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MUSHOKU TENSEI

– Jobless Reincarnation –

- VOLUME 8 -

Youth Period

– *Special Student Chapter* –

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無職軒生

異世界行ったら
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⑧

理不尽な孫の手
Ritujin na Mabore



ザノバ

フィッツ

ルーデウス

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人物紹介



ザノバ

ルーデウス



ジュリエット

『ルーデウス・グレイラット』 人物年表

People chronology

平龍暦407年

アストラ王国フィットア領のブエナ村において、父パウロと母ゼニスの長男として生まれる。三歳の頃、家庭教師としてロキシー・ミグルディアがつけられる。五歳にして水型魔術師となり、長耳族の血を引くシルフィエットに魔術を教える。

七歳の時、フィットア領の領主の家に家庭教師として招かれ、領主の孫娘エリス・ボレアス・グレイラットに魔術、算術、読み書きを教える。

平龍暦414年

転移事件が起り、エリスと共に魔大陸へと転移する。スペルド族のルイジェルド・スペルディアを仲間とし、道中にて冒険者となり魔大陸から中央大陸へと旅をする。

平龍暦417年

旅の途中、ミリス神聖国にて父パウロ、妹ノルンと再会。また、シーローン王国で囚われていた義母リーリヤ、義妹アイシャを救出する。

平龍暦419年

十三歳の時、ルイジェルドと別れ、エリスをフィットア領へと送り届けた後、行方不明の家族を探すべく中央大陸北部へと旅立ち、Aランク冒険者『泥沼のルーデウス』として名を馳せる。

平龍暦420年



リニア

クリフ

ブルセナ

ルーデウス

八物紹介





「自分じや脱げないんだ。脱がせてよ」

CHAPTER 1

AN UNREACHABLE POWER 1

1

Zanoba Shirone. The third prince of the Shirone Kingdom. A miko^[1] who possessed superhuman strength from birth.

He's a deviant. Undeniably a deviant. You could perhaps say that he's a figurine otaku taken to the extreme. Before he had noticed, he was gazing at dolls everyday. When he feels like it, he'll gently pat the dolls.

He'll never treat a doll roughly. Though he'll be unable to suppress his superhuman strength when he gets excited, he'll never make a mistake in handling the dolls.

He might be in love with dolls.

Love.

Right, he loves dolls. He dotes on them.

For example, in his room is a copper statue of a naked woman. I hear that he had caught sight of it in town, and bought it on impulse.

It's the naked figure of a slim, but bewitching girl.

When I had first looked for Zanoba's room, he was hugging that statue in the nude. It was my fault for trying to surprise him by entering without knocking. There's no doubt that I was in the wrong, but when Zanoba saw me he flusteredly put on clothes, and bowed his head in an unsightly manner.

I'm fine even if he doesn't go out of his way to explain what he was doing hugging it naked.

His love for dolls is abnormal. It still snows occasionally, up here in the north. It's cold outside, and it goes without saying how cold a statue would be. Though on the verge of getting frostbite, he was satisfying his desires. It was devotion to a level that no one else could imitate.★

However, it's not abnormal to an extent that I can't understand it. In my past life, I had "used" figurines as well, after all. However, I've never used the Holy Statue (Roxy Figurine) for that. It's something unacceptable after all.

...Speaking of which, I didn't see a Roxy doll in Zanoba's room. Did he perhaps leave it in Shirone?

2

That Zanoba, on a certain day...

He suddenly performed a dogeza in front of me. It was something that happened at night. In my hand was the figurine I was making.

"Shishou, please teach me how to create dolls(figurines)!"

Over this past month, I've been continuing to tell Zanoba to wait a little longer. Though he had been patiently "waiting" like a pet dog, it seems that he finally reached his limits.

"Did we not make a promise!? Why have we not began our lessons yet!?"

Zanoba was a little angry. Of course I had no reason to refuse. I had promised him after all. For the sake of teaching him I had been practising to rehabilitate my skills. There was also the fact that my everyday life hadn't calmed down yet, that I was still far away from achieving my ultimate goal, and that I hadn't found a chance to teach him yet.

"...My dear Zanoba. This training of mine will be harsh, you know."

I had deliberately spoken rather affectedly, and Zanoba was taken aback. He then nodded solemnly.

“Of course. Shishou, please do not underestimate me. Even if I have to vomit blood, I'll learn the heart of Shishou's doll creation method.”

“Mmmn. You have spirit.”

And like that, I began to teach Zanoba my doll creation methods.

Using the time before bed, I'd teach him about 1~2 hours a day.

I had my own motives as well. His love towards dolls was the real thing. Additionally, he was royalty; he was rich.

I had given up on colouring the dolls, and on my dreams of mass producing dolls, but it might be possible with his influence.

First, I'd mass produce Roxy dolls. In the past I had created it as a unique item, but the art of creating bronze statues as well as the art of creating western styled dolls existed in this world. Even if the craftsmanship quality falls, appropriating these two techniques should allow me to mass produce them.

After that would be Ruijerd dolls. Using the real history as a basis, I would write books that glorified the Supard clan. It'd be filled with battle scenes that the people of this world love so much, and in contrast to the depictions of famous heroes, it'd be about a man who never gave up and the suffering and conflicts that he faced as he endeavoured. It would come with a figurine.

The figurine would come with the book as a gift. After all, it makes a big difference to show the protagonist visually. If this turned out to be a success, it might be nice to produce books that depicted Roxy and her glorious exploits next.

Alright, we can do it. Though it might be impossible on my own, no matter what they may say about him, Zanoba is still royalty. He's rich. He's got passion as well. As a partner for this enterprise, there'd surely be no one better.

There's a saying about counting chickens before they've hatched. It was surely a fitting description for me at the time.

“Well then, I'll teach you my secret techniques!”

“Yes! Shishou!”

Our doll creating was just beginning.

3

Let's just start with the conclusion.

He couldn't do it. Zanoba couldn't use chantless earth magic to create dolls.

There were two reasons. First there was the fact that he couldn't control chantless magic. Second of all, there was the fact that he lacked my overwhelming mana capacity.

Thinking about it, there are hardly any people in this world who can use chantless magic. Among the people I've met, there were only Orsted, Fitts, and Sylphy. In this school there was one more; a teacher who could use chantless wind magic. However, I was told that he died last year. Since I had been able to use it since childhood, it had never really occurred to me but chantless magic was a high level technique. Thinking back on it, Eris and Ghyslaine weren't able to learn chantless magic either. Since it was like that, there was no way a person who just started learning magic like Zanoba would be able to use it.

Moreover, the issue of mana capacity is an important one. When I create figures, my mana is consumed continuously. I use up a considerable amount of mana to produce them.

It was then that I understood it for the first time. It seems that somehow or other, the amount of mana I have is far greater than others. No, strictly speaking I had vaguely noticed it. I thought that I had more than the average. However, I hadn't thought that it'd be so far above the average. When I was an adventurer and I had seen magicians who ran out of mana, I would think something like "they've been wasting their mana on useless things". To express things numerically, if we said that a normal magician had 100 mana points, I had thought that I was around 500 or so. However, the reality is that it seems I have much, much more than that. To think that Zanoba couldn't produce even a single doll part.

Well, leaving me aside for now, Zanoba put in great effort.

Waking up early, he'd use up his mana until he fainted, then when he woke up, he'd use up his mana until he fainted. He repeated this all day long. It might be because he'd continued to use his mana until he reached his limits, but his cheeks were thinning and starting to sag a little. His face was like a skeleton, and was wet with tears and mucus. He didn't have talent in the thing he wanted to do most. That much was obvious.

I've done something quite cruel to him. I reflected on it. Doing so, I apologised.

“I'm sorry.”

Zanoba shook his head and replied without any power.

“No, if I was more talented...”

The figure of a man stricken with grief. The figure of a loser, surrounded by a shroud of sorrow. It wouldn't be good to give up here.

I think about things.

It really is quite pitiful that Zanoba can't even manage the first step in creating figurines. Even so, it can't be helped since chantless magic is impossible for him. Since he lacks enough mana as well, it's probably impossible for him to create figurines using the same method that I do.

“Alright. Let's change the creation method.”

I spontaneously reach such a conclusion.

“There's another way of doing it!?”

The grieving Zanoba suddenly recovered, and now leans in towards me.

“Yeah. Let's try a method that uses mana as little as possible.”

Saying this, I create a lump of earth. It's clay.

“Though I used magic to create this, you should probably be able to find this naturally in the wild.”

Just where do people get clay? I hear that famous potters like to seclude themselves in the mountains, but the mountains and forests in this world are dangerous. Although, those golem things seem to be made of something like clay, and you can probably obtain clay even without having to dig up the earth yourself.

“What are you going to do with that?”

“I'm going to carve it.”

Carving.

It's the oldest method, the most reliable method, but also the most difficult method. I'll create the figurine parts one by one by carving the clay. If I do things like this, it should be possible to create figurines even without using mana. There's the problem of lacking the appropriate carving tools, but we can probably work it out by looking for a magic item in town. In the past, I've seen things like knives that can cut through stone like butter.

“I see, Shishou! With this method, even I should be able to do it!” said Zanoba in a cheerful voice.

His expression was filled with hope.

4

His hope was very simply crushed.

Zanoba couldn't use his fingers skilfully. The cause was an ability he possessed since birth.

Superhuman strength.

Indeed, he was hindered by that superhuman strength. He could keep it in check enough that he didn't destroy everything. However, that was as far as he could control it. It was difficult to perform the delicate work required to carve the parts.

Zanoba persevered each day with bloodshot eyes. His passion was the real thing.

Without even a wink of sleep, he immersed himself in doll creation until he almost starved himself to death. Because it hadn't gone the way he had wanted, he redid things again and again. Each time he would cry, shout and let out strange noises.

And then it would be finished; the doll that he had created from scratch.

It couldn't be called beautiful by any means. The workmanship was bad, and had it been in my previous life, I might have laughed at it in scorn. It was like the badly done joke photoshops that you could find in abundance on the internet. However, I knew. I knew that this was his passion. I'd never laugh at him. However, even without me laughing, Zanoba himself could tell that it was badly done.

“Shishou, I can't do it... I... can't do it the way Shishou does it!”

Zanoba cried. Unable to create what he saw in his mind, he cried. Stricken with grief, he seemed like he had no energy left to stand.

From the beginning of our lessons to the end was 2 months. Even seeing Zanoba's depressed and worn out expression, there was nothing I could do.

5

“And that's how it is.”

I had consulted Fitts-senpai. Asking someone else for advice about my student; I was truly shameful as a shishou. However, I still wanted to rely on someone else's wisdom. Zanoba was too pitiful after all.

“Making dolls?”

Fitts-senpai couldn't really understand. Whilst sitting on some chairs that were lined up inside the library, he listened to my story and then tilted his head in puzzlement.

“Yes. That's basically how it is.”

Using earth magic, I create a simple doll to show him. It was a simple doll without any clothing, and was a bit like a Saobobo^[2].

“A-, amazing...”

Fitts-senpai stared at my hands, and looked fixedly at the doll I had finished making. Then as though wondering if he could do it as well, he gathers mana into his fingertips and creates a wiggly something or other that was a bit like slime. Considering that he had just tried to copy me on the spot, he really was amazing.

However, it seems that it didn't turn out the way he wanted. In the end Fitts-senpai sighed and gave up.

“I can't do it.”

Well, creating figures is something that I've been diligently practising for a long time now, and is an accumulation of the techniques that I've studied. If it was something that could be easily imitated just by looking, I'd cry. Nevertheless, it feels to me that if Fitts-senpai practised, he'd be able to do it. In the first place, he's someone who can use chantless magic.

“This is something that a normal person can't imitate.”

“That's true. I had thought that another method involving carving from a lump of clay would work out, but...”

“Since he was clumsy with his hands, he couldn't do it, you said.”

Fitts-senpai let out a 'Mmmmm' and was thinking about it with his hand to his chin. It seems to be a habit of his to bring his hand to his chin when he thinks. It might be because of the sunglasses, but it looks awfully uncomfortable. Incidentally, when he's awkward or embarrassed, he'll scratch his cheek or behind his ears. It's an action that's quite suiting of his age, and suits him really well. However, since elves are long-lived, he might not be as young as he seems.

“Mmm, let's see. I'm not sure if you'll be able to use them as a reference, but there

are people like him in the Asura capital as well."

"People like him?"

"Mmn. People who have things they want to do themselves, but lack the ability or skill."

"What do these people do?"

When I asked that, Fitts-senpai seemed a little reluctant to answer and scratched himself behind the ear.

"Ummm, well, they get slaves to do it."

"Hohh." [3]

According to Fitts-senpai, those people in the capital had the knowledge, but lacked the skill. That's why they would buy slaves, train those slaves, and had the slaves create what they wanted.

"According to what I've heard, that Zanoba-kun likes the dolls that you make, Rudeus-kun, and because he wants more of them, he wants to create them himself, right?"

"...Huh? Was that what I said?"

"Umm, that's how it sounded to me?"

Is that so? But still, normally even if you liked figurines, you'd just paint them yourself or remodel them; you wouldn't think to create them from scratch yourself. When I was alive, at best I was an average remodeler.

"I'm sure that Zanoba-kun wanted you as his personal doll-maker, Rudeus-kun, but he himself knew that it'd be impossible and so that might be why he said something like becoming your student, right?"

"Well, I don't think it'd be impossible though."

Employed by Zanoba in the Shirone Royal Palace, and spending each day making figurines. In the end, a lifestyle like that might not be bad. Working for a royal palace would probably mean a stable income. Speaking of which, how much does Fitts-senpai get from Princess Ariel each month?

...It feels like it'd be rude to ask, huh?

"Well, I'll try suggesting it to Zanoba once. Thank you very much."

“Mn, you're very welcome.”

When I bowed, Fitts-senpai smiled bashfully. Why is it that I feel so startled when I see that smiling face of his?

It's a mystery.

The mysterious man, Fitts. Truly a mystery.

6

Buy a slave, teach them, and they'll be able to create dolls. When I told Zanoba about this idea, he agreed.

As I expected, he began making arrangements to buy a slave with great joy.

It seems that he had originally wanted to create them himself. However, it seems that he realised that since it was impossible, there was no choice but to give up in it. Unexpectedly, the method that Fitts-senpai had suggested was typical for this world. Be that as it may, for a student to ask their shishou to teach a slave instead of themselves was quite rude it seems. After all, in the beginning Zanoba tried to learn it until he was vomiting blood. That's why although he couldn't bring up the topic, when I suggested it instead, he was relieved.

“And so our next monthly break, we'll be going to the slave market.”

Once again, I expressed my thanks to Fitts-senpai. As someone who gave me advice when I was troubled, I really was thankful to him.

“I see. It'd be good if you found a good slave.”

And like that, the topic came to a close. Though it had come to a close, afterwards Fitts-senpai was a little fidgety. What to say?

“Speaking of which, I'm free as well next monthly-break.”

“Is that so?”

“Mn. And so, umm, I don't have anything to do, and I was thinking to visit the town, but it's not like there's anywhere I wanted to go in particular... I don't have any friends, so I'd be going by myself...”

From his fragmented speech, and his occasional glances towards me, he conveyed what he meant.

Is this okay for a guard?

Wouldn't it be bad if he wasn't near the princess when something happened?

...Well, that's not for me to worry about.

I'm sure Luke would be able to deal with it somehow.

“Umm, would you like to come with us, senpai?”

“Is that okay? Wouldn't I bother you?”

“It's fine. As thanks for your advice, I'll treat you to a meal.”

“Really? Then I'll accept.”

Saying that, Fitts-senpai smiled bashfully.

Like that, the plan was for the three of us to go to the slave market.

Author's Comment

I had originally thought to make the subheading one of the following:

“Rudeus vs Zanoba”

“Shishou's Mana Capacity Is the Greatest in the WooooooooooooorlD!”

“A Flower in Each Hand!? Heart-Throbbing Shopping with Prince Super-Strength and Prince Bashful!”

but I decided against it.

CHAPTER 2

AN UNREACHABLE POWER 2

1

“It's nice to meet you. I'm... Fitts.”

When Fitts met Zanoba, he was a little nervous. If he's a senpai, then he should act more like one. More grand and dignified... or so I was thinking, but the thing about him being shy around strangers might really be the case. Zanoba steps forward with a jerk.

“Third prince of the Shirone Kingdom, Zanoba Shironnoaaa!”

Zanoba was getting cocky, so I kick him behind the knees. He topples a little. It's not like I have plans to reinforce the pecking order. It's just that it'd probably be best to be a little more humble when meeting a senior for the first time.

“Zanoba, the one who came up with our current plan was Fitts-senpai. Pay him your respects properly.”

When I said this, Zanoba bent at the hips and greeted him.

“I understand, Shishou... I do not believe I have had the pleasure of meeting you before. I am Shirone Kingdom's Third Prince, Zanoba Shirone. Pleased to make your acquaintance.”

“N-, no, it's all go-, fine. Because you're a person of royalty, please stop with that.”

While waving his arms in a fluster, Fitts-senpai took his place behind me. Seeing that, Zanoba stared in wonder. There was quite an astonishing gap between his appearance, the rumours about him, and his current speech and conduct.

Despite being a magician of voiceless invocation, and being called Silent Fitts, he was

acting afraid like this. Despite wearing sunglasses, and looking a little... once you spoke to him, he was quite typical of his age. He's a good senpai who looks after his kouhai.

“Well then, now that we've all met, let's go.”

At my command, the two begin to walk.

2

The slave market is in the Commerce Street.

The slave trading business was just barely scraping along on the Milis continent and in the southern parts of the Central Continent. However, it's different here in the north.

Here, the slave trade is perfectly legalized in most countries, and is endorsed. To the countries in the northern parts of the Central Continent, the slave trade is an important business. They're reliant on it to the point where the countries wouldn't be able to survive without it.

There are a variety of reasons for a person to become a slave.

Those who are orphaned in a war.

Those who are up to their ears in debt due to bad harvests, and so sell their children.

Those who sell themselves off to save their family.

It's also rumored that in the dark side of the Thieves Guild, there's something like a slave farm.

The Ranoa Kingdom that is included in the “Magic Triumvirate” would survive even without slaves. However, heading further east are a great number of poor villages that have to sell children at fixed intervals.

Those slaves are bought by warrior and mercenary groups or countries and used as disposable soldiers in warfare.

However, there are those in the business that are connected with the Kingdom of Asura. Slaves that are beautiful or have a lot of ability are brought to the Kingdom of Asura to sell. The Kingdom of Asura is a place that doesn't know poverty. Though there are those who live in destitution, there's nobody who suffers from starvation. Slaves who are brought there are basically winners. I honestly think that you've lost the moment you become a slave though.

Also, because the slaves here in the north are excellent and robust, there are those who come all the way here to make their purchases. There are many looking to buy people.

“So it's this place, huh?”

In fact, I'd gathered information at the Adventurers Guild beforehand.

In a district as big as this, there are numerous slave markets. This particular district has 5 of them,

Though there are 5, they range in quality. For example, I was told about one of them “absolutely never buy from there”. I was told that in a slave market with low credibility, there are slaves who are diseased or dying that people try to pawn off to others with a straight face. Well, I also heard that you could occasionally find a bargain there, but since we're all beginners we'd all have no way to tell the difference.

Because we're new to this, we head to a better slave market.

“Hmm, it's quite different to my homeland.”

Zanoba nodded in interest.

The slave market looked just like a normal building at a glance. Made of stone and earth, it was a typical building for these parts. Judging by from the standards of this world, this building was on the large side. There were three of them in a row. Written above the door that served as the entrance was “Rium Company - Slave Trade Centre”.

There were fires burning at the entrance, and standing around were men who wore leather armour over winter clothing. They were unshaven, but didn't give a particularly bad feeling... I've spent 2 years as an adventurer though, so it might be that I've become used to this kind of appearance. I probably would've thought

different about them in the past.

“The slave market isn't outside huh...”

Fitts-senpai's voice sounded surprised. In the north, there are many slave markets that are held indoors. The reason is simple.

“Shall we enter?”

When we enter, a waft of hot air surrounds our bodies. There are fires throughout the inside of the building.

