten.

Even though I say that, in this world I've almost never seen anyone with silver hair.

Those characteristic-like Sanpaku eyes and it seems like only Eris and Ruijerd are feeling some kind of bizarre sensation.

If they've already met once, then as expected you would usually remember.

"Who are you? How do you know my name?"

Ruijerd thrust his spear at the man.

It seems it's not an acquaintance of Ruijerd as well.

Eris and Ruijerd say they don't know the man.

I don't know the man.

The man doesn't know me.

However, the man knows Eris and Ruijerd.

Well, that's fine on its own.

Ruijerd is famous.

His name isn't all that well known on the Central Continent, but if you were to go to the Magic Continent generally everyone would know his name and face.

In regards to Eris I don't really know, but if you were to speak of a Red Haired Bishoujo Swordsman, then you could probably hit it with some guesswork.

But, what's strange isn't that.

The obviously strange point isn't that kind of thing.

It's the behavior.

The atmosphere if you could call it that.

The difference in behavior between the man and these two is far too different.

The man's behavior is extremely friendly.

His tone of voice as well, if you were to ask which way, it has some happiness mixed in as if one met an old friend in an unexpected place.

In contrast to Ruijerd, it seems like he's about ready to attack at any moment.

However, he's not moving his hands.

He's clearly looking at him with hostility, but he's not commencing his attack.

I don't understand the reason.

Even Eris who is always trying to take the first move isn't moving a bit.

I can't imagine it's just because Ruijerd told us not to move.

"This is a strange place to meet but... It seems like you're doing well. Then it's fine."

The man took a good look at Ruijerd who was holding the spear towards him, but soon after, he laughed to himself, and took one step backwards.

After seeing that, the girl wearing the mask let out a small whisper.

"Is it fine?"

"It can't be helped at the current point in time."

I couldn't comprehend it, shortly after the conversation excluding the subject,

"I've been a hindrance to you."

The man slowly started to walk just to our side.

The black haired girl followed afterwards.

Ruijerd never took his eyes off.

Of course, Eris as well.

"About me... eventually, you'll understand."

In the end he quietly said that.

A profound meaning.

This man knows something.

I thought that intuitively.

I'm getting a similar feeling to the Hitogami from this man.

"Please wait a minute!"

Before I realized it I had called out to him.

The man turned around.

It was a surprised face.

And then, Eris and Ruijerd as well were looking at me with surprised faces.

"What is it? Who are you?"

"Ah, excuse me. I'm Rudeus Greyrat."

"It's a name I've never heard before."

Well it is our first meeting after all.

"No, Greyrat, huh. What's your parent's name?"

"Rather than that, won't you name yourself?"

"Hmmm... Well, I don't mind I guess. I'm Orsted."

Orsted.

A name I have no memory of hearing.

I don't know it to the point that I'm the same as the people who died and are apologizing in the other world.

After looking at Ruijerd, it seems like he doesn't know either.

"Ummm, are you an acquaintance of these two?"

"No, we haven't become acquaintances yet."

"Yet? What do you mean?"

"It's fine if you don't know. Then your parents?"

They were words that were bluntly refused.

Even though I answered your question, you should answer my question as well, huh.

Well fine.

I wouldn't be bothered over something to that degree.

"It's Paul Greyrat."

"...Hmmm? Paul shouldn't have a son. He should only have two daughters."

How rude.

He does you know, my father has a single son that looks quite similar to him.

An idiot son who left home and went all the way to Magic Continent to work.

"...Hnnn?"

There Orsted leaned his head like he realized something.

He slowly took steps towards me.

"Don't get any closer than that!"

"Yeah, I understand."

However he was threatened by Ruijerd and maintained his distance.

While closing a bit of the distance, he was taking a good look at my face.

I caught that gaze from the front.

"You don't avoid eye contact, do you?"

"Since the look in your eyes is scary, it feels like I might turn away any moment now."

"Hmmm, in other words, you aren't feeling any fear."

The man's brow dropped.

"Hmmm. That's strange. I have no memory of meeting you."

I don't either.

It's our first meeting.

I don't know a name like Orsted.

I have no recollection of his appearance either.

Not to mention he just keeps saying things that I have no idea what they are about.

Next, he finally said some words I could comprehend.

"You, could it be, you have heard of the words Human God, Hitogami before?"

That is right, finally.

Finally, that name.

Finally something that I could understand came out.

I'll say it clearly.

I was letting my guard down.

Even though it was something that no one had said until now.

Suddenly hearing it from another person's mouth, not to mention the fact that it was from the mouth of this man who keeps talking about things I can't understand.

There were no common points in the language to connect our conversation, so I thought, ah, if it's that even I understand.

With just that kind of light feeling about it.

I said it.

"I do, the one known as Hitogami comes out in my dreams..."

I suddenly saw a vision.

<Orsted's arm has gone through my chest>

At a speed almost as if he had teleported, it went straight through my chest.

I can't avoid it.

With just one second, it's too short.

"Rudeus!"

In a moment the vision of it going through disappeared, Ruijerd forced himself in front of me.

The thrust stopped at Ruijerd and I fell backwards.

The man was looking over Ruijerd's shoulder.

They were cold eyes.

"I see, you were the pawn of Hitogami."

It's a false accusation.

2

Ruijerd shouted.

"Run away! Rudeus!"

"You're in the way, Ruijerd."

Ruijerd swung his spear.

I couldn't move.

In the first place, there wasn't enough time to run.

There were several seconds before Ruijerd suffered damage.

He twisted around like a baby, I couldn't do anything but silently watch.

Ruijerd is strong.

He's supposed to be strong.

In the end, over the course of this journey Eris hasn't been able to get even a single good hit on him.

Five hundred years worth of combat experience should have made him worthy of being unrivaled.

He's supposed to be a man with strength above King Class.

The fact that such a Ruijerd would lose was something that I could clearly see.

I saw through the whole thing while watching with my demon eye.

In terms of time, it was at most 10 seconds.

Orsted was by no means faster than Ruijerd.

Just, each time Ruijerd made a single move, just a little bit, Ruijerd started to lose his advantage.

That continued to repeat one time, three times, four times.

While Ruijerd was moving he was digging his own grave.

A little, again a little, he was gradually being cornered.

Each time he received an attack his stance collapsed just a bit, each time he went in to attack he had the initiative reversed on him.

Ability.

There was certainly nothing but ability there.

Even I could clearly see it, Orsted was striking down Ruijerd.

Orsted was overwhelmingly exceeding him.

Even looking from my eyes, I could clearly understand it.

It was a brilliant technique.

With the most minimum movement possible, yet he was rendering Ruijerd powerless at his fastest speed.

If you could realize that, it would most likely end up with those movements.

He completely saw through the distance with Ruijerd, he always left his body in the inner part of the spears effective range.

Ruijerd was using his mastered combination at his specialty distance.

That was being destroyed as if it were being ridiculed, staggered, gaps were being created, attacks that you absolutely can't take were being guarded.

Most likely, if he were to try and kill he would have been able to do it.

However, that guy wasn't doing it.

He knocked him unconscious.

He was going easy with that Ruijerd as an opponent.

And then.

Ruijerd was unable to do anything.

All of his means disappeared.

It was checkmate.

A fist very deeply landed in Ruijerd's solar plexus, subsequently a second fist grazed the tip of his jaw.

The third hit, a fist that reaped Ruijerd's consciousness attacked his temple.

He rotated twice and then fell to the ground.

Ruijerd wasn't moving.

He wasn't dead, but he wasn't moving.

Orsted could have probably gotten a single hit whenever.

While going for the second hit he probably devoted to it.

However, in order to steal Ruijerd's consciousness it required three hits.

Even though that was able to render Ruijerd helpless, it could have been called the fastest performance.

"Now then."

"Uuuuaaa!"

The one who shouted wasn't I.

It was Eris.

She moved in front of me, she faced Orsted with a flash of the drawn sword and fired it off.

"...Hidden Technique, [Streaming Current]"

In regards to Eris it didn't cost Orsted any time.

Just, he only caught her sword gently on the palm of his hand.

At least that's how it looked to me.

With just that, Eris's body started to spin like a tornado and was blown away.

It was almost like the time when receiving a certain kill technique in battle and being blown off.

Eris flew out of that guy's field of vision.

The instant Ruijerd fell, Eris fired off a slash in his blind spot.

Even looking at it from my eyes, it was an attack that I thought had no shortcomings.

Without a thought for defense, a completely focused sword strike.

In regards to that, that guy reversed it one technique.

I don't know what was done specifically.

In my eyes, it just looked like his hand went to the side of Eris's sword.

In the next instant, Eris was sent flying with a tailspin.

No, I've seen something similar to that.

Paul showed it to me.

It was a technique of the Water God style.

It was a move that seemed like that with a much more honed and sharpened feel to it.

Every bit of the energy from her motion was returned to Eris.

"Gaha...!"

Eris crashed into a stone wall.

While scattering rocks all over the place she fell.

Since she has trained, I want to think that she wouldn't die.

However, it could be that something like her bone had fractured.

"Eris Boreas Greyrat. It seems you've advanced your skill with the sword considerably. I did think you had the potential, but... It's still rough."

"Uu... uu..."

Eris was trying to get up while letting out a groan.

If it was the usual me, I think I would have quickly tried to use healing magic on her.

However, I had other things to worry about than that.

His eyes were aimed at me.

3

It was in the blink of an eye.

In the blink of an eye the two of them were beaten.

I always had my demon eye opened.

One second ahead, what I saw there was despair.

No matter what timing I reacted with, I would just have it turned back on me.

The me one second ahead had all of my vital points being crushed.

Head, throat, heart, lung...

I could see visions of each of them being crushed, furthermore, I saw the vision that guy was there.

I didn't understand the meaning.

If this is true, then that means one second later there will be five of him.

I couldn't move.

I understood that everything was futile.

Continuing unable to do anything, one second passed.

He was right in front of me.

Right in front of me as I couldn't move.

It was a slide movement that would make you think he was completely ignoring the laws of physics.

He appeared in front of me almost as if he had teleported.

Abruptly, almost like an anime lacking the inbetween frames.

And then, by the time he had arrived in front of me, he had already finished the movements for his attack.

These sorts of movements I once saw somewhere in an old Fighting Game.

It was the game of the century, where every character had an eternal combo or instant death combo.

By the time I realized it I had already taken the palm of his hand unguarded.

Eight or so of my ribs simultaneously broke.

There was an impact.

However, my body was by no means sent flying backwards.

I felt a pressure almost as if my back had simultaneously received an attack as well.

The damage was all collected internally.

My lung was crushed.

"Goha!!"

In an instant blood came up my throat and I spit out blood.

"If you crush the lung of a magician it restricts them..."

He said that like nothing at all was happening to me while I was on my knees.

I was looking at my old blood spread out on the ground and somewhere in my heart I thought "I see now", and understood it.

It's fine if its just crushing the lung of a magician.

They won't be able to use incantations.

In reality at this point my healing magic has already been sealed.

Of course, incantations aren't the only thing I won't be able to do after a lung is crushed.

I won't be able to maintain life activity.

In other words, it's fatal.

"It's fine for you to die and tell the Hitogami that the Dragon God Orsted will never let you live."

Dragon God.

[Seven Great World Powers] Second ranked.

Orsted gave a glance over me who was crouched over holding my chest.

He pushed me over with his heel.

I saw that as negligence.

I've already received a fatal wound, putting aside defeat, death is already imminent.

In that condition, why did I still think to fight I don't know.

I wonder if it's because I saw Eris still trying to stand in the edge of my field of vision.

This man especially went out of his way to stop those two just in order to ascertain that I would die after.

In any case, I sent a Rock Bullet aimed flying at him.

Why didn't I use a stronger magic?

I have even more advanced magic that I could have used.

Even after, I couldn't understand it.

Just, I most likely used the magic that I was most accustomed to using.

A rock that was as hard as possible, at a velocity that was as fast as possible, with a rotation speed as fast as possible added.

I think that rock bullet was at such a high power that it surprised even me.

The man and I were at an exceedingly close distance, the rock bullet went flying at a red hot speed.

<Orsted turned around and pulverized the rock bullet with his fist>

And then it was smashed.

The rock fell.

After it fell to the ground there was a dinging sound almost as if it was metal.

Orsted looked at his own fist.

"Just now was that a rock bullet... that was an absurd power. To think this magic could leave a wound on my body..."

The skin on the back of Orsted's hand was coming off.

It was just a scratch.

It was no good, there was no point to the rock bullet.

I'm unable to damage this man.

"Your lung should have been crushed though... voiceless incantations? Is that a power you gained from the Hitogami? What other powers have you gained?"

Orsted looked over me as he was surveying.

Wouldn't it be fine if he just quickly stopped it?

He looked at me ruthlessly almost like watching over a grasshopper that has had its legs torn off.

It's painful...

"Geha...!"

I used wind magic and forcefully sent air into my lung.

I violently choked.

I have the feeling it was meaningless, but I forcefully send it in.

And then having accumulated air with all my might, I held my breath.

"Oh. That was an interesting usage, what meaning was there in that just now? Why don't you use voiceless incantations to heal your lung?"

Orsted put his hand on his chin and looked over me as if my suffering was of great interest.

In my fading consciousness I created a fire ball with my right hand.

In fire magic the more magic power you pour into it the greater the temperature rises and the scale increases.

If the rock bullet speed and hardness is no good then what about heat and explosive power?

"That is already fine. 'Ran Ma' [Disturb Magic]!"^[30]

That shallow thought was easily erased.

The instant I pointed my right hand at Orsted, the consistency of magic power gathering at the end of my hand was disturbed.

The magic power that continued to come out from the end of my hand never took shape and scattered.

Even in my hazy state I understood it.

It was interfering with the magic power coming out from my hand, by disturbing it he's cancelling out my magic.

It seems like something I could do as well, I carelessly thought.

My right hand is sealed.

However, I still have my left hand.

I started to construct magic with my other hand, I'll drive a shock wave into the middle of Orsted.

I heard a heavy sound ring out, Orsted was blown backwards.

Simultaneously, I was also able to fly back.

"Hmm... you managed to cancel [Magic Disturb]? No, it's different... it's a form of multiple incantations. Being able to do it with voiceless incantations what a skillful guy you are. This sort of feeling."

With his left hand the man pointed his finger and a small sound came out.

And then, at the man's feet a small window about 50 cm in every direction appeared.

It was a pretty window that was silver in color adorned with gaudy dragon ornaments.

"Oh, it's surprisingly strong."

Without minding anything, I fired off the most high fire power magic I could at Orsted.

My image was a huge blaze. A mushroom cloud.

Nuclear explosion.

I gathered my power in order to hit him, I simply continued to concentrate my magic power.

I wasn't really thinking about the fact that Eris and Ruijerd would be swallowed up in it.

I had already lost the power to think.

"Open, [First Dragon Gate]."

After the man muttered that the window opened.

In that instant, the magic power that was going to become magic in my left hand was sucked up.

The frame of the window made a noise as it cracked.

Simultaneously, an explosion happened near Orsted.

It was overwhelmingly smaller than what I was assuming.

He was able to simply avoid it.

"What a frightening amount of magic power. Even the [First Dragon Gate] couldn't bear this size. It's almost like the same level as Laplace. There's a reason for the Hitogami to make you into an apostle. However, why haven't you used healing magic on your lung since a while ago? Are you trying to get me to let my guard down?"

At that time, my consciousness was already on the verge of being interrupted.

I didn't have any judgment left.

Since a while ago I haven't been able to breathe sufficiently.

The man continued to look at me again as he surveyed.

Our eyes met.

"Is it over?"

Just a moment.

Orsted was closing in on the bewildered me.

I already had nothing left.

"Can you not do anything beyond magic?"

My magic has been sealed and my legs are cramped, I can't move.

In front of this overwhelming intent to kill, I can't do anything.

In the edge of my vision the border of the window disappeared.

However, I wasn't able to do anything.

"Go ba!!"

What I suddenly let out was the very small roar that I learned in the Dorudia village.

"Mu...!"

Orsted put himself on guard to my action.

However.

Obviously.

All I did was spit up blood, there was no effect.

"...Just magic power, huh. What were you planning?"

I already can't do anything.

My magic has been sealed, there's no chance of winning to be found with physical techniques.

The only thing left that I could do is nothing but prostrate myself.

"Well, it's fine, die."

But, Orsted wouldn't even let me prostrate myself.

"Ga fu..."

The arm sent flying at a super speed easily pierced through my body.

The fist certainly went through my heart.

Certainly a fatal wound.

A wound that wouldn't even be healed with healing magic.

"Too quick. Damn Hitogami. Did you make someone who can't even wear touki [Fighting Spirit] into a pawn. What were you planning?"

He pulled out his fist.

There it was, splattered with my blood.

I tried to stand.

My body isn't listening to what I say.

Against my will, my body crumbles.

At the edge of my vision, I saw Eris with her face raised looking at me blankly.

Our eyes met.

"Ahh... a... Ru... Rudeu... Rudeus...!"

In my fading consciousness, I calmly thought about it.

Ah, this is bad.

I don't want to die.

I haven't fulfilled my promise to Eris yet.

At least two more years, please wait two years.

Even though I could go without any regrets if that were the case...

It's healing.

Healing...

Gather the magic power, there's only one wound.

I can't do the incantation, my lung has a hole in it as well.

However, do it, slowly, gather the magic power.

Fix it, I'll fix it.

I can't afford to die yet.

"Uwaaaaahhhhh... aaa!"

Eris cried out.

It was a scream of bitterness.

"Was he someone precious? Sorry about that Eris Boreas Greyrat. However, one day will come when you understand. Let's go, Nanahoshi."

"Y-yes..."

Orsted leisurely walked away leading the girl.

Eris couldn't stand up.

Was it damage or was it terror.

Or else was it shock.

Only able to raise her shout, without a sword, just crying and shouting.

"Ruijerd! Ghyslaine! Grandfather! Father! Mother! Therese! Paul! It doesn't matter who, it doesn't matter who so just save him! Rudeus will die!"

This is bad, my consciousness is starting to fade.

Are you serious?

Is it really over here?

I don't want to...

...die...

"Hey Orsted, there's one thing that's bothering me but... Wouldn't it be better to leave this guy alive?"

On the verge of my consciousness stopping.

I had the feeling that I heard that voice.

CHAPTER 10

GAPING HOLE OPENED IN THE CHEST

1

Once I realized it, I'm in a white place.

A pure white space.

A space with nothing at all.

Normally, I would be filled with a disgusting feeling here.

The memories of my previous life are refreshed and I return to that familiar and unsightly 34 year old body.

Regret, conflict, vulgarity, and dependency.

The 12 years of my life start to fade almost like a dream, and my heart fills with dejection.

I fall into a feeling like I've been watching a long dream.

An irritation enough to tear it off fills my chest.

However, limited to this time, it didn't happen.

The usual degrading feelings didn't come rising to the surface.

In exchange I had a feeling of loss, like a gaping hole was opened in my chest.

After taking a look, my chest had an air hole opened in it.

Ah, as I thought I died, didn't I...

"Yo!"

Suddenly I realized that Hitogami was standing there.

As usual he had that irritating smile floating on his face.

I don't know why, but today I didn't feel any irritation towards that.

I wonder why.

I wonder if it's because a gaping hole has opened up in my chest.

Or because I decided before to stop being belligerent.

...Well, it's fine.

"Well, I guess, it was unfortunate wasn't it."

Yeah, really, how unfortunate.

"...Today you're in a different mood than usual. Are you alright? Are you feeling bad?"

It's just as you can see, there's a hole opened up in my chest.

...Hey, there's one thing I'd like to hear from you, but is it okay?

"What is it?"

That guy, it's about that Orsted guy.

The instant he heard your name he started to attack me.

What's up with that?

"That guy is an Evil Dragon God after all, in regards to how I'm Virtuous, he recognizes me as an enemy."

Virtue, I see.

Well, you certainly are easy to consider as an enemy after all.

However, in that case wouldn't it have been fine for you to tell me about it in advance?

You, can see a variety of things, right?

I'm sure you knew I would meet with Orsted there, right?