And on top of the countless daises are naked slaves lined up in a row. The reason they don't do it outside is basically because it's cold. The slaves would catch colds.

However, because indoor markets would lose passing customers, there are those who still do it outside.

“Hmm, there are a lot of different sales places, aren't there? Shishou, what should we do?”

“Since it's my first time buying as well, first let's look around as appropriate.”

We start to walk around without much of a plan. The 8 slave stands are merchants associated with the Rium Company. Gathered around each place are possibly those who are selling slaves they've bought.

They probably alternate when they've sold out, or it might be something like switching over after their designated timeslot has passed.

It's quite a successful business, and there are crowds of people around each of the stands. Their outfits are quite varied; there are those like me who are dressed like adventurers, those who like Fitts-senpai and Zanoba are dressed like nobles, as well as those dressed like merchants, townspeople, commoners and students. Among them are merchants whose aim seems to be the resale of slaves. Further away from the stalls are those who have just purchased their slaves and are having a chat with each other.

Could the seedy looking ones be pickpockets? No, pickpockets wouldn't come to a guarded place like this. They might be slaves who are sent by their masters to purchase other slaves.

Nonetheless, I clutch onto the coin purse under my robes. This time I've been

entrusted with the funds. It wouldn't be a joke if they were stolen.

“U-, uwah, uwah... They're really all naked...”

Seeing the slave stalls, Fitts-senpai's eyes are staring in surprise. His face is bright red. Because he's wearing a mantle I can't really tell, but he seems to be bashfully standing pigeon-toed.

“T-, they're big, huh...? To become like that...”

Following his line of sight, I find that he was looking at some slaves who seemed like warriors, being introduced as featured goods. Whether man or woman, every one of them was well built. In particular, the female warrior in the middle was good. She was big. It goes without saying that her stature was big, but her bulging chest was something that made you look on with longing. Though it seems that goods as big as those would get in the way of battle, as I understand from Eris, in this world even if they're huge, there's not really a problem.

“Senpai, is this your first time at a slave market?”

“Eh? Ah, mmn...”

While scratching behind his ear, one of Fitts-senpai's hands was already holding his mantle in front in embarrassment. He was probably worried about the position of his thing. Truly the reaction of a DT. I was like that as well, once. Now? Well, look, right now my motive is a little different.

“Y-you sure are used to it huh, Rudeus-kun?”

Though Fitts-senpai was my senpai, it seems that he still hasn't had any experience. When I think about it like that, I feel like boasting about my victory a bit, but I've only done it once too, and my partner ran away from me. It's not something I can be proud about. Still, with just that as experience, I really am a little calmer about these things. It's a problem now that I'm too calm, though!

“I think once you've had some experience as well, senpai, you'll more or less grow used to it.”

“Y-, you think? Wait, so you've had some experience, Rudeus-kun...”

Fitts-senpai seems a little down. He really is young, huh? Truly young.

“Shishou, we have no need for warriors, so what we should be looking for is a race that can use magic and is good with their hands, right?”

As if to say he had no interest in these things, Zanoba jerked his chin in another direction. It seems that he essentially doesn't have interest in women. Technically he is a widower, so it might not be that he has no interest in sex at all.

“If it's a race that's good with their hands, I guess it has to be dwarves, right?”

“It seems so. A dwarf who can use earth magic would probably be best. Although I don't really think there's a need to fuss over the race.”

Saying that, I have a look around one of the stands. Though it's a slave market as big as this, the number of dwarf slaves is few. The majority of the slaves are those with combat ability, and there are almost no slaves who would seem to be suitable for crafting.

“Umm, Rudeus-kun. If you were to teach them magic, then I think a young child who can't use magic would be better.”

Fitts-senpai gives some advice.

“Why?”

“Chantless magic is something that you can learn easily as a child.”

“Ah, is that how it is?”

“Mn. I think that after you become 10, you basically can't learn it.”

Is that how it is? But thinking about it, though Sylphy could do it, Eris couldn't. Could there be a relationship with age?

“Is there a relationship with one's age?”

“Mn. From my experience, my master's words, and the words of the teachers at school,

I've concluded that I shouldn't be wrong but... Ah, also, if you start using magic from when you're about 5, your mana capacity increases tremendously. If you want them to create dolls using your method, Rudeus-kun, it'd be better to have greater mana capacity, right?"

If you start using magic from when you're about 5, your mana capacity increases tremendously. I had come up with a similar hypothesis in the past, but this is the first time hearing it from someone else.

"I've heard that your mana capacity is determined at birth, but..."

"That's wrong. It certainly says that in the textbook, but because you can't increase it past the age of 10, I think they're probably misunderstanding."

I see. So if you start using magic from when you're about 5, your mana capacity increases tremendously huh? Since I've been using magic since 2 or 3 and my mana capacity is large, it's something that I can assent to. Also, since Fitts-senpai said he had personal experience, he's probably concealing a considerable amount of mana as well.

"Fitts-senpai has been using magic since young as well, huh?"

"Mn. That's... In the past, I was saved by my master, and at that time I begged them to teach me."

"Hehh."

Perhaps he was attacked by some monster in the forest. No, since he was young, the chance that it was a kidnapping is high. In this world there's quite a kidnapping boom going on. Since senpai would probably be a bishounen if he took off those sunglasses, I can understand that kidnappers would aim for him.

"That master of yours can also use chantless magic?"

"Mn. They're an amazing person, you know. I respect them even now."

"Is that so? In that case I'd really like to meet them one day."

A person who can use chantless magic. If I met him, my magic might be able to improve a little. At any rate, I'd probably benefit somehow... or so I was thinking, but Fitts-senpai smiled bitterly.

“Umm, that's probably impossible...”

“I see. So they're someone quite important after all, huh?”

Fitts is a guard to the princess after all. His master might be a court magician or something. For example, by luck a court magician saved him, and then using that connection became that magician's disciple. He then grew up, and became the princess's guard. It might be something like that. If they're a court magician of the Kingdom of Asura, then they should probably be able to use chantless magic at least.

“An important person... they're not really, umm, they're someone from the Fedoa region.”

“Ahhh...”

They were wrapped up in the teleportation huh? In that case, their whereabouts would be unknown.

“That's um... It'd be good if they were alive.”

“They are alive. I've already found them after all.”

Speaking of which, he did mention that he was studying the teleportation incident because he was looking for an acquaintance. Wait, if he found them recently then...

“Huh? Then why can't I meet them?

“Huhu... It's a secret.”

Fitts-senpai laughed bashfully.

...Why is it that when I see that smile, my heart starts to throb like this?

Though I can love traps when they're 2d, I was sure that I wasn't a homo but...

Perhaps it's just that kind of drastic measure.

3

Following Fitts-senpai's advice, we search for a slave.

A slave that's about 5 (if they're younger than that, there's a good chance they

wouldn't understand us),

a dwarf (it's better that they're dexterous so that if it comes down to it, they'll be able to use the carving method), and a cute little girl (my personal preference).

“A girl? Their gender doesn't matter to me, but Shishou, aren't you getting our objectives mixed up?”

“Rudeus-kun...”

As we piled up the criteria one by one, once we got to the final criterion, they looked at me with eyes of criticism.

“Huuuhh?”

Since we were all guys here, I had thought that they'd have been on-board instead, but... Well, it seems like they aren't the type. If it was Elinalise, then she might have approved. If it was her, she might be suggesting we find cute little boys instead. Lately her interest in shota has been awakening after all.

“But still, if we buy a 5 year old then we shouldn't expect too much regarding education. They might not even understand our words. If it turns out that they can only speak the Beast God Language, then we wouldn't be able to teach them magic after all.”

“I can speak the Beast God Language, so if that's the case then I can teach them.”

“What! You can speak the Beast God Language, Shishou? As expected of you...”

“Huu, well that's how it is.”

At Zanoba's praise, I start to feel proud and I hold out my chest. Though I look like this, I'm multilingual.

I've also taught a 5 year old before. Speaking of which, I wonder if Sylphy is doing well.

Even without seeing Elinalise and Fitts-senpai, you could say that elves are really to my taste, or that they had the type of face that Japanese of the fantasy generation preferred. Elves brought to mind something like a slim and beautiful man and woman pair. If I remember correctly, Sylphy was roughly my age, so she might be 15 right now. She's probably become considerably beautiful. According to Paul, she could use magic, and on top of that, she has green hair. Since I'd probably hear rumours of her right

away, I'd probably be able to find her immediately. I haven't heard a single rumour though... I wonder where she is right now.

"Anyway, since we've already decided on the criteria, let's go ask a sales assistant."

I head to place where "Help Office" is written. The man at the reception had a completely clean-shaven head, and when combined with his beard, was quite a macho man. Though he looked at Fitts-senpai and I with suspicious looks, when he saw Zanoba he accepted it and nodded.

"Um, excuse me, we're actually..."

The macho man ignored my words, and spoke to Zanoba who was behind me.

"Yo, welcome Onii-san. What is it that you're looking for? A warrior for a guard? Right now we have guys that can teach the sword as well, you know. We also have some magicians, but it'd probably be better to head to the Magic University for that. Or could it be that you're looking for THOSE? No, no, I shouldn't say it. You don't seem all that popular after all. We've got a real voluptuous one in her 20s you know. She was recently a whore so THAT would be perfect as well. Of course they aren't diseaAGAAAAAH!"

The macho man then ate Zanoba's Iron Claw, and was raised into the air.

"Don't ignore Shishou. Yakking on and on like that, I'll pull out that noisy tongue of yours and rip off your jaw, you know."

"H-, hey! What are you doing!?"

The guards around had immediately moved to capture Zanoba, but he was undisturbed. Conversely, with just a shake he sent them flying. Mmn well, he's quite high powered.

The muscular guards are being swung around by a skinny otaku-looking guy. It's surreal. So this is the power of a miko, huh? Oops, this isn't the time to be standing here watching.

“NO! Zanoba, stop this! HOUSE!”

“Yes!”

At my voice, Zanoba released his grip. In the face of the suddenly motionless Zanoba, the guards stop moving as well. I face the guards and bow my head.

“I'm truly sorry. He just got a little excited.”

“No, it's fine... Just don't act too violently, alright? We'll draw our swords the next time.”

They easily let us off. Though there was a little fear in their eyes, they decided that they hadn't seen anything this time. It wouldn't be good even if they poked their noses in further.

What surprised me was that the moment Zanoba was caught, Fitts-senpai had prepared his stance before I did. It was an extremely fast and decisive movement. As expected of the princess's guard. You could also say that I was just cowardly though. Anyway, it seems that there isn't anyone particularly vigilant here, uh? After all, using adventurer terms, the guards around here were only C rank, or at best B rank. Well whatever. I'll continue speaking to him.

“We're looking for a dwarf around the age of 5.”

I speak to the macho man again.

“Around 5...?”

While cowering, he looked over the list in his hand. Flipping through the pages, he squints his eyes.

“There aren't many dwarves in the first place here and on top of that a 5 year old...”

So the criteria really were too strict? The dwarves basically live on the Milis Continent after all. Even with all the kidnapping going on, the dwarf slaves basically don't end up here.

“As long as it's a race that's good with crafting, even if they aren't a dwarf it won't be a

problem. We definitely wouldn't complain if they were young though..."

"Oh, there is one."

The man tapped a part of the list with his finger.

"A dwarf girl of 6 years old. Because of her parent's debts, the whole family were sold into slavery. Her health is a little on the bad side though. It might be because of malnutrition. Well, she'll probably be back to normal if you feed her. She can't speak the Human Language, and though it's natural for a 6 year old, she can't read either."

"I see. What happened to her parents?"

"Both her parents have been sold."

It's something I heard in a tavern during my days as an adventurer, but amongst the dwarves exist a social class who believe that they can live with nothing but the mountains. It'd be fine to leave the Milis Continent and work in the Dragon King Mountain Range, but occasionally there'd be idiots who guessed wrong and headed too far north, and without re-entering the mountains were unable to make a living. They'd even get their families wrapped up; truly useless fathers.

"For now, let's just meet them."

4

At the macho man's call, after a while a single merchant appears.

He's a man with dark skin. It's not just suntan. He's probably from the Begaritto Continent, or one of his parents was from the Begaritto Continent. He's a little fat and drenched in sweat. Though there's a cloth hung over his shoulder for wiping up the sweat, that cloth too is soaked. Though the smell of sweat wafts about, this marketplace is hot so it can't be helped. I had already taken off my robe as well, and Zanoba undid his mantle as well. Fitts-senpai is dressed as usual with a nonchalant look.

His face is red though.

For a different reason.

"Hello. I'm the branch manager of one of the Rium Firm's associate firms, the Domehni firm, Fe'Burrito."

The merchant names himself. He turns to Zanoba and extends his hand. Zanoba was reaching his hand towards the merchant's face, so I took his hand instead.

“Hello. I'm Rudeus of the Quagmire.”

I give that name a go, and for an instant looks at me puzzled, but immediately smiles broadly.

“Ohhh, so you were Quagmire! I've heard about you. Just before winter, you killed a stray dragon.”

“I was just lucky; the dragon was weakened you see.”

The name of the A ranked adventurer, Rudeus of the Quagmire is known in these parts as well, somehow. The efforts I put into spreading my name weren't just for show.

“Today I'm looking for a dwarf but...”

Fe'Burrito glances at Zanoba and Fitts-senpai.

“Right. These two are contributing to the funds. We're looking for a child so that we can teach them crafting from a young age.”

I tried saying something appropriate. It wasn't a lie.

“I see, so it was something like that... Though it isn't a good one that I'd really recommend... Anyway, please just have a look. It's this way.”

We listen to Fe'Burrito and from the other side of the market, move into the neighbouring building. We're heading to a slave storehouse. Though I say a storehouse, there are iron bars attached to pulleys lined up in a row, and inside those are slaves. The inside of the bars are about a tatami mat in size and all have one or two slaves inside. Before they're brought to the marketplace, they're washed and covered in oil, but right now they stink. The slaves inside are crying children, and glaring slaves who send killing intent our way.

Inside the warehouse are a number of people like us who are directly trading.

Fe'Burrito walks between the barred cages. He then calls for a man standing to the side. It's probably a subordinate.

We head further in. We stop in front of one of the cages.

Inside the cage is a girl with empty eyes, sitting with her knees huddled up.

“It's this one... Oi, bring em out.”

“Right.”

Fe'Burrito's subordinate nods, and opening the cage, pulls the child out of the cage. The child is shackled with an iron collar. A rag is concealing the flaws in her skin and bones body. Her hair is something like a reddish orange. It's unkempt and has some white hairs mixed in. Her complexion is also bad.

She was hugging herself and shivering. It might be because we're further into the storehouse, but it's a little cold. The eyes she's looking at us with are completely empty. She looks truly pitiful.

Fe'Burrito's subordinate pays this no heed, and unhesitatingly removes the rag from the girl. Her skinny body, like a child who misses meals, is completely revealed. Seeing this, Fitts-senpai frowns.

“Rudeus-kun...”

Be at ease. Even I have no intention of creating Pulitzer prize winning photographs.

Wanting to quickly buy her, feed her, and give her a warm bath; I'm filled with these kinds of feelings. However, I'm a bit worried about her eyes. Those empty eyes. I've seen eyes like those before.

“As you can see, it's a dwarf child. 6 years old. Possesses no skills in particular. Both parents are dwarves. Father was a blacksmith and mother created decorations. As long as it's hereditary, the dexterity of her hands should be as you wish. However, she can only understand the Beast God Language. Because we hadn't thought she'd sell, her health isn't the best. Because of that, we'll sell her at a discount.”

While making a difficult expression, Fitts-senpai approached the girl and touched her cheek. After a few seconds, the girl's complexion became somewhat better. He might

have done something.

“Naturally she's a virgin. There are no concerns about infectious diseases and the like, but as you can see, she might be a little weak. Though we'll treat her with healing magic upon purchase, this really isn't a good that we'd recommend.”

Fitts-senpai is looking at her with eyes like a child who's found an abandoned puppy. At any rate she's fulfilled the criteria so I was planning to buy her anyway though.

“Hello, little Miss.”

I crouch down and speak to her in Beast God Language. The first step is to interview her.

“I'm Rudeus. You are?”

“...”

“Actually, there was something we wanted you to do for us.”

“...”

“Umm...”

The girl just looked at me with empty eyes, and didn't reply at all. Fe'Burrito's subordinate brandishes the whip at his hip, but I stop him with my hand.

“Shishou, what's the matter?”

“She's in quite a bit of despair. She's got the face of someone who hasn't any hopes at all and just wants to die.”

“...Have you seen that kind of face before, Shishou?”

“In the past, many times you see.”

Zanoba and Fitts-senpai look like they're brooding over something. Well, it'd be best not to talk about things from my past life too much. It's just a lot of negative things after all.

I looked at the girl for a little while. They're nostalgic eyes. In the past I had a period when I made eyes like this too. Let's see, it was when I had just passed 20 I think. I

hadn't finished my education, I had no prospects, I had no job experience, and I was thinking that my life from now on would just be nothing but eating and shitting. They were the same eyes as that time. Thinking about it, at that time there were still things I could do. However, because I was despairing over my situation, I gave up on everything. After a few years, I became defiant about being a NEET and got even worse, however. During that period of my life, I really didn't have a single hope. I just thought that I wanted to die.

“Do you want to die?”

“...”

“You can't do anything about this yourself, huh? I can understand your feelings.”

“...”

The girl's eyes slowly noticed me.

“In that case, shall I end things for you?”

I said this seriously. I think my tone was light.

I had truly thought that I wanted to die. However, without dying, I continued to live on, and on. It was a long time, filled with regrets.

I can't save her from this kind of life. Of course I can buy her and give her work to do. I can buy her clothing, I can feed her food, and I can speak kind words to her. However, the fact that doing those kinds of things isn't saving her is something I should already understand very well. Forcing her to do things that she doesn't want to do is by no means saving her.

In that case, it would be better to end things for her.

If she became like me. If she was able to live another life after dying. It would be good if she could abandon her current life, and try her best in a new one. There's someone like that out there, without a doubt. Telling someone something like 'your hard work will pay off' is just a pretense to make you feel better about yourself.

I don't know if she's this kind of person. From my perspective, she can still keep at it. She's still young, or rather, very young, and as long as she tries her best from now on, whatever happens things will work out.

However, it's not for me to say. I was someone who was an incurable idiot even up until death.

It's something that depends on how willing she herself is. I'm not the one who gets to decide.

“...”

“Say something.”

The girl didn't tremble. However, she slowly parted her lips.

“———I don't want to die.”

She murmured only that. It was a feeble voice. Though it was a spiritless response, that's fine. It's just how it is. I was like that too. It's fine like that. It's fine even if she doesn't want to live. As long as she doesn't want to die, that's fine.

“We'll take her.”

I covered the girl with the robe that had been in my hands. I create hot air to warm her body, and chant detoxification magic. Recovery magic won't restore her strength; after this we'll let her eat.

“Fe'Burrito-san, how much is she?”

One Large Asura Copper Coin^[4]. That was how much the girl cost.

5

After buying her, we cleaned the girl in the washing area that was in the corner of the marketplace. After that, we bought clothes and the like for her in the commercial districts, as well as other necessary items. We then entered a suitable cafe.

It wasn't a simple eatery. It was a cafe with a good atmosphere. It's a shop that I'd definitely avoid were I by myself. The one who picked it was Fitts-senpai. Unlike me though, this kind of cafe suits Fitts-senpai quite well. It can't be helped, but I feel out of place here and can't stop fidgeting.

As expected of a royalty I might say, Zanoba is quite dignified. The girl we've just bought is single-mindedly shoveling food into her mouth. The only one who's uncomfortable is me.

Fitts-senpai seemed to be in a good mood. While saying something like 'I'm glad', he's patting the girl on the head.

"By the way, Rudeus-kun, what's this girl's name?"

Being asked that, I noticed that I haven't yet asked for her name. That Fe'Burrito didn't tell me her name.

"What's your name?"

The girl looks at my face as if she's heard something strange.

"...Name?"

Huh?

Could it be that my Beast God Language isn't getting through to her? It's certainly been about three years since I've used it, but it seemed to work fine in the Great Forest... Could it be that in the Dorudia village I was looked at like Michael (an American, self-proclaimed fluent Japanese speaker) who had just come to Tokyo? No, there's no way... The way I spoke shouldn't have been very different from Ruijerd.