If you had at least said one word about it, 'even if Orsted asks, don't let my name out', then even I would have...

"No, sorry, actually I can't see things in regards to the [Dragon God]. I can't see his future or his present. I didn't know that you would meet him."

Is that the case?

Why?

"Since that guy has that sort of curse on him."

Curse.

Is there that kind as well?

"Yeah. Were there none in your world? From the time they're born there's some kind of abnormality in their magic power, and they end up as a child with some kind of strange ability."

The concept of magic power doesn't even exist in my world after all.

There are people with a strong supernatural sense or ones that call themselves that, but honestly, they're lacking in credibility.

"Oh~, is that how it is. Over here, there are ones called Cursed Children, and there are some pretty strange ones. Orsted is one of those. Well, he also has another three or so curses as well."

Four curses.

That is quite amazing.

Come to think of it, I think I've heard about it.

Miko and Cursed Children was it?

"That's right. It's the same sort of thing. Humans like to differentiate between them."

I see.

Then, what kind of curses does that guy have?

"Look, Ruijerd and Eris were afraid of him, right? That is one of his curses. All manner of living beings in this world feel hate and fear towards him."

It makes him hated by everyone, that is... how do I put it, kind of sucks.

If it were me then my heart would quickly break.

I understand the feelings of the side being hated.

"Wait a second there, sympathy is unnecessary you know. Since the time he was born he is a bad guy that had planned to destroy the world you know."

Well, don't say it like that.

If you were to feel nothing but animosity from your surroundings, anyone would want to destroy one or two worlds.

Even I in my previous life, held those kinds of thoughts.

Everyone should just die, I would often complain on the World Wide Web.

"Hnn, is it that sort of thing. I hate that guy as well, so I don't really want to understand though."

Hn?

Ah, does the curse have an influence on you as well?

Being unable to see him, is the fault of that curse right?

The curse to be hated and the curse that makes it so you can't see him and...

What else?

"Who knows, since I can't see him I don't really know well."

I see...

However, even more so if it's that sort of dangerous guy.

I would have liked if you had told me beforehand that there were guys like that in this world.

That was way too sudden so I was troubled.

"Even I couldn't have possibly imagined that you would meet him. Who knows what the probability is of you walking around and meeting him in this vast world?"

Well, I guess so...

It's like finding a single grain of sesame seed in the desert.

Come to think of it, I didn't feel neither hate nor fear towards that guy.

Why is that?

"Wouldn't that be because you came from another world?"

People from another world are not influenced by the effects of a curse?

"That does seem to be the case. It was the same during the time when you met Ruijerd right?"

...Eh?

Wait just a second, what do you mean?

Does that mean Ruijerd is one of those Cursed Children as well?

"No~, that is the Curse from the Spear of Laplace. Laplace possessed the "Curse of Fear" as well though, then he transferred that into a Spear, then that lead to blaming everything on the Supard race. They always do in regards to things that look like Emerald Green Hair that is."

Curse?

Blaming it on?

Hey.

What is that? What do you mean?

You, did you know that from the start?

Even though you knew that, you told me to assist him?

Did you make me do something pointless?

"No, don't be mistaken. The curse that was cast on the entirety of the Supard race is starting to disappear with the passage of time. Ruijerd himself still has a bit of the curse remaining, but thanks to the fact that he cut his hair it's rapidly started to fade."

Hair, huh.

Come to think of it, Sylphy was bullied as well, but it didn't feel like they were afraid of her...

Why is it hair?

Is it the origin of magic power or something?

"It's because Laplace's hair was Green as well."

Ah, I see now.

My world has stuff like that as well.

Things with a common likeness are used for their curse to cast it or remove it.

"In any case, thanks to getting involved with you, the curse is about to disappear. There's still the firmly rooted discrimination remaining, but something can be done about that with the passage of time and Ruijerd's effort."

In other words, it wasn't pointless is what you're trying to say?

That's great...

You are properly thinking about it as you act after all.

"Well, perfectly restoring it would be difficult even so."

Well, it is a difficult problem after all.

However, I see...

That is great.

"Yeah, it is great isn't it? It means that it was worth it to bring you together with Ruijerd."

Did you bring us together with that kind of reason?

If that's the case if you had just said it then it would have been fine wouldn't it?

"Didn't you have any intention of listening to my words at all in the start? I didn't have any allowance."

...Well, that is true isn't it?

I was being belligerent and rejecting it after all. Certainly.

In any case, that Ruijerd as well, was defeated so easily by Orsted...

I couldn't have imagined that he would be beaten that easily.

"Well, that guy is probably impossible for Ruijerd after all."

At any rate, he is one of the [Seven Great World Powers] after all.

How can you win against him?

"You can't win."

Can't win, huh.

As I thought is there just too big of a difference in real ability?

"He is, you know, the strongest in this world. With his body being restricted by a number of curses that is."

Oh?

However, isn't the Dragon God number two on the seven great world powers?

What about number one?

"The Technique God is strong as well. However, if they were to fight seriously, the one to win would be Orsted. Orsted can use the techniques and arts of all living things in this world. Adding to that, he has the Dragon God's peculiar characteristic magic and

he can even use his own original magic."

All of the techniques and arts, huh.

That would make him like a certain Last Savior of the Century then.

"Oh~, is there something like that in your world as well?"

He can copy all of the techniques opponents have used against him up until then.

Although even if he doesn't use the techniques of his opponents he's still strong.

With just a single fingertip to his opponents and they go poof.

"With just a single fingertip huh. That's amazing. However, Orsted is amazing as well. If he gets serious, he can destroy this world."

Is he that strong?

The expression of strength seems to feel overshadowed.

Abnormal? Natural disaster?

"Though, thanks to a curse he can't get serious."

Is that the case?

Curses sure do seem troublesome.

By the way, is it fine if I ask something?

"What is it?"

You know.

You said just now that you didn't know about the curses.

The curse that makes him hated and the curse that makes it so you can't see him.

Even though you said you didn't know the others, how do you know he can't get serious?

"...Ummm."

Ah, actually it's fine.

Since it's the last time, let's keep it friendly.

Even if you're hiding something, I won't really feel bothered by it.

I know that you were doing a courtesy for Ruijerd now after all.

Just the other day as well, thanks to you I was able to save both Lilia and Aisha as well.

If I take that into account, even if there are some lies mixed in some places, I won't be bothered over it.

Even after this, the fact that you might have wanted me to do something as well, it's all become water under the bridge after all.

Although in reality, there are various other things that I want to hear about.

For example, why you pulled me towards the Great Demon Emperor?

For example, where the other missing people are located?

For example, in the first place what was your real objective?

Even if I heard it at this point, it's all stuff that I can't help either way after all.

Well, what is it.

We're both companions in mutual mistakes, let's keep up with it being friendly.

Let's forget about formalities and make some noise.

Dancing naked and hidden talents are both okay, of course I won't be bothered by you expressing yourself as well.

"Last?"

Yeah, last.

Isn't that the case?

Since I died after all.

"I see now, and then you've fallen into self-abandonment... It's completely reversed from the first time isn't it?"

That time, I died while not knowing what was going on after all.

This time is, well, it can't be helped.

Besides, somehow or other, on the verge of death, I had the feeling that I knew I would end up coming here after all.

I don't know where people go when they die, but I thought you would come to talk to me on the verge of death.

And my consciousness is starting to fade.

It seems like it's about time for us to part.

I'm glad I was able to talk to you with a calm feeling for the last time.

"Is that so? Then, I have good news for you."

Hn?

"You aren't dead."

After I realized it, the hole in my chest had disappeared.

2

Suddenly, I woke up.

Eris was nearby.

In front of my eyes.

I was lying down looking up at Eris.

I quickly realized that it was a lap pillow.

Eris was looking at my face with a worried expression like she saw something that she didn't want to see, when I opened my eyes she made a relieved face.

Her eyes were bloodshot.

"Ru-rudeus... have you woken up!?"

"U... ge... ha!!"

When I went to say something I spit up blood.

"Rudeus!"

Eris embraced me.

"[Cough]... [Cough]...!!"

I continued to vomit blood and violently choked on it.

Eris was caressing my back.

"...Are you all right?"

I looked at Eris's perplexed expression, I tilted my head.

"Why... am I alive?"

The wound on my chest had completely healed.

Completely would be a faulty expression.

There was still a large hole opened in the center of my robe, and there was a scar almost as if it was welded together on the skin that could be seen under it.

Well now, it's rather odd.

Even though my right hand is not a parasite, it's just a lover.^[31]

"Just now, that woman said something, then that one called Orsted or whatever healed you using healing magic."

Eris answered me while confused herself, with a question she had to me in response to my genuine doubt.

"Woman?"

"The one called Nanahoshi."

Nanahoshi.

That girl huh.

Come to think of it, she was called that wasn't she?

However, Nanahoshi, I have the feeling I've heard it somewhere.

Also, it was even this past year or so.

Where was it again, I can't remember.

"Does that mean they especially went out of their way to heal the opponent they killed?"

I wonder what they were thinking.

However, I was certain he had pierced my heart.

Damage to vital internal organs can't be healed with intermediate healing magic.

In other words it must have been Advanced, or even higher.

Orsted used healing magic that healed fatal level wounds in an instant.

It might not necessarily be a lie when Hitogami said that he can use all of the techniques and arts in this world.

"It was utter defeat..."

When you say the class is different, it must mean something like that.

Second of the [Seven Great World Powers].

And, according to what the Hitogami said, the strongest in the world.

Either way, it's not just for show.

Ruijerd, Eris, and I as well were all taken out.

Taken out with effort to spare.

Moreover, it seems that he was never serious from the start.

"How is Ruijerd?"

"He still hasn't woken up yet."

After looking, Ruijerd is laying on the side of the road.

The carriage as well was brought to the side of the road, and a bonfire was started.

Did Eris do it all herself?

"It's the first time I've seen Ruijerd laying horizontally."

"Rudeus don't talk yet. You were just spitting up blood."

"I'm already fine. It was just the portion that was remaining in my throat."

Even while saying that, I didn't move from Eris's lap.

I don't want to move.

I want to stay here forever.

If I were to turn over right now, I wonder if she would hit me in objection.

Only those sorts of things were floating into my head.

I wonder if they're survival instincts coming out.

When people are about to die it seems they feel like leaving offspring after all...

I can't really tell for sure though.

Yeah, it's already fine.

I'll go with not thinking about anything difficult.

I'll continue lying down.

"Living is so wonderful."

While saying that I turned my body around, and embraced Eris's hips.

I took a deep breath, and I have a feeling that I caught on to a somehow bittersweet scent.

"Rudeus... it seems you're considerably healthy."

"Hn? Somehow, you know, I feel like a variety of things are overflowing."

More than usual even.

I'm sure it's because of that man known as Orsted.

Or else, maybe it's because I saw the dream with Hitogami.

I'll say it once more, but I don't really have the feeling that I wandered the boundary between life and death.

However, it wasn't a mistake that I feel more energetic when I woke up.

"Then, will you be all right even if I hit you?"

Eris's trembling voice came out.

Great anger it seems.

Well, it can't be helped.

Even though she was worried about me, I suddenly sexually harassed her after all.

Even I would get angry, that is...

"Indeed it is."

I was hit.

Lightly with a bop.

And then, I was pulled in and had my head embraced.

I could feel the soft sensation of Eris's chest in my cheek.

Deeper inside the beating of her heart and from above the quiet sobbing as well.

"...U... gusu..."

Eris cried.

She quietly cried.

"I'm glad..."

Eris whispered that.

I was exhausted so I patted her back.

CHAPTER 11

END OF THE JOURNEY

1

After that three days passed.

And then we entered the Asura Kingdom.

The place of our objective is already imminent.

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say we've already arrived.

Even though that's the case the expressions in the party aren't clearing up.

The incident that just happened the other day cooled things down a lot I'm sure.

The gap between the bright expressions of the people passing by us on the road is intense.

It was complete defeat after all.

We were all too quickly annihilated, I even had my life stolen.

I don't know what kind of whim it was, but he especially went out of the way to revive me.

If it weren't for that, I wouldn't be in this world.

In my regards I can't really feel the reality of it.

It's something mysterious to even me, but that time I wasn't really feeling very much fear.

The instant he dealt the final blow, I certainly thought that I didn't want to die.

I thought it wouldn't be strange for it to end up as a trauma.

Even though that's the case, by the time I had woken up, for some reason I was completely refreshed...

That's not really the correct way of putting it, but "[Ah, a dream huh.] I had that sort

of feeling.

The same sensation as when you see a nightmare.

Is it because the sensation when I was on the verge of death is connected with that dream, though it felt like everything was a dream it could have been that kind of feeling.

After thinking that, I considered that the Hitogami might have planned that and interrupted my consciousness at that moment.

Honestly, there's an unbearable feeling like I was instinctively denying it as well, but it seems like he was also thinking about Ruijerd, so it might be that he's not actually all that bad of a guy.

2

Ever since I was on the verge of death, the distance between Eris has felt somehow really close.

Previously when we were sitting in the carriage, there was more of a slanted feel to how we would stand,

"It's balance training, why don't you try it as well Rudeus?"

Is how she said it, but recently it's become sitting.

Right by my side.

With a distance where her thighs were glued to mine.

After getting to that distance, there were various things that came into my sight.

For example this is about a certain day.

I could peek in at the skin from the hem of Eris's pants and clothes.

And then after peeking at such a thing, the human heart wants to unintentionally caress such a thing.

Since that's the case I just unintentionally caressed with my right hand to see, then I get glared at with a bright red face.

Here as expected, even I was hesitating a bit.

That's right, she won't hit me.

Eris won't hit me.

Everything I've done until now that she would hit me for, but now she won't hit me anymore.

She just glares at me with her face bright red.

Just staring at me like that.

Moreover, unchanged as always Eris continues to sit down as if she's stuck to me again.

Until now if I had made such actions then she would have pulled back a certain distance.

However, our current distance has remained close.

Being serious though, I'm starting to feel like I want to just stick my hand straight into her pants, so I'd like for her to separate for a bit around now.

I know there are things that you can finish with a laugh and can't just laugh off.

And even I understand that I want to do the things that can't just be laughed off.

I'm enduring it.

Unknown to that kind of conflict within me, Eris's distance is close.

"..."

If I were to let my hand do as it pleases then it ends up stretching out in the direction of Eris.

Therefore.

Currently, I've started the operation where I'm creating magic with my left hand and then using my right hand to disturb that magic power.

It's the magic Orsted used.

If I remember correctly it was called, "Ran Ma" [Magic Disturber].

Just before the magic power that comes out of my hand takes shape, I use a different magic power to interfere with it and cause it to scatter.

It's simple and it consumes a very small amount of magic power, but it's an amazing technique.

After thinking about it, the King Class Barrier used a similar method to nullify magic.

It's simple to say it in words, but it's actually considerably difficult to put it into practice.

I wonder if it's because I'm trying to use the magic with my left hand.

More often than not the magic fails to take shape.

In order to completely nullify it like Orsted did, it must take a considerable amount of practice.

However, even just this much should work as a restraint.

No, he really taught me something good.

"Hey Rudeus, what have you been doing since just now?"

"I'm trying to imitate the magic that Orsted used."

After saying that Eris fixed her gaze on my hand.

In my left hand a small warped rock part was created and then suddenly fell to the ground.

Another failure.

It feels kind of like trying to play rock, paper and scissors with both hands.

I always end up allowing my right hand to win.

I can't just do whatever is relevant.

Most likely, there's some sort of rule for the magic power to operate along or else it won't work.

Yeah.

The fact that whatever works, won't work means there's some sort of rule at work during the time it's being disturbed.

Then, if I were to take into consideration the rule when I release the magic power, in reverse would I be able to nullify [Magic Disturber] as well I wonder?

The dream is spreading out.

"What kind of magic is it?"

"It's magic that nullifies magic."

"Can you do such a thing?"

"That's what the purpose of this practice is for."

"How do you know about something like that?"

"Since there have been a number of cases where my magic has been sealed and I've been unable to do anything recently, I'm researching it after all. Well, in the case that we end up meeting Orsted and have to fight again, don't you want to at least be able to run away?"

Eris was at a loss for words after hearing that, she just kept silent.

After a short while, the sound of the rocks falling and rolling around continued.

"Hey, why is Rudeus that strong?"

Eris was silent for a long time, but suddenly she came out asking that.

I wonder if I'm strong.

No, there's no way that can be the case.

I'm not bragging, but these past few years, I haven't felt the reality of my own strength at all.

It was an everyday life with nothing but powerlessness.

"I think Eris is the strong one though?"

"That's not the case."

"..."

"..."

There the conversation paused.

Eris seemed to want to say something, but she kept silent since it seemed difficult to say.

I wonder what it is.

I don't know.

No, it isn't that I don't know.

"Are you still bothered by the fact that we were beaten so easily the other day?"

"...Yeah."

I'm sure that can't be helped.

Just as Hitogami said, that guy is the strongest in the world, Dragon God-sama.

Even that Ruijerd was lightly dealt with.

The opponent was bad.

In this world, there exists a domain that can't be reached through just hard work.

In my previous life, I tried a variety of things, and I was able to reach a reasonably high level in some of them, but I never even once was able to reach the highest level.

Playing a game, if it was this then I thought I could be unbeatable, but there are always those who can go above you.

It seems that Orsted is impeded by a number of restrictions as well.

Even with that in terms of physical techniques he exceeded Ruijerd, he dealt with Eris with one hand, and completely rendered me powerless.

Furthermore, he fought and defeated us in such a way that the greatest amount of damage to our HP^[32] would accurately be hit.

It seemed he still had plenty of spare energy remaining as well.

I have no idea how strong he would be if he got serious.

It seems he can't become serious because of the curse, but...

Even if he doesn't get serious, you can't win against that guy.

Most likely, no matter how much effort you put in you'll never win.

"The opponent was bad, that can't really be helped."

"...But."

I understand Eris's worried feelings.

At any rate, Eris was defeated in a single blow after all.

He just caught her sword and just like that she was blown away.

"Eris is still young, depending on your effort you can still become stronger."

"I wonder if that's true."

"Yeah, Ghyslaine and Ruijerd both said it didn't they?"

Eris suddenly raised her face.

She was looking straight at me.

"Rudeus was about to die you know? How can you be that... how can you say it so simply?"

That is... because the feeling doesn't really remain very much.

I'm not thinking about fighting at all.

The next time I see that guy's face, I'm running away like a rocket.

Or else like a mouse, hiding in the shadow of something.

If I can't run away then this time I might beg for my life.

If my wish can be granted, I really hope Eris doesn't have to see that spectacle.

However, putting that pathetic intention into words is embarrassing.

"Since I don't want to die next time."

"...That's right, you don't want to die right."

"Please feel relieved. Even if Eris gets into a dangerous situation, I'll make sure I can at least escape holding on to you."

Eris made a complicated face and placed her head on my shoulder.

If I were to caress her head here right now, I thought it might end up happening, but my right hand is currently in the middle of Magic Disturber.

"Well, in any case, it won't be good if I don't get a bit stronger."

A bit more.

That's right, a bit more.

As expected, I won't be able to become the strongest in this world.

The ceiling of this world is way too high.

I couldn't even become the best in the world in my previous life.

Without even a glimpse of that talent, even the means of my effort was incompetent.

I don't know how much talent I have in regards to this world, but it doesn't seem like I can believe in something so simple about myself and be devoted to it.

However, I want to at least be able to run away if I end up running into some kind of weird guy and suddenly get attacked.

I buried my face in Eris's hair, [Sniff] [Sniff], while smelling the scent, I was thinking about that.

3

After it became night and Eris fell asleep, I started a conversation with Ruijerd.

Since that day, the number of things he was saying had decreased even more than usual.

He was never all that talkative in the first place, but became completely sullen and silent.

It seems he's bothered over that time.

He's a man with a strong sense of responsibility after all.

Even though he promised to escort us home safely, he might think he wasn't able to protect that.

It's stupid.

Even though it was rough luck, I'm as healthy as I look.

"That man known as Orsted was the Dragon God it seems. The second of the [Seven Great World Powers]."

First I entered using those words as a jab.

It can't be helped since the opponent was strong.

While holding onto that sort of nuance.

"I see, that does explain it..."

"He sure was strong wasn't he, after that, I was done in without being able to do a thing as well."

"The last time I realized with a glance that I had no chance of winning hasn't been since the time of Laplace."

According to Hitogami, it seems that Orsted is stronger than Laplace.

It seems even including the fact that he's under restrictions that won't let him become serious...

There's no point in telling Ruijerd about that.

He was dealt with using just physical techniques while being taken down easily.

That fact might have been a shock to Ruijerd.

Is what I thought, but,

"Even I never thought I would stand a chance against the upper ranks of the [Seven Great World Powers]. Those guys are true monsters that are beyond comprehension. I can't call it anything but bad luck that we would run into a guy like that just walking along the side of the road. And then I can't call it anything but good luck that we managed to survive. Rudeus if you ever meet a guy like that again, never pick a fight with them. There's no way to match them. If you don't want it to end up like this time at least."

"Yeah. Well, next time I'll probably avoid eye contact and pass through."

I was scolded by him.

Well, if I hadn't called out to him then it would have ended with nothing but passing by one another after all.

Let's go with reflecting on that.

Although, from the start he really didn't look like that much of a dangerous guy to me...

No, Ruijerd and Eris were showing that much of a reaction, I should have been more cautious.

"Then, what are you worrying about?"

After asking Ruijerd looked over at me.

"What is Hitogami?"

Oh. That matter.

"That guy had intended to overlook us at first. Even while scattering his blood thirst, he wasn't even taking us into consideration. However, the moment the name Hitogami came out of his mouth, his blood thirst was entirely focused on you."

I closed my eyes.

Should I tell him, or should I not.

I think I used to have the answer decided but...

It seems that despite how he looks the Hitogami isn't all that bad of a guy, even after such a thing happened I'm still hiding it.

It is also true that I don't like that fact.

Since that's the case, I decided to tell him.

"Actually, Hitogami is..."

Even though I worried about it that much, after I made a decision it quickly came out.

And then my mouth smoothly moved.

The fact that since the time of the teleport incident, an unknown individual calling himself Hitogami has occasionally appeared in my dreams.

The fact that individual gave me advice to help Ruijerd.

The fact that more than that he granted me a variety of other pieces of advice.

The fact that many of my strange actions were due to following those advice.

And then, the fact that Hitogami and Dragon God have a relationship of hostility.

My conversations with Hitogami are hazy and I think there were many things I was

forgetting.

However, I think I conveyed all of the general parts.

"Hitogami and Dragon God... The seven gods of the ancient times huh... It's suddenly turned into an unbelievable story."

"I'm sure."

"However, there are parts where I can understand."

After saying that Ruijerd went silent.

Only the sound of the fire wood crackling away ruled the place.

The shadow created by the fire swayed from side to side, a single older warrior's face came to mind.

Thanks to his race Ruijerd looks young, but that expression has something that shows of its long history.

Suddenly, I remembered touching on the matter of the curse about Ruijerd in my last dream.

"Come to think of it, Ruijerd-san. It's about the dishonor of the Supard race, but it seems that was a curse."

"...What?"

"Putting it precisely, Laplace transferred his own curse into a spear and then had those spears given out to the entirety of your race... that sort of thing it seems."

"I see... a curse..."

I intended to bring it up as good news, but Ruijerd continued to think about it even more with a gloomy face.

"I had never heard about him transferring the curse, but if it's Laplace then it's possible. That guy was a man who could do anything after all."

I'm not really sure on the details, but I'd imagine Ruijerd would be more familiar with things regarding curses.

It seems like he thought about a variety of things for a short while, but finally he laughed weakly.

"If it's a curse then there's no method to remove it."

"Is that the case?"

"Yeah. Curses are curses because there's no method to remove them."

So there's no method to remove curses, huh.

"I've never heard about curses placed on the entirety of a race but... If it's something that god said, it might be the truth."

I laughed in self-derision, that I might have said something pointless.

I thought it was just the light, but I slightly saw tears welling up in the edges of the eyes.

"But."

"What is it?"

"The Human God said that the curse in the spear was different than normal, it seems it was about to disappear after the passage of time."

"What?"

"He said that the remaining curse is in Ruijerd himself, thanks to cutting your hair it's started to rapidly fade."

"Really!"

Ruijerd suddenly said that in a large voice.

Eris moved a bit and raised her voice with a "Hnn..."

I wonder if it would have been better to let her hear this conversation as well...

Well, it's fine if I tell her when she wakes up.

"Yeah. It seems that it's just the remains of the curse now and the prejudice received from the start of the curse supposedly. Depending on the effort Ruijerd-san puts into it from here on out, the popularity of the Supard race can slowly recover."

"I see... I get it, so that was how it was."

"However, it's something Hitogami said, I think we can believe what he says to some

extent, but it's better not to swallow the story whole. It's better to keep going with caution just like up until now."

"I understand. However, it's plenty for me just hearing that."

Ruijerd went silent.

It wasn't just the light playing tricks on me anymore.

Ruijerd let tears flow.

"Then, it's about time for me to sleep."

"Yeah."

I decided to pretend as if I hadn't seen those tears.

The Ruijerd-san that we rely on is a strong man who would never let tears flow.

4

And then one month after that.

We were aiming straight north.

Rather than going in the direction of the capital, we travelled further north along a thin road.

We moved from point to point along small rural villages, continuing north with fields of wheat, water wheels, and small huts along the sides.

We never even bothered collecting information.

With the fastest speed possible, we aimed north.

I thought we would understand all of the information once we arrived at the refugee camp.

However, more than that, it's just a bit more, the thought that I wanted to hurry and arrive.

We arrived in the Fedoa region.

We came to know there was nothing left.

No, we had already known about this matter.

Just, in that place which there used to be something, there was now nothing.

The field of wheat, the flower garden of Batirusu, the water wheel shed, as well as the livestock sheds it was all gone.

It was just a grass-covered plain spreading out.

A vast, vast grassland.

While holding a sense of loneliness from that spectacle, we arrived at what you could call the only current town in Fedoa region.

We arrived at the refugee camp.

The land of our final objective.

Just a few steps before the entrance of that place, Ruijerd stopped the carriage.

"Hn? What's wrong?"

Ruijerd descended from the driver's seat.

I looked over the surroundings wondering if a monster had appeared, no shadows of an enemy.

Ruijerd walked around to the back of the carriage and said it.

"I'll be taking my leave here."

"Eh!!"

The words that were suddenly declared.

I raised my voice in surprise.

Eris's eyes were opened wide as well.

"Wai-wait just a minute."

We got off the carriage as if we were about to fall over and went to face Ruijerd.

Isn't this too fast?

We only just arrived at the refugee camp.

No, we haven't even arrived yet we're just standing outside of it.

"At the very least how about taking it easy for one day or so, No, at least come together with us into the town?"

"That's right, after all..."

"There's no need."

Ruijerd looked at us with those blunt words.

"There's no need for a warrior here. There's no need for protection."

"..."

Eris went silent in response to those words.

Honestly.

I might have forgotten about it a bit.

Ruijerd came along only just to see us up to our hometown.

Now that the objective has been completed, it's only natural for us to separate.

Even though I thought we would be together forever.

"Ruijerd-san..."

After opening my mouth I hesitated.

If I try to detain him, will he stay I wonder...

No, after re-thinking it, I have brought a heavy amount of troubles onto this man.

There were certainly plenty of times where I have troubled him, but the times when I showed him my shameful parts were common.

Even though that's the case, he recognized me as a Warrior.

I don't think I can depend on him anymore than this.

"If it weren't for Ruijerd-san, I'm sure we wouldn't have been able to make it here in

three years."

"No, if it was you then it should have been possible."

"There's no way that's the case. Since there are places where I'm lacking, I think I would have stumbled somewhere."

"As long as you can say that you'll be all right."

There were quite a few situations where I had no solution.

For example, the time when I was captured in Shirone, if it hadn't been for the existence of Ruijerd, I would have panicked more, I'm sure I would have been more distracted.

"...Rudeus, I said it once before, but."

Ruijerd looked over me with an even more peaceful face than usual.

"You've already accomplished yourself as a magician. Even though you possess that much talent you haven't grown arrogant. You should hold self-awareness that you were able to do that much at such a young age."

I received those words with complicated feelings.

Even if you say youth, the age of my experiences has already gone over 40 years.

The reason I haven't grown arrogant is because I still have memories of that time.

However, even if I said it's 40 years, if I look at it in comparison to Ruijerd's age, then it would enter into the category of young.

"I..."

Here is where I should I have started to talk about my bad portions.

However, I had a feeling that would have been just too shameful.

In front of this man, I want to stand a bit tall.

"No, I understand. Ruijerd-san, we've really depended on you quite a bit until now."

After saying that and lowering my head, I was caught and stopped.

"Rudeus don't lower your head to me."

"...Why?"

"You might think you've been depending on me, but I think I've been depending on you. Thanks to you, I have the feeling I've been able to see hope for the recovery of my family's honor."

"I haven't done anything at all. I couldn't really do much at all."

In regards to the Magic Continent, I think we did end up making the name Dead End into something agreeable, but that was limited to just the framework of Adventurers.

Since our established reputation couldn't be used in the Milis Continent, while I was thinking about different methods to approach it, it just kept being put off.

In the end, since the time we came to Central Continent, we haven't done anything.

Up until now, I feel that the influence has started to come around a bit.

However, that is limited to just a bit.

Putting aside the largely remaining history of persecution in the world and of course the prejudice towards the Supard race, we weren't able to do anything.

"No, you were able to achieve a variety of things. You were able to teach someone like me who only knows how to honestly save children that a variety of methods exist."

"However, all of them had weak effects."

"However, it certainly has changed. I remember everything. According to your scheme in the Town of Rikarisu, the words of the old woman who said she didn't fear the Supard race. The happy faces of the adventurers who laughed without fear after hearing the name Dead End. The closeness to the Dedorudia race warriors who came to recognize us even after hearing the name Supard race. The Shirone soldiers who thanked me in tears after being reunited with their families."

Putting aside the first two, the two after were all Ruijerd giving it his best effort.

I haven't done anything.

"...That is Ruijerd-san, your own power."

"No. I couldn't do anything myself. It's been 400 years since the war, I moved around alone and I wasn't able to advance even one step forward. The one who allowed me to take that step forward was you, Rudeus."

"...However, that was always under the advice of Hitogami."

"Things about a god that I've never seen don't matter at all. The one who actually saved me was you. I don't know what you think, but I feel a debt of gratitude towards you. Therefore, don't lower your head, you and I are equal, rather than thanking, look with your eyes."

While saying that Ruijerd faced me and held out his hand.

While I was looking at him in the eyes.

Without averting my eyes from there I grabbed his hand.

"I'll say it once more. Rudeus, thanks for the assistance"

"We as well, thanks for the assistance."

While tightly holding onto his hand, the strength of Ruijerd was conveyed.

The inner corners of my eyes got hot.

This shameful I, this I who made nothing but mistakes, Ruijerd recognized me.

After a short while, we quietly released our hands.

That hand moved to the side and was placed on top of Eris's head.

"Eris."

"...What is it?"

"Is it fine if I treat you like a child in the end?"

"It's fine, really."

Eris bluntly responded.

Ruijerd lightly smiled and caressed Eris's head.

"Eris, you have talent. You should have enough talent to become far stronger than me."

"That's a lie, after all... That guy..."

Eris linked her lips together in a frown and made a sullen face.

Ruijerd suddenly laughed a bit, normally, he would have said words about training.

"You fought against someone with the name of God, and received their technique. The meaning of that..."

Understood?

Eris was definitely glaring at Ruijerd.

Before long, she opened her eyes wide.

"...I understand."

"Alright, good girl."

Ruijerd patted Eris's head and then removed his hand.

Eris continued with her lips shaped in a frown and grasped her fist tightly.

It looked like she was on the verge of crying but desperately tried to endure it.

I asked Ruijerd without taking my eyes off her.

"Ruijerd-san, what are you going to do from here on out?"

"I don't know, I intend to search around for survivors of the Supard race in Central Continent for a short while. If it's just me alone, then recovering the honor is just a dream within a dream after all."

"I see, please give it your best. If I have any spare time, I'll try playing some kind of hand."

"...fu... Then I as well, if I have spare time I'll look for your mother."

Ruijerd said that while facing me.

Preparations for a journey are unnecessary for him.

He can live and walk on with just the clothes on his back.

However, he suddenly stopped.

"Come to think of it, I still needed to return this."

While saying that, Ruijerd took off the pendant that was hanging around his neck.

The pendant I received from Roxy.

The Migurd race pendant.

It was the only item that connected Roxy and I.

"That is, Ruijerd-san please hold onto it."

"Is it fine? Isn't it a precious item?"

"It's because it's a precious item."

After saying that, Ruijerd nodded silently.

It seems like he'll accept it.

"Well then, Rudeus, Eris... Let's meet again."

While saying that Ruijerd left us.

The time when he decided to come along with us, he talked about all sorts of things, but during the time he leaves, it's in an instant.

I had a lot of things I wanted to say.

Meeting in Magic Continent and coming together with us to the Asura Kingdom.

Really a lot of things happened.

Enough that you can't even put it into words, a lot of things, a lot of feelings...

The feelings towards an ally who I don't want to part with.

"Let's meet again."

I summarized those feelings with just those words and watched Ruijerd's back disappear into the distance.

That's right, it's fine if we meet again.

I'm sure we'll meet again.

As long as we're both alive, definitely.

Eris and I watched Ruijerd's figure until we could no longer see him.

Just quietly, packed together with our thanks until now.



Just like this, our journey came to an end.

CHAPTER 12

REALITY OF THE DISASTER

1

Refugee Camp.

It was a quiet place.

In terms of scale, it was the size of a village.

Or on Magic Continent then you could probably just barely call it a town.

However, there was no energy.

There was an overall silent atmosphere floating around.

Even in regards to the scale, there were few people.

I could feel the presence of people inside of the log houses that were under construction.

Though it seems like there are at least a few people who plan to stay, but I couldn't feel their energy.

The atmosphere had stagnated.

In the center of such a refugee camp.

To a place almost like an Adventurer's Guild, we proceeded.

Refugee Camp Headquarters entrance was written there.

We entered inside.

There were a few people, but after all it was melancholic here as well.

I was getting nothing but bad premonitions.

"Rudeus, that..."

Where Eris was pointing her finger, there was a paper with the names of those who were missing.

In small letters, the names were crowded together written there.

Ordered by village and town respectively.

On the very top was, Fedoa region lord.

James Boreas Greyrat's name and written was "Seeking Information on Missing and Dead Individuals".

"Let's look later."

"Yeah."

A terrifying number of dead.

And then the fact that the name of the lord wasn't Sauros.

While holding both of those anxieties, we continued further into the building.

2

After informing of Eris's name at the counter, the old lady at the reception quickly went into the back.

And then, with an amazing vigor she returned with a pair of people.

A man and woman I have recollection of.

One of them was a man in his prime, wearing somewhat prosperous merchant-like clothes, with graying hair and a beard growing out into a face that you couldn't imagine anything but a butler.

It was Alphonse.

The other one was a woman with chocolate colored skin and wearing a swordsman like outfit.

"Ghyslaine!"

Eris ran at her with a full face smile rising to the surface.

She was so happy I was wondering if she had a tail.

I'm happy as well.

We never got any information on Ghyslaine, but she still looks energetic.

The fact that there was no information on Paul's side must mean that we passed by it during this past year.

Ghyslaine as well had a smile on her face after seeing Eris's face.

"Eris, No, Eris-sama, you did well making it here safely..."

"...Really, it's fine just as Eris."

Ghyslaine made a happy face for a short while, but soon that face turned into a frown.

Alphonse as well was looking at her with pity.

It can't be...

The feelings of anxiety attacked my heart.

"Eris... Let's talk inside."

Ghyslaine's voice was stiff.

Her tail was standing as well.

It's the face she makes when she's tense.

It wasn't just the face of her being delighted over Eris's return.

"I understand."

It seems Eris understood something after seeing that face as well.

Following Ghyslaine we walked deep into the building.

I was planning to continue following like that, and

"Rudeus-dono, please wait outside."

"Eh? Ah, yes."

I was stopped.

I nodded to Alphonse's words.

I see, for the most part I was in the position of someone being hired after all, they won't let me listen to the important talk.

"That's no good, Rudeus come as well."

Eris's tone was strong.

With enough presence that it couldn't be overturned.

"If Eris-sama says that it's fine."

The area around Eris's mouth was looking strained more than usual, her hands as well were being gripped enough to make them turn white.

3

We silently followed along through the corridor and entered a room like the officials meeting room.

In the center was a sofa and at the end was a vase with Batirusu flowers in it.

There weren't any unnecessary ornaments in the room, a cheap looking officials desk was there.

Eris went and sat down on the sofa without having to be told by anyone.

And then she took my hand and had me sit beside her.

Ghyslaine was the same as always, standing in the corner of the room.

Alphonse was standing in front of Eris, he was taking on the manner of a butler.

"Welcome home Eris-ojousama. We had already received contact about ojousama's return and we were awaiting you..."

"It's fine without the introductions, just say it. Who died?"

Eris interrupted the butler's words and asked in a stronger tone than anyone here.

Who died?

The words without being oblate were asked.

That stance was no doubt a strong gaze.

However, I knew that her heart was a whirlpool of anxiety.

Because, she was tightly holding onto my hand.

"That is..."

Alphonse hesitated with his words.

If it's this reaction then Sauros, huh.

Eris was a grandfather's child after all.

Even through everything she was imitating Sauros.

If he were to die as expected even Eris would get depressed.

Alphonse informed us as if to squeeze it out.

"Sauros-sama, Philip-sama, Hilda-sama... these three have all passed away."

The instant we heard those words, my hand was crushed.

And a pain intense enough to want to take it away.

However, rather than the pain, the reality that Alphonse informed us about, my brain was in disorder.

Isn't there some kind of mistake?

It's only been a little less than three years.

That's right, not even three years have passed.

No, you could say that soon three years will have passed.

"There's no mistake? Right?"

In response to Eris's trembling voice, Alphonse deeply nodded.

"Philip-sama and Hilda-sama teleported together and passed away in the strife zone. This is something that Ghyslaine confirmed."

Ghyslaine nodded.

"I see... Where was Ghyslaine teleported to?"

"The same place as Philip-sama, the strife zone."

Ghyslaine didn't talk about it in much detail.

On the way while breaking through the strife zone on foot, she discovered the remains of Philip and Hilda.

She just told us of that.

The condition of the corpses or the situation she found them in at the time were things she didn't say.

Just, going off that expression, I understood it was terrible.

I don't know what was terrible about it.

Was the condition of the corpse terrible?

Was the situation the corpse was in terrible?

Or else, did she see something else that would make you want to turn your eyes away even more.

Did she hear something that would make you want to seal your ears?

Eris just took a breath with a single, "Hnn."

The hand that was holding mine was trembling.

"And then, what about Grandfather?"

"...He took responsibility for the Fedoa region teleport incident and was executed."

"No way."

I spontaneously whispered it.

"What need was there for Sauros-sama to be executed?"

Taking responsibility for that natural disaster and executed?

Don't be stupid.

There's nothing he could have done about it.

Or else, are you saying he could have defended against it?

Didn't it just happen suddenly without any signs?

Taking responsibility for that?

"Rudeus, sit down."

"..."

My hand was pulled by Eris and I was forced to sit down.

It seems I had stood up at some point unaware.

Inexpressible feelings were turning around inside my head.

Thanks to the intense pain I couldn't settle them well.

My hand hurts.

No, even I understand.

Even without signs.

Even if you couldn't defend against it.

People died, all of the fields in the region and the crops produced there vanished.

The losses were immeasurable.

The displeasure was great and there would be blame.

There was no choice other than to have someone become the lightning rod.

Even in Japan in my previous life, whenever something happened, the prime minister would quickly take responsibility and resign.