"Umm, what do people call you?"

"...Bazelle of the Sacred Iron and Lilitella of the Beautiful Snowy Ridge's child."

Because that didn't quite seem to be what I was looking for, I conveyed what she said to Fitts-senpai. When I did, he went "ah, I see" and nodded with a knowing look.

"The dwarves don't get a proper name until they reach 7 years of age."

"Proper name?"

"Mn, until age 7 dwarves aren't given a name, and when they turn 7, they're given a name based on things they like, or things they admire, or things that they're good at for example."

So he said. As expected of Fitts-senpai, he really is knowledgeable, huh?

“I see. It's quite inconvenient if she doesn't have a name.”

“Her parents aren't here anymore, so there's no choice except for us to give her one.”

I see.

“We're going to give you a name now, but do you have any kinds of hopes?”

When I had asked this just in case, she tilted her head in puzzlement. I wonder if someone like this will really be able to create figurines. I've become a little uneasy.

“Since she's a girl, let's give her a lovely name.”

Fitts-senpai said that kind of girly line. Hearing this, on the contrary I start to want to give her a gallant and manly name.

Ah, no good, no good.

“Zanoba. Let's hear your thoughts!”

When I said this, Zanoba turned towards us.

“Mn? Will it be fine if I decide?”

“I'm not the one who paid after all.”

“In that case, 'Julius'.”

There's no mistake that he said that. He didn't look like he had thought about it.

“That's, a man's name, right?”

“Yes, it's the name of the pitiful younger brother that I accidentally killed.”

I'm probably making a strange face. Fitts-senpai looks like he doesn't know what's going on.

“This child will be staying in my room, right? In that case, it'd be better for her to have a name that I'm comfortable with.”

Certainly, this child will end up living with Zanoba. As a room for royalty, Zanoba's room is large after all. I could also get permission and have her live in my room, but it'd be much easier for royalty to get permission. That's why although my room would be fine as well, we've naturally planned for her to stay with the rich Zanoba. That's how our conversation had gone. However, since she can't understand his words, it might be good for her to stay in my room instead. Another option might be for me to stay in Zanoba's room as well.

“Well, since it's a name that you've determined, I think that it's fine too, but let's at least give her a girl's name like Juliette.”

“That's fine with me. Let's make it Juliette then.”

“Juli... ette, huhuh, it's a good name, isn't it?”

Fitts-senpai had found something funny, and was laughing delightedly. At this age, people will laugh about anything after all, huh...

Having settled our views, I tell the girl just that.

“From today onwards, your name is Juliette.”

“Julie...?”

“Juliette.”

“Julie.”

The girl said that and smiled clumsily. Though she couldn't remember anything past 'Julie', that's not a problem.



And so we bring Juliette (nickname: Julie) to Zanoba's place. While learning this and that from the surroundings, she would toddle behind the messy Zanoba and support him. When night fell, she'd learn Human Language and chantless magic from me. Before going to bed, she'd continue to earnestly listen about dolls according to Zanoba, and was brainwa-... *educated* like that. That kind of training and effort continues on.

Incidentally, Zanoba continued to practice moving his fingers carefully. He probably wants to be able to create things himself one day.

Our doll creation plan continues to advance little by little.

Additionally, my true objective shows no signs of progress.

CHAPTER 3

DAUGHTERS OF THE BEAST RACE KIDNAPPING AND CONFINEMENT INCIDENT 1

1

Rinia Dedorudia. The Dedorudia are one of the two Dorudia clans that serve as the protectors of the Great Forest. She's the granddaughter of that clan chief, Gustav. and the daughter of that clan's warrior chief, Gyes, who is the next clan chief.

Pursena Adorudia. The Adorudia is the other Dorudia clan that serve as the protectors of the Great Forest. She's the granddaughter of that clan chief, Buldg^[5]. and the daughter of that clan's warrior chief, Telteria, who is also the next clan chief.

Among the Beast Race, the Dorudia clan are a special existence. They have roots that go back roughly 5500 years. They span back to the time of the first Human-Demon Great War.

An all-out war between the Human Race and the Demon Race. The Human-Demon Great War. The winner of that war was the Human Race.

The humans treated the demons like slaves, and grew arrogant. One by one, they declared wars with the other races. The Beast Race that lived in the Great Forest with plentiful wood resources was no exception.

An approaching army. The one who rose up against this threat was the top of the Beast Race in those days, "Beast God Giger".

Beast God Giger gathered a Beast Race army to face the cowardly humans, and naturally fought on the front lines himself. Exhibiting his might, and occasionally his wit, occasionally saving other Beast People, in the end he managed to protect the Great Forest.

“Beast God” was a man who reigned over all of the Beast Races. It was the name of a hero. That Beast God Giger was a member of the Dorudia clan.

As a result, the Dorudia clan became the top clan of the Beast People that lived in the Great Forest.

It might not sound like that big of a deal. However, currently the Beast Race doesn't exist only in the Great Forest, and the Beast Race diaspora can be seen even on the Central Continent and the Begaritto Continent. The total population isn't as great as the Human Race. However, it is definitely not a number that can be ignored. Specifically, they possess enough power to wage a war with the Holy Kingdom of Milis.

They're a race with that much military might.

And Rinia and Pursena are the grandchildren of the clan chiefs. They're the direct descendants of the Beast God. They carry a special significance.

They're people who might become clan chiefs, or the wives of clan chiefs in the future. To use the Human Race as a reference, they're something like people who have the right to inherit the crown... princesses, you could say. On top of that, they could be said to be on the level of princesses from the Human Race's greatest country, the Kingdom of Asura. As a result, when they first enrolled in the school, they were seen as extremely important personages.

Why were such important girls separated from their homelands and sent to a far off land to study? That's because of a screw up caused by the previous generation's prince and princess.

Like the prince (Gyes) and princess (Ghyslaine) of the previous generation, these two girls were stupid. As a result, lamenting about this, the clan chief (Gustav) sent them to study in a far off land with the mission of acquiring knowledge. In a place where they couldn't use their political power, they might acquire some good judgement of their own, he thought.

However... He made one miscalculation. He had sent them to the Magic University thinking “they won't be treated as the Beast Race clan chief's granddaughters”.

Because they were of the Beast Race, the two of them even thought they might be persecuted instead. What awaited the two, despite expectations, were teachers who treated them with great caution and students who sucked up to them.

Right, in other words it was the result of the Dorudia clan's political power.

The two of them got carried away. Though they were a little afraid when they first enrolled, because of the voice magic passed down in the Dorudia clan, their superior agility, their physical strength, and the characteristics special to their race, they were strong. Furthermore, when the magic they learned in class was added to this, they could even beat down upperclassmen without much trouble, and when they noticed this, their attitudes gradually grew worse and worse. Boycotting things, shakedowns, extortion, loitering... They'd basically do everything that a bad student would, and became gang bosses in their first year.

However, that steady advance suddenly came to a stop.

When they became 2nd years, the Asura princess came along. Ariel Anemoi Asura. She was a person who until just recently was wrapped up in a power struggle amongst political factions. Along with her came two guards, and as if they owned the place, intruded on Rinia and Pursena's territory. And unbearably, the students and teachers who had been wagging their tails at Rinia and Pursena now wagged their tails at Ariel and her lot.

Even so, they endured it for half a year. While thinking that they couldn't accept it, absolutely couldn't accept it, they still endured it. However, they immediately reached their limits. Because Ariel was outstanding, she became the student council president as a first year. When Ariel ascended to student council president, it was almost saying to them that Ariel was admired as an honours student, while they were labelled as delinquents. Because the label of a delinquent was due to their own actions, their resentment towards Ariel was unjustified.

Rinia and Pursena began making trouble for the Asura princess and her entourage. They began straight out harassment like spitting on the ground where she was about to walk, or going out of their way to bump shoulders, or splashing water, and escalated even to stealing her underwear and leaving them in front of the boy's dorms. In the

end they gathered the other delinquents and led an attack on her.

And then they were beaten up by Fitts-senpai. Almost 20 attackers were crushed by Fitts-senpai alone. The two of them were also beaten mercilessly by Fitts-senpai.

When the incident came to light, the teachers even had a conference. 20 or so attackers dropped out of school.

However, Rinia and Pursena didn't. It was judged that expelling the two ladies of the Dorudia clan would be bad.

The number of delinquents dropped, and Rinia and Pursena's influence crashed. The Asura princess and her entourage were seen as heroes by the other students. Incidentally, the Asura princess was also going to be a Special Student, but in accordance with her wishes, she was enrolled as a normal student and treated the same as the others.

Of course this wasn't amusing to Rinia and Pursena. Though they found it unamusing, the difference in their power was clear, and they had already run out of underlings to use.

At best, because the special students Cliff and Zanoba who entered last year were rampaging about, they used it as a pretext to pick a fight and defeated them. They used Zanoba to gather information on the princess, but they didn't plan on revenge. Recently, though they still showed some bad behaviour, they were properly attending classes. You could say that they were rehabilitating.

To a new student like me, it was just a story about Fitts-senpai's greatness.

Case closed.

At least it should have been.

--Zanoba's Perspective—

I am Zanoba Shirone.

Right, the beginning of this incident was on a certain night.

Shishou was single-mindedly teaching Julie earth magic.

Shishou had said "This is an experiment." and started some strange training. At first he had made her practice chanted magic only once, but after that he had her do nothing but create earth bullets chantlessly. At first I had thought that there was no way she'd be able to use such a spell without chanting.

However, it only took one month. Right, in just one month Julie succeeded in using the earth bullet spell. It was chantless. It was something to be amazed about.

ザノバ

ルーデウス



ジュリエット

According to Shishou, Julie was still far off from our desired level. Certainly, though Julie had tried to use earth bullet many times, she only succeeded once. She also ran out of mana quickly. On some days she wouldn't succeed even after practising the whole day. However, compared to I who had no talent... I expect that it would be best if I increase my abilities in another area.

Nevertheless, a young child like this could use chantless magic. Shishou had said "I was just following Fitts-senpai's advice" and didn't say anything else. But the one who taught Julie was Shishou. As expected of Shishou.

I had not made a mistake in becoming Shishou's disciple.

At the same time as doing this, Shishou also teaches Julie the Human Language. Surprisingly, she can understand it as long as it's just some basic words. Thinking about it, since she had spent a number of years in the Central Continent with her parents, this much is natural. It might be because of this that teaching her is really simple it seems. That merchant lied. No, since he had no reason to lie, it might be that Julie simply hadn't spoken it in their presence.

I think that Julie is a great purchase as well. Julie is a really sharp child. If I tell her to bring me this, she'll bring it to me. If I tell her to bring that, she'll bring it. She's good at guessing what I mean. She's almost like Ginger.

Normally so that they won't run away, a slave will be branded using a special magic seal. However, Shishou doesn't like those sorts of things. When we bought Julie, we didn't do that either. In the end he treated her as a disciple rather than a slave. Because of that, I decided to treat Julie as a young disciple. Thinking of her as a younger disciple rather than a slave, she mysteriously became more adorable.

Now then. That incident happened after class on a certain day.

When Shishou finishes his lessons with Julie, I tell Julie about the magnificence of dolls. It's an important time. One can't achieve great things without passion. Julie who has become the core of Shishou's grand plan must come to understand the magnificence of dolls.

Right, on that day. Today using the “Ruijerd Doll” as an example, I was going to talk about the greatness of Shishou's doll creating. Thinking that, I took out the doll from the locked box.

While Shishou was preparing to return to his room, he suddenly said something.

“Speaking of which, what happened to the one of Roxy?”

Because it was this topic, I ran a cold sweat. What I had thought he wouldn't ask, definitely wouldn't ask up until now, he asked. I was unconsciously going to tell him that I had left it in the Shirone Kingdom. However, I bit my lip and resisted. I won't lie. To Shishou, I'll definitely never lie.

“The truth is... it's, I have it here but...”

I can't speak smoothly. My hands are shaking. If Shishou knows about this, he might excommunicate me. Thinking this, my body feels like lead and I become unable to move.

“It's here? Since it's been a long time I want to see it. Could you please bring it out?”

Shishou's excited voice. My chest hurts.

After much effort, I finally bring out a single locked box from under the bed. My shaking hands undo the lock, and I produce the contents.

The moment he saw this, Shishou's gaze stopped moving.

“Oi, what is this...?”

Shishou's voice is trembling. His flat, monotone voice is trembling. I wanted to cry. It wasn't anything that scary.

Shishou's number one masterpiece. The “1/10 Roxy Figure” was... cruelly broken into pieces, after all.

The head was removed, the parts for dressing her were broken, the arms were broken from the elbow, and the legs were twisted in unnatural directions. It was a miserable corpse. Only the cane was strong, so it wasn't broken.

“What's the meaning of this Zanoba? You, I, oi, just what the hell happened, hah...?”

Shishou was mad. Shishou who normally would speak uninterestedly in honorifics. His speech was strange and off tone.

“Haven't I told you how much I respect, and am grateful to her? Didn't you know just how much of my thoughts for Sensei were put into this figure?”

I clearly understood that Shishou was truly mad. Shishou who abased himself and praised Rinia and Pursena, who was just downhearted after being attacked by Cliff, who just made a troubled face when he was made fun of by Luke was truly mad.

He let off killing intent. Julie had become scared, and was now hiding behind me. I'm the one who wants to hide.

“You, could it be that you're ridiculing Roxy? Hey, could it be that you're an enemy?”

“T-, t-, t-, that's not the case!”

I shook my head in a panic. I always hear Shishou talk about Roxy. Shishou would always talk about how she was a wonderful person, or how she was someone who should be respected. It wasn't just admiration; you could feel some kind of fanaticism from it. Right, it's the same type of feeling that you'd get from the Order of the Temple in Milis.

Honestly speaking I don't particularly care about Roxy. However, if I say that plainly right now, Shishou will probably use his magic. If Shishou uses his magic in seriousness... I won't even leave behind ashes. Though I am said to be a miko with superhuman strength, this body of mine isn't that strong against magic.

“You're mistaken! This is something that I bet in a duel against Rinia and Pursena; it's something that is extremely important to me! When I lost the duel it was cruelly destroyed and stepped on, but I'd never, never think of ridiculing Roxy-dono!”

“Duel?”

I continued my explanation. I spoke single-mindedly. About how in my first year, I was challenged by Rinia and Pursena to a duel. About how at the time we wagered what

was important to us. About how I brought the '1/10 Roxy Doll'. As a miko, I've never lost in the Shirone Kingdom. That's why I had no doubts about my victory. Even if they used advanced level magic, I was resolved to bear with it and swing my fists. However, they suddenly used a strange technique. Because of that, my free will was snatched away. After that they harassed and made fun of me. Losing without being able to do anything, I let go of the doll in tears. It couldn't be helped. I had lost after all. It couldn't be helped that that wonderful doll was taken from me. It was something that anyone would want. Thinking this, I resigned myself. However those two bitches^[6] who don't know the value of things... They'd say things like "What is this?" and "It's gross nya" and dropped the doll, kicked and trampled it, and broke it into pieces.

Shishou's killing intent lessened.

"I see, you've suffered as well."

He pats me on the shoulder. He understood. Thinking this, I raise my voice and let out a miserable "Hii".

"If something like that happened, you should have told me from the start. Had I known, I wouldn't have smiled at them so frivolously."

Those kind words are said with a colourless face. His tone is different from usual. Somehow Shishou has gone past anger. Shishou doesn't talk about dolls often. Lately I had been thinking that perhaps he didn't love dolls that much. However I was wrong. The passion that Shishou hides deep down burns hotter than anyone's.

"Let's teach those girls a lesson." ^[7]

Tonight, those two girls are going to die. I had confidence in this. I started to tremble in fear.

However, after a few seconds, that fearful trembling stopped and changed into trembles of joy. I realised that I had gained a powerful ally and would be able to take revenge for the doll.

"Yes, Shishou!"

--Rudeus' Point of View—

What an absolutely unforgivable story. To not only steal away something a person created, but also crush it underfoot... It's an outrageous display of violence. It's the same as smashing up someone's laptop with a baseball bat. To destroy people's belongings like nothing is...! Aahh, shit. They're disgusting and I can't forgive them.

What I can't forgive above anything else is that they stepped on Roxy. Even if it was a doll, they stepped on Roxy.

In the Edo period, the Tokugawa shogunate would force concealed Christians to step on pictures of Jesus or Mary.^[8] In the past, I had laughed at this. 'As if you could identify them with a test like that!' I had thought. However, I understand it now. The feelings of those Christians. The disgrace you feel when something you believe in is trampled in front of you. The reality of the Shimabara Rebellion. The Humiliation of Canossa. The crusaders who forced themselves forward even when it was impossible. I understand it now.

I have to teach them a lesson.

I have to teach those two stupid animals just what it is they've done.

I must teach them a lesson.

I must teach them that there are consequences born from doing whatever you please.

“Listen up, Zanoba-san.”

“Y-, yes.”

“We'll catch them alive. We won't kill them. We must punish them for defying god.”

“Punish them? I see.”

“I think that for now we should catch them separately.”

“However, those two always act together.”

A two-man cell. Animals that move in packs really are smart.

"That's true. They're smart enough that you wouldn't think of them as animals. And speaking of those two, they have combat strength enough to defeat you, a miko... It seems like it'll be quite a tough battle for us."

"No, I think that with Shishou here it'll be more than manageable."

"It's no good to overestimate me. Victory is something that you grasp by always being modest, you know."

I keep myself composed. I keep composed. I keep cool. In my adventurer days, whether or not I was calm determined whether I lived or died. I'll always keep cool, always keep composed, and beat those animals to death.

"Let me tell you the plan."

"Sir!"

"Though their battle strength is unknown, we've already grasped their attack style. One of them will quickly charge forward while causing chaos with magic, and in that time the other will use voice magic to render the enemy powerless. It's simple, but the two of them are equally strong. Even if we attack the one in the rear, they have the ability to immediately change roles."

The one attacked will devote themselves to defence, and the other will wholeheartedly try to use the stun technique. Did Fitts-senpai defeat this combination? It would've been good to hear about it. Well, whatever. It's probably fine.

"However, this time it'll be two on two. If you use your real power, I don't think that you, a miko, will lose to them."

"...No, even if it wasn't a two on two, I think that Shishou alone would be plenty though."

"Zanoba. You admire me as a shishou. I'm glad. Regarding close combat, however, I have a childhood friend who's 2 years older than me that would always beat me up. Since then I've been trying to work out, but frankly speaking I have no confidence at all."

"Eh!? There's a person who can beat Shishou up!?"

"There certainly is. At the very least, I know of three such people."

They're Eris, Ruijerd, and Orsted. Though I only know three people, if I searched I'd

definitely find more. And it isn't necessarily true that Rinia and Pursena aren't among them.

If I use my mystic eye and magic, I can win against Eris. However, I've virtually never fought with her for real. Rinia and Pursena are about the same age as Eris. It would be better to treat them as having that level of power.

“Shishou is being too humble.”

“Zanoba-kun. Victory is not something you can be certain of. We mustn't let Roxy-sensei be trampled on again. I actually want to ask Elinalise or Fitts-senpai for help. Unfortunately, the two of them are busy, so this time it'll just be us.”

Elinalise doesn't really get involved with personal quarrels. Even though she had been in Roxy's care, 'Isn't it fine if it's just a doll? It's not as if Roxy herself has been done in.' she would say. She's a cold-hearted one.

“Sir! In that case let's immediately send them a letter for a duel. In my country, we have an ancient custom of sending a letter with a knife and a single flower when we duel. The Dorudia tribe have a similar custom where they throw a rotting fruit at their enemy's head. However, I've never heard of such a custom so it might just be a lie, but it's what I heard when I dueled them. What will Shishou be doing?”

“I'm going to ambush them.”

“Eh? Isn't that unfair...?”

Hmph, if it's unfair then great. This isn't a duel. This is a crusade. Since it's a crusade, being unfair is fine. As long as it's in the name of religion, anything is acceptable. Victory is all that matters.

4

However, I gave up on the ambush. I couldn't think of a way to fool the noses of the Dorudia tribe after all.

In the end, we simply waited to attack them. It was from the front, fair and square.