At the time, I thought they should continue to look over the situation until it's solved in order to take responsibility, but simultaneously, I thought it might be a good method as well.

Through death, he ends up disappearing carrying with him the complaints of the

people.

The next one to take office is usually someone who is expected to fix the situation.

If you do that, to some extent you can cause peoples complaints to fall...

That's not all.

I'm sure, there was some sort of power struggle related among the nobles.

I don't know how much power old man Sauros had.

However, it seems he had enough power that losing his standing meant he had to be killed.

That's right, forcing him to agree to it is possible as well.

It's possible, but...

However, I wonder if that would end in this state.

An inactive refugee camp.

An unpopular headquarters.

I can't think that the country is seriously trying to reconstruct the Fedoa region.

If Sauros was still alive then possibly there would have been more activity and movement.

That old man was the type of person to be useful right at these times.

No. That's all a front.

In my regard that's all just trivial matters.

Eris's feelings.

After thinking about that, my heart can't remain calm no matter what.

Eris has no family left.

I don't know under what conditions Philip and Hilda died.

Was it before Sauros's death, or was it after?

Sauros was alive.

He could have even been called the last one.

It should have been fine even without killing him.

In that disaster.

In that teleport incident.

How many people do you think died?

Even though one hundred or two hundred pointlessly died.

Why did they especially have to go out of their way to kill a person who returned alive?

Even though Eris finally returned.

Ah, shit, I can't collect my thoughts. My hand hurts.

"Rudeus-dono, I understand your feelings but... this is the current Asura Kingdom."

It's not a problem that can be put to order with just a single word like that is it.

Alphonse.

Your own lord was killed you know.

Ghyslaine.

The benefactor of your life was killed you know.

I wanted to say it like that.

"..."

However, the words didn't come out.

Since Eris didn't say anything.

Even if I shouted here it can't be helped.

Even though I depended on them, even though we were relatives, in regards to me Sauros was a stranger.

Even though the family isn't saying anything, even if I said something it can't be helped.

"...And then, what's going to happen?"

Unusually, Eris didn't shout, didn't act violently, she just quietly asked.

"I've been told that Philemon Notos Greyrat-sama would like to welcome Eris-sama as a concubine."

Even I understood that Ghyslaine was letting out blood thirst.

"Alphonse! Do you intend to go along with that talk!?"

An angry roar from Ghyslaine.

It was a beast voice loud enough that I thought my ear drums would rupture.

"You remember what that man said don't you!"

In response to Ghyslaine in a rage, Alphonse remained composed.

"However. If we were to think about Fedoa region from now on then, a bit of inconvenience is..."

"There's no way she would find happiness marrying into that man's side!"

"Even if he's trash, it's a distinguished family. There are many instances of unwanted marriages that ended up in happiness."

"I don't know of any such precedent! Are you really thinking about Eris!?"

"What I'm thinking about is the Boreas family and Fedoa region."

"Do you intend to sacrifice Eris for that sake?"

"If it's necessary."

The two suddenly started quarreling.

I looked blankly up at the two.

When I realized it, Eris had stood up.

She released my hand, crossed both her arms, pushed her jaw out and was standing in the usual pose.

"Shut up!"

It was a sound loud enough for Ghyslaine to hold her ears.

Recently, I haven't heard it at all, Eris's serious loud voice.

However, her vigor quickly faded.

"...Leave me alone for a bit. I'll think."

After listening to a withering voice, the two were taken aback.

First, Alphonse went straight out of the room.

Ghyslaine looked reluctantly at Eris and left the room.

And then I remained.

I was hesitating over what to say to her.

"Eris... ummm..."

"Rudeus, didn't you hear me? Leave me alone for a while."

Indeed, it was a forceful tone.

I just received a bit of a shock.

After thinking about it, this might have been the first time in these past few years where Eris has rejected me.

"...Under... stood."

I quickly lowered my head and left the room with my back facing Eris.

And then on the verge of shutting the door, I had the feeling I heard the sound of a nose sniffing.

Alphonse prepared rooms for our sake.

In a certain house near the headquarters, most likely for the purpose of refugees, four narrow rooms were in a row.

I was carrying my own luggage into one of those rooms and Eris's luggage into an adjoining room.

I changed from traveling clothes into casual clothes.

I threw my robe with a clumsy trace of stitching in the center of it on the bed and left the room.

Returning to the headquarters.

I thought about talking to Ghyslaine and Alphonse a bit, but I couldn't find them.

As expected since I didn't have the energy, I absent mindedly looked at the notice board.

Paul's message, the one that I've seen a number of times these past few months, was there.

Search in the northern part of the Central Continent.

This was written at the time when I was 10 years old.

I'm soon to be 13 years old.

A considerable amount of time has passed.

The dead. I let my eyes glaze over the list of missing.

The column for Buena Village.

Among the names I know of, they were all lined up along the missing list.

However, more than half of those have lines drawn through them.

After glancing at the dead column, the same names had lines drawn through them.

It seems, if death is confirmed, then a line is drawn through and they're added to the dead column.

The list is missing fewer in number, but even then the list of dead column is densely

filled.

I noticed that Rawl's name had a line through it on the missing list and raised my eyebrows.

I heard that Rawls had died from Paul.

I hadn't heard the details about his cause of death though.

And then right below that.

The letters for Sylphy were on the missing column.

There was a line drawn through it.

I suddenly heard my heart pound with a beat.

It can't be, while thinking that I look at the column of dead.

It's not close to Rawl's name.

Looking at them in order from the top.

However, it's not there.

The name of Sylphiette wasn't there.

...Huh?

"Umm, this, there's a name here that has a line through it, but the name isn't on that side...?"

I thought it was strange so I asked the personnel.

"Yes, that would mean that they've been confirmed to be alive."

After hearing those words something in my chest fell.

Just like that it continued to pierce through my chest and fell into my stomach, after piercing through my stomach I thought I would crap myself.

Sylphy is alive.

I felt relieved over this fact.

"Then, umm, do you know how they can be contacted?"

"No, that is, unless you actually ask at the headquarters."

"It's the name Sylphiette, could I ask you to check up on it?"

"Please wait just a minute."

Several tens of minutes after I asked the personnel.

"I'm very sorry, there was no contact information registered."

"I, see."

Either she hasn't settled down yet or the person who found her updated the list and the person themselves hasn't added the contact information, one of those.

Otherwise, there's the possibility of omitting the entry, but I can't imagine it.

There's a high probability that Sylphy is alive.

For now I'll just be delighted over that fact.

Of course I'm worried.

For example the color of her hair.

The tint is a bit different from the Supard race, but it's the same green.

According to Hitogami, the curse doesn't apply to anyone that isn't a Supard race, she shouldn't be progressively bullied by anyone outside of the children of Buena village.

However, there are plenty of heartless people in the world.

She might be crying somewhere after being called out by her hair.

No, according to Paul, he said Sylphy can use healing magic with voiceless incantations.

It was just something I heard, but I felt like she already has enough power to survive on her own.

Similar to me, she might be acting as an adventurer somewhere.

I also heard that Lilia taught her manners and etiquette, I'm sure she could live anywhere.

Or she might not know her family has died and she might be searching for them.

Rather, if she managed to survive that teleport then that possibility is high.

I'll just pray that she didn't end up as a slave.

For the time being, I drew a line through Lilia and Aisha's names.

The name Rudeus already had a line drawn through it.

It seems that they had received a report that Eris was heading here, it must have included information on me as well.

Among the Paul household, the only name remaining is Zenith Greyrat.

After all, she must not have been found yet.

Next time Hitogami appears in my dreams I'll have to ask and see.

5

Eris still hasn't come out from her room.

I wonder if this is the first time that Eris who is fast at changing her mood has worried this long.

However, we traveled for a long time, when we finally returned back to our hometown, there was no warm family waiting to accept us.

As expected even Eris would get down over that.

After all I wonder if it would be better for me to return and comfort her...

No, I'll wait a bit longer.

While thinking like that, I returned to the building where I transported our luggage.

After returning I thought over a variety of things, but I couldn't think of what to do.

I'll rest for a bit.

Just at the time I was planning to leave for the headquarters, Alphonse called for me.

He had me sit down on a chair in his room in the Refugee Camp Headquarters.

Alphonse in front of my eyes, on my right Ghyslaine was sitting there.

The reason the two were sitting was probably because Eris wasn't around.

Different from me, they properly understand the employer and employee relationship.

"Now then, Rudeus-dono, since conciseness is necessary, please report."

"Report?"

"Yes, these past three years, what have you been doing?"

"Ah, that's right."

After being asked by Alphonse like that I started to talk about these past three years.

That we were teleported to Magic Continent and met with Ruijerd.

That we registered as Adventurers and moved while earning money.

That there was a bit of strife at the Great Forest.

That we met with Paul and the Fedoa Region Search Group in Milishion and there we understood the situation for the first time.

Then we went north while searching for information and about the strife in Shirone Kingdom.

Then about meeting Orsted in the Red Dragon's Lower Jaw.

Mostly centering around things that involved Eris, it was an exceedingly concise talk.

Alphonse listened quietly and finally sunk down.

Suddenly he raised his voice at our separation with Ruijerd.

"...Did that escort go back?"

"Yes, we depended on him quite a bit."

"Is that so, I thought about proposing an official reward from Eris-sama when she

calms down."

"He's not a person who would accept such things."

"Is that so?"

Alphonse nodded and then silently met with my gaze.

They were the fatigued eyes of a man.

"Then, Rudeus-dono... as for the people who were working for Sauros-sama, we are all that is left."

"...What about the other maids?"

"The fact that they haven't returned would mean they either died or returned to their hometown."

"I see."

Those cat ears were annihilated as well, huh.

It could be that a number of them returned to the Great Forest...

"Even after they received such assistance from Sauros-sama, it's sad."

"In the end, it's a relationship made through just money."

After saying that, Alphonse's poker face shifted a bit.

It might be a severe way of putting it, but it's that sort of thing.

"I hesitated over whether to add the still young Rudeus-dono in as well but... if you are able to answer in such a way then there should be no problem. You have protected Eris-sama and returned her home safely. In recognition of that achievement, we will recognize your enrollment as a vassal of the Boreas Greyrat family."

Vassal Group.

It seems that this is that sort of gathering.

"From here on we are going to start a Vassal Group meeting, but do you mind?"

A meeting huh.

I'm sure, even before the teleport incident, they had them when I wasn't around.

Probably, Ghyslaine as well wasn't included in them previously.

Now it's just the three of us, but formerly that is. A lot more vassals would have probably had a discussion.

"Thank you very much. Then what is the agenda?"

I had no intention of pointless talk, so I asked that.

At any rate, Philip and Sauros are already gone.

It's already been decided who the topic would be about.

"It's about Eris-sama."

Just look.

"Concretely, I would like to discuss about Eris-sama from now on."

"From now on?"

Think about it.

Eris returned to her home town.

However, there was nothing there.

Her family is gone and house is gone.

She can't return to how she used to live.

"Yes, Eris-sama from now on."

"Certainly Sauros-sama and Philip-sama have passed away, but it's not like the Boreas family itself has perished, right? Can't a house be prepared for her to live in?"

"James-sama is a person who worries over rumors, so he would most likely reject responsibility for Eris-sama."

James, Eris's uncle, huh.

The current lord.

If I remember right, he's the guy who got into a power struggle with Philip and won.

If he's bothered over rumors then certainly he wouldn't want Eris who isn't like a noble to be added into his family.

Her manners are pretty vague, it's hard to even treat her as a child of nobles.

Also, he should already have Eris's siblings included among his family.

Several other cousins as well.

If Eris were to cause some kind of problem with them, it's not hard to imagine.

Eris isn't so sweet that he would still want to take care of her knowing a problem would occur.

"Even if in case he would have been willing to look after her, whether he would treat her properly as a noble in the first place is suspicious... It's not unthinkable that he would have Eris-sama imitate a maid servant. Since that's the case, this is rejected."

I nodded to those words.

That's right, it's better to stop there.

Even though we could say Eris has become considerably more mature, her rough disposition is the same as always.

She's not enough of an adult that she wouldn't strike back when being looked down on.

"Next, Philemon Notos Greyrat-sama conveyed that if Eris-sama were able to return alive, he would definitely like for her to become his concubine."

Philemon. My uncle, huh. Paul's younger brother.

The current Notos family head was him.

It seems like old man Sauros hated him though...

He's the person who was the source of the quarrel from just before.

After looking at Ghyslaine, she lowered her brow and closed her eyes.

"It's not a bad talk, but there are a number of dark rumors about Philemon-sama."

"Dark rumors?"

"Yes, rumors about how he's been sucking up to High Minister Darius Silver Ganius for the recent assistance being given."

How is that a dark rumor I wonder.

I'm sure there are a variety of nobles, those with power making up to those with more power, isn't that normal.

"Lord Darius has been fixing problems for him these past few years, and he backs the first prince, they ended up having the second princess exiled from the country behind the scenes."

Hmmm.

I don't get it. Even if you suddenly start with the first and second, the only thing I know about is radio gymnastics.

"Philemon-sama was affiliated with those backing the second princess faction but..."

"Since she was exiled out of the country, that power has rapidly dropped?"

"That is correct."

That seems to be the case.

In other words, since his own boss was about to lose, he was scheming to change sides to the winning side.

"Isn't that fine just like that. What is the problem?"

"Rudeus-dono, do you remember the kidnapping incident some time ago?"

"Kidnapping incident?"

"The incident when real kidnappers abducted Eris-sama."

Ah, the one I suggested huh.

"The one who was behind that kidnapping, was Lord Darius."

"...Oh?"

"Lord Darius came to Fedoa region for a visit once, and it seems at that time he was considerably pleased after seeing Eris-sama at a glance."

"That is, in a sexual meaning?"

"Of course."

Then, since he was pleased with her, he asked Sauros to give her to him, but all too quickly he was refused, so he tried to abduct her.

The truth that has finally been revealed several years later.

No, in reality it should have already been confirmed at that time.

They just couldn't make a fuss out of it because the other side is a big shot.

I wonder why Sauros refused him.

...Is it because he hates Darius?

He was that kind of old man that decides everything based on feeling.

Well, in regards to what basis he used to make the decision, this dangerous topic is fine.

"In the case that Philemon-sama were to take Eris-sama as a concubine, with some kind of reason attached he would probably offer her to Lord Darius. Philemon-sama would treat Eris-sama like an item."

Hmmm, so that Darius is a pervert noble guy, huh.

It seems they're common in Asura Kingdom.

If what he's seeking is Eris, then I can't think his tastes are bad.

Though it's just his taste that isn't bad.

"Then, that's rejected isn't it."

"No, in regards to Lord Darius himself, I can only frown from what I know, but Lord Darius is the one who has the most influence with the current king. I'm sure Eris-sama

will experience some troubles, but her social status and treatment will be guaranteed."

"However...?"

"If it was a bit of selfishness, then Lord Darius should listen and give in. For example, reconstructing a village for the sake of the Fedoa region's population..."

I see now.

If you become the woman of one possessing power then you can use some of that power and money yourself.

Even though I say that, I really don't want Eris to become that kind of pervert's belonging.

"Any others?"

"On the side of other nobles, most likely Eris-sama is... Now that Sauros-sama and Philip-sama are dead, Eris-sama's worth as the daughter of a noble is almost nothing."

Worth, worth, huh...

Is it that sort of thing I wonder?

If you were to ask me, Eris has quite a bit of worth on her own...

"Rudeus-dono which way do you think would be best?"

".....before you ask my opinion, do you mind if I listen to Ghyslaine's opinion?"

In response to the sudden question I softly responded saying that, running away.

My thoughts still haven't collected yet.

"I think it would be best if Eris-ojousama remains together with Rudeus."

"Together with me?"

"You are Paul's son. Zenith as well is an influential noble from Milishion. Since your lineage and background are both clearly known, then you should be able to become a noble of Asura Kingdom."

No, I wonder about that.

I don't think I can.

While thinking that I look at Alphonse.

"It isn't impossible. Paul-dono has earned some merit from this incident, if we were to make use of that then making Rudeus-dono into a noble is possible. However, in order to become strong enough to manage Fedoa region, it would be difficult. I can't imagine that Philemon-sama would allow Paul-dono's son to hold any power. Also, if you were to marry Eris-sama in order to take on some power, then I can't imagine you would have a good face towards Lord Darius or James-sama."

I thought as much...

Well, but, I somehow or other understood it.

According to Alphonse's thinking, he's only focused on the region's recovery.

"Then it would be fine for Rudeus to take Eris-ojousama and run away."

"What about the Fedoa region?"

"You do something about it."

Ghyslaine's words were forsaking him.

She might fundamentally have a bad relationship with Alphonse.

"Isn't having Eris-sama govern this land that Sauros-sama loved precisely our dearest wish?"

"That's limited to your dearest wish, don't stick us together. I'm fine as long as Eris-ojousama is happy."

"Will she be able to be happy if she runs away with Rudeus-dono?"

"At the very least, more than if she were to marry Philemon."

"What about the people of this region?"

"It's not something we can know. From the start nothing of that sort was ever expected from Eris-ojousama."

The Vassal Group was split in half on difference of opinion.

I'll put it into order.

In other words, Alphonse wants Eris to follow in the footsteps of Sauros and Philip. And then, he wants her to govern this land.

If it's for that sake, he's saying that she should endure with doing some perverted things with a perverted noble.

Ghyslaine is saying that sort of thing has no relation and wants Eris to be happy.

If it's for that sake, she's saying to throw away power and family name, and elope with me.

If you were to ask me, I side more with Ghyslaine.

It's a sentimental thing.

After all, a girl I protected all the way up to here, I wouldn't want her to become the belonging of a guy like a pig.

No, I don't really know if that Darius guy is a pig or not though.

Even if that's the case, eloping with Eris is still the better option.

I really don't care about power at all either.

However, I understand somewhat what Alphonse wants to say.

He wants Eris to take over what Sauros started.

If I think about the importance of that matter, for the time being I can understand it.

Though I can't agree to it.

Well, it doesn't really matter which.

"We can't come to a conclusion."

I muttered that.

The two disputing looked over at me.

"What do you mean?"

In response to Alphonse's request, I said,

"In any case, the one to decide is Eris. There's no meaning in us talking about it like this. Rather than that, let's search for a more constructive topic. Isn't there anything else?"

Alphonse was looking at me with a dumbfounded face.

Ghyslaine as well, sunk into silence.

"If there isn't, then I'd like to go rest."

The meeting on that day came to a close just like that.

CHAPTER 13

YOUNG LADY'S DECISION

Author's Note: The chapter this time is a bit perverted in description, I tried to keep it in the Rated 15+ range but it might have ended up barely outside of this range, so anyone who dislikes these developments should be aware and avoid them.

1

By the time the meeting ended, the sun had already set.

I returned to my room.

It was a room with the bare minimum of furnishings.

I was going to organize my belongings but I wasn't feeling any motivation so I sat on the bed.

My body sank into the hard bed.

I was more tired than I thought, it seems.

"Fuu..."

I don't think I did anything today that should have worn me out.

I'm feeling really fatigued to the core.

Maybe this is mental fatigue.

No, that's not it.

I could be in shock as well.

Sauros, Philip, Hilda.

I wasn't all that close to them, but if I close my eyes I can still remember.

The time when Old Man Sauros came to check up on Eris when we went out to look at the countryside.

Philip, with a villain's smile, asking me to join him in usurping the Boreas family power.

Hilda telling me to become their child and marry Eris.

They are no longer in this world.

Even more, that house doesn't even remain.

That large house, where voices would sometimes echo is no longer around.

The banquet hall where I danced with Eris, the tower where I interrupted Old Man Sauros's love affair, the large amount of paperwork and books, it's all already gone.

It's not just the house. Buena village as well.

I haven't actually seen it myself, but the tree Zenith took so much care of, the tree Roxy burnt down with Saint Class magic, the large tree Sylphy and I played together at, it had all disappeared.

...When it comes to Buena Village, why is it that I remember so many trees?

Well, whatever.

Anyways, everything has disappeared.

I thought I understood it when Paul told me, but after actually seeing it, it's more of a shock than I thought.

"Fuuu..."

After my second sigh, *knock knock*, someone was knocking at the door.

"...Come in."

The one who came in was Eris.

"Good evening, Rudeus."

"Eris, are you feeling better now?"

"I'm alright."

Saying that Eris stood in front of me and took her usual pose.

It doesn't look like she's feeling too down.

As expected of Eris.

After just learning that her family has been annihilated, she's way stronger than me it seems.

No, she could actually be feeling quite down.

Normally she wouldn't even have knocked on the door.

She would have kicked it open.

"Well, I thought this might possibly be the case a while back."

"Is that so..."

Eris said it as if it was nothing.

Sometime ago she said was prepared mentally in the case that this happened.

That she prepared herself for the possibility that her family had died.

It's something I couldn't have done.

Even now I'm still thinking that somewhere Zenith is out there alive.

Even if I understand in my head that the possibility of her being dead is higher.

"Eris, what are you going to do from here on out?"

"What am I going to do?"

"Um, have you heard the story from Alphonse yet?"

"I heard. However, that doesn't matter at all."

"Doesn't matter at all..."

Eris was looking straight at me.

Suddenly, I finally realized, her appearance was different from normal.

Eris was wearing the black one piece she bought in Milishion.

The black one piece matched well with her red hair, almost like a dress.

Maybe because of the thin material, but her chest really stood out.

Hm?

It's because she's not wearing a bra.

After looking closely I noticed her hair was a bit wet.

It looked as though she just washed it in the bath.

That's not all, I could smell a bit of a sweet smell unlike normal.

What is it?

I've smelled something like it before. Perfume?

"Rudeus. I'm alone now."

Alone?

Ah, I see.

Her family is already gone.

She still has blood related siblings, but no family.

"And, I turned 15 recently."

Speaking of 15 years old... hearing that I panicked.

When was it?

When was her birthday?

My birthday was 1-2 months ago or so.

Therefore, it was more than a month ago.

I didn't realize.

"Umm, sorry, I totally didn't realize it."

When was it?

I don't think I saw anything that would have shown that.

If it's Eris, normally she would be making a lot of noise around her birthday.

Was there a day Eris did something unusual?

I can't remember.

"Rudeus didn't realize, but it was the day Ruijerd told me I was now an adult."

"Ah."

It was that day, huh.

I remember, right in the middle of the road, now I understand, that's why. That's why Ruijerd told Eris she was now an adult.

This is bad, I might have screwed up.

Did I really not realize...

"Umm, is it alright if I prepare something now? Is there anything you want?"

"That's right, there is one thing that I want."

"What is it?"

"A family."

I was at a loss for words.

That is something that I can't really prepare.

I can't revive people from the dead.

"Rudeus, become my family."

"Eh?"

I suddenly looked at Eris's face in the darkness and it was bright red.

Then that is that.

A proposal?

No, it can't be.

"That is, then, you want to be older sister and younger brother?"

"It doesn't matter what the relationship is."

With a bright red face down to her ears Eris was avoiding eye contact.

"In other words, umm, let's sleep together, is what it means."

What does it mean?

Calm down, think about the meaning of the words.

...Sleep together.

I understand.

In other words, with everything that's happened, Eris is in shock.

In order to heal the wounds in her heart, she wants to know she's not alone and feel the warmth of another.

Family.

In this case it would be playing family. But...

"Even though you were feeling lonely today, I might try to do something perverted?"

Some night in the past I said something similar to that.

Frankly, I have no confidence.

I have no confidence that I can hold myself back while lying in the same bed and feeling Eris's warmth.

Eris should understand something like that as well.

Right...

"To-today it's okay."

"I told you before though, I won't be able to stop at just a little bit."

"I remember. Today, it's alright if you mess me up."

Hearing that reply, I just kept staring at Eris's face.

Thinking about what I just heard.

But.

If you say something like that, my son's gonna do a standing ovation you know?

"Wh-why are you suddenly saying something like that?"

"Didn't we promise that it would be okay when I turned 15?"

"I thought we were talking about when *I* turn 15?"

"I don't mind either way."

"Mind it!"

Strange.

Something is very strange.

Think, what is strange?

That's right.

In other words Eris is lonely.

She might be throwing herself away.

I've experienced many scenes like this in ero games.

When someone dies, they go to someone else in order to comfort them.

And a physical relationship is formed.

Yeah, I understand.

However, if I lay my hand on her, then isn't it like I'm taking advantage of her weakness?

Do I want to do that?

My worthless parts are yelling "Graduate from your Virginity!" and feeling very happy.

But, wouldn't it be better to do that under more normal circumstances?

I don't think it's a good idea to do it in this mentally cornered state.

If we do it while both of us are suffering emotionally.

Later, we might regret it.

Ah, but, a chance where Eris says it's okay might not come again.

In the case that Eris goes to where Philemon is, certainly the promise at 15 years old will be scrapped.

No, in the first place, if someone else steals her virginity...

Do it.

I want to do it.

However, I feel like I shouldn't do it.

I'm an indecisive harem story protagonist.

A coward when it comes time to show his manly side.

But, in reality when it comes down to it I'm retreating.

I can't think of a good word for it.

What would be the best choice.

I have a feeling I'll end up regretting it regardless of which decision I make.

I'm sure I'll regret it two years later.

Expecting Eris on a bed wrapped in ribbons on my 15th birthday.

[It's your birthday present! I might accidentally hit you, so I've tied myself up, do whatever you want with me!]

As if something like that would actually happen.

Ah, no, wait.

I almost died recently.

That time before I was about to die I was really regretting it.

Thinking that I still had something left to do.

Who knows if I'll still be alive 2 years from now?

I was in a number of critical situations up to now.

Wouldn't it be better to throw away my regrets and just do it now?

No, but, wait...

"...Geez!"

While I was lost in thought.

Eris coughed a bit and sat on my lap.

And facing me put her arms around my neck.



Eris's beautiful face and her sun burnt chest spread out before my field of vision.
When she noticed something between her thighs she opened her mouth a bit.
And her face went even more red.

"What is this..."

"Because Eris is cute."

Eris sighed and grinded her inner thighs against the head of my son.
That sensation was so sweet and soft.
My son was very delighted.

"This happens when you get excited, right?"

"Yeah."

"It's not like you don't want to do it with me, right?"

"Yeah."

"You were fond of Father and Grandfather as well, right?"

"Yeah."

"Rudeus, for a while now you've had a perverted look on your face."

"Yeah."

"Even though you've been saying we can't?"

"...Yeah."

I nodded for the last time.

My gaze was already pinned to her chest and nape.

I felt her soft thighs and the sensation of her chest pressing against me.

Inhaling a full breath of her scent.

My body was already giving in to instinct.

I gathered the last tiny bit of my reason and spoke.

"Promise... wasn't it a promise? Not to do it until 15."

Of course, that was just for show.

At this moment, frankly, I couldn't care less about it at all.

Why I'm even resisting at all is pretty vague.

Hearing my words, Eris sighed and said.

"Hey, Rudeus. I learned something from Mother but, it was forbidden, and since it's embarrassing I'm only going to say it once."

After saying that she took a single deep breath.

She brought her face close to my ear.

And said a single line with a voice like a child wanting to be spoiled.

Undoing the forbidden seal.

"I want to be Rudeus's kitten, nyan~"

Those words quickly invaded my ears and devoured my last bit of resistance and reason.

This person is called the problematic Mad Dog in public and it matches her perfectly.

A dog, a dog, but nyan!

I reacted with instinct.

Through instinct I become a beast and pushed Eris down on the bed.

2

That night.

Eris and I climbed the stairs to adulthood together.

During that moment I forgot about everything that was bothering me.

Only focusing on being together with Eris.

I never said it out loud, but I thought that I love her.

I thought I want to protect her forever.

I thought that nothing else beyond that mattered.

Didn't Paul say it?

Noble responsibility doesn't matter at all.

There's no need to think about anything difficult.

In order to save her, doing anything would be fine is what I thought.

I think 3 children would be good, but we'll probably make more is what I thought.

Yes, if that's the case.

I was totally happy.

I wasn't thinking at all about what Eris was thinking about.

3

--Eris Point of View--

That day I, Eris Boreas Greyrat became an adult.

I received Rudeus as my present for my 15th birthday.

It was a bit different from the promise, but I was bound together with Rudeus.

I love him.

When was it that I clearly became aware of it?

That's right, I'm certain the first time I realized I liked him was during his 10th birthday.

It was the time when my mother forced me up when I was sleeping, she put a deep red nightgown on me, and with a serious face said, "Go to his room and entrust your body to him."

It wasn't that I didn't want to do it.

However, I was a bit confused.

Things like that I had heard about a number of times from my mother and Edona.

Eventually it would become like that, is how I was instructed.

However, that day I still hadn't resolved myself.

I thought it would be further in the future.

Whether he knew or didn't know of my confusion, Rudeus touched my body.

It seemed like he was up until late talking about something with my father, could it be, that they had this kind of conversation?

While thinking that a certain thought rose to the surface within me.

"He might not like me."

It could be that, he had no choice other than to follow what my father told him and lay his hands on me.

Rudeus in those days was an amazing person.

He knew everything and could do anything.

Even though that was the case he never let his desire to learn weaken, and just kept advancing forward.

I wonder if he and I match together.

Looking at Rudeus who was breathing heavily, I thought my feelings didn't matter at all to him.

I am a reward given to him by my father.

After thinking that it became unpleasant.

I pushed him away and ran.

After running away from the room this time I was afraid.

That right now I could be doing something that I can't recover from...

It could be that right now I'm about to lose my final chance.

I was told by mother that there would be no other person than Rudeus willing to accept me.

I think that is the case as well.

I've met with the children of nobles a number of times, but there were none of them with as much backbone as Rudeus.

Rudeus has been interested in my body since he was younger.

He would often come to flip up my skirt and try to pull my panties down, and whenever he can he tries to touch my chest.

Each time I would hit him and drive him off.

During the short period when I went to school, there was a time when a boy tried to tease me and I hit him, that child never said anything cheeky again.

However, Rudeus didn't respond to it at all.

I strongly felt the reality of the words my mother said, that there is no one other than Rudeus.

If I'm to be hated by him, I thought I would be forever alone.

I thought isn't it fine even if it's as a reward?

As long as we can remain together.

I returned to Rudeus's room.

After seeing me, he rolled up into a ball like a frog.

He apologized saying he was wrong.

Even though it was me that wasn't resolved?

In response to him, while looking down from above, I said to wait another five years.

At the time I thought that much would be good.

If it was the adult Rudeus, I thought he would wait for me.

That time I realized that I had come to like him.

However, the situation soon underwent a sudden change.

We were thrown to some unknown place, then when I opened my eyes what was in front of me was a Supard race.

I thought I was receiving retribution.

I thought I was receiving retribution for doing whatever I liked until now.

Mother always used to say any number of times if I'm always selfish a Supard race will come and eat me.

That's why I thought I would be eaten by this demon.

At least I felt it would have been good if I had let Rudeus do as he pleased at that time.

The main thing starts at 15 years old, but it's fine.

Until Rudeus is satisfied, it would have been fine if I had just endured.

I cried, screamed, and crouched to the ground.

The one who came to save me was neither Ghyslaine nor my grandfather, it was Rudeus.

He was talking with that Supard race.

Even though he should have been considerably worried as well, he was comforting and calming me who is older.

I thought how much courage he has.

I found another thing that I like about him.

After that Rudeus gave it his best.

With a pale face, he made a deal with the Magic Race.

He didn't eat much food at all.

He hid the fact that his condition was bad.

I'm sure it's so he doesn't worry me, he's suffering when I'm not looking.

That's why, I decided to endure it.

I'll bear with it during the times I want to cry out and leave it to Rudeus.

As much as I can, I'll continue to behave as I usually do.

However, there were a number of times where I couldn't endure it.

The anxiety never stopped, it continued to well up in the bottom of my heart.

Since it was a painful situation, I think I was being quite selfish.

Rudeus never got angry, he continued to stay by my side.

Without saying a single word of sarcasm, he caressed my head, embraced my

shoulders, and comforted me.

During those times he wouldn't do a single ecchi thing.

Even though he normally would do as he pleases, during just those times he would only touch my body as much as was needed.

I thought that being ecchi was his method of playfulness.

He might act like that on a normal basis in order to make us feel relieved.

That's how I thought.

He isn't thinking about just himself, but he was thinking about me as well.

I thought I had to become strong.

At least enough that I wouldn't get in Rudeus's way.

The only thing that I could do better than Rudeus was just waving a sword.

Just fighting.

Even in that, I'm still far from Ruijerd who became our ally.

If it was just the sword... but I can't win against Rudeus when he is using magic too.

Rudeus allowed me to gain experience.

I'm sure, if it was just Rudeus and Ruijerd, they could have defeated monsters in a simpler way, and they could have continued the journey in a simpler way without delay.

After thinking like that I felt like crying.

If Rudeus were to realize that, if he were to come to hate me along the way, he would leave me and return. That's how I thought.

Therefore, I desperately tried to get stronger.

I challenged Ruijerd for training and was defeated over and over.

Each time, I would hear Ruijerd say "Understand now?".

Each time, I would remember Ghyslaine's words.

Rational, that's right, it's rational.

There's rationality to the movements of a master.

If you see something stronger than yourself, first carefully observe them.

Ruijerd is strong, most likely stronger than Ghyslaine.

That's why I was watching.

Nothing but looking at his movements, trying to imitate it until I was able to do it.

Ruijerd helped me to become stronger.

All night long after Rudeus gets tired and falls asleep, without making an unpleasant face, he accompanied me with my training.

I did intensive training as well.

As if it was the most obvious thing, Ruijerd would beat me down.

For him who likes children, beating me down should have been something painful.

In regards to me, Ruijerd is already an existence I can call shisho.

One year after we started our journey.

I thought I had become strong.

I felt like I understood I was different from those days when Ghyslaine would say with a sour face, "rational-rational".

While training with Ruijerd I understood the true meaning of rational.

The movements of my body that were always fine being made up on the spot until now, every bit of them suddenly had a meaning to their existence.

I finally understood the meaning of the feints that I thought were crafty and the nonchalant pre-emptive attacks up until now.

Then one day, I managed to land my first hit on Ruijerd.

If I think about it now, it seems like he was distracted by some other matter.

However, in regards to me, those kinds of gaps didn't matter at all.

I managed to take my first hit off him.

With this I wouldn't get in Rudeus's way.

I can go on walking by Rudeus's side.

That's right, I was getting ahead of myself.

That impudence, Rudeus all too easily crushed.

He suddenly got his hands on demon eyes and all too easily pinned me down.

I lost to Rudeus.

In a head on battle without magic at that.

It was a shock.

I already have nothing left I can win against him with.

I thought it was unfair.

I thought that was against the rules.

The path that I had been walking down for a number of years, in a single go, he overturned it.

The same time reality was forced on me.

Without changing I was still holding him back.

I secretly cried.

Early morning the next day, while swinging my sword on the beach I cried.

Ruijerd said not to let it bother me.

From the start, Rudeus had a good affinity with demon eyes.

If you train, then you'll be able to become stronger.

He said I have talent, therefore don't give up.

What do you mean talent?

Ghyslaine and Ruijerd are full of lies.

I thought that.

Around that time Rudeus looked huge to me.

Overwhelmingly large, he looked as if he held a light so bright I couldn't look directly at him.

I was turning him into a deity.

If you were to speak of who is a perfect human, I would have answered Rudeus without a doubt.

I thought I needed to try and catch up somehow, but I had given up somewhere thinking it was impossible.

That only changed after we crossed over into Milis Continent.

We met Gisu, I came to understand that there were a variety of skills other than the sword and magic in the world.

I thought I would learn them, but I was rejected.

I thought, why? At that time.

I couldn't accept it.

And then the events at Milishion.

At the very least, I had to make sure I could do things on my own and then I went off to do the simplest Goblin Subjugation.

I wanted to think even a bit that I can do it by myself.

For the first time I came to realize a portion of my own talent at that time.

I ended up fighting against some strange assassins and overwhelmed the other side.

At some point I had grown without realizing it.

And then, when I returned, Rudeus had weakened.

After somehow listening to the situation, it seems Paul is in this town and his meeting with Rudeus was painful.

Even though he wasn't crying, while looking at the deeply depressed Rudeus, I remembered that he was still a child two years younger than me.

Even though that was the case, he became this selfish woman's home teacher, he never received congratulations from his family on his 10th birthday, and he was forced to travel along with someone dragging his legs down on the Magic Continent.

And then he was pushed away by his father.

It was something I couldn't possibly forgive.

For someone who is seated at the very lowest of seats in the Asura nobility, I decided in my heart to kill Paul Greyrat.

I often heard about the strength of this person known as Paul from my father.

It was talk about how he's a genius swordsman who has raised Sword God style, Water God style, and North God styles all three styles to Advanced level.

And then he's that Rudeus's father.

However, I didn't want to think that I might lose.

The things that Ruijerd had taught me had properly become power within me.

The swordsmanship taught to me by Ghyslaine and the combat techniques taught to me by Ruijerd.

If I hold both of those then I shouldn't be defeated.

I can't lose to a fiend.

However, I was stopped by Ruijerd.

After asking why, he said it's because this is a parent and child fight.

I had heard that Ruijerd was lamenting things about his own children.

That's why this time I decided to do as Ruijerd said.

Now that I think about it, even after everything, Rudeus enjoyed the time he was talking with Paul.

A parent and child who get along well just got into a bit of a petty fight.

After thinking like that, it feels like something in my guts cooled down.

However, the me from that time couldn't accept it.

In the end, Rudeus and Paul reconciled.

It ended up just like Ruijerd had said.

I'll say it once more, I couldn't accept it.

I couldn't understand why Rudeus forgave his father.

That's right, he forgave him.

He, to that inhuman father...

If it was me, he would be an opponent that I would absolutely never forgive.

In regards to that matter, Rudeus didn't talk very much about it.

Ruijerd wouldn't tell me about it either.

Since they are adults.

After that, we crossed over to Central Continent.

During this time he had become energetic, he became able to eat a lot of food.

And then, as usual, Rudeus was amazing.

In the Shirone Kingdom, he became friends with the third prince in a single day and managed to rescue his family.

If you were to ask me, all I did was just rage about along with Ruijerd.

In terms of results, raging about without thinking ended up being what saved Rudeus.

He said [I didn't do anything.] and [You saved me.] but at that rate even if he had been alone he would have without a doubt solved everything.

Rudeus was large.

He was too large.

That large figure, that day, the day we met with the Dragon God, became even greater.

The confrontation with the Dragon God.

During the time when Ruijerd and I were trembling from that guy who was like the symbol of fear itself, only Rudeus was calm.

Against that opponent who Ruijerd couldn't do a thing to, he even managed to land a single hit.

The magic he used at that time couldn't be seen by my eyes.

Rudeus said it was a rock bullet, but I've never seen that terrifying of a rock bullet until

now.

It was amazing. Rudeus who was being serious.

He was able to properly fight against the Dragon God that is said to be the strongest in the world.

The next instant after I thought that, Rudeus died.

Until that instant I thought death was something completely unrelated to us.

Rudeus is strong, so he would never die.

While I'm being protected by him, I wouldn't die either.

Since Ruijerd is here as well, it's safe.

That's how I thought.

It was a misunderstanding.

Rudeus was about to die.

If in the case the young girl who was accompanying that Dragon God hadn't requested to heal him on a whim, or if the Dragon God hadn't been able to use healing magic, Rudeus would be dead.

I was afraid.

I was not only a shackle to him, but I had become a burden.

That's right, I felt it all over again.

Even after that, I still looked at Rudeus like a deity.

Because even if he was almost killed he managed to survive.

Moreover, he started to train under the assumption that he might have to fight that Dragon God again.

Three days after he was on the verge of death.

I couldn't comprehend that.

I couldn't comprehend it, but in any case I was afraid, so I stood by his side.

I had the feeling that if I wasn't by his side he would die.

I had the feeling that I would be left behind.

And then we separated from Ruijerd.