There's a separate building a little distance away from the main school building. From there we search for a route to the dorms, and position ourselves somewhere with no people. It's by the forest and is an open space that's hard to see from elsewhere.

There, we wait grandly, taking imposing poses. It's evening now. There are few

passerbys. I don't have a policy of holding my duels during the evening or anything. It's because right now is when their lessons end and they're leaving the school building. By the end of the day their mana is depleted, or so my plan went.

Even so, they're late. They disgrace all delinquents because they properly attend their lessons. Even though it would have been fine to gather on the rooftop late in the afternoon.

My arms are crossed, and together with Zanoba I'm waiting in an imposing stance. It had gone past evening and it was just about to truly darken, and was around the time that I'd be done with dolls. At that time, they appeared.

“What's this, nya?”^[9]

“Like, what's this, nano?”^[10]

They saw the two of us who posed here. Rinia glared at me in suspicion.

“Oi, you guys, if you stand there you'll get in people's way, nya. Move aside, nya.”

So she said, but I didn't move. Pursena sniffs at the air. Pursena licks her lips and grins broadly.

“Rinia, it seems that these guys like, wanna have a go.”

Hearing this, Rinia stares at Zanoba who's standing behind me. Then she sighs.

“Zanoba. Aren't you ashamed, nya? Though it's revenge for that time, what's the deal about bringing that first year boy along, nya...?”

“Hmph.”

Zanoba snorts and turns his head away. A vein bulges on Rinia's head.

“Pissing me off, it's an attitude that I can't stomach nya. It looooks like I'll have to break the other doll, nya.”

“Mu... Shishou, I'll-”

With an angry expression Zanoba made to step forward but I stopped him. I'm

irritated as well. By the other doll, she probably means the Ruijerd doll. In other words they intend to break the figure of my benefactor and friend.

“Isn't it fine? There's nothing to be ashamed about. You two who are always together are much more shameful. People are always saying that you can't do anything by yourselves, anyhow.”

“What was that nya...?”

Rinia and Pursena are making threatening expressions like “!?” are floating in the air. However, as expected they're not scary. I know someone who holds a much more terrifying bloodthirst. If that person was told a line like that, without a sword she'd jump in and attack. She'd hit you, pull you to the ground, mount you and pound you with her fists while hurling acidic words at you. These guys are lukewarm.

“You... Don't get too carried away, you first year. Since you seemed to be Jii-chan's acquaintance I overlooked you nya, but if your mouth gets too big I'll beat you to death, you know.”

What's with that? It's like we're picking a fight with them for no reason, isn't it?

“Look, if you get it then piss off, nya. We're already done with messing around nya, so we're busy honours students now nya. Go pick a fight somewhere else nya.”

Saying that, Rinia waved us away. I can't stand anything about her.^[11] Though I used to get really aroused by this 'nyaa nyaa' business in the past, I'm angry at the moment and I can't see it except as making fun of us.

“You're freaking noisy with all the 'nyaa nyaa'. Can the Beast Race speak nothing but that kind of shitty Human Language? My acquaintances all speak it perfectly, you know. You're not a baby so how about you try pronouncing things properly!?”

“Nya!?”

!?

Rinia's mouth shot open in anger. Her pupils suddenly narrowed. She let out a breath angrily, and her tail is standing on end.

“You... I'll strip you nyaked and pour water all over you!”

That's something that's already happened to me. It's second-rate as a threat. And hearing this makes her seem like quite the idiot.

“Rinia gets like, angry right away... Fakku nano.”

Muttering this, Pursena bared her fangs and brought her hands to her mouth. It brings to mind the time when I was done in by Gyes. It's voice magic.

“Hukaaah!”

Pursena seemed to be preparing her technique. Rinia kicked off the ground. With a sound, Rinia leapt sideways and vanished.

<Rinia will move right beside me in 3 steps, and will suddenly charge in to attack me>
It's reasonably fast. However, I've already activated my demon eye. It's not so fast that I can't see her.

“Zanoba! Pursena!”

I watch Rinia and give instructions to Zanoba.

While I speak, I aim my hand towards Pursena. It's difficult to tell when her voice magic activates using my demon eye. It'd be better to stop her before that happens. However, I don't understand the flow of mana for the voice magic. As a result, I don't know if I can use Disturb Magic^[12]. That's why I create a huge cloud of sand before her.

“...! -Cough! Cough!-”

Pursena who inhaled quite a bit is now coughing violently.

“Shaa!”

At the same time Rinia thrusts. I see it. It's slow, crude, and she throws her whole

weight in. I could probably dodge it just fine even without using my demon eye. She can't even hold a flame to Eris. Eris was faster, sharper and more beast-like than the Beast Race, more determined and finally, stronger.

I match her movements and counter her. I shoot my palm towards her chin. With just that, Rinia jerks and messes up her stance. I pursue her. I strike her forehead and bring her to the ground. I step on her chest. Overlooking her, I create a rock bullet. A clear sound resounds.

“GINYAN!?”

Rinia easily parts with her consciousness. I remove my foot from Rinia who looks like a squashed frog. Because of the force from the fight, her skirt is upturned. Hm, it's white today, huh?

I turn my eyes towards Pursena and Zanoba. As according to the plan, Zanoba moves towards the attacker in the rear who is assigned the role of using voice magic. Zanoba can't catch up. Pursena who is moving on four limbs is fast. Or more like, Zanoba is slow. Is he a throw character^[13] or something!? All he has is physical strength. He needs to train his running more.

I create a bog in front of Pursena. Because the ground in front of her was suddenly turned muddy, she tripped up and fell face first into the mud.

“Wahu!?”

At the same time, I use earth magic and harden the mud.

“What!? Like what's this, nano!?”

Pursena was trying to pull out of the hardened mud in a panic. I fired an earth bullet from my right hand.

“GYAN!?”

A nice sound rang out and Pursena fainted.

It was over.

“Hu... Alright, come!”

At my signal, Julie who's been hiding behind a bush trots over with a large sack. Together with Zanoba, they stuff the two girls into the sack.

Still, that ended more quickly than I'd expected. Is that just how these things are?

Eris would never think of going out of her way to attack from the side. Her fist would always find the shortest path. Also, she would never have been hit by that first counter. Even assuming she was hit, she'd have changed the site of impact and avoided being concussed. Doing so, she wouldn't have received the attack on the temple and fallen to the ground either. Even if she did fall to the ground, she'd immediately begin to grapple and attack. She wouldn't have allowed me to step on her chest either. In the instant that I did that, she'd catch my knee or ankle and might even break them. Even if she broke them, my rock bullet wouldn't stop though.

It was the same for Pursena's situation, too. If it were Eris, she wouldn't have tripped up just because the ground in front of her turned into mud. She'd properly keep her balance, or she'd stand still and get out of it.

Of course, there's no way Eris could do this in the beginning. Because she stacked up a lot of experience in battling me, she became able to cope with it. However, when I did something like that to Paul, he dealt with it even on the first time. As long as it's an advanced ranked swordsman with plenty of experience, they'd be able to avoid something like a bog.

Moreover, these days even monsters won't be caught by bogs. Even the stray dragon... Hm? The stray dragon got caught didn't it?

...Hm?

Could it be that Paul and Eris are just really strong? I'd heard that they had talent but...

“As expected of Shishou, I didn't even get a turn.”

Zanoba returns carrying the sack. I stop thinking about those things and turn to face him.

“No, even I was surprised.”

“You're being modest. Come on, let's return to the room.”

“Yeah.”

We walk down the now dark path while taking care not to be seen by anyone.

“Julie, watch your feet, okay?”

“I', I'm fi, ne.”

It feels that there's a bit of fear mixed into Julie's eyes when she looks at me.

Author's comments below

I was wondering just which of these I should pick as the subtitle,

“Rudeus vs Rinia vs Pursena”

“Good-for-Nothing Bluedeus”

“We're Going to Get Two Pets!? Huge Chaos Due to Pet Turmoil!”

but decided against it.

CHAPTER 4

DAUGHTERS OF THE BEAST RACE KIDNAPPING AND CONFINEMENT INCIDENT 2

1

We returned to the room and a little time had passed.

A cat-eared and dog-eared girl in school uniforms. Their hands are bound behind their backs with shackles made from earth magic, and they're gagged. Zanoba and I were sitting on chairs, waiting for them to wake up. Didn't I do anything to the girls, you ask? Don't say stupid things. I'm a gentleman, after all.

“Mguh!?”

“Nnuuu! Nnuuu!”

The two of them immediately opened their eyes. Realising the situation they're in, they go 'uuu, uuu'.

“Good morning.”

While standing up I calmly greeted them, and overlooked the two.

The two of them are twisting their bodies, and turn their gazes toward me. Though there's a little fear in their eyes, they're glaring at me.

“Nnuu!”

A voice of protest. It seems they don't really understand their situation.

“Now then... where should I start from?”



I watch the two as I bring my hand to my chin. The two of them are twisting their bodies around so their skirts are overturned, and their young thighs are exposed. It's truly an obscene sight.

“Hmm.”

“Nnuu!?”

Pursena noticed where my gaze lay. She then started sniffing and her expression turned into one of unease. Whether it's what I'm looking at, or what I'm thinking about, she understands because of that nose. On the other hand, Rinia doesn't seem to understand, and is still glaring at me going 'huhu huhu'.

It seems that Pursena's nose is better. In reality, they basically shouldn't be able to smell such a thing from this disease-wracked body of mine but...

“Hmm.”

And then I suddenly came up with an idea. These animal-eared high school girls were bound, their clothing was in a mess, and they couldn't move. It's incredibly stimulating.

Could it be that I could cure my sickness using this?

I've heard that all Asura nobles have perverted inclinations. Since I've lost my DT, I might be able to use this method to awaken instead. I didn't hate this sort of thing in my past life. Well, it's not like it was something I loved though.

“Hm.”

I immediately try out what came to mind. My two hands are moving in excitement as I approach Pursena, and touch that huge mountain range. She tightly shut her eyes. What an expression. She's acting like I've done something extremely cruel, hasn't she? There are heaps of women in this world who freely let men touch their breasts you know.

Still, it's a really nice sensation. She's big after all. However, my arousal is weak. Though he should have returned, I didn't hear the first cry of my poor baby. I part my hands from her, my arousal disappears in an instant, and I'm left with a feeling of desolation that has nowhere to go.

...It really was no use.

When I removed my hands, Pursena looked blankly for a moment. After sniffing for a bit, she immediately made a relieved face, and then a slightly complicated expression appeared in its stead.

“Shishou? Are you going to be giving them that sort of punishment?”

“No, it was just a little test.”

At Zanoba's question, I calmly reply and look at Rinia.

The moment our gazes meet, Rinia glares at me in anger. I may touch her as well. She's smaller than Pursena, but she's got some fine ones as well. Generally speaking there are a lot of huge ones in the Dorudia clan.

However, as expected my tomcat doesn't rejoice. Basically the only thing that changes is that Rinia's gaze is filled with even more humiliation and anger, it seems. It's been said that to those interested in bondage, pushing the owner of such a gaze into further despair is the ultimate joy. It's something I understood in my past life. However, it seems that it's a little different from when I see it on a monitor.

I don't gain anything from it. The test ends.

“Now then, do you know what you two have done?”

First, I made sure. The two of them looked at each other and both shook their heads. Since Rinia seems like she'll be noisy, I ungag Pursena. After thinking for a little, she sighs.

“...We shouldn't have like, done anything to you nano.”

“Hohhh, haven't done anything!”

I repeat her words affectedly, and snap my fingers. Zanoba timidly brought over a box. Then when the box was opened, inside were the cruel remains of the Roxy doll.

“The one who did this was you, right?”

“...Like what about that disgusting doll?”

“Disgusting!”

I repeated Pursena's words. To say that Roxy was disgusting! The Roxy that I had poured my effort into, and whose craftsmanship was good enough that it could sell! Dis-gus-ting! No, calm down. Be cool.

"This is a doll made in the shape of my god."

"G-, god?"

"That's right. Because I was saved by her, I came to know the world."

While speaking, I move to the corner of my room. There sits a small shrine.^[14] When I moved into this room I immediately set up a shrine. When I open the small double doors, the insides are revealed.

"Mmmm!"

"L-, like what is this nano...?"

"S-, Shishou, this is..."

"..."

At the sight of the divinity of the god enshrined there, it seems the two of them were deeply struck. Even Zanoba winced, and Julie was pulling at Zanoba's clothing looking as though she was about to cry.

"That figure is my god. You two kicked it, stomped on it, and broke it into pieces."

Rinia and Pursena's eyes widened and they looked between my face and the shrine. They then slowly look at Zanoba, and Julie who is about to cry. They return their gazes to me. During this whole chain of look about, their faces gradually paled. Their faces are like Blu-ray Discs, huh?

It seems that they understood just what it was that they had done.

"Now then, do you have any excuses?"

Pursena thought about my question for a few seconds. She then spoke.

“Y-, you're mistaken the one who stepped on it was Rinia I like told her to stop.”

“Mmm!?”

For her to make excuses before apologising... Hmph, very well. Since it's amusing, I'll undo Rinia's gag.

When I did, the two of them started clamouring in high pitched voices.

“The one who said it was gross so we didn't need it was Pursena, nya!”

“But the one who like stepped on it was Rinia, nano.”

“Ah, my foot just slipped. Besides, Pursena was the one who kicked it in the end and broke it into pieces nya. When she saw Zanoba picking up the pieces even deep into the night, she was snickering at him nya!”

To search for those small fragments even deep into the night... Even though the ankle parts are as small as a pinky. Zanoba-kun, a guy like you is...

Right now my impression of Zanoba has tripled. You're heading straight down the Rudeus Route^[15], aren't you, Zanoba! Oop, let's leave that aside for now.

“SHUT UP! You two are guilty of the same crime.”

First I'll shut up this unsightly act. Then,

“Your crimes must be punished.”

I hand down my judgement.

“Though I say this, my religious sect was only recently created so we don't have a precedent on what to do during times like this. What kind of punishment is given in your village during times like this?”

“I-, if you do anything weird to us, Tou-chan and Jii-chan won't stay quiet, nya. Even in the Great Forest we're two of the best warriors after all, nya! Ah...”

It seems that Rinia has recalled it. That Gyes and Gustav are my acquaintances. Then I remember. The Great Forest's “Punishment”.

“Gyes-san? Ahh, I've remembered. I was given false charges by him. I was said to have done something indecent to Holy Beast-sama, and was stripped naked, had cold water splashed all over me, and spent a week in jail. I see, so shall we do something like that for you two as well?”

By the way, I'm not in the least resentful about that incident. However, that's how these girls seemed to have interpreted it. The two of them are speechless and have become horribly pale. As expected, to that race, that punishment amounted to a terrible torture.

“N-, no, I'll do whatever you want so just spare me from that nya.”

“You can do like whatever you want to Rinia's body so please have mercy on just me nano!”

“Right nya, you can do whatever you want to me s-... Uehhh!?”

Even when the two of them are begging they're doing a manzai routine. They sure aren't reflecting enough. Especially the dog.

“Your Dorudia tribe was really cruel when this happened to your esteemed Holy Beast-sama, you know? Whenever something happened they'd suspect me and pile false charges on me. Compared to that, your crimes are the truth, through and through.”

“I'm begging you, please forgive me... I didn't know it was such an important doll...!”

“Indeed, that does seem to be the case.”

“I like won't do it a second time...”

What 'second time'? Like you'd be able to do it a second time. Things that are broken will never come back, you know. Do these guys understand how it feels for a person to have their precious things broken in front of them? Even now I remember that moment. When my younger brother destroyed my laptop with a bat. I don't have any intention of getting angry about that all over again though. All I remember is the despair and emotions I felt at the time. They're emotions I had when my only emotional support was broken into pieces!

“I'll apologise nya, I'll even show you my belly nya...”

“That's right, though it's embarrassing I'll like bear with it too nano.”

Show her belly? Ahh, it's the Beast Race's dogeza that Gyes did, huh? Even if I see that kind of insincere dogeza, I won't be able to calm down.

“If you want to be forgiven then fix this doll!”

R O X Y, R O X Y!

“Right, even Shishou can't mend it!”

Zanoba condemns the two of them.

But Zanoba, it's not like I can't fix it you know. You've got all the parts here, and the most important part, the cane is untouched. I've gotten more skilled at this than I was when I made this. Without any marks, beautifully...

Mn?

That's right. I can fix it. I can fix it, huh! It's not like it'll never come back.

They've apologised too. The two of them are repenting. I feel like it's fine even if I forgive them. Or more like, this is a crime, isn't it? If this comes to light, on the contrary we'll be the one in trouble, huh. For example if this scene was seen by a certain spear-wielding baldy...

No! That's not the problem! The problem is that these two easily broke what someone else held precious! But if I let them off easy here, they'll definitely do this again! I have to carve reflection into their bodies! In the name of the Roxy Faith!

Speaking of which, since I've calmed down a bit, I'm reminded of some rather more esoteric punishments.

“Zanoba, do you have any ideas?”

“Let's have them suffer what the doll did.”

Zanoba's eyes were extremely ruthless. It seems that he's still angry. It's natural; it happened before his eyes after all.

If I said 'shall we?' he probably would leave them in the same state as the Roxy doll. They'd be broken into little pieces by his hands. He'd do it. This man would do it. The

Neck-Ripping Prince is in good health.

“No, Zanoba. Killing them is probably going too far. I don't like killing people.”

“In that case let's sell them to a slave merchant. Though it's forbidden to sell those of the Dorudia clan, if I remember correctly there's an Asura noble family that finds the Beast Race irresistible. The daughters of the Dorudia clan's chiefs... If they could make someone like that into a slave, even if it was breaking the law they'd buy them.”

Zanoba was wild-eyed. Having said that, selling them as slaves is also probably going too far. It might end up as a war with the Beast Race.

“That Asura family is currently on the verge of being wiped out, so it'd probably be difficult.”

I wonder what's happened with the Boreas family. Not a lot of information reaches up here in the north. Just that it's in quite a severe condition and it might only be a matter of time before the family is wiped out.

“Listen up, Zanoba. Even if they're like this, they're princesses. If we don't use a method that doesn't cause too many problems, this matter will come back to bite us.”

“As expected of Shishou; even when blood is rushing through your head, to still be thinking about how to protect yourself is...”

“Be silent.”

Mmmmn. What should I do? At this rate I won't be able to feel better. It might be good to just continue looking at this lovely sight. Though this isn't really my hobby, these two are counted as bishoujo as well.

No, no, in the first place this might have become a problem the moment we kidnapped them. It'd be better not to hold them captive for too long a time.

These two seem to be reflecting as well. I can fix the doll. I'd really like to get this over with on the spot, but...

Mmmn.

If I'm troubled, then I consult Fitts-senpai for help. Lately I've fallen into something like a pattern. Fitts-senpai is knowledgable after all, and will reply properly for most problems.

"Wa-, wait a moment. Doesn't this mean that those two girls are in your room right now, Rudeus-kun...?"

"They are, huh... Please be at ease. I've properly made sure they have an excuse for missing classes today, and have contacted the school."

"Umm, that's, by catching them, that is, in other words, right now those girls are confined together in a room with Zanoba-kun?"

Oh. So you could see it like that? Two kemonomimi bishoujo are being confined, huh? I think it was on my previous life's "List of Things to Do before I Die". But what I wanted to do back in the day was a step beyond this; a step that I don't have the ability to take at the moment.

"Rudeus-kun, that, umm, after you confined them, did you umm...?"

Fitts-senpai's face was bright red and he was looking at me a bit like he didn't know me or something. No good. He seems to have misunderstood.

"No, I haven't done anything sexual, you know."

"R-, really?"

"At the most I rubbed their chest a little."

"Y-, you touched their chest...?"

"Yeah. I had something I wanted to test out, so."

"...? Umm, you didn't touch them with 'that' kind of meaning in mind?"

What kind of meaning is 'that' kind of meaning? No, in other words he's asking if I was touching them with something sexual in mind. Broadly speaking, you can certainly take it that way. However, from my point of view, in the end it's just for the sake of medical treatment, and was just an experiment.

“I don't think it was 'that' kind of meaning.”

Fitts-senpai looked a little relieved.