Ruijerd said it was impossible to win against that Dragon God.

However, in the very end he taught me.

He told me to remember the technique the Dragon God used.

Burn into my eyes that scene, the Dragon God's movements, that technique that warded off my sword.

I found rationality in that.

The Dragon God wasn't some monster with an unknown identity.

He was a master who used human techniques.

And then in the end.

We arrived at home, we came to understand there was nothing left.

I came to know of the death of my Father, Grandfather, and Mother.

I was sad.

Even though it was this painful trying to return, I had nothing left.

My house and my family were gone.

Ghyslaine and Alphonse were here, but somehow they were scolding me like different people.

Already, I had nothing left but Rudeus.

That's why I thought to become family with him.

I was impatient.

His job was already coming to a close.

The contracted time was five years and it had already long since passed.

His role of escorting me home had ended as well.

Not all of his family had been found yet.

He would soon go off on a journey most likely.

Leaving me behind.

I thought that.

In order to restrain him, I closed in with my body.

He was reluctant at first.

I thought he might not accept me.

Rudeus had shown interest in my underwear, but he never came to peek on me when I was bathing.

Even in the ship crossing over to Milis Continent, if he had such an intention he could have touched me or stripped me as much as he pleased, but he didn't.

That's why I thought he might not have any interest in my body.

Since I had always spent my time training with the sword, I wouldn't have as much femininity as other girls.

I thought no matter how ecchi Rudeus is, he might not want to actually embrace this.

That was not the case.

Rudeus was extremely excited.

After seeing Rudeus that excited, I got excited as well.

And then we combined our bodies for the first time.

In the beginning it hurt a bit, but gradually it started to feel good.

Compared to Rudeus it seemed like he was feeling good in the start, and then on the way he started to get weak, then fragile, and then he seemed to break.

There I realized it.

I realized it again.

Rudeus is smaller than me.

Of course, I'm rather sturdy as a woman, but putting aside stature his entire body was smaller as whole. Even more than me.

Rudeus is younger than me, I understood it for the first time then.

Even though Rudeus is this young, he was always protecting me.

Even the time when we were on the ship, he continued to cast healing on me.

During the time when we got off the ship, he was considerably tired.

After getting on that disgusting feeling vehicle, even he shouldn't have been able to remain composed.

That's right.

If it hadn't been for that healing, then after we got off the ship Rudeus might not have been captured by that beast race Gyes.

Compared to him, what about me I wonder.

I had become stronger.

Even my swordsmanship, it has become relatively skilled.

However, I had never thought much about Rudeus.

My eyes were always so focused on his greatness, my eyes were turned away from how small he is.

In the end I used the worries of losing my family as a means to close in on Rudeus, following my own desires, I even behaved like this.

I'll say it once more.

I love Rudeus.

However, I am not appropriate for Rudeus.

I am nothing but a burden for Rudeus.

We were able to become family, but we can't have a relationship beyond that.

We can't become a couple.

It's just like he said, being siblings would be just right.

I don't balance up with him.

Even if we stayed together, I would just continue to drag him down.

It seems like it would be good to put a bit of distance between us for a little while.
I naturally started to think that.

If I remain together with Rudeus, I will most likely be spoiled by him.
That luscious sensation is still remaining deep inside my stomach.
A bit unsatisfactory almost.
This wretchedness is a characteristic of the Greyrat family.
Unexpectedly, Rudeus might not be all that strong in that sorta way.
Rudeus who is giving it his best, he even makes this direction feel lost.
That is something that shouldn't be done.

Even if that is said, after all I like him.
I have no intention to marry another man like Alphonse said.
In the first place, trying to live as a ladylike noble's child at this point is already impossible.
In the first place, even if you tell me to give it my best for the sake of the unacquainted people of our land, it doesn't come to me.
In the first place, I can't understand why I would have no choice other than to do such a thing.

Grandfather and Father and Mother are all already gone.
Fedoa region as well is already gone.
In that case, I as well will throw away the name of "Boreas".
However I am still my Grandfather's grandchild, and my Father and Mother's daughter.
I have no choice but to live with a steel willpower.

I will become strong.
I thought that all over again.

After I part with him, I'll train more and more.
At the very least, until I've done enough that I can stand shoulder to shoulder with Rudeus.

It's fine even if I can't win against him.

However, at the very least, I want to become a woman who is in harmony with Rudeus.

I want to become a woman who won't be talked about or pointed out by being by his side.

It's impossible for me to live cleverly like Rudeus.

That's why I'll seek out strength.

Ghyslaine and Ruijerd and Gisu all said it.

I have talent with the sword.

From the time I met Rudeus until now, I've never once thought I was strong.

However, I'll believe in the words of those that have allowed me to grow.

Following Ghyslaine's suggestion I'll go to the Holy Land of the Sword.

There, I'll become a strong swordsman.

I will be the swordsman and Rudeus will be the magician.

The male and female roles are reversed.

However, that's fine for us.

After I grow, after I become strong, we'll meet once again.

At that time, I'll take one step forward as family and become a couple.

I'll give birth to his child and we'll live happily together.

Yeah.

Let's do that.

Now then, but, how should I separate...

Rudeus is skilled with his words.

Even with everything he might try to hold me back.

Saying he's worried about me going alone, he might follow along.

Putting himself aside, he might try to follow along with me.

Leave behind a letter?

However, even if I leave behind a letter, I'll probably leave some kind of trace behind of where I'm going.

After seeing that, if Rudeus were to come chasing after me it would be terrible.

It's not good if he continues to be held back by me.

He's a person who will steadily move further into the future.

I don't want to drag down his future as well.

During these times, swordsmen in stories usually just leave without saying anything.

However, Rudeus hates those sorts of things.

During our travels we had enough reports, communication methods, and meetings to make ones' mouth sour.

It's not like I wanted to be hated by him.

Alright!

I'll just leave behind a single line.

And with that, I'm certain Rudeus will understand!

4

--Rudeus Point of View--

Good morning, everyone.^[33]

Good morning, it's a good morning isn't it virgin fellows!

Virginity is only forgiven until elementary school it seems, but are you all okay?

Oh my, I was no good. Haha... I'm soon to be 13 years old after all.

If we were to convert it I would be a middle school student. Haha!!

And then Hello, non-virgin fellows!

From today on I'm joining your group as well!

It's the so called, real fulfilling life^[34], sort of thing right!

I couldn't have possibly imagined that I would be included on that side, but as a real fulfilling life beginner please warmly show me in.

They say there's no point fighting among the rich after all, let's just get along together!

You know that rumor that masturbating feels better than sex? Yeah, that's a lie.

After all, when masturbating that, or this, or the mouth, or below aren't attached.

There's no meaning to it if you don't taste their entire body.

Sight, sound, touch, taste, smell, everything to satisfy you is there.

I wonder if that's what's no good.

[Don't think you're a boyfriend just because you held her once], such a line is out there.

I get what you want to say.

Though you know.

How do I put it... you know.

If you circulate your hand around her lower back, then hold onto her tightly.

And then she'll put her hands around your back and hold you tightly.

The rough breathing that can be heard next to your ear, the gaze which intertwines together if you look at her face.

If you lick around her mouth she'll offer her tongue, and then the upper mouth and the lower mouth will both turn into a flood.

It feels like, reciprocal things become reciprocal and then it turns into a hustle.

Would that be the spiritual satisfaction I guess?

Requesting love and giving it.

That is? For a person who is used to it, they may be thinking, don't be mistaken right.

However, that's impossible for a beginner like me.

I'm totally going to put on the face of a boyfriend.

And then since we're both beginners there's no problems.

I'm sure even Eris will want to put on the face of a girlfriend.

Oh my my my, excuse me. This was a topic that is a bit too stimulating for the virgin fellows wasn't it.

Excuse me, excuse me.

I as well you know, I think I should calm down a bit more as well though you know.
I've had 47 years of bodily experiences.

After getting my hands on something that I never had in that time, I'm a bit restless.

Oh my, in this case it would be letting go of something wouldn't it?

In the past I thought if it ever came down to it I would stay COOL but...

Hahaha, it ended up being something that I couldn't control very well!

Oh my? It's already this time, huh.

Please excuse me, I have previous plans to have morning pillow talk with her.

No, real fulfilling lives are really quite busy after all.

Especially the plans for at night are busy right!

Tonight again we'll go with Beast Mode and Burning Time.

It could be that we are even busier in the afternoon.

Look Eris, it's morning.

Wake up, if you don't wake up I'll play a trick on you~

And she's not here.

The other side of the bed is empty.

She always gets up early after all.

Even though it was already decided that the first morning would have pillow talk and a coffee break.

Really now, she's so shy.

"Alright."

I get up.

The area around my hips is returning a good listless feeling.

Thanks to this, I realized in an instant that last night wasn't just a dream.

It's truly a good feeling.

For the time being I'll put on the clothes scattered around.

I found my pants but I can't find my underwear.

Since there's no helping it I'll put on my pants with no underwear, Eris's panties were on the side of the bed, so I put them into my pocket.

After putting on my coat I did a big stretch.

"Hnnn? It's good."

I've never felt a morning as refreshing as this before.

And then there I noticed there was something scattered on the floor.

Something red was scattered about.

"Eh??"

It was hair.

Bright red hair had fallen to the floor.

"What is up with this?"

I grabbed a clump of that hair and sniffed the scent of it.

It was the scent I smelled a lot last night of Eris.

"Huh??"

While confused I shifted my gaze in front of me.

And then I noticed a single piece of paper was left there.

After that I picked it up, and read the letters written there.

"Right now, Rudeus and I don't match up together. I'm going off on a journey."

That meaning I carefully tried to digest.

One second.

Two seconds.

Three seconds.

I ran out of the room.

I look at Eris's room.

There's no luggage.

I quickly ran outside.

I entered the headquarters.

I found Alphonse.

"A... Alphonse-san, where is Eris?!"

"Together with Ghyslaine, she left on a journey."

"To... to where?"

After hearing that Alphonse looked at me with a bit of a cold expression.

And then he slowly opened his mouth.

"I was told not to disclose it to Rudeus-sama."

"Ah?? I see."

Huh?

Why?

I don't know what is going on.

Huh?

Why am I trembling?

No, I was thrown away?

I was left behind?

Huh?

Family???

Huh?

5

I spent about one week in a daze.

Sometimes Alphonse would come by and give jobs to me.

I thought there was nothing left in Fedoa region, but it seems that small farming villages are gradually increasing.

If you move a bit away from the refugee camp, then you can find that cultivation of wheat has started.

Following what Alphonse said I created a protective earth wall around the village and created a bank on the river to prevent it from flooding.

It was slow, but the reconstruction was progressing.

Although, the main stream cultivation wasn't set to start until they bring all the immigrants from Milishion supposedly.

It seems they were going to go with the fact that Eris died.

Eris Boreas Greyrat has passed away, and just Eris was born.

Thanks to that it seems that a variety of matters are going to be difficult, so Alphonse isn't planning to announce it officially until several years later.

In order to receive the assistance from that Darius guy or something.

Well, it doesn't really matter at all.

Even without Eris, Alphonse is making a face like nothing happened at all.

When I tried mixing jokes in and saying it's unfortunate that Eris ran away, he ended

up saying, regardless he's just focused on the reconstruction of Fedoa region.

And just like that he carelessly repeated it.

In reality it seems like he was supposed to listen to the situation more beyond that.

However, since Eris is no longer around, he just started to feel like it didn't matter at all.

He's already fed up with being thrown around by political strife and people doing things at their own convenience, that kind of feeling.

Then if you were to ask what I was thinking about during that one week.

I was always thinking about the reason why Eris disappeared.

That night I was thinking back on my own actions and conduct.

However, even if I think back to it, all that would come to mind is a pink colored scene.

All of my memories were overwritten by that moment.

It could be that I was lousy in bed.

Since I attacked her with all of my desires, she might have been disillusioned.

No, that is strange, the one who attacked her is me, but the one inviting should have been Eris.

No, I can't say that.

I was tired of courtesy.

If I think about it, these past three years, there's been nothing but mistakes throughout the journey.

In terms of result most of them turned out good, but it ended up with us being saved by Ruijerd.

Eris probably didn't want to be followed around for another two years by such a partner.

That's why she paid in advance on the promise to get it over with and then said goodbye.

I don't understand the reason why she took up such suggestive behavior, but...

For the time being, that's right, I arrived at a conclusion.

In the end, I hadn't grown at all.

It can't be helped that I had grown tired of courtesy.

That's right at that time when I had given up, I suddenly remembered it.

"Ah! That's right, I need to search for Zenith or else..."

Just like this, I set out on a journey to the Northern part of Central Continent.

SIDE STORY

THE TWO WHO MET

1

Roxy Migurdia had arrived in Kurasuma town.

Kurasuma town was situated in the northern tip of the Magic Continent.

Though it wasn't to the extent of Rikarisu town, it was certainly a flourishing city.

It didn't seem to have any special features at a glance, and was an average town that you could find anywhere.

However, in truth the Demon King reigning over the town had good relations with the Ocean Race so there was trade between them.

Kurasuma town was the location for that trade, and was a town where the goods of both the Ocean Race and Demon Race were gathered.

From the Ocean Race came the blessings of the sea and from the Demon Continent were strong herbs characteristic to the area.

Kurasuma town was home to an extremely delicious cuisine that made use of the two of them.

It could be said that only one or two other towns on the Demon Continent could compete with it in food. Incidentally, one of those towns was Wenport.

"The food here goes well with alcohol!"

Having come to the town, Talhand was in high spirits.

Kurasuma town not only had the dry drinks of the Demon Continent, but also the sweet drinks of the Ocean Race.

Talhand, a dwarf, was a drinker.

As long as it was his beloved alcohol, no matter how bad the drinks might have been, he would unfailingly head to the tavern, hit it off with the ruffians there, and drench himself in alcohol.

You could find taverns everywhere, so he could find people he got along with everywhere.

Moreover, as long as you gathered good drinks, Talhand would be in high spirits.

However, to Roxy who had childish tastes, the cuisine of this town was a little disagreeable.

To begin with, the cuisine and seasonings of the Demon Continent weren't very palatable to her.

That's why no matter how it was modified, she didn't think it'd be very tasty.

Roxy was a person who liked sweet things.

However, the specialty of the Ocean Race was their sweet alcoholic drinks.

This was good.

To Roxy whose common sense dictated that alcoholic drinks were dry, the existence of sweet drinks was quite a shock.

If you sniffed them, you'd find they had the scent of the sea, and if you held it in your mouth, an indescribable sweetness would spread across your tongue.

Though it left just a faintly salty aftertaste, it was something you could get rid of with snacks.

"What's this, what's this? Isn't this a rare sight!? You're going to drink, Roxy!?"

"Yes, I'll be drinking."

"Well aren't you in good spirits today!? Let's drink! Barkeep! Bring us a cask! I'll show you how we dwarves drink!"

Talhand saw Roxy drinking, and in a good mood, placed an additional order.

It was at times like these that Roxy was glad for the low prices of the Demon Continent. After all, no matter how much they ate and drank, a single Asura copper coin was enough to cover it all.

"Jii-san, you drink pretty well!"

"Chug! Chug! Chug! Chug!"

"As expected of a dwarf, huhhh!?"

"Alright, let's have a match! Barkeep, a cask for me too!"

Talhand who drank by the barrel had set off a trigger, and other customers began drinking as well.

Incidentally, Elinalise had already come across a man she liked, and they had disappeared into the night together.

Usually Roxy would begin to feel alienated, but before she noticed, she was already cheering on Talhand with the girl next to her.

"Faaahahaha! He's quite the agreeable dwarf, isn't he!? A cask, you know, a cask! No matter the age, the dwarves never change do they!? Hey, don't you agree?"^[35]

"Yeah, that's true."

"Ohhh! It begins! Drink! Drink! Drink!"

"Chug! Chug!"

After carrying over casks, along with another demon, Talhand began to chug down the alcohol magnificently.

Though he certainly had a wide body, just where did the alcohol go?

Having drained a cask that could barely be carried with one arm, he had burped.

Immediately afterwards, he carried over another.

"Oi! More drinks!"

"Shaddap! We're out already!"

"If you don't have any then buy some from a neighboring tavern!"

"Ohhh! There was that option as well!? Orright! You there, go buy some!"

"Leave it to me! You lot chip in as well! Tonight we'll drink to the end!"

"Ohhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!"

Like that, a bag for collecting money was passed around.

"Hahah! Ojou-sama! Have some pity on a wretched drunkard!"

"Okay. Tonight is... my treat!"

At any rate, the mood today was good.

Roxy chipped in 1 green mineral coin.

Seeing that, the men lowered their heads, laughing and grinning.

"As expected of Ojou-sama! Oi! You're rich!"

"Huhu, that's... obvious!"

In a relaxed and pleasant mood, Roxy gave an exaggerated nod. Though her response sounded quite similar to usual, she was drunk.

"Faaahahaha! Tonight, I have money as well! Graciously accept it! Then make merry! Tonight, we'll forget about social status!"

The girl next to Roxy produced a scrap iron coin and chipped in as well.

Though they'd usually crack jokes about someone who only chipped in a scrap iron coin after all that big talk, the guy collecting the money was drunk as well.

"Uehehe! Thank you very much, Ohime-sama! Tonight we'll drink until we hurl!"

"Good, good! Hurl lots!"

The girl nodded self-importantly, and the collector continued around the room, collecting money.

"Very good, very good! This atmosphere brings to mind the old days!"

Roxy didn't know when the girl had sat down next to her.

By the time she had noticed, the girl was already next to her and munching on the food that Elinalise had left behind.

Roxy didn't mind though; she was drunk after all.

"Well, whatever. Have a drink."

"Ohhh, thank you. Still, it's fortunate that I had come to see what was so fun here," -

gulp gulp- "Come now. Won't you drink as well!?"

"I am drinking."

"Drink more!"

"Drink more? I guess it can't be helped..."

Since Roxy was told to drink as well, she gulped down the contents of her cup.

"Puhaa!"

"Here! One more for the Ojou-sama!"

"Ah, thanks."

When she had placed her cup on the table with a bang, a cheerful man had come out of nowhere and poured her another cup.

As long as it was this sweet drink, she really could drink endlessly.

"You're quite a heavy drinker as well, are you not!? For one so young, you're splendid!"

"I don't want to be called young by you."

Roxy stared at the girl.

Boots that came up to her knees.

Leather short-shorts.

A leather tube-top.

Her collarbone, curveless waist, navel and thighs - all of her skin was pale.

Voluminous and wavy violet hair and horns like a goat.

No matter how she looked at it, this girl was younger than her.

"Huhu, thank you for the flattery. One keeps their age in mind, after all!"

Seeing this girl, normally Roxy would have wondered, [Was there a demon clan like this?]

However, she didn't consider it.

She was drunk, after all.

"I'm keeping my age in mind as well. Well anyway, have a drink."

"Ohhh, thank you. Still, the drinks have gotten quite tasty over these past few centuries. In the past, there wasn't anything like these sweet drinks on the Demon Continent."

"I hear it's the Ocean Race's drink. The Demon King here has been doing business with them or something."

"What was that!? That Baglah Haglah bastard has been hiding this from me, huh!? Unforgivable!"

"Isn't it fine? Abandon all ceremony, and forget about social status."

"Ohhh, you're right. Tonight we were ignoring social status!"

Demon King Baglah Haglah was the Demon King who reigned over this area.

He was a stout and chubby, pig-faced Demon King, and it's said that he was the most knowledgeable about food and drink on the Demon Continent.

Though he was politically moderate, he had participated in fierce attacks during the Laplace campaign.

Because he had plundered all the food and drink from the territory of the Human Race, he gained the name 『Plundering Demon King』 .

"Whoa, he's smashed!"

"-Uuiiick- Who's next? Anyone is fine, so bring it on!"

"Anyone!? Is there anyone who's up to it!?"

At some point Talhand had become topless and was sitting on the table, leaning his elbows against a cask and displaying his might.

Then who challenged him was the girl next to Roxy.

"Alright! You can leave things to me!"

"What's this, Ojou-chan? Do you think you can win against me? Wouldn't it be fine to challenge me again 20 years from now?"

"Faaahahaha! Oh, foolish dwarf, can you not tell at a glance? Despite appearances, I

have lived for 300 years already!"

"I see, I see. My bad. Well then, bring it on!"

"Very well... Oh, but before that, I ask for your name! I shall certainly remember the foolish one who challenged me!"

"It's 『Talhand of the Great Rigid Peak』."

"I see! The one who defeats you is the 『Demon Empress of the Mystic Eye, Kishirika Kishirisu』!"

And like that, Kishirika and Talhand's battle began.

In the blink of an eye, the extra alcohol was drained, and a bag for chipping in was passed around a second and third time.

Because Roxy decided to take responsibility, she chipped in 5 green mineral coins and sent off the shop boy.

Thanks to some strong men, a large amount of alcohol was carried in.

While everyone drank and passed it around, Talhand and Kishirika emptied it.

Roxy was the referee.

Though it wasn't clear what or how she was refereeing, while sitting and drinking, she was somehow left with the job of counting how many they had drunk.

"That's 40 cups."

The fated moment.

Until that instant, the match had seemed like a close struggle.

Putting aside the dwarf Talhand who was as strong as he looked, just where on earth did the girl who called herself Demon Empress store all the alcohol she drank?

No one at all had noticed.

They were drunk, after all.

Then, the conclusion was reached.

"Mugu-... Kpyu..."

The moment after Talhand had begun making mysterious noises, he began to throw up alcohol like a water fountain.

Then, just like a cask, holding his sides he collapsed.

With a noise, he fell from the table to the floor and a liquid that reeked of alcohol leaked from his mouth.

"It's my win!"

"Uohhhhhhh! Incredible! She beat a dwarf in a drinking competition!"

"My name is Kishirika! Great Empress of the Demon Realm, Kishirika Kishirisu! Say my name!"^[36]

"Kishirika! Kishirika! Kishirika!"

"Who is the greatest in this world!?"

"Kishirika! Kishirika! Kishirika!"

The moment Kishirika was declared the winner of the match, they began chanting in unison, and Kishirika's mood became extremely good.

"Faaahahahahahaha! Faaahahaha!"

"Bravo! Bravo!"

"Strip! Strip!"

Roxy couldn't really remember what happened after that.

Roxy was staggering from overdrinking as well.

While thinking about taking revenge for her fallen comrade, but thinking that it was a little impossible, she lost consciousness.

What she saw before she fainted was the sight of Kishirika on top of the counter, dancing about naked.

The next day, Roxy woke up.

"Uuu..."

Finding that she had a splitting headache, and that her own breath smelled of liquor, she frowned.

So as to clear the alcohol out of her body, she applied Healing to her head.

When she looked around her surroundings, she found that she was in the tavern.

It might have been because a brawl had broken out, but the table was broken, the liquor bottles were smashed, and a large amount of empty barrels were rolling about.

"Uuu, I overdrank, huh...?"

Her memory was fuzzy.

She remembered clearly though, that she had overdrank.

When she had incidentally looked to her side, she found that a half-naked Talhand was lying about with the whites of his eyes showing.

For a moment she had thought that he might have died, but it was impossible for a dwarf to die from drinking alcohol.

Even if they did somehow die, one of their childhood dreams was to die drinking, so it would probably be a satisfying death.

However, Roxy looked around once more.

She saw corpses all around.

Whether they were clans good at drinking, or clans weak at drinking, everyone was lying around groaning.

Amongst them was the man who had been collecting money.

All of them had passed out from drinking, and were suffering from hangovers.

[Even though you can't use healing magic, you were all drinking absurdly after all] thought Roxy.

However, amongst them stood two figures.

"Like I said, it's reparations, you know? Reparations. With my shop all messed up like this, I can't open up business, you know."

"No, well, but-"

"What, you can't pay? You had said it'd be your treat, right?"

"That is true, but I thought I'd have enough at the start..."

They were the figures of the angry shopkeeper, and the dejected Kishirika.

"So you don't have money?"

"No, well, sorry, I'm completely broke..."

"Well then, I guess there's no option left but to sell you at the slave market."

"What!? Sell me, you say...!? Wait, wait, I'll immediately contact Haglah so please wait for but a short while."

"I'm not waiting. That's just a plan to escape, right?"

Roxy sighed and felt for her purse.

Then, finding that there was only a single gold coin, she frowned.

While drunk, she had chipped in quite an amount.

(No, the one who was actually drinking was Talhand-san after all.)

With that excuse in mind, she unfastened the coin purse from the fainted Talhand's hips.

Looking inside, she found that there was plenty, and Roxy got up.

Frowning about the sour smell near her shoulder, she approached the shopkeeper.

"Here. It's payment."

"Mn?"

Roxy produced 6 green mineral coins from the coin purse and slipped them into the

shopkeeper's hands.

"This isn't quite enough."

"This tavern completely sold out, so you've made quite a bit right?"

"...Well, it's fine I guess."

Saying this, the shopkeeper turned around and headed into the kitchen area.

While sighing, Roxy tossed the coin purse onto Talhand's hips.

"Ohhh... Ohhhhh... Thank you, truly, thank you!"

While trembling all over, Kishirika had looked up at Roxy.

Looking down on this sight, Roxy remembered what she had heard long ago from the village chief about the Great Empress of the Demon Realm.

Though her image was a little different, Kishirika's characteristics resembled what Roxy had heard.

If she was from a clan that possessed immortality, it wouldn't be strange for her age to be different from her appearance.

She was drunk last night so she had paid it no heed, but Kishirika seemed to be on good terms with the Demon King.

"Excuse me, I'd just like to ask once more, but you're the true Great Empress of the Demon Realm, Kishirika Kishirisu-sama, correct?"

"Mn? Ohh, that's right. Not many believe me these days though. Your name is?"

"Ah, excuse me. I'm from the Migurd clan of the Biegoya region, Roxy."

When Roxy named herself, Kishirika exclaimed 'Ohhh' and nodded.

"Roxy? Ohh, I know you, I know you. You're Rudeus's master, aren't you!?"

"...Do you know Rudeus?"

"We met by chance in Wenport. He was quite the interesting man."

"I-, is that so...?"

Roxy was wondering just what he had said about her, but she was too afraid to ask. In fact, Kishirika was just pretending to know, and had heard about Roxy on her travels here.

Roxy didn't know this, however.

"Hrm, I was saved by Rudeus as well; you're a truly splendid teacher and student, are you not? I've been saved by you as well so, let's see, I'll grant you a reward."

Hearing the word 'reward', Roxy's heart leaped.

The mystic eyes that the Great Empress of the Demon Realm bestowed on others were famous.

It was because she had this power that she wasn't a Demon King, but was instead called Demon Empress, and possessed enough power to start a Human-Demon Great War, thought Roxy, when she suddenly recalled a certain matter.

"Um, can Your Majesty's mystic eyes be used to search for missing people?"

"Mn. They can. Just the other day I had met Badi by chance, and now there isn't a person in this world that I can't find."^[37]

"Is that so... In that case, please look for the whereabouts of Rudeus and his family. His family is currently missing."

Roxy spoke without hesitation.

Though she had regretted not being bestowed mystic eyes by Kishirika, Kishirika had a high level mystic eye called the 『All-seeing Eye』^[38], that purportedly held the ability to see anything in the world without fail.

"Oh? To use your only wish for the sake of another; you're quite an admirable one, aren't you! Had times not changed, I'd have offered you a position as a Demon King."

"No, I don't need that sort of thing."

"I see, I see. You're a modest one. Let's see..."

With a spin.

The colour of Kishirika's eyes changed.

After that, she turned her head this way and that, and nodded with an "mmn".



"Rudeus is presently in the northern parts of the Central Continent. He's wearing light clothes and running."

Roxy firmly nodded.

It seems that somehow or other, he was searching in the northern areas of the Central Continent like the message had asked him to.

Though he could have gone from Milishion to the Begaritto Continent, he had probably wanted to confirm the state of his hometown.

"The father is in Milishion. Together with a maid... Hm, this maid seems to be called Lilia. Oh, and his two daughters are in the same building."

A sigh leaked from Roxy's mouth.

Though she had heard that Lilia and Aisha were still missing, it seemed that they had been found safely.

It's possible that Rudeus had found them on the Demon Continent and escorted them over.

Dead End was a group of three, but there might have been two others outside of the party.

"The mother is... wait just a moment."

Kishirika frowned making "mumumu" sounds, and put more power into her eye. Then she saw Zenith's location.

"It seems she's in the Begaritto Continent's Dungeon City Lapan."

Roxy's expression brightened.

Though it was a place far from here, at least she had confirmed that all of them were alive.

Though she had thought it wouldn't have been strange had one or two of them died, she also thought [As expected of the Greyrat family].

They had great luck, it seems.

"However... It's a little strange, huh..."

Kishirika frowned, and her eye turned.

"Is there a problem?"

"Well, hmmm. I can't see very well."

"You can't see very well? Is it because it's underground?"

"I'm still not in my best condition, you see... Well, it'll be fine if you just head there and look yourself."

"That's a little troubling. If there's a problem, please tell me the details."

Though Kishirika had spoken as if it were nothing, Roxy furthered the conversation. On the journey thus far, she had seen the tragic conditions that the refugees were in. It was something tragic that you couldn't see even with a mystic eye from the Great Empress of the Demon Realm.

She was currently happy thanks to what Kishirika had told her, but it was possible that it would be a short-lived happiness.

"What?... Even if you say that, things that can't be seen just can't be seen. Ohhh, that's right. She might be inside a dungeon. It's called Dungeon City after all, though I've never been there myself."

"You can't see into a dungeon?"

"Mmmn. The dungeons in the Begaritto Continent have a thick mana concentration after all."

Roxy thought things through.

She had heard that Zenith, along with Paul, Elinalise, Talhand and some others had gone dungeon exploring.

During their travels together, she knew very well about Elinalise and Talhand's strength.

If she had journeyed with them, then she'd probably be able to survive even a dungeon. However, why hadn't she made any contact?

It'd already been three years...

"At any rate she's alive isn't she?"

"Mmn. There's no mistake."

Roxy had decided to believe in those words.

It seems that for some reason or another, she was unable to leave the dungeon.

Thinking this, Roxy nodded her head.

"I understand. Thank you very much."

"It's fine, it's fine. It's my thanks for being saved."

Kishirika nodded exaggeratedly and tottered out of the tavern.

3

That afternoon.

Talhand who had begun drinking again as though nothing had happened and Elinalise who returned with a huge number of kiss marks on her nape.

Roxy was having a meeting with the two of them.

"To be able to meet with someone like the Great Empress of the Demon Realm, your luck is quite good, isn't it?"

When Roxy spoke of Kishirika, Elinalise just laughed quietly.

Roxy didn't think of it as a big deal either.

Perhaps it was because she had met her while drunk in a tavern.

Or perhaps it was because she wasn't particularly dignified.

"However, this brings our journey to an end, doesn't it?"

Talhand had spoken a little regretfully.

It would still take at least a year to return to the Milis Continent.

However, the purpose of the journey was achieved.

They had confirmed the lives of all of Paul's family, and had pinpointed the location of the last member as well.

It was the end.

"What are you going to do, Roxy?"

"I plan to return to Milishion and talk to Paul about this matter."

"I see. Then it seems we'll be parting on-route."

It seems that Elinalise and Talhand didn't want to meet with Paul.

Though it seemed that they had parted following some big fight, Roxy never heard the details.

She wasn't that interested in it though, so she never did press for details.

"Hmmm, still, Rudeus is pretty far away all by himself."

Talhand had brought his hand to his chin, and said that in a sigh.

Hearing this, Roxy suddenly realised as well.

From here, Roxy would return to Milishion.

She would probably then accompany Paul and the others to the Begaritto Continent.

In that case, only Rudeus would be out of the loop, and would continue to search the northern parts of the Central Continent.

Because he was in the middle of searching, it meant that they wouldn't know his location, nor could they send letters.

"It really would be best to let him know somehow, huh...?"

Elinalise spoke worriedly.

However, there was no way to do so.

Though the northern parts of the Central Continent looked close, they were far.

Roxy sank back into thought.

Rudeus was outstanding but he was still young.

It really would be pitiful for him to waste away this period of his life.

Even if he was going to meet with this family, or even if he was going to do things independently like that, at least a few words...

Roxy wanted to tell him [It's fine for you to stop searching.]

4

"And there I^[39] went BABABABANG!"

"And then I^[40] also went BANGBABANG!"

Suddenly.

Suddenly, these two had appeared.

"Tell me about what happened!"

"We overheard!"

The door opened with a bang, and there entered a great man.

He was someone you could recognise as a demon in a glance, with obsidian skin and six arms.

His topmost arms were folded, his middle arms were pointed towards Roxy, and his lower arms were placed at his hips.

He had violet hair that stretched down his back.

And on top of those shoulders of him, sitting there as if a matter of fact, was the Great Empress of the Demon Realm.

"Alright! I am Kishirika Kishirisu! A.K.A. THE GREAT EMPRESS OF THE DEMON REALM!"

"And I am her fiancé, Demon King Badigadi!"

The two who had suddenly appeared, and the three who were stunned.

The first one to react was Elinalise.

"Um, we haven't seen each other since this morning, huh, Onii-san!"

"Huhahahaha, it was quite a night huh, Onee-san!"

Bardy had replied while making a vulgar gesture with his hands.^[41]

With a cold sweat, Roxy asked,

"I-, is he an acquaintance?"

"Umm, I guess technically speaking...?"

It seems that after leaving the bar with a man, Elinalise then visited another bar.

With ulterior motives, a man had gotten Elinalise to drink, and also with ulterior motives, Elinalise drank.

Dead drunk, Elinalise was brought to an inn...

When she had come to her senses, she was in the pitch-black arms of this man.

And then somehow or another, there was penetration and they did it until afternoon.

"Eh? But just now, he said fiancé... Huh? Ah, should I greet you first?"

In a fluster, Roxy lowered her head.

"Mmmn, dear Roxy. Raise your head. Badi is popular, so this kind of thing is an everyday occurrence anyway."

"Mmn. Rather than that, since I can't enter Kishirika sexually yet, it can't be helped!"

Roxy's mind couldn't process such uninhibited words.

Thanks to Elinalise, Roxy had recently amassed quite a bit of superficial knowledge about sex, but this Demon Empress and Demon King fiancé pair who were fine with adultery exceeded Roxy's comprehension.

"Howeeever! That's fine!"

"Mmn. It was just a passing relationship anyway!"

Honestly speaking, Roxy didn't feel that she could understand these rather high-spirited two.

The Demon King Badigadi.

She knew of him.

He was the Demon King that reigned over the Biegoya area.

『The Immortal Demon King, Badigadi』

He was the younger brother of the one who rampaged during the Laplace Campaign, 『Immortal Demon King Atohfe』 .

He was of the moderate faction during the Laplace campaign, and had fought and been defeated by the Demon God Laplace at Kishirika Castle.

Though he was currently missing, he was said to be quite an important person.

"Dear Roxy, I also owe a debt to Rudeus. If Rudeus has lost his way, then I will also assist!"

"Though she says this, she's still just borrowing my political power, you see!"

Talhand had recovered quicker than Roxy, who was still in great confusion.

He was stroking his ample beard whilst looking at Kishirika doubtfully.

"Is that really fine?"

"Ohh! You're that dwarf from yesterday! It's fine, it's fine, isn't it Badi?"

Kishirika hit him on the head, and the Demon King nodded.

"Mn. I'm also quite interested you see, in this brat named Rudeus that Kishirika says is so amazing! I'm going to see with my own eyes if he's actually amazing or not!"

"What's this, what's this? Are you jealous, darling?"

"Indeed this is jealousy, honey."

"Goodness, you're still a child, aren't you Badi? You're the only one I love..."

"Fuu, I'm not above being influenced by love. I'll smash up any rivals I have."

[It'd be troubling if you smashed him up...] thought Roxy, but the two didn't seem in the mood to listen.

"Huhuhu"

"Huhaha"

"Faaahahahaha! Faaahahahaha! Faaaha-COUGH COUGH-"

"Huhahahahaha! Huhahahahaha! Huaha... Are you alright?"

Though Roxy still couldn't catch up, the conversation progressed regardless.

5

The common sense of this world dictated that the seas were ruled by the Ocean Race, and that those who lived on the ground were restricted in crossing them.

This was related to the confusion that occurred during the Laplace Post-War Period, but we'll leave that aside for now.

As an individual, the Demon King Baglah Haglah was friends with the Ocean Race.

Though it wouldn't be good for a friend to break a law that was decided by the whole Ocean Race, it was a different story for them to quietly consent to a friend breaking the law in secret.

Demon King Badigadi and Demon King Baglah Haglah were old friends.

Using this connection, it was easy to travel to the Central Continent, and they wouldn't even need to pass through the Heaven Continent.

However, if Roxy crossed the seas with them, then informing Paul in Milishion would be delayed.

Someone had to head to Milishion.

Moreover, you couldn't travel the Demon Continent alone.

Unlike the safe Central Continent, monsters were abundant on the Demon Continent.

Taking Roxy for example, she was a powerful magician.

Her judgement was quick, and her chanting was quick as well.

If it was just battle, then Roxy might be fine on her own.

However, she would have to sleep at night, and if she were attacked by a huge number of monsters, there was still the possibility that she'd be defeated.

At the very least, the Demon Continent had to be travelled in pairs.

"I don't want to. I don't want to see Paul's face." said Elinalise.

"I don't want to either." said Talhand.

"I understand. In that case, I'll go."

Faced with those two's selfishness, Roxy decided to head to Milishion first.

Although she had wanted to meet with Rudeus, it couldn't be helped.

Now she just needed one more person.

The two looked at each other, and Talhand immediately gave in.

"Hmm, then I'll be going with you. Honestly speaking, I really don't want to get on a boat..."

"Sorry, Talhand." Elinalise said.

Talhand's shoulders drooped.

[There's no need to head all the way to Milishion. We could just send a letter at some point.] thought Roxy. However, these two had their own ideas, so there was no need to overthink things.

As for Roxy herself, she had no reason to be against meeting Paul.

6

Like that, their party split into two.

Roxy and Talhand were going back the way they came, to Milishion, and Elinalise was heading to the Central Continent with Great Empress of the Demon Realm, Kishirika Kishirisu, and Demon King Badigadi.

There was still a little time until the boat departed.

However, Roxy departed first.

"Elinalise-san. Thank you for everything."

"Thank you for everything as well, Roxy."

Roxy firmly shook hands with Elinalise.

"Roxy, if you meet a good man, don't let him go, okay? You have to use both your upper mouth and lower mouth and properly catch him."

"You're saying things like that again?"

"It's fine, so listen up. If it's someone you really like, you have to come on strongly. You can just worry about making him love you afterwards."

Talhand let out a sigh at Elinalise's words.

"You... Did you say that to Zenith as well?"

"I did. Because of that, Zenith got her hands on Paul. My teachings are flawless."

Hearing this, [I see] thought Roxy.

To Roxy, Zenith and Paul were the ideal couple.

If they ended up like that because of Elinalise's advice, then there might be merit in listening to her.

"I understand, Elinalise-san. I'll come on strongly."

Their hands parted.

Because Roxy was short, she was looking up at Elinalise.

"Please tell Rudi that I send my regards."

"Of course. I'll make sure to tell him about how you were moving about at night from the loneliness of being apart from him."

"Wai-, why do you know that? Don't tell him such a thing. After all, it's not like I was dreaming about Rudeus or anything."

"Okay, okay."

Then, suddenly Roxy thought,

[What if Rudeus and Elinalise meet, and like that they head off to an inn together?]

If he was searching in the north, then Elinalise would probably meet with him in about a year.

It had been close to 10 years since Roxy had last seen him.

Rudeus was already 13 or 14 years old. In that case, it wouldn't be strange for him to catch Elinalise's eye.

That was just a little unpleasant.

"What's wrong? You suddenly went quiet."

"No, well, actually, if Rudeus turns out to be a good man, are you not going to make a move on him?"