“I-, I see. But that'll be a problem, you know. Even if they're like that, they're still the daughters of Dorudia clan chiefs after all.”

“Please be at ease. The clan chief and the chief warrior are acquaintances, after all.”

“Eh!? Really!?”

“Yes. As long as I say something like 'they were slacking off in school so I had to whip them into shape', I'm sure they'll understand.”

“H-, how did they become your acquaintances!? The Dorudia clan are really seclusive so it's rare to be able to meet someone like the clan chief, you know.”

I told Fitts-senpai about the incident in the Great Forest. It was a pretty shameful episode of my life if you ask me. Saving children and then being caught, and after that being liberated and spending each day playing with a dog and such, or making figurines. It was that kind of lifestyle after all.

“Hahh, you're amazing aren't you, Rudeus-kun...”

Thought it was a shameful story, Fitts-senpai let out a breath of admiration. Just what part of that story was amazing exactly?

“For the sacred beast to become attached to you...”

I see. Now that it's mentioned, just why did Holy Beast-sama come over to me anyway? I get that it was Gisu's fault, but... There's no way that it really came to like me.

“Even though it's just a mongrel, it seems to at least understand that I saved it, huh?”

“You can't let a Beast Person hear you talking like that, okay?”

Obviously, if someone called Roxy a filthy demon or something and made fun of her in front of me, I'd get angry after all. I intend to clearly avoid crossing the line.

"Anyway, please lend me your wisdom again, Fitts-senpai. A punishment that'll satisfy me and get rid of my resentment, but isn't so harsh so that they won't seek revenge from me. Do you have any ideas?"

"That's a difficult question, huh?"

Even so, Fitts-senpai went 'mmmmmm' as he was thinking. I had thought that he'd have asked me to release them immediately though.

"I'm the same, you know. I can't forgive people that gang up on others, snatch away their belongings and destroy them."

Or so he said. I completely agree.

Incidentally, he and Zanoba have become close enough to greet each other when passing by. Hearing about what happened to an acquaintance, he got angry as well. I had thought so while we were buying slaves as well, but Fitts-senpai might have a strong sense of justice.

"Alright, I've got a good idea."

"Hohh."

Since a line like that is usually bad news, I decide it best not to say anything. Well whatever.

And so our investigation finishes early that day, and Fitts-senpai and I head back to the room together.

3

When I return to the room, I find that a sharp smell is wafting about. The bed is wet. It completely stinks. Pursena and Rinia are completely out of it, and have no strength left.

...It might have been better to let them use the toilet at least.

Since it really was unpleasant, I used magic to dry them, I opened up the windows for some air, and removing their soiled panties and skirts, wiped them clean. The clothes end up laundered.

Just to mention it, since they aren't completely naked, it should be fine. Thinking this,

I had a look at their expressions to check, but the two of them had completely resigned themselves to everything.

“At least you could have just treated us violently nya... but if you were going to keep us like pets in your room, you could have at least undone the handcuffs nya... it's really tough nyot being able to move nya... I won't run away, so please nya...”

It seems that for a cat-type like her, being restrained for about 24 hours was really tough.

“We'll be good girls, so at least let us like eat please. I like won't bark at night... I like won't bite either... I like wanna eat meat... I'm like hungry nano...”

I didn't notice up until now, but this one seems to be a glutton character. Thinking about it, when we first met she was eating meat, wasn't she?

Still, to give up after just one day... It might really be because she had nothing to eat. When you're hungry, you become weak hearted after all.

I undo their handcuffs. When I do, the two of them kneel in front of me. Because they're not wearing anything below, it's outrageously erotic. My lips unconsciously extend into a perverted smile.^[16] Unfortunately the thing downstairs doesn't extend as well.

“Rudeus-kun...”

It's the voice of Fitts-senpai who's right beside me, washing their skirts and panties.

“Ummm... Since the two of them do seem to have reflected, I wonder if it wouldn't be best to forgive them already...? Though you might not have calmed down yet, not being able to move for a whole day is really tough you know? Since this is a man's dorm, there are lots of 'hungry' men around so the two of them must have been scared too.”

“Right nya.”

“Everytime I heard footsteps I thought it was like all over for me nano...”

No, as far as I know there shouldn't be that many 'hungry' men around at all. We're allowed to go outside, and if you were starving for women you could just head to the

red light district or something, and lately all of the first years are fine because of the rumoured man-eating elf. Or was it dangerous for them because they've made a lot of enemies? Ahh, but there might be a lot of people who would just sell them off to a slave merchant if they found two girls bounded like this.

“From now on we'll listen to what you say nya, we'll become your henchmen nya.”

“That's why please like forgive us nano.”

The two of them are pretty regretful. At least they look regretful.

“It's not like I have any absurd requests for you... but I won't forgive you if you make light of Roxy.”

Just saying that was enough to cause the two to turn ghastly pale and nod repeatedly.

“Of course, nya. It wouldn't be strange even if we were killed after making fun of someone else's god nya.”

“Uuu, I suddenly remembered like the terror of being chased by the Order of the Temple...”

When I told them that I had family in the Order of the Temple as well, the two of them became even more pale. It seems that the saying about having money and connections was right.

After a little while.

The laundry is done and the two of them happily put on their clothing. Just why is the action of putting on panties so arousing? To me it's even more erotic than watching them take them off.

They've learned their place and put on their clothes. Because of this, their attitude returned.

“Even if I said that we'd listen to what you say, I won't do anything like making babies with you nya. That kind of thing is for after we've properly dated and married nya.”

“That's right. But it's fine if you just want to like touch Rinia's boobs a little nano.”

“Right nya, if it's fine if you just want to... WHY ME NYA!?”

“I'm expensive. If you gave me like, expensive meat, nano.”

Though these two girls are delinquents, they're relatively chaste. As expected of princesses.

Still, half of that meek attitude from before was acting, huh? As long as they've really reflected then it's fine but...

“Ah, that's right, Rudeus-kun. Be careful of being ambushed, okay?”

At Fitts-senpai's words, the two of them made shocked expressions.

“Nya!? Hang on, Fitts, don't say weird things nya!”

“That's right!”

“Boss is a messed up fiend of a man nya, if we lose again who knyows what would happen to us, so just who would do something like that!?”

Just who is a fiend of a man? That's a really horrible way of putting it. But if they're this scared of me, then at least I'll be able to sleep soundly at night.

“Boss, can we like go yet nano?”

Pursena tilts her head slightly as she asks. Which reminds me, what's this 'boss' business? Not that I mind.

“I'm hungry, so I wanna go back nano, to eat meat.”

“Right nya, we haven't eaten or drunk since yesterday evening nyaa...”

What's with that? It's like I'm the bad guy here! Have they really reflected enough?

“It seems like they haven't reflected enough, huh.”

The one who said that was Fitts-senpai.

“Fitts, this has nyothing to with you nya.”

“That's right... Like, fakku nano...”

Fitts-senpai has become a little shocked. I shouted.

“You two, seiza!”

The two of them unwillingly sit down. Fitts-senpai produced a bottle from his chest. It's a bottle with black paint inside. Then he produces a brush. This is what you'd call a 'good idea'.

4

When we're done, my anger is almost completely gone.

“...Fitts, we'll remember this nya...”

“Like, fakku nano...”

The two of them are making resentful expressions. Both of their eyebrows are joined together into a monobrow, and there are eyes drawn on their eyelids. There's a beard that looks like something a thief might have drawn on their faces.

And then on their cheeks.

“I'm a cat who lost to Rudeus” “I'm a dog who lost to Rudeus”

It's a new style of bodypainting. It's a bit arousing, huh.

“I've used a paint that a certain clan uses to leave tattoos on their bodies. If I use a special chant it won't come off for the rest of your life.”

It seems to be such a paint. I guess it's this world's tattoo. Speaking of which, I saw such a thing a number of times during my adventurer days.

“It won't disappear if you just wash it with water you know. If you oppose Rudeus again, I'll use magic to make sure it doesn't disappear for your whole life!”

“I, I get it nya, I won't do such a thing nya.”

“...I like get it nano.”

The two nodded whilst trembling in trepidation. They're making some pretty terrible

expressions, huh? If it becomes permanent they probably won't be able to become brides. Fitts-senpai is pretty nasty as well.

“You can leave for today, but you'll be spending all of tomorrow like that. If you do so, I'll erase it for you. However, the stuff on your bodies I won't erase for half a year!”

“I get it, please forgive us nya.”

“...-sniff-”

Pursena is in tears. By the way, some pretty indecent words are written on their backs. If it becomes permanent they'll probably live in shame for the rest of their lives.

Since we'd get in trouble if the two of them are seen in the hallway, they left from the window. It's the 2nd floor here, but it'll probably be okay. It's only the 2nd floor after all.

Just before leaving, as if she suddenly remembered, Rinia asked,

“Boss, even though you're just a magician, what kind of training did you do to be able to see my movements?”

“I didn't do anything special. I just followed my Shishou's teachings and did things like she said.”

The training that I did with Eris wasn't for nothing, I guess. I always thought of myself as weak. Comparing myself to Eris's growth, I had thought that I wasn't growing at all. However, it seems that we were just growing at different rates, and I might have become strong as well.

“Who's your Shishou, nya?”

“Umm, it's Ghyslaine I guess.”

“By Ghyslaine... you mean my aunt?”

“Yeah, that's right. Ghyslaine the Sword King.”

“...I see nya.”

Saying that, she made an accepting expression.

“Bye then, nya.”

“Later, boss. I'm like really sorry about the doll nano.”

Said the two, and they left.

“Sorry, Rudeus-kun. Even though I'm unrelated, I got carried away.”

“No, it was good to see the two of them afraid like that.”

More importantly,

“You said that you'd need a special chant, but if there were others who knew the chant wouldn't it be bad?”

It seems the two don't really know, but the tool has already been used and this chant isn't something that only Fitts-senpai knows. If someone chanted the spell as a joke... Thinking this, I feel they're a little pitiful.

“Eh? Ah, mmn, that was a lie.”

Fitts-senpai spoke rather blankly.

“There certainly is a paint like that, but the one I used was just a normal one for drawing magic circles. It'll come off in the wash.”

Fitts-senpai spoke while giggling. Almost like a child whose prank succeeded. I relaxed.

5

Fitts-senpai stayed in my room for a little longer. For some reason he was fidgety and couldn't calm down. Walking back and forth in my room, he asked many times about this or that that he found curious.

“What's this? Is there something inside?”

Fitts-senpai had a good eye and pointed at the shrine.

“The god that my faith worships is enshrined in there.”

“Huh? So you weren't a follower of the Milis Religion, Rudeus-kun. Could I have a look?”

“The Roxy Faith is... Please don't open it!”

I stopped Fitts-senpai who was about to open the shrine. Our god is divine and isn't something for outsiders to gaze upon. And geez, what was up with me yesterday? Even if I showed them the panties, they just drew away from me.

“Ah, sorry.”

Fitts-senpai withdrew his hand in a fluster. After that he looked around this and that, but then suddenly his gaze stopped on top of my bed. He picks up my pillow.

“This pillow is making grainy sounds, huh.”

“It's a self-made pillow.”

A self-made pillow. The Mustard Turrents monsters in the forests of the north drop seeds. There are nuts inside that resemble walnuts, but the shell resembles buckwheat chaff. That's why I crushed it and put it into a sack, which I then covered with monster fur. Since the day I completed it, I've been assured a good night's sleep.

“Hehh... Do you mind if I try it out a little?”

“Feel free.”

Fitts-senpai put down the pillow and lay on my bed.



“It's a good pillow, isn't it?”

“You're the only one who's said that.”

The only other person who's tried it is Elinalise. She said “The best pillow is a man's arm” though.

“...”

Even laying down he won't take off his glasses. It's something he's probably picky about. I wonder if he'll let me see his real face one day. No, on the other hand, Fitts-senpai in sunglasses might be the real him.

...If I reached out my hand now, and took them off, what would happen?

No, it's probably not just pickiness; he did say that he had a reason. For example he might have a complex about his eyes. I'd better forget it. I don't want to be hated.

“...”

Fitts-senpai is still laying down, and for a while a silence hangs in the air. It might be because he's noticed my gaze, but Fitts-senpai sits up.

“It's about time I return to Ariel-sama.”

“I see. Thank you for today.”

“Mmn, see you later, Rudeus-kun.”

“Thank you very much for everything.”

“You're very welcome.”

Fitts-senpai left through the window. Though I was thinking 'just leave from through the corridor', it might be that the window is closer to the girls' dorm. Well whatever.

A little smell was left in my room. I spread a powder that adventurers used to remove smells and lay on my bed. There's a smell that's different from usual coming from my pillow. It might be Fitts-senpai's scent. It's not unpleasant.

“Huu...”

This time abducting those two girls ended up in a pretty erotic situation, but as expected there are no signs of being cured. Whether it was looking at them or rubbing them, neither worked out.

There's no progress.

This is something that happened later, but those scribbles on their faces were seen by Zanoba the next day. Zanoba didn't seem as though he'd forgive them with only something like that. However, after being told “You didn't even do anything this time”, in conjunction with showing him my emergency repairs of the Roxy doll, he immediately started to smile widely and forgave them.

Also, though their confinement had almost become a problem,

“It's nyot a big deal! Nyothing happened, I just lost a duel and got this drawn on in their room as a prank, nya!”

“That's right... Nothing happened at all... Really, nothing happened at all nano... - tremble tremble-...”

Or so the two of them insisted, and so it didn't turn into a big problem.

All's well that ends well.

CHAPTER 5

THE GENIUS YOUTH'S SECRET 1

1

Cliff Grimoire. The grandchild of the Pope of the Milis Faith. Young and excellent with magic, a genius youth.

He was a bit quick to pick a fight, his self-respect was strong, and he had a habit of seeing himself as a big deal. As a result, he had no friends.

He had talent. However, he didn't rely on this alone and was diligent in his training. Though his mouth was terrible, his actions weren't. Though they were few, there were those who thought well of him.

Cliff was now 16. Though he had become an adult a year ago, there wasn't anyone to celebrate that.

His reason for coming to the Magic University was simple. In a few words, it was due to a power struggle.

A few years ago in Milishion there was an attempt on a miko's [Shrine Maiden's] life. Because this incident was the work of the Pope's faction, the internal struggles intensified. During the conflicts, naturally the Pope had his grandchild take refuge on the other side of the world, in the Kingdom of Ranoa.

"Cliff, you possess great ability. Be not conceited and look outside of yourself."

The Pope sent Cliff away.

Cliff understood that there were expectations for him. It was natural. Though he had lost to Eris, he was still a genius after all. So Cliff thought.

After a long journey, he arrived in the Kingdom of Ranoa; a harsh land. The food didn't suit him, the climate was harsh, and there was a fuss because his way of thinking was drastically different to the locals'.

Even so... Cliff continued to believe that he was a genius. He was a Special Student, the grandchild of the Pope, and as someone who would carry the Milis Faith in the future, he was different to others. So he thought.

In his first year he received two major shocks.

The first time was by a person named Zanoba Shirone. He was a miko. He was a person who was loved by the gods since birth. Though he was a bit messed up, his power was the real thing. He'd been seen lifting someone thrice his weight up by the head, and then throwing them.

Though he had such power, he was at the Magic University. He was learning magic, focused completely on earth magic.

From Cliff's perspective, his growth was slow. However, to begin with there shouldn't have been a need for a miko to learn magic. One of the theories regarding magic stated that it was a means for the weak to imitate the acts of the gods in the ancient past. Miko were people who possessed the power of the gods. They didn't have a need to learn things like magic. Thinking that, Cliff went and asked him,

“Why are you learning magic?”

“Mm. There's something that I want to do.”

Saying this, Zanoba brought over a box and produced from it a doll. He then began to talk for a long time about the doll. Cliff only understood half of what Zanoba said. However, he at least understood from Zanoba's talk that this doll was something wonderful.

“I've become the disciple of this doll's creator, and I wish to spread dolls throughout the world with him! For this reason I must be able to create dolls! If I'm not capable of the fundamentals of doll creating by my next meeting with Shishou, I won't be able to face him! However, I do also want to be able to create dolls myself, you see!”

It was what people called a “dream”.

That was something that Cliff didn't have. Nay, it was something Cliff had given up on.

Even though a miko would be burdened with the expectations of his homeland... Even though upon his homecoming, he probably wouldn't have any freedom... This man hadn't given up on his hope, in the chance that one day he might suddenly gain his freedom. And he planned to do what he wanted to do the moment that day came.

Incidentally, Cliff didn't know about the circumstances surrounding the Shirone Kingdom and Zanoba. The conclusions he came to were a result of his common sense. He misunderstood. However, it left Cliff with a deep impression. He thought Zanoba was quite the person.

"What kind of person is this shishou of yours?"

"He's a person named Rudeus Greyrat."

Hearing this, Cliff received an incredible surprise. Rudeus Greyrat. Since the day he was rejected by Eris, this name had remained in his heart. He hadn't thought that he'd hear it again here, and furthermore from the mouth of the person who had left such an impression on him.

The shock was huge.

The second time was because of a senpai.

Though this was as to be expected, Cliff had been under the impression that he was the strongest in the school. If you included close combat, then he was absolutely no match for Eris. However, he believed that there wasn't anyone who could beat him as a magician. He was a genius after all, and the ones enrolled in the school were student-level. Even among the teachers there were many who couldn't use more magic than he could.^[17] As a result, he concluded he was the strongest in the school.

This was simply him being conceited and was something he would learn roughly 2 months into enrollment. It was when he lost to the two Beast Race girls who were also rumoured to be top class amongst the school; Rinia and Pursena.

Just who was it that started the fight?

Cliff had a bad mouth and everything that came out of it was intolerable. At the time,

though Rinia and Pursena had already relatively calmed down, as expected, an impudent first year would rub them the wrong way.

Cliff couldn't remember just what he had said that had angered them.

However, he remembered the battle that followed. When Cliff used advanced level magic, Pursena used elementary level magic to deal with it and at the same time put a stop to Cliff's chanting and movements. Rinia then drew closer and thoroughly beat him down.

Because he had been beaten to a pulp in public, he cried once he was alone. 'Since it was two on one, it couldn't be helped. I didn't lose.' he told himself. And then one day, a senpai named Fitts defeated the two of them by himself, and Cliff received his second major shock.

There was always someone stronger. Since coming to this school, Cliff realised this obvious fact. And that just being able to use advanced level magic didn't make you strong was something that Cliff finally understood.

Then two years after he first entered...

He received two more shocks that were even greater.

The first shock; Rudeus Greyrat entered the school. He had an expression that lacked confidence. He was wearing a shabby grey robe. On first meetings, he would ingratiate himself to others while debasing himself. He'd lower his back and took an attitude that could be called servile. When he saw women, his gaze would stick to them. He had no appeal as a man...

He was too far from the person that Cliff had envisioned based on the things he had heard from Eris and Zanoba.

'A guy like this?' he thought. 'It's probably just someone with the same name', he thought. However, Zanoba called him Shishou and he knew about Eris as well.

In that case, he had lied to them, Cliff concluded. Piling up lies upon lies, he fooled

Zanoba and Eris, he thought.

As proof of that, even when Rinia and Pursena provoked him, he simply smiled foolishly and lowered his head. If he were truly strong, he'd beat the two of them down.

Or so Cliff had judged. However, his true character would immediately be revealed, he thought. Zanoba was the real deal as a miko, and he was a hard worker as well. Rinia and Pursena's ability was also assured. He wouldn't be able to get by with lies or deception.

Though he had also heard the rumour that Fitts was defeated by Rudeus, there was surely some mistake or perhaps Rudeus had lied again, or he had used some sort of cowardly trick.

That was what Cliff had thought.

But Rudeus showed his true power. He was a user of chantless magic. To start with, Zanoba's adoration for him further increased. Rinia and Pursena also withdrew. That Fitts had recognised him as well, and it was said that once every few days they would study together in the library.

Though he had this much ability he was seen going to classes too. They were classes in "Elementary Level" exorcism and barrier magic. Even though he'd have no use for them after all this time, he still greedily made to learn the things that he was lacking in.

Rudeus Greyrat had more ability than him. He was more diligent than him. He produced different results from him.

It was a reality that Cliff shouldn't have wanted to recognise. However, it was probably because he had met with Zanoba, and had been defeated by Rinia and Pursena. Unexpectedly, he readily accepted it; that this youth was far, far ahead of him.

Even so, it wasn't as though he had come to like him. Accepting this reality and coming to like Rudeus were completely different matters after all.

Then the final shock.

It was something that happened on a certain day. It was something that happened when it had turned into the evening. It was something that happened while he was walking down the road. It was something that happened when he had looked up by chance.

There, stood a goddess.

She had magnificent golden hair. She was leaning against the window and with a languid expression she was looking outside. Her face, dyed in the red of the evening, was beautiful.

Cliff's heart was pierced. His gaze was stolen at a glance.

However, it was purely physical. During his childhood when he was yearning for the life of an adventurer, he had said something like 'It'd be nice if my bride were someone beautiful' or something like that. The reason was because the alumni of the orphanage that had become clerics were beautiful.

"...!"

At the time, the woman by the window noticed Cliff. She gently smiled and waved at him.

That gesture, that smile, that situation; all of it hit Cliff head on.

Cliff thought,

'I was born to meet this woman.'

'She was born to meet me.'

In that instant, Eris changed from the target of his first love into someone he simply admired.

--Rudeus' Point of View--

I'm attending the once-a-month homeroom.

Presently, lined up around me are Zanoba, Rinia and Pursena. As expected, it's a nice thing to have your friends' desks lined up along yours. Incidentally, Julie is sitting on Zanoba's lap.

As always, Rinia has her feet on the desk and her healthy thighs are freely revealed before me. This lifestyle where I can see these up close is really not bad.

“Boss's eyes are always nyailed to our legs nya. So Boss is also a hungry male huh... Lookie, lookie... Gyaal! Don't put your hand up my skirt nya!”

Since Rinia occasionally provokes me for no reason, I feel her up without hesitation. However, no matter how much I may touch, it's all in vain. The libido that has nowhere to go turns into sadness, and it just piles up.

“Nya!? What's with those eyes nya! Even though you touched me yourself, why are you making such a face nya!? Just what is it that you didn't like about me nya!?”

Honestly speaking, these days I'd rather just touch their ears and tails. Cat ears and cat tails can heal you.

“Rinia is like, an idiot nano.”

Pursena is sitting just outside of reach and eating meat. Dried meat, grilled meat, fresh meat... though there are a lot of types, it's essentially always meat. Though she normally pretends to be the cool type and makes fun of Rinia, if you lure her with meat her tail will wag about like an electric fan and she'll come towards you. Her fur is softer than Rinia's so it feels great to stroke.

It's something that's been on my mind for a long time now, but the members of the Beast Race don't have human ears. Their hairline is sort of diagonally to the side of where we humans would have ears. However, it depends on the species and there are also those who have their ears further to the side. It's because their skull structure is different. It's probable that the internal structures of their ears are different as well.

Were I a biologist, I'd probably love to dissect one of them for analysis. However, I'm not a biologist. The type of analysis I'd like to do is completely different. However, everything starts after I'm cured.

Unlike Rinia, unless I offer her meat she won't let me pat her. On the other hand, as long as I give her meat, she'll let me do so. Though she's quite chaste, I'm still a little worried about her.

"Shishou, for a while now, the angle of the ankle has been getting worse."

"Goshujinsama, I'll fix it."

"Julie, call me Master. And call Shishou Grandmaster."

"Yes, Master."

Zanoba is the same as always.

However, his position in this group has dropped to the lowest. Since the one who did all the work in the duel the other day was just me, Zanoba just ended up as a tag-along. 'I can't accept someone who just borrows someone else's authority', or so Rinia said.

In response, Zanoba asserted 'I am Shishou's first disciple'. However, I've also taught Sylphy, Eris and Ghyslaine, making him the fourth. Since Ghyslaine was also my master, excluding her puts him third. When I told him this, Zanoba made a miserable expression, and I felt a bit like I'd done something bad. I followed up and told him that he was my first disciple in doll making.

The second doll-making disciple Julie listened earnestly to Zanoba's lectures on the Roxy doll. It seems she's quite brainwashed now. She's also become quite motivated about doll-making and will ask questions herself. Though I say that, she's still far from the level of Zanoba and I when it comes to talking about dolls.

Also, though it's still unskillful, she can use chantless magic. As expected, you really can increase your mana capacity when you're young, you can also use chantless magic, and so it seems that Fitts-senpai's theory was on the mark.

"...Grandmaster. I couldn't do it."

"Right."

However, it might be because she's still young, but she fails a lot. Just now she made the bubble on the Roxy doll's leg bigger. It's probably impossible for her to create small-sized earth magic.

Of course I'm not angry. I teach her to try things herself. I teach her not to feel bad about failing, and to try to redo it as many times as it takes. Failure is the mother of success, and if you give up upon failing once you're on a straight track to becoming a shut-in.

"It seems it's still a bit early for you to fix the Roxy doll, huh."

"I'm sorry."

The eyes that she looks at me with are sometimes a little fearful.

'Why are you so afraid of me? Aren't I the one that saved you?'

When I tried asking this, I was told about a dwarven bedtime story; "The Hole Monster".

It lives inside of a hole, and occasionally comes out to abduct bad children. Even if they try to escape, the ground beneath their feet will turn into a bog and they'll be trapped. The monster then stuffs them into a sack and brings them back into the depths of his hole. Though the bad children are taken by the Hole Monster they will one day suddenly return, and be good children, almost like different people.

I see, now that I'm told this it does make sense. I used a bog to defeat Rinia and Pursena, and then I stuffed them into a sack and abducted and confined them. While Zanoba and Julie weren't there, Fitts-senpai helped me out and we concluded their punishment. Rinia and Pursena were talking big to me. Perhaps that's how Julie saw it.



“Faaa, I'm sleepy nya.”

“Like, lately it's gotten warmer nano.”

“Boss, next time we'll show you our napping spot nya.”

“Eh? Is it okay to mess around with you while you sleep, Rinia-san?”

“...Don't you think about anything but perverted things, Boss?”

“Shishou thinks about dolls before anything.”

“Whenever you open your mouth complicated stuff comes out, so like, be quiet.”

“However,”

“Like, just do it and go buy me some meat.”

“The teacher is about to come nya.”

“Like, dash for it then.”

“In that case, I'll,”

“If you're going to go, Boss, then I may as well.”

“Go ahead, go ahead.”

“Nya!?”

Until the teacher arrives, we just continue to chat like this. Well, it was probably noisy. Without a doubt, it was noisy.

Well then, there's another person in the room. He's sitting in the front. A youth studying by himself. A youth who's studying in earnest. Cliff. He got angry at our chatter and stood up in anger.

“You're noisy! I can't concentrate! If you're just here to play around then just go home!”

I shut up. Zanoba stopped chatting as well, and returned to Julie's lectures. However, the two former delinquents took that as an invitation to a fight.

“Just who the hell do you think you're talking to, nya?”

“The insides of your bag are like, all my meat from now on nano.”

“!?”s are suspended in the classroom.

Usually those who have just been done in would be all show. However, I've heard that

these two have already fought with Cliff. When Cliff first entered the school, he was done in by the two, and since then he's been earnestly studying. Using failure to feed growth. He's a diligent youth. It'd be better not to disturb him.

“We apologise. It seems we've gotten in the way of your studies; we'll be quiet. Come on, you two sit down, sit down, I said to sit, SIT!”

“...If Boss says that then there's no helping it nya.”

“Like, fakku nano...”

With unhappy expressions, Rinia and Pursena sat with a thump.

“Hmph, if you get it then good. God, even Zanoba, what are you all doing...!”

Cliff snorted. Rinia and Pursena clicked their tongues. I won't get in the way of those who are living their lives seriously. I don't have any intention of living otherwise either though.

Whatever the case, I probably won't cross paths with him. So I thought at the time.



クリフ

リニア

プルセナ

ルーデウス

八物紹介

3

After that a week passed. As usual, I was researching teleportation with Fitts-senpai.

It's something I realised recently but there are some similarities between teleportation and summoning. The magic circles are similar. The colour of the mana light is also similar.

However, there are some decisive differences; that is "People cannot be summoned".

No matter the summoning magic, people can't be summoned. Magic beasts, ghosts, plants... all of these can be summoned but people can't be.

Whether in literature, documents or stories, there are no mentions of human summoning. Humans, demons, beast people... though there are many types in this world, as long as they're designated as people they can't be summoned.

However, neither I nor Fitts-senpai are experts in summoning so though I say they're similar it's not a strong assertion. However, there's a part that I'm stuck at.

The "summoning of living people" can't be done.

Then what about just their "soul"?

"..."

I don't speak of it. However, I thought that it would be good to ask an expert about it. The wandering soul of someone from another world. Would that be possible to summon?

"Fitts-senpai, could you see if there's a teacher who's knowledgeable about summoning?"

"Eh? Mn, got it. But I don't think there's anyone at this school who knows about anything but enchanting-type^[18] summoning, you know? Are there really any teachers who know about what we're researching...?"

Is that so? Speaking of which, there really wasn't 'summoning magic' listed amongst the available courses, huh. I noticed the things that I was familiar with, but didn't pay much attention to the things that I wasn't. However, enchanting was categorized under summoning? Did I see that in a magic textbook?

"For now, there's probably nothing we can do but try searching for one."

At that time, unease sprouted in my heart. I didn't let it show. It's a needless worry. There shouldn't be any connection.

That disaster happened when I was 10. It had been 10 years since I had reincarnated. Right, in those 10 years, nothing had happened at all.

There shouldn't be any connection.

4

In this world, it might be that the sunrise and sunset are affected by the seasons. It was evening at the time when I first entered but on the way back to the dorms, it's night now.

A characteristic of the north, now that the snow has completely vanished, is that only the reddish-brown ground remained. While walking along the stone-laden path embedded in this ground, I happened to hear a voice.

“Oi, wait!”

“Don't think you can use your chants!”

From behind the school building appeared a fallen youth. Chasing them were 6 men.

The youth had been gaining distance to chant. At first he had tried to use a large magic but were stopped by the men, but even when he used elementary magic it made no difference due to the numbers. The youth was cornered, beaten, and thrown about. The six of them were attacking the youth who was like a turtle, unable to move, just bearing with it.

It was bullying. It was the scene of bullying. It was something that hurt to see.

Unconsciously, I raised my voice.

“Oi, oi, you guys. Don't bully people (turtles) who can't escape.”

When I unconsciously ran up while saying that, the six of them simultaneously turned towards me with a glare. Because they were also a little taller than me, it felt daunting.

“The hell you say!?”

However, one of them noticed.

“O-, oi, Quagmire...”

“Quagmire...? R-, Rudeus!?”

“The one who confined Rinia-san and Pursena-san in his room and trained them!?
That Rudeus!?”

I didn't train them!

“Nah, that's just a story right!?”

“Pursena-san called him Boss and wagged her tail at him you know...!?”

“But she'll basically wag her tail at anyone who gives her food!”

“But you know, those two really listened to what he said yanno?”

“Ahh, I saw them with scribbles all over their faces in class you know.”

“What was it again? “I'm Rudeus-sama's sex slave” was it?”

“Nah, I didn't really see it but...”

“After he beat them in a duel, he kidnapped them as slaves...? Seriously...?”

“...Not just that, but someone from the Dorudia clan, you know?”

“Doesn't he think about consequences...?”

The men were just talking without even taking a glance at me. Finally, they nodded with a gulp, and with a shudder turned to look at me. After exchanging looks, they nod together. They then lower their gazes to the fallen youth.

“Oi, we'll let you off for today.”

For today. I'm sensitive to words like that.

“By 'for today', you mean that you'll do the same thing another day? Six of you bullying a single person?”

When I said this harshly, the six of them openly showed on their faces that this had become troublesome.

“Tsk...”

“Hey, Rudeus... san, this is none of your business, right...?”

These guys are always the same. None of your business. None of your business. I was well aware that it was none of my business when I stuck my nose in you know.

“I don't know the circumstances, but 6 vs 1 is unfair, you know.”

“...”

The six of them exchange glances, and then shake their heads. Don't have a discussion using your eyes.

“We get it. We'll stop it. But yanno, it's not like that guy is innocent.”

One of the men said that, and went back behind the school. The other 5 accompanied him. The area behind the school building might be their hangout.

“Phew.”

I sighed. As expected I get pretty nervous when faced with so many imposing guys. I've mentally simulated battles with multiple opponents, but even so, this is a matter of the heart. I wouldn't be afraid in a 1 vs 1 fight though...

“Hey, are you alright?”

I approached the youth who was getting up. While dusting off his clothes, he chanted Healing in a quiet voice. It's to be expected of a Magic University, but for even bullying victims to be able to use healing magic is...

While I was thinking that, the youth turned his head. It was Cliff.

“...”

Frankly speaking, I don't have any good memories of Cliff. Each time we meet he flares

up and this time he'll probably just say "You had no business saving me!" I thought.

"You had no business..."

Cliff stopped speaking halfway. He then made an expression like he was sullenly thinking. He then let out a sigh.

"...No, you saved me. Thanks."

"You're welcome."

Bowing once, Cliff quickly walked away.

I was shocked to see that. I certainly did save him. But for him to suddenly change his attitude like this. It's enough to make me wonder if he's scheming something.

No, it might be best for me to obediently accept this. Though Cliff has been really snapping at me up until now, I've never snapped back. Cliff might have finally recognised that I'm not an enemy. To begin with, I don't even know why I was hated so much...

"Well whatever"

I returned to the dorm.

5

The next day. When I had just finished lunch, Cliff called out to me.

Then, I was summoned behind the school building after school.

Cliff was angry. I didn't know what he was angry about. But he was making a difficult expression.

He might want to fight, huh? Or so I vaguely thought. I'd already activated my mystic eye. Whilst paying attention to my surroundings, I gathered mana to my right hand.

To pay back my kindness with evil... Turtles sure are cruel these days. Or so I was thinking.

"Alright. Here seems fine."

Making sure no one was nearby, Cliff turned around. His face was bright red.

I immediately understood. This wasn't a duel. He hadn't called me here for such a reason. On the contrary, it's a confession. That's basically how things are in a situation like this.

Oh man. No matter how many times I've failed with women, I don't recall ever becoming a Pants Wrestler.^[19] Phew, it's tough being popular. Just kidding.

"T-, the truth is..."

"Aye."

I've decided on what to say. I'll answer him with dignity.

'Let's just start out as friends first, then after that, once we get to know each other better, we'll still stay as just friends.'

"There's someone I like."

"A-, aye..."

With shyness written all over his face, the completely blushing Cliff cast his eyes down. Am I going to reject this? My stomach hurts. I think about how it would be were this a girl. Though my sword is a holy sword, I don't have that sheathe either.

But Cliff raised his head and pointed to a certain place.

"It's her."

His finger is pointed to the school building. Some distance away, a person can be seen through the window. Even from here I can see their swaying, long, blonde hair. Beholding the scenery of the school dyed in the colour of the evening, with a languid expression she looks out the window.

"Today, I saw you. Talking to her. Is she an acquaintance? That's, um, could you introduce me?"

"...Aye."

The person who had appeared in the school building... That was a person I knew well.

An oft-talked about problem child. A devilish woman who would 'eat up' her classmates like a succubus.

It was Elinalise Dragonroad.

Author's Notes

I was wondering just which of these I should pick as the subtitle,

"Cliff vs Elinalise"

"The Deceived Virgin ~The Impure Lust That Crushes a Pure Love~"

"I Became Intimate with That Boy That Bothered Me!? That Impudent Boy's Crush!"

but decided against it.

CHAPTER 6

THE GENIUS YOUTH'S SECRET 2

1

Good day, this is Rudeus. Ummm, right, so you see, what happened was, you see, the other day Cliff-kun asked me a favour you see. He was in love with Elinalise, and wanted me to introduce him. Right.

Certainly, Elinalise is my acquaintance. She's my parents' former party member you see. Right.

Though I don't know much about how romance works in this world, if Cliff is in love, and if he wants my cooperation so that he can make his feelings clear, then I feel that I also want to help him out.

That's how I feel. That's how I feel, but...

Let's just recall what kind of a person Elinalise is.

Elinalise Dragonroad. S-class adventurer. Vanguard. Warrior. Magic University First Year. Age 50. Unexpectedly diligent in her studies, and has been said to have excellent grades. Has recently been able to incorporate elementary water magic into her battle tactics. Adventurers who accompany her for a long time come to hate her, but she's capable, she's good at taking care of others, and she's good in bed.

Right, she's good in bed.

Her body is afflicted with a certain curse. Thus, night after night she has to slurp up men's 'essence'.^[20] Thus, she'll never stay with a particular man, and she just repeats one night stands over and over again. I've heard that she's given birth before. She wouldn't tell me what happened to those children. It's possible that she just abandoned them here or there, or sold them into slavery. In reality though, she hardly ever becomes pregnant, so it does seem that she raises them properly until they're independent though.

Well anyway, I don't know the details. To introduce such a person as the target of someone's love is, is it really a good idea?

Cliff doesn't know that Elinalise is that kind of person. When I asked him about his impression of Elinalise, I became greatly troubled. Elinalise was an untainted, pure white angel. His reply was along these lines.

Of course, he's also investigated Elinalise.

"The Sovereign by the Window. She's extremely famous. Her name is Elinalise Dragonroad. It's a beautiful and valiant name that's worthy of her. Though this is obvious, she's diligent and her grades are said to be good as well. Because she was an adventurer until just recently, she's also knowledgeable about the application of magic in real combat."

Anyway, I have nothing to say about this except for the Sovereign by the Window thing. The window is probably just where she sticks her butt out after all. However, I don't think that Cliff knows that the sovereign stands by windows to have sex.

"Still, that rumour that she'll sleep with people without discrimination is no good. It's likely that someone who's jealous of her has been spreading it."

Or so Cliff interpreted for the most important part.

The fight the other day was the same. The six men from the other day had heard the rumours about Elinalise. That she would spread her legs to anyone, and that they should have a go with her as well, they said. Hearing this, Cliff became angry. 'Don't look down on others because of rumours', he warned them. Of course the rumours are true, but...

The six of them were upperclassmen, they had strong physiques, and they were delinquents. Because they were given a warning by Cliff who was not only an underclassman, but also smaller than them, they got a little irritated and retorted with vulgar expressions,

"Just the other day my kouhai and another man were taken care of by her at the same time. Since you can't see the truth, how about you go have her take care of your first time as well?"

Cliff was enraged. In a fit of recklessness, he attacked them. Not with magic. With his fists.

Cliff was supposed to be pretty good at fighting as well. But it was 6 vs 1. Their physiques were different. It would have been better had he used magic, but the moment he used his fists to engage them, he lost all chance of winning. And then, I appeared.

For the purpose of gathering information, it was a splendid chat that we had. But hmm. Now what do I do?

I have no obligations towards Cliff. Even if I introduce him to Elinalise and that illusion of his is smashed to pieces, it's still none of my business. But even so. Even so, can I just push him onto Elinalise without a care?

Elinalise might be grateful to me. She's generally quite happy about being introduced to men. Lately she's been especially interested in hunting for virgins, and it can't be helped. It's nice when they're innocent and apologetic, and for their first time they put up a strong front. It's nice when, although they were like that in the beginning, after doing it again and again, they start to change. In my previous life, this was something that I'd seen countless times in eroge. That's why it's not like I can't understand her feelings.

Cliff looks to be a virgin, and Elinalise will probably gladly eat him up.

But how would Cliff be? He's misunderstanding the type of person that Elinalise is. If he met her for real and started going out with her, he'd probably see how she really is. Wouldn't he be angry at that time? He might end up thinking that it was my fault that he had to go through something horrible. If you ask me it'd be getting his just deserts, but if I introduce him knowing all this, I'll have my small share of responsibility too.

But on the other hand, I might have no choice but to introduce him. He might come up with some weird suspicions about me if I don't. For example, that I might actually be aiming for Elinalise as well, or something. Were my disease to heal, I might want to try that kind of one night stand with her as well. However, there's no way that I'd be aiming for her.

What should I do?

2

And so,

“Fitts-senpai, there's something I'd like to discuss with you. Is that okay?”