Roxy was pretending to be casual about it and asked, and Elinalise sighed in response.

"I don't in the least plan on becoming Paul's daughter, you know."

She really did seem displeased about the idea.

While feeling relieved, Roxy replied [I see.]

"Well then, it's about time that we depart."

"Take care, Roxy. Stay well."

"Yes. You too, Elinalise-san."

Elinalise glanced at Talhand.

She looked down at the dwarf who was shorter than her, with eyes like she was looking at an insect.

"Don't die in a ditch somewhere, Talhand."

Talhand made an unhappy expression from the bottom of his heart, and spat.

"I'll send those words right back at you."

Seeing this, Roxy once again thought that the two were pretty close.

7

And then, Elinalise got on the boat.

It was an Ocean Race boat from very long ago.

It was a boat drawn by marine magic beasts, and compared to the boats of the Human Race, it was a little shabby looking. However, it was faster than human boats and very safe as well.

Elinalise and Badigadi crossed the gangway together.

When they did, Kishirika's laughter resounded from behind them.

"Faaahahahaha! Well then, let us meet again, oh Badi! If you start to miss me, then feel free to immediately return to the Demon Continent!"

"Mmmn. Stay healthy, my fiancé! Let us meet again someday! Huhahahahaha!"

"Who knows how many years we'll be separated this time! Faahahahaha!"

The Great Empress of the Demon Realm, Kishirika Kishirisu didn't get on the boat.

Elinalise tilted her head in confusion.

"Ara? Will the lady^[42] not be getting on?"

"Mmn. Kishirika can't leave the Demon Continent!"

"I see. Is it a curse?"

"Something like that."

The Great Empress of the Demon Realm couldn't leave the Demon Continent.

As a result, today as well, she would be roaming about the Demon Continent.

Roxy didn't know about this at all.

She had believed that Kishirika was boarding the boat with them, and was probably

heading to meet with Rudeus.

Had she known about this earlier, Elinalise would have wanted Kishirika to accompany Roxy as well.

The Demon Continent was rife with dangers.

With Talhand with her, the worst was unlikely to come to pass but it would have been even safer with even one more person.

If that one person was the Great Empress of the Demon Realm, then their safety would have been virtually guaranteed.

However, Elinalise immediately changed her mind.

Had such a person followed her about, Roxy would surely be pitiable.

Roxy Migurdia continued her journey.

SPECIAL CHAPTER

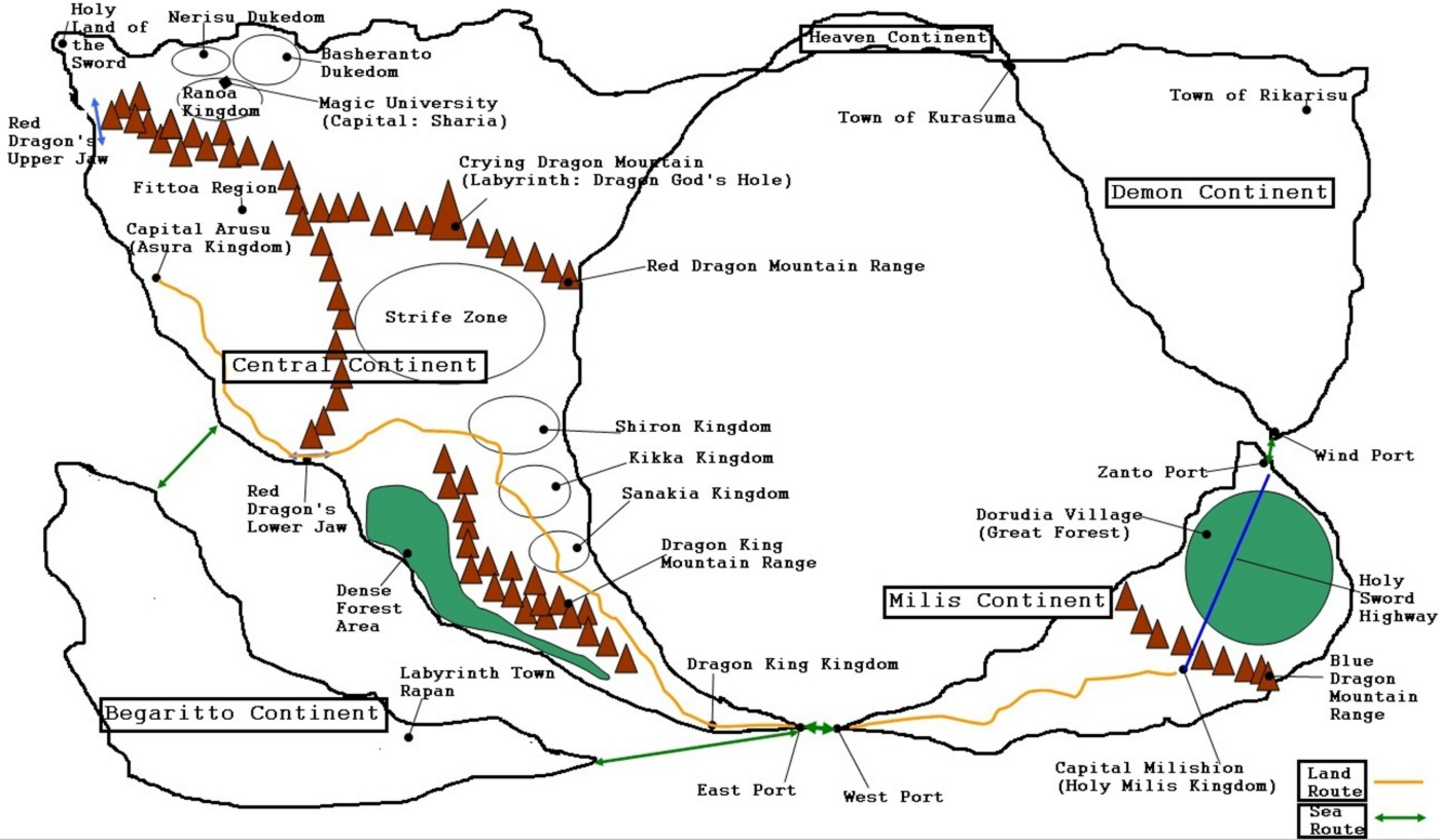
WORLD MAP 2

Note: this chapter and map were drawn by the original author including the note below, not a part of the Light Novel but the Web Novel, the map image has been edited to English by the translator.

Authors Note:

These are notebook-like memos. I'll explain it roughly.

If you don't have any particular interest in it, please feel free to skip over it.



The map was created extremely rough.

Please only use it as reference to get a rough image.

Central Continent

It's split into three parts by the Red Dragon Mountain Range.

The poor and needy Northern areas with many wars, Asura Kingdom in the West one of the worlds most abundant and rich regions, a number of large countries are always struggling for power and rioting in the Southern area.

Human race makes up the majority of the population.

Asura Kingdom^[43]

The country that holds the greatest national power in the world.

It's abundant with natural resources, a land of fertility with no starvation. The soil hasn't become barren.

Fittoa Territory^[44]

The region in the Northeast of Asura Kingdoms interior. Asuran barley (wheat) and Flowers of Batirusu are the local specialty products.

Red Dragon's Lower Jaw, Upper Jaw

The only valleys of the Red Dragon Mountain Range that can be passed through.

Dragon King Kingdom

The third ranked country in the world.

It holds a wide territory in the southern area.

West Port - East Port

Port cities that connect Central Continent and Milis Continent.

Shiron Kingdom^[45]

An ally of the Dragon King Kingdom. The border area of the strife zone.

Sanakia Kingdom

A vassal nation of the Dragon King Kingdom. Local specialty is rice.

Kikka Kingdom

A vassal nation of the Dragon King Kingdom. Local specialty is oil(side dish).

Strife Zone

A place where large countries just keep continuing with nothing but skirmishes.

Demon Continent ^[46]

A poor place with strong monsters.

There are Demon Lords ruling over various places.

Demon(Magic) Race make up the largest portion of the population.

Town of Rikarisu

Great Demon Emperor Kishirika Kishirisu's old castle. It was created in the center of a large crater.

The current ruler is Demon Lord Badigadi.

Town of Kurasuma

The only town where Magic Continent and the Sea Race make exchanges.

The current ruler is Demon Lord Bagurahagura.

Wind Port - Saint Port

The port cities that connect Milis Continent to Magic Continent.

Milis Continent ^[47]

In the north there's the Great Forest, in the south there's the Holy Milis Kingdom.

Splitting those two regions is the Blue Dragon Mountain Range, with the Holy Sword Highway going straight through them from top to bottom with not a single monster on the Highway.

Population is roughly 50/50 of Human Race and Beast Race.

Great Forest

A huge forest where the beast races live. Within each year there's a three month period of rainy season.

Holy Milis Kingdom ^[48]

The worlds second ranked country. The place where the worlds largest religious faction "Milis Church" headquarters and the Adventurer's Guild headquarters exist.

The name of the capital is Milishion.

Begaritto Continent ^[49]

A large number of labyrinths, a place of many strange occurrences in terms of magical power.

The strength of the monsters is equal to those of Demon Continent.

A variety of races live here. The majority of them are Adventurers or ex-Adventurers.

Heaven Continent ^[50]

A level ground 3000 meters above sea level.

The place where the Heavenly Race live.

EXTRA CHAPTER

THINGS THAT DON'T CHANGE, EVEN IF TWISTED

In the Kingdom of Sanakia, large paddies spread across the ground.

On a highway that ran as though cutting through these paddies, was a horse carriage running along.

Despite being protected by a number of soldiers, there was no serious atmosphere about it. The guards as well were walking along with relaxed expressions as though they were resting somewhere. Seeing this alone was enough to tell you that there were no VIPs in the carriage.

On top of that, there was no sign that they were holding anything metal, but there was nobody who would attack this carriage that had nothing but the number of guards going for it.

Indeed, there were no VIPs inside it.

The ones riding the carriage were three women.

One of them was a knight of the Kingdom of Shirone, Ginger York.

She was sitting by the entrance of the carriage, and listening to the conversation of the other two.

“Owner-Oniichan sure was cool, huh...”

The one speaking, filled with energy, was a girl wearing a baggy maid outfit; Aisha.

“Really, when it comes to marriage it has to be with a man like that, huh! Right, Okaasan?”

“Y-, Yes, that’s right.”

And as you’d expect, the other woman was also wearing a maid outfit.

She looked like how Aisha would look if she grew up without change and put on a pair of glasses, and her name was Lilya.

Behind her glasses were eyes that housed a cold light, and she gave the impression of a cool and cold woman... but right now, her eyes were swimming.

“He was really amazing the time he saved me, you know? He’d point his finger at the ground like *this* and a hole would open up, and then **PON**, we’d be flying through the air... I wonder if that was magic too. You can do anything with chantless magic. It’s amazing, isn’t it. Chantless magic is... something splendid.”

Aisha had been completely praising “Owner-Oniichan” for a while now.

On the other hand, Lilya was at a little bit of a loss.

It seems that her daughter hadn’t realised that the real identity of “The Owner” was her own brother Rudeus.

Since she had been saying ‘Oniichan’ from the very beginning, Lilya was sure that she had noticed, but it seems that it was just ‘Oniichan’ in the sense of an older male of that age.

“And you know? It was my first time with something like that so I accidentally wet myself, but somehow with Owner-Oniichan I wasn’t embarrassed at all. I ended up thinking that even if this person saw my everything, I wouldn’t mind... Could this be love, perhaps?”

Aisha brought her hands together as though in prayer, her eyes sparkling.

Seeing Aisha like that, Lilya was at a loss.

She didn’t know if she should say right now with this timing that The Owner was actually Rudeus.

Up until just the other day, Aisha hated Rudeus.

In opposition to Lilya telling her about how wonderful Rudeus was, Aisha thought that there was no way that was true, and turned her head away in a pout.

Of course, there was a problem with Lilya’s methods. Lilya was too set on having Aisha serve Rudeus, and spoke of nothing but his good and amazing points.

When the outstanding Aisha heard about this flawless and perfect human Rudeus, she immediately saw through to the fact that it was impossible. And then discovering the bad parts of Rudeus that her mother had been hiding, her mind closed up to him.

Rather than things that others tell them, people place more weight on things they see and discover themselves.

If it were an older Aisha a few years later, perhaps she would have noticed that the credibility of what she tried to discover, and what others tried to tell her were the same, but she was still young.

She thought that her mother's words were all lies, and Rudeus was a no-good person, opposing her mother. Though there were probably better ways Lilya could have worded it, she spoke as though pushing Aisha's brother onto her like an idol, which Lilya was regretting and reflecting upon. However, no matter how much Lilya tried to amend it, once you have an impression it's quite difficult to remove it.

While they were staying at the Kingdom of Shirone, Lilya had half-given up on fixing her daughter's perception of him.

However, by some act of fate, right now Aisha was raving in praise of "Owner-Oniichan".

Lilya considered things.

If it came to light that the wonderful Owner-Oniichan was actually Rudeus, would Aisha's hate for her brother be cured?

And wouldn't Aisha then serve Rudeus as Lilya wished?

On the other side of such thoughts, was the fact that Rudeus had been worried and hid his identity.

Up until the end, he had kept his identity hidden.

She didn't know why he had done so.

But Aisha hated lies and being tricked.

Because Aisha was a clever child, she would see through adults' casual lies and condemn them.

There was the possibility that if after all this time it was revealed that "actually, The Owner's real identity is Rudeus", Aisha would hate him even more.

She might misconstrue the fact that Rudeus hid his identity to the end, and think *‘it’s because he has darkness in his heart, as I thought Oniichan is a deviant, he even lied and washed my panties’*.

Lilya wanted to avoid this.

“Heyy, Okaasaaan. If Oniichan died, I’d sure like to serve Owner-san.”

“ ... ”

Normally Lilya would smack Aisha on the head for saying something so unlucky.

However, right now she couldn’t, and just gave a wry smile while she was running a cold sweat.

Should she tell Aisha that The Owner was Rudeus or not?

If she said it skilfully, Aisha would like her brother.

If she failed, Aisha would hate her brother even more.

She wouldn’t allow the latter, but she didn’t have confidence that she could guide this overly clever daughter of hers.

Not knowing what to do in the end, she continued listening to Aisha.

“You know, if I served Owner-san, I’d work my body for his sake. But because I’m not guarded against Owner-san, I’d even be defenceless when I’m changing and stuff, and one day, when Owner-san just happened to be turned on, I’d get pushed down and made his. From that day, an everyday life of obscenity would begin... I’d make it clear to him that it was only my body I was giving him, but then one day he’d say “I want your heart as well” and propose to me... Kyaaa~”

In contrast to the agonising Lilya, Aisha was laughing in her heart.

That The Owner was her brother, that her brother wasn’t a deviant, that he wasn’t perfect but he was outstanding like her mother had said...

Aisha had already seen through all of it.

And knowing this, she was teasing her mother.

Honestly speaking, she didn’t really like her mother who had restrained her, telling

her to do this, or that, since she was little.

When she asked the reason why, her mother would tell her to just do it, and every day was like this.

Training purely to serve a brother she had never even seen before... It was natural that she was unhappy about it.

But that was just until she actually met her brother.

Chantless magic, the wit to use it, the judgement to grasp the surroundings, the courage to enter the Shirone Royal Palace alone to save her mother, the gentleness to not make even one unhappy expression despite being dirtied by the pee of an unknown girl; it was enough to make the catchphrase “this is what ‘cool’ means” run rampant in Aisha’s mind.

To become helpful to an outstanding brother like that, she would probably have to be good at basically everything.

She had already grasped as much, and by now she was even thankful to her mother for the training.

Had she not been trained from when she was little, she would probably flinch at the idea of serving her brother.

“Aa~ah, I wonder if Oniichan is deadd. If he was just dead already, then I’d be able to jump right into serving Owner-san.”

“I-, If Rudeus-sama isn’t dead, then make sure you serve him properly, all right?”

“Of course~ I know~”

But that was its own matter.

This was the first time Aisha had seen her mother confused.

“Ah-, but just one year is enough right? After that I want to keep serving Owner-san~”

“T-, That’s no goo-... m~m...”

She decided to enjoy this fun situation for a while longer.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. To get an idea what the map looks like and the routes they are about to discuss please look at this map while reading.
2. He switches between using bei, kome, gohan, and meshi all meaning rice in different forms throughout this chapter.
3. Ginshari seems to be a brand of high quality rice.
4. amai = naive, sweet, optimistic, it's probably intended as a pun.
5. Use both hands with chopsticks to mix the egg well with the rice so it become a sticky mess. Like using both spoon and fork to mix spaghetti with sauce.
6. rapeseed is used to make canola oil
7. Nanahoshi is a person's name.
8. An expression that is used to express gratitude/respect towards a certain person. (Japanese household altar of ancestors placed relatively close to the ground and therefore close to the futon where you sleep. You must not sleep with your feet pointed toward the altar. Note the religious connotations whenever Rudeus talk in regard to Roxy)
9. Inou Seizontai (異能生存体) refers to an idea proposed by a Colonel of the Red Shoulders in the series Armored Troopers Votoms involving super-powered individuals who could survive no matter what circumstances they faced.
10. Kanji read 'magician' and 'general', but are read as Evil and Omega respectively. They're references to Tekkaman, namely Tekkaman Evil, and a general named Tekkaman Omega. Series name is Space Knight Tekkaman Blade. Hence the use here amongst the other 'knight' jokes.
11. A reference to Schrödinger's cat.
12. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_owarai_terms
13. The word he uses here for incompetent for battle is also used for ED.
14. His name ironically is Latin for peace.
15. A pun on Pax Romana.
16. Russian name for Catherine the 2nd, Queen of Russia.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catherine_the_Great

17. A reference to a story about the mathematician Leonhard Euler and the Russian queen Catherine the Great.
18. Hikikomori: social withdrawal/reclusive lifestyle, NEET: Not in Education, Employment, or Training
19. A reference to Mario if you did not already know.
20. A reference to Rabuyan (Love-yan).
21. Comiket
22. Reference to The World God Only Knows
23. Sarcasm(?)
24. The word used for inner palace could also mean royal harem.
25. Scene, listener, player, and solo play from above are all in English.
26. Hachigane
27. About \$100,000 in USD
28. Rudeus is referencing a common cliché to cancel out what he perceives as a "Death Flag", presumably Ruijerd having "passed the torch" on to Eris somewhat by having recognized her growth.
29. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanpaku>
30. The actual name of this is "ran ma disturb magic" where ran is disturb and ma can mean magic, so it's basically the same name said twice in two different ways as most abilities are in Mushoku.
31. A Kiseijuu/Parasyte reference.
32. Hit/Health Points
33. Said in full English.
34. Real fulfilling life = riajuu. <http://www.funjapanese.net/whats-a-riajuu/>
35. Spoken in a somewhat casual but typical old person talk.
36. A reference to Hokuto no Ken's Jagi.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehNwYyNJ5Rg>
37. Badigadi is the Demon King of the region that Rikarisu town is in.
38. Actually 'eye of ten thousand of miles'. Incidentally, the one she offered Rudi was the 'eye of a thousand miles'.
39. Uses the pronoun Warawa, an archaic humble first-person pronoun for females. Literally means "child". Mainly used by women in samurai family.

Today, it is used in fictional settings to represent archaic noble female characters.

40. Wagahai - Literally "my fellows; my class; my cohort", but used in a somewhat pompous manner as a first-person singular pronoun.
41. Clenching his fist with his thumb between his index and middle fingers. Represents pussy/sex.
42. As in, esteemed woman
43. Capital: Arusu/Als
44. Also known as Fedoa Region/Territory
45. Also known as Shirone/Siron/Searon Kingdom
46. The word Ma can mean both Demon and Magic, that is why you will see it translated different here and there, just try to think of them as Magic Demon people/continent.
47. Mirisu is another spelling as well as Millis
48. Can also be translated as Saint Milis Country or Country of Saint Milis
49. Also spelled as Begaritt and Begalitt
50. the word Ten means Heaven as well as ceiling



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