After school I went to the library and asked that of Fitts-senpai.

“What?”

“It's kind of a a love problem.”

“A love problem!?”

Fitts-senpai turned his whole body towards me. Almost leaning his whole body in, his mouth turned just a little crooked.

“R-, Rudeus-kun, you have someone you like!?”

He's unexpectedly enthusiastic about this. His eyes are sparkling... well, they may or may not be; I can't tell with the glasses on. Fitts-senpai is probably also at an age where he's interested in romance.

“No, it's about someone I know.”

“Someone you know...?”

“Yes, someone I know.”

“M-, mn. Continue.”

“This acquaintance has become enamoured with someone at first sight.”

“First sight... And so, by discussing with me... C-, could it be Ariel-sama? I-, if that's the case then it's pointless. There are heaps of people who wanted my help for this but...”

Fitts-senpai starts to trail off. There are probably lots of people whose gazes were stolen by that princess at first sight. It's natural that as a guard you'd see them all as pests that you'd want to shut out.

“No, it's someone else. It's not Princess Ariel.”

“I-, I see. Thank goodness.”

“This acquaintance of mine had their gaze stolen by that person. It's someone that I know, if I introduce them as a love interest there's a bit of a problem, you see. I'm hesitant over whether or not to introduce them.”

When I looked at Fitts-senpai by chance, I found that he was making a strange expression. He had his hand to his mouth, and a strong gaze came at me from beneath his sunglasses.

“Does this acquaintance know about this woman's “problem”?”

“No, he doesn't.”

...Hm? Did I mention that it was a woman? No, it's probably because we were talking about Princess Ariel that he just went on assuming that it was a woman. Well, since Elinalise is a woman, there's no problem but... Or could it be that he thinks that I'm the “acquaintance”?

“I'm just saying this to make sure, but this isn't about me, you know. Since it's Fitts-senpai, I'll tell you that it's the Special Student Cliff-senpai.”

“Ah, really? Sorry, I misunderstood.”

Fitts-senpai is scratching behind his ear. Did he really think it was about me? Well, saying stuff like “someone I know” is a cliched way of talking about your own matters after all.

“Anyway, that's how it is, so what should I do?”

“Umm, perhaps you should tell them about that “problem”...or, not, I wonder? Unless of course there's a reason you can't tell him...”

Fitts-senpai seems to be lacking in confidence a little. Speaking of which, senpai is also a virgin, huh. He might not have much experience in love matters.

“There's no problem if I tell him, but Cliff-senpai is misunderstanding and he's an intense person, so if I tell him there's a good chance he might not believe me. He might even misunderstand and think that I also like that woman.”

“Ah, really that could happen.”

"Yes. That's why I was thinking that perhaps it might be better if he doesn't hear it from me."

Mn. If I'm the one who says it, he could misunderstand a little. It might be better for Cliff to hear it from another woman that he trusts, or from words around him... No, it might be best if he hears it from the person herself, huh?

"Umm, Rudeus-kun, do you not like her too?"

"I don't hate her, but I can't see her as a love interest."

Since I hear that she's really skilled, I would be interested in trying a night with her, though I'd be a little reluctant to date her seriously. I'd immediately be cheated on, after all.

"So that's how it is... But though you might not be able to see her like that, it might look different to Cliff-kun, huh."

Right? To a person who sees her as a untainted white angel, he probably doesn't think that anyone can see her any differently, but just who is that?

"Mmm."

Should I introduce him? Should I not introduce him? I'm lost. After a while, Fitts-senpai murmured.

"Umm, I have someone that I like as well, so I can understand his feelings. It'd normally be someone I wouldn't see as a love interest, but I like them even so."

Someone that Fitts-senpai likes? I wonder who?... Thinking about it normally, it'd be Princess Ariel, huh? Just now he had that huge reaction as well. Certainly it'd be difficult to see Princess Ariel as a love interest. She's Asura royalty after all, and she's way out of his league. No, it's fine even so.

"I think it'd be tough only being able to watch them and not confess."

Fitts-senpai's face is red. He's red all the way up to his ears.

"That's why, umm, wouldn't it be fine to properly introduce them and give him a chance to confess?"

"But there might be problems that arise afterwards."

"That can't be helped. I mean, after you've already introduced them, what happens afterwards is something that's their problem, right?"

Ohhhh, that's true. What happens after the introduction is their problem. That's certainly true. As long as I make this clear beforehand, it should be fine.

"I understand. I'll try doing it like that, then. Fitts-senpai, thank you very much."

"M-, mmn... I'm glad that I, was of, help..."

Fitts-senpai seemed a little unconfident. He's probably thinking something like 'What am I talking all big for when I have no experience?'. However, even without experience, what he said was spot on, so there's no problems at all.

Anyway, I've decided on my approach.

I'm a bit concerned about Fitts-senpai since he collapsed onto his desk when I left, but... it's probably because at his age, acting all big and giving advice is something embarrassing. All I have are thanks for him though.

3

The next day, I called out to Cliff. Cliff, whose gaze held a little anticipation.

"I don't mind introducing you, but there's just something I'd like to say."

"What is it?"

"Cliff-senpai. Since I've also formed a party with Elinalise-san before, I know a bit more about her than other people do."

At 'formed a party', Cliff's eyebrows twitched a little.

"I won't say anything about her temperament myself. However, that's not because I'm deceiving you. I want you two to meet in person, talk, and then decide for yourself

what kind of person she is."

"What do you mean?"

"In other words, what happens afterwards, for example 'she's different from what you say' or 'why didn't you say anything' or 'you've really pulled a blind one on me'; I'm saying I don't want to be accused of such things afterwards."

I'm protecting myself just in case. Then I guard myself. I also didn't forget to imply that she has some sort of problem.

"Of course. I'm a devout follower of Milis! I'll pay the proper respects to my matchmaker!"

Matchmaker? Is that how I'm seen according to the Milis Faith? Since I'm not an adherent of the Milis Faith, I'm not really sure. Ohhh, my Goddess, please guide me!

"Since I'm not a believer of Milis, afterwards please don't say that I was playing matchmaker or anything, okay?"

"I won't."

"However this ends, this isn't my business after all."

Cliff nods as if this is obvious.

"I'm prepared to be rejected before anything!"

I feel that you might experience something more repulsive than just being rejected though.

4

Elinalise was in a room by herself. Today she was leaning against a window as well, but today there was nothing like a two-torsoed centaur. She's looking out the window and idling about. I know what she's thinking about: 'Won't it hurry up and turn to night? Once it's night the tavern will open and in there I'll find lots and lots of men.' They're probably those kinds of pink colored thoughts. However, if you looked at her without knowing any better, certainly she might seem like an angel.

“Ara^[21], Rudeus... Isn't this a rare occasion? For you to come to me.”

When Elinalise notices me, without particularly smiling, she just says that in surprise. Certainly since entering this school, I haven't spoken to her much. At most I'd just drop in at lunchtime on occasion to see how things were.

“Ara? Who might that be?”

Cliff hops out from behind me. He then brings his hand to his chest, and his feet together. It might be Milishion etiquette.

“Elinalise-san, this is Cliff Grimoire. He's a Special Student, and one year above us.”

“As introduced, I am Cliff.” ^[22]

He then bows where he is.

“Ara ara, how very courteous of you. I'm Elinalise Dragonroad. And so, what business might Cliff-san have with me?”

“Nothing in particular; he wanted me to introduce him to you, Elinalise-san, so I brought him along.”

“Yes. I've always seen your beautiful face, Elinalise-san! Please go out with me!” ^[23]

A silence befalls us. Elinalise is staring blankly. After a while, she slowly leaves her chair, and grabs a hold of my arm.

“Hang on.”

Saying this, she brings me to a corner of the room. She then draws near my ear.

“What is it?”

“How much do you want?”

I don't understand what she means, and a few seconds pass by. Could it be that this is

a 'how much money do I need to pay to bring this man into my bed?' type of talk? That would be the worst.

"I don't need money."

"In that case, what? What's your goal?"

"No, somehow he likes you, Elinalise-san."

"You're lying... Rudeus, you know what kind of person I am, right? To bring such an easily fooled boy like that to me... Please have some shame."

Having some shame or whatever... I feel like I'm being told this by the number one shameless person. Well, it's fine but...

"I didn't deceive him or do anything else; all I said was that I'd introduce him to you."

"Is that true?"

"I don't have any ulterior motives. If it pleases you, I'll even swear on Roxy-sensei."

I said that, and after she thought for a while, her eyebrows raised into a 八.

"Even if you're telling the truth, Rudeus, I'm a little troubled by such a serious kid."

Troubled? That's unexpected. I had thought that since it was Elinalise, she'd happily say "Since it's like that, I'll bring him to an inn".

"You're aware that I'm cursed, right? I can't date a single person, you know."

She can't date a single person. As a result, she'll never get serious and continue to have monetary or playful relationships with an indefinite number of men. I feel that I've heard this before. Well, it seems that even she's thinking. Since it's like this, then I guess dating is impossible huh.

"There's no helping it then. Please reject him cleanly."

"Is that fine? Won't it throw mud all over your name, Rudeus?"

"That's not a problem."

It's not really that big a deal in the first place. It is 'quagmire' after all, and I also have no need to sell my name anymore.

"But please try your best to explain to him the truth. That it's not because I secretly want to date you or anything."

"I understand already."

Alright.

Our little conference ends and Elinalise walks over to face Cliff. She's taller than him. Cliff is small. The more I look at it, the more unbalanced they look. However, people's bodies being mismatching has nothing to do with the heart. Thinking that, it somehow becomes a rather depressing situation.

"Rudeus, people's romance isn't something you should be peeking at."

"Ah, that's true. In that case I take my leave."

I leave at Elinalise's words. I feel a bit sorry for Cliff. However, this is likely the best result. There's also the issue about the curse, but Elinalise is a lascivious woman to begin with. On the other hand, Cliff is an earnest honours student. It's like water and oil.

"Rudeus... Umm, thank you!"

Cliff's words rang out behind me. My chest hurt.

5

After that, about a week passed.

It was our once-a-month homeroom. There, sat an openly flirting couple. A tall woman was sitting on a man's lap, and they were flirting away.

"It's easy to remember how to create the melded magic phenomena. Even if you can't use two magic, you can use things that occur in nature to achieve the same effect."

"As expected of Cliff; you're so knowledgeable."

"It's not a big deal."

Both of them were people I know; they were Cliff and Elinalise. I slowly approached them and my head tilted a little.

“Mn? Rudeus! Thanks for the other day!”

Cliff made to stand up and thank me, but because there was a woman sitting on his lap, he sat in place and bowed.

“You're welcome... Elinalise-san, what's going on?”

Sitting on his lap, Elinalise smiled gently.

“We're going out now.”

Huuuuuh? Why? Seriously, why? [24] Isn't this different to what she said?

“Umm, isn't this different to what you said?”

“Rudeus, in the face of such a manly proposal, even my heart would skip a beat, you know.”

Propose? No matter what the case is, isn't that too fast?

“Stop it, it's embarrassing.”

““I'll definitely save you from your curse, so please marry me!”“

“O-, oi!”

“And then at the inn, Cliff's innocent... aahh! I feel like I'm going to 'come' just from remembering it.”

“S-, stop it I said. There are people here.”

Cliff's face was bright red. Though he said to stop it, he didn't seem that unhappy. First of all, congratulations on your graduation. I'm not really annoyed about this; is it because I've already thrown 'that' away as well? Or could it be that it's because I know what Elinalise is really like?

Still... It seems he's heard about the curse. It doesn't seem like Elinalise plans on stopping her numerous liaisons with random men, after all. Her reason for not being able to date just a single person is also valid. It's the truth after all. So why? Cliff heard about it. Eh? Propose?

"From now on, I'm going to try my best to endure for Cliff."

"I-, I said you didn't really need to. It's a curse, so there's no helping it, so a-, as long as your heart belongs just to me, then..."

"Cliff... Of course. For everyone else it's just body... but with you I'll give both my body and my heart."

Cliff gently brushes the hair of the enraptured Elinalise. Their gazes meet. Because she's sitting on his lap, their faces are close.

"Elinalise..."

"Cliff..."

Then it leads to a kiss.

After that, they begin to flirt as though I'm not there. Boldly flirting, and flirting out in the open. Is that okay, Cliff? Is that really okay? Though this woman may be saying some admirable things, you'll be treated like a doormat you know? Aren't you just being blinded by love?

"..."

As I'm about to say that, I firmly endure it. We'd agreed that after I introduced them, there'd be no complaints no matter the outcome. I feel that it'll be weird if I'm the one who says something.

I look towards the back of the classroom. The three of them didn't seem to care. Pursena is chewing on dried meat, and Zanoba is talking to Julie about a doll he spotted in the markets the other day. Julie's eyes are full of seriousness and doesn't register the idiot lovebirds.

Only Rinia was sulking, like she'd say "urgh" at any moment.

"Boss, what's up with that woman nya? When I say something sarcastic she replies

pretty intensely nya."

"I don't really get it either."

It's weird. While thinking that, I sort things out in my head.

The other day when I left them, she said was going to completely reject him. Then after that, the talk should have gone in that direction as well. So as to avoid future troubles, she probably tried to get him to give up by telling him all about the curse and the like, as well as the fact that the rumours were the truth.

However, it seems she was proposed to. 'I'll cure you, so please marry me'. It seems that she gave in after being told something like that. I have absolutely no idea how after hearing all that, Cliff ended up at such a thought.

However, I consider it for a bit. If I were in Elinalise's position, how would things have gone? 'I'll definitely cure you of your illness, so please marry me'; if I were told that straight to my face, then...

I might fall in love. Violently so.

Though I wouldn't know if they'd be able to heal the thing that I've been worried about, they'd earnestly give it their all. I don't know just how much Elinalise is troubled by this curse. No matter how much she likes doing those things, there's probably no way that she isn't worried about it at all. She might... fall in love?

No, I shouldn't just talk about Elinalise. Cliff tried his best. He showed his manliness and softened Elinalise.

"Boss, I've thought of a good idea nya."

"What is it?"

"Let's go out and get them back, nya."

So Rinia suggested. At any rate, it's probably a temporary arrangement. Still, I want to experiment now.

"Rinia-senpai. I don't mind going out, but I'm actually impotent. Will you give it your all to heal me if we go out?"

“Eh?”

At those words, everyone besides Elinalise suddenly muttered “Eh?”. Their gazes gather on me. It's like they're wondering 'Just what is this guy saying?' or something like that. What, is it that weird if Rinia and I go out together?

Or so I was wondering, when Rinia became flustered.

“Bo-, Bo-, Boss, c-, could it be that you heard what we said the other day nya?”

“The other day?”

“That although you had confined the super attractive us, and you touched and stripped us, you didn't mate with us, so you might be floppy dicked... the stuff we were saying at lunchtime nya.”

The hell? This is the first time I'm hearing this. When I was thinking this, I looked at Pursena and she quickly averted her eyes.

“T-, that's wrong nano. We weren't speaking badly of you. Like, it's just that on that day when you touched me your scent was weak, so like, I was wondering if perhaps that was the case, that's all nano...”

At Pursena's words, all of the gazes on me turned to some like pity. They were gazes of sympathy.

Still, it wasn't the dating stuff that they were shocked about, but the impotence huh? Though I had hidden it, was it really that strange?

“Like, we weren't spreading rumours about you or anything nano. The only one who used the words 'floppy dicked' was Rinia nano. She's totally, like, fakku nano.”

“But Pursena was the one who said that you were harmless since you touched us but didn't attack us nya.”

“I was like, praising him nano.”

“Nya!?”

Giving a sidelong glance at the two who began a Manzai routine, I sat down.

“Well, it's fine anyway. It's not something that'll trouble me if known, after all.”

“R-, right nya. It's not like we'll be prejudiced against Boss because you're impotent or anything, nya.”

“That's right. Like, whether it's an impotent Boss, or a normal Boss, Boss is Boss nano.”

Impotent, impotent, stop freaking repeating it. It hurts, you know. Should I have kept it hidden after all?

“Shishou, do not worry about it. Let us live for dolls.”

Zanoba said that and patted me on the shoulder. Julie tilts her head.

“Master, what is 'impotence'?”

“Mmm, it's when you cannot fulfill your duties as a man... Should I put it like that...? Even so, it's basically something unrelated to doll making.”

“Hmmm.”

Zanoba might have been trying to console me. I understand keenly that he picked his words carefully.

“Boss, I had thought that you were thinking about nothing but perverted things all day, but you were actually desperately trying to cure yourself nya... It's moving nya...”

“If there seems like something I can do, I'll cooperate nano. Like, only if you give me meat, though...”

Their sympathy feels a bit forced. How do you say it? It feels kind of different. I'm not going to fall in love with them or anything because of these words.

“Rudeus. Technically I've also undergone training for listening to the confessions of our believers. Though it's been said that I don't have much skill in it, I can at least do something like think about the problem together. If anything happens, I can give you some counsel.”

Cliff-san's words were sincere and warm. I kind of understood Elinalise's feelings a little. No, I'm not a homo so I won't fall in love or anything, you know.

And like that, Cliff and Elinalise ended up going out. Honestly, I think that it'll be impossible for that Elinalise to continue enduring this. I absolutely don't think that Cliff will be able to endure Elinalise sleeping with other men, either. Though it's fine, eventually this relationship will completely collapse... Though I thought this, I didn't voice it.

And my sickness became something well known to those of the Special Class. Though I took a little damage, everyone did technically say that they'd cooperate.

Have I finally taken the first step...?

I want to hurry up and get better so I can flirt about with someone too.

-Supplement-

Cliff was under the impression that because of her curse, Elinalise was forced to have sex contrary to her desires, and courageously, so that no one would be able to tell, she acted the part of a slut; he was "convinced" that she was a tragic heroine.

CHAPTER 7

PRECIPICE OF ENGAGEMENT 1

1

Onigashima.

Biheiriru Kingdom, the Northern lands on the far eastern tip.

Even further east from there.

After crossing the ocean, that island is there.

Onigashima.

A small island called as such.

There lives a unique race known as the Ogre Race.

With dark brown hair and a horn on their head, a strong combat group of fighters lead by a Chief known as “Fierce God”.

That is the Ogre Race.

They are a variety of Magic Race, but they didn't participate in the Human-Demon war or the Laplace campaign.

For that reason the people don't consider them a variety of Magic Race and recognize them as a similar race to the Elves and Dwarves.

Even though that's the case, because they fundamentally never leave Onigashima, their popularity is low.

The number of those who don't know about the existence of Onigashima is large.

They are a seclusive race.

The only human race they are connected with are those of the Biheiriru Kingdom.

Outsiders who enter within their territory are mercilessly attacked and destroyed.

However, that race as well openly welcomes guests who they recognize for

themselves.

Currently, there's one such guest here.

He came here journeying on the ship of the Sea Race, but after approaching this island his interest was piqued so he came to land.

Through great fusses he came to be approved by the "Fierce God", and was a person treated as a guest.

He settled down on the comfortable Onigashima.

He talked with the frank and sociable "Fierce God", drank alcohol together with the Ogres, and occasionally participated in training with the young Ogres.

That sort of lifestyle continued for roughly two years.

To that guest, the time of several years is a period of time almost like an instant.

One day a letter arrived for that guest.

It was sent as an urgent job request in which an S rank adventurer sent out the letter in a hurry.

The contents were short and concise.

"Found the person being searched for in the Magic Triumvirate. Traveling towards Ranoa Kingdom Magic University several months after"

After seeing that letter the guest stood up.

After seeing the letter's content and that guest's face the "Fierce God" asked.

"Are you going?"

The guest nodded in an exaggerated way and responded as such.

"Humu. It won't be good if I don't get going soon."

The ogres who heard that each said.

That it would become lonely.

Please don't go.

Wouldn't it be fine to live here?

After being told as such the guest nodded with a "Humu."

"I would really like to do that. However, the life span of the human race is short, if I keep taking my time, slowly he might end up passing away. It was a short period but I enjoyed myself. We'll meet again."

Only the leader of the Ogres the "Fierce God" didn't try to restrain him.

He said just a single line, "Take care of yourself."

The words of the "Fierce God" that is the decision of the Ogres.

Even while feeling reluctance to part, the other Ogres obeyed his decision.

However, at least...

At least... a final banquet.

In response to those words, the settlement of Ogres held a grand banquet.

The Ogres held a match where they often boasted of their skill similar to Sumo, as well as a number of drinking contests, the "Fierce God" and the guest both greatly enjoyed themselves.

And then, the guest set off feeling good.

A good humored man that one day suddenly came along and spent close to two years freeloading in the village.

He fought the "Fierce God", was defeated, but the next day he revived, he was defeated over and over again as he continued to revive, and then before one realized it he had come to get along with the Ogres, the immortal man.

A large man with jet black skin and six arms.

"Fuhahahahaha! Just you wait!"

He plunged towards the west.

A certain country was surprised over his sudden invasion and attacked with Advanced level magic,

A certain country was surprised over his sudden invasion and offered tribute.

However, he ignored everything.

He continued plunging forward to the west.

Passing the forest, overcoming the mountains, with a speed surpassing that at which the human race could relay information.

By the time the various countries set out to search for his objective, he had already passed through that country and arrived in the next.

West and further west.

With an overwhelming speed.

And then he arrived.

“Humu, it is here.”

At the Magic University.

---Rudeus Point of View---

Since I entered the Magic University time has flown by, it's already been six months.

The season is autumn, an autumn of good harvest.

This season is extremely short.

However, it's an essential harvesting period for the sake of overcoming the bitter winter, unusually it's a season where festivals are thrown in the town as well...

And then in regards to the Beast Race it has a special implication of going into heat.

During this season the Beast race men and women all get restless.

It's not as if the Magic University has that many Beast race enrolled.

Even if you were to look at the 10,000 students, it would be at best 5%.

That's still around 500 people.

If you think about how vast the Magic University is then it's not all that many.

It's not all that many, but during this season you can catch sights of those few dueling in various places.

The ones dueling are men and women.

During this season the Beast race duel the opposite sex in order to become companions.

After the duel ends, they will end up flirting for several months, and then marry after.

It seems that the one who wins the duel becomes the Boss of that "family."

Well, it seems limited to just being a [Custom that has continued since the past.]

In regards to the Beast race, Rinia and Pursena are [flowers beyond reach].

In terms of combat ability they're at the top class among the Beast race at this school.

And then they are the princesses of the Dorudia race, so of course they would be popular.

Following the customs of the human race, they are regarded as adults at 15 years old, and a great number of Beast race have challenged them to duels.

Among them are even those who have gone out of their way to travel a long distance to come as well.

Outsiders are forbidden from entering.

Normally it would be a concern from the school's side to stop them.

But, during the in-heat period, since it's a reproduction custom, it's an extremely delicate problem.

If they were to forbid everything, there's the possibility that the Beast Race students would riot.

Therefore, from the school side, if you properly get permission, you can use "observing the grounds" as a pretext to enter even if you're not a student.

Well then, Rinia and Pursena.

In regards to the courtship of those two and winning a duel, that would in other words mean aiming at the patriarch seat of the Dedorudia race.

You won't become the patriarch right away, but at the time when the patriarch is chosen, you would without a doubt be included among the candidates.

Although, since they came all this way for the purpose of studying, it's not like they can just decide on their marriage themselves.

When they turned 15 years old they rejected all of the marriage proposals.

However, even after taking such an attitude, the number of Beast race warriors coming to propose never decreased.

They're popular.

Supposedly there were those among them that forcefully tried to attack them.

Nothing but people who think that as long as they can establish a relationship after the fact then it's fine.

Since that becomes the case, the two end up secluding themselves to their dorm rooms during this season.

Rejecting them is too much of a pain.

Even if they reject them they'll be attacked by starving men.

The female dorm can't be called safe, but at the very least if someone were to intrude on the dorm, all of the girls would drive them out.

Therefore, during this season the two didn't come out of their rooms.

Since that's the case, they took a vacation from homeroom as well.

I wonder if this is the so called physiological holiday. [25]

The fact that it's the in-heat period would mean that the two are currently in such a state.

When I think that those two are getting all nyannyan-wanwan in their rooms I get a bit aroused as well.

Although, it's limited to just getting excited in my head.

I received a letter in my place from them stating, “We'll cause a bit of trouble for Boss, but we're depending on you after.”

Even if you tell me you're depending on me after, I haven't done anything in particular. I wonder if that means they want me to work as their proxy or something. It's impossible since I don't even know what classes they show up to.

Furthermore, it's not just the Beast Race that goes into heat in autumn.

And then during this season the Magic University won't stand for rape-like incidents. I guess you could call it an evil practice for those of mixed races.

I can agree with the firm security stance they take at each of the dorms.

If it's between the same race during heat then you could call it the so called natural providence, but if it comes down to a completely unrelated first year, they might be attacked without having any idea what is going on.

Of course, the action of rape is prohibited in the school rules.

For that reason, during this season there's security guards posted within the school.

Rape is no good, but if it's pushing someone down with “consent” during a duel then it's okay.

And attacking someone after they've rejected your challenge to a duel is strictly forbidden.

It seems it's that sort of feeling.

There was a warning about it even from the teacher in homeroom.

During this season you shouldn't carelessly accept duels, and anyone lacking confidence in their combat power should always remain together in groups when they move around.

Fitts-senpai worried about me as well and told me to be careful.

Since you're strong, there might be some women who come along and challenge you to a “mere training duel”, but that is a lie, so after you reject it, no matter how much they provoke you don't accept it and quickly escape while being careful of your back.

Women in heat.

If it was the old me then I might have gone around dueling everyone right and left to build up a harem.

However, with this body that is being violated by illness, even if I did something like that it would just end up bitter.

The in-heat period.

It is something that is of no relation to me. [26]

Look, what has relation to me are the two young ones over there.

The two who cleared things up and ended up becoming lovers, an elf and a human boy.

The eternally in-heat elf is sitting on the lap of the boy and studying together.

No really, from morning to night it's hot over there.

The heart bubbles are drifting over here...

However, putting aside Cliff, the way in which Elinalise acts looks the same as she does with other men to me.

Since I felt that it would be pitiful to report to Cliff, I won't say it out loud but...

Frankly, I can't see it as anything but an act.

I wonder if everything is all right between those two.

“Shisho, wouldn't it be a good time to start with a new work?”

While I was looking at those two, Zanoba started a conversation.

He was operating normally.

He knows nothing and doesn't care about the heat period, basically sums it up.

“A new work huh?”

The other day, in order to rehabilitate I started to create a 1/8 Eris, but for some reason when I started making it tears were coming out so I gave up midway.

Since then, somehow my skill has been dulled.

I wonder if it's a slump.

"That's right, who should we create?"

"We might as well just move away from people."

"Then, should we try making a Red Dragon?"

"Oh, come to think of it you once beat one didn't you?"

"That time was terrible, I thought I would die."

"Wawawa, how modest."

"...Master, what are you talking about?"

Since Julie was tilting her head, I told her about how I defeated a Red Dragon in my adventurer days.

And then, her cheeks flushed red and her eyes were sparkling.

After all, it seems like the children of this world like these sorts of stories.

She's not really receiving child-like treatment, but even then she's still six years old.

"Alright, then, I'll make a Red Dragon for Julie's sake."

"Mu... Shi... shisho, what about me? Won't you make anything for me?"

"If she's your disciple as well, shouldn't you say something about helping out?"

"...!! Ha... Shisho, even though my ability is poor I will help out!"

Even with my slightly bad pace, I'm operating normally as well.

My Elementary class Barrier lesson will end soon as well.

Next is well... these days I'm a bit worried over what class I should try taking.

I guess, it should be Intermediate level Detoxification.

However, up until now, I've never been troubled over Detoxification.

Just by remembering Elementary level I've more or less covered everything else, I wonder if Intermediate or above is necessary.

Or else maybe I should take Advanced level Healing.

As well as this, most things can be covered with just Intermediate, so I wonder if it's really necessary.

Or else, maybe I should look into the Summoning category, Enchanting class.

Enchanting is a kind of magic related to the production of Magic Tools.

Why something that has to do with production would be categorized as Summoning I don't really know but...

It might not be too bad to consider it a challenge into learning a new field.

Might as well just skip out on taking classes and increase the time I spend in the library.

The things in regards to the teleport incident have reached a bit of an impasse, but trying to learn some other race's languages might be interesting.

If I'm not going to take classes, then what about having Cliff teach me Exorcism?

No, he's recently been stuck to Elinalise.

I don't really want to be thought of as a hindrance, I'll keep my distance for a bit.

Or else, maybe I should try looking into some other field of magic.

Horse-riding classes might be interesting as well.

While thinking like that the day continued on.

A peaceful day.

2

Is what I was thinking until...

"I recognize you as the A rank Adventurer who defeated a Stray Dragon, the lone horseman, Rudeus of the Quagmire! I challenge you to a customary courtship duel!"

While I was on the way to the library I was challenged to a duel.

After turning around what was reflected in my eyes was a beautiful girl.

A girl with dark skin and flowing dark blue hair that was gathered behind her.

In terms of age she should be 17 or 18.

Her mouth was tightly linked and her looks in a single word would be, dignified.

If I were to say it, then I guess it would be something like a female warrior.

Her clothes were an ultramarine color that stood out. I wonder if she likes blue.

Her chest was reasonable.

She seems to have quite the nice bit of muscle as well.

On her hip was a long sword with a curve that is commonly used by the Sword God style swordsmen.

Her clothes weren't a uniform, but swordsman-like clothes.

Such a girl was looking in my direction.

If I were to state it precisely, she was looking at the person in front of me with a surprised face.

She was looking at the untalented Beast race covered in fuzzy hair that challenged me to a duel.

That's right.

The one that said it was an untalented man.

No matter how you look at it he wasn't a magician, he was a dog-eared Beast Race with bulging muscles.

The girl was probably just passing by.

I think anyone would be surprised if a large man nearby suddenly said something like that.

It is that sort of season right now after all.

She probably was wondering if it was said to herself.

“Umm.”

Well, putting aside the girl.

The problem is the man.

I'm a man and this guy is a man.

That would mean that I received a challenge to a duel from a man.

It's a huge problem.

"Isn't it that the courtship duels that are popular during this season?"

"Indeed!"

Ha?!

"Sorry about this, but, umm, even if I look like this I'm generally normal^[27], so please excuse me from the homosexual stuff. Please allow me to humbly reject this offer."

"It seems there's a bit of a misunderstanding."

"Excuse me, since I have piano practice, I will now take my leave from this place if you please..." ^[28]

After I rejected him, without listening to anything further I left the place.

I acted just as Fitts-senpai told me.

"Wait?!"

Is what I was going for, but the hairy man jumped up with a loud sound.

And then he jumped over me and landed in front of me.

It was a jumping strength almost like reverse joints. ^[29]

He could become a Dragon Knight.

"You have no right to reject! My name is Buruku Adorudia! I seek marriage with Pursena with the intent to become the head of the Adorudia!"

"Pursena-senpai is currently in the dorm taking an in-heat holiday, so please ask over there."

After saying that Buruku shook his head and spat out an insult.

"According to the words left behind by Pursena-sama, I have identified you as the Boss

of the group! I have heard of your fame from Gyes-dono! That act of freezing the entire forest during the rainy season! That ability that allowed you to kill a Red Dragon as a lone horseman! It's certainly a true ability appropriate for one that rules this school, you're not lacking as an opponent!"

Lone horseman, lone horseman you've been saying it since just now, but I travel by foot you know.

Well it's fine though...

"What will happen if I refuse?"

"As the boss of the group you have an obligation to accept the duel!"

Let's sort things out a bit.

In other words.

The other day after I defeated Rinia and Pursena in a duel, I've come to be known as their boss.

If you desire for the bitch under the boss, then defeating the boss is how it goes.

Then, if he were to defeat me, he would get his hands on Pursena as the prize.

It seems that accepting a duel is the obligation of the group's boss.

I didn't become the boss of that group of girls because I wanted to, but it seems that it doesn't matter.

It's the Animal Rule.

In other words, if I were to intentionally lose, I would be dismissed as the boss of the group, and Pursena would become this guy's bride.

After this, it would stand to reason that guys like this would no longer have a reason to come and challenge me to a duel.

"Now I advance... let's fight!"

Without waiting for my response, Buruku yelled out loudly and came leaping at me.

.....

.....

...

Well, what the.

He was all talk.

He came plunging at me from the front, caught his legs in a bog, and was knocked out with a rock bullet.

Around three seconds I'd say.

It seems I somehow or other defeated him reflexively, but after giving it some thought, there's really no need for me to lose intentionally.

It doesn't seem like Pursena intends to marry anyone for the time being as well.

In other words, what was written on the letter [We'll trouble you] is this sort of thing.

I don't really care how they just threw it onto me, but if the opponents are at this level then I can deal with them somehow or other, it should be fine I guess.

While I was thinking lightly about it as such, I was attacked five times on the way to the library.

They were all people calling out that they've waited for this day.

Rinia and Pursena are really popular.

I wonder what's so good about those two.

Their body?

No, it seems that many of them haven't even seen their face.

In other words, it's status.

The first guy did say he wanted to become the patriarch after all.

They want to become the leader that much huh.

Which area aviation staff officer are you. [30]

However, it seems that they've already decided the order in line to duel.

The guys who tried to pick a fight with me on the way ended up being yelled at over

skipping in line.

This and that all seems to be customs of the Beast Race.

The Beast Race really is all about their customs.

Really, these damn Beast Races...

However, as mysterious as it is, they didn't come raiding the inside of the library.

I guess they were told from the school's side not to act violently inside of the buildings.

Or else this might be another custom of the Beast Race.

I don't know, but in any case it's a shelter for a short while.

3

In the evening Fitts-senpai showed up in the library.

“Rudeus-kun, it's become something amazing outside, what have you done?”

He was giving me a look with a bit of blame in it.

“Nothing, it seems that if you want to take Rinia and Pursena as your bride you have to defeat me.”

“What's that!?”

Since Fitts-senpai's brow dropped I explained it in detail.

It seems that since I defeated Rinia and Pursena they've come to recognize me as their boss.

In other words it seems to be something like if you defeat the boss then you get your hands on the girl.

After finishing the explanation, Fitts-senpai was making a bit of a sullen face.

“That shouldn't be the case. You aren't the patriarch of the Dedorudia race. You might have won over them once, but you shouldn't have the right to accompany them.”

Hmm... After all that's true, huh.

That would be right wouldn't it?

If that were the case then I should have more freedom to do as I please with the bodies of those two.

"Even though that's the case, how are we supposed to make them give up?"

"Eh? Hnn?? Even if you say it, the Beast race won't stop during this season after all..."

Fitts-senpai put his hand to his chin and thought while nodding.

"In reality, there shouldn't be any need for you to be their opponent, but even they would give up and return if they are defeated in a duel."

"...Does that mean in the end I still have to accept the duel?"

"That's what it comes down to."

You sure say that easily.

I don't know how many there are, but it seems there's at least 30 people lined up outside.

Almost all of them are untalented men who want to become the patriarch.

And that I have to defeat all of them...

"I don't wish for such a violence-filled daily life."

"I know that. However, if you don't do something you won't be able to leave here. And even if you keep hiding they might get impatient and come inside, we'll be in trouble if they act violently in the library."

"I guess so."

Well then, what a troublesome thing.

"Dueling with a bunch of dirty men huh..."

Who benefits from this I wonder.

"Umm, it's not as if they're all men, it seemed like there was one girl as well."

“Seriously? Was she a cute girl?”

“Rudeus-kun?? Will you accept the duel from that girl?”

“No, that can't be.”

I somehow or other shook my head to that threatening glance.

However, I would like to see her face.

I wonder where she came to know about me.

“But, doesn't it make you curious?”

If they were trying to get close with good intention, then of course that would make me curious.

Of course, having them accompany me somewhere afterwards would be a talk for after my illness is cured.

“Is that so? You're curious? Hnn...”

...I don't know why but for some reason it seems Fitts-senpai is in a bad mood.

I wonder if it was because he told me not to carelessly accept duels.

Ah, that's right.

I'm sure, Luke was guilty of something like that in the past and he was left to deal with it.

That's why he's irritated at me for thinking about it so lightly.

“However, if it's become this sort of serious matter, can't the student council do something about it?”

“It can't be helped during the in-heat season. If we were to forbid it, it would become something even more terrible.”

It seems that the student council is quite busy with various things during this season as well.

There are many students who rampaged, there are also guys who act violently outside of the school grounds.

Taking advantage of the strife during the duel, it seems there are guys who attack in the darkness as well.

It seems the students attached to the student council protect the students who have low combat ability from such fellows.

In small groups they patrol the school and if any misconduct occurs they stop it on the spot.

Supposedly Fitts-senpai as well, after he showed his face here was going to enter into that sort of patrol rotation.

“If the student council is doing that kind of thing then save me as well.”

“Rudeus-kun you should do something yourself, you can right?”

Fitts-senpai's tone today is somehow a lot colder than usual.

I wonder if I did something to get on his nerves...

No.

It could be that he's remembered the examination from a while back.

Fitts-senpai said he didn't mind that I won.

However, here I'm sneakily running away.

I'm sure if Fitts-senpai is known to have lost to a coward, his fame would fall.

I've depended on Fitts-senpai in a variety of ways.

I don't really want to do it, but here I should give it my best for once.

“I understand, for the sake of Fitts-senpai's honor, let's go with massacring those guys.”

“Ki... killing them is no good!”

“I know that, it was a joke.”

Even though it's called a duel, we won't go as far as taking lives.

There's that sort of unwritten law.

Even though I say that, it might be that there's a strong one mixed in with them.

I can't let my guard down.
Let's go while bracing myself.

4

Since the plan had been decided we went outside.
There, an unexpected spectacle was spreading out.

“...What the heck is this?”

A large number of Beast Race men were scattered about.

It was exactly a scene appropriate for the expression, “heaps of corpses.” [31]

They were all Beast Race men.

There were a variety of shapes and sizes.

The shape of their ears were also various.

There really is quite a variety among the beast race.

There were also guys wearing a uniform, but there were many who weren't wearing one as well.

Ah, there is one girl.

It was that swordsman-like girl from just now.

I wonder if she got dragged into it.

Or else maybe she fell for me?

And then in front of my thinking a single man's laughter resounded.

“Fuhahahahaha!!”

And there he was in the wasteland of those heaps of corpses.

A single man was standing there.

That guy was holding onto the final one and letting out a loud laughter filled voice.

“For you to challenge this one! It seems you do not know your place, but it seems that there are many with backbone gathered at the Magic University!”

Fitts-senpai and I were dumbfounded.

After all, we came outside and suddenly this?

Heaps of corpses and something amazing is standing there you know?

“...Umm.”

That guy tossed the last one aside and looked over here.

“Oh~, they said if I don't want to wait in line then I should try to defeat them, so I tried it and you really came out soon after didn't you! Splendid splendid! One who protects their promises is greatly desired!”

That obsidian-like skin and six arms, you can recognize it as a Magic Race at a glance.

The top pair was folded, the middle pair was stretched towards us, and the lower pair was holding onto the hips.

Long purple hair that stretched down to his waist.

“This one's name is Demon King Badigadi!”



Demon King.

Speaking of Demon Kings is it that, the ones that go around abducting young women from villages in order to eat them without a problem in a sexual meaning.

The ones that as long as they deal with the occasional assassin known by the name of hero, they can do whatever they please.

No, that is fine.

The problem is, that's right.

What is a Demon King doing here?

"That Foresight eye! You are Rudeus Greyrat huh! I've heard about you from my Fiancée, Great Demon Empress Kishirika!"

That guy came walking up in front of me.

And then a single line.

"I challenge you to a duel!"

If I offer up a young dog and cat girl as a sacrifice I wonder if he'll let me go...

CHAPTER 8

PRECIPICE OF ENGAGEMENT 2

1

Demon King Invasion.

That report spread like lightning to the countries in the vicinity of the Magic University.

Invasion and Information.

Normally the information should come first.

However, since the Demon King's movement speed was tremendously fast, the time when each country received the information and the time when the Demon King arrived in the land of his objective were almost simultaneous.

Each of the nations became flustered in a panic.

Those known as Demon Kings, fundamentally never leave the Magic Continent.

The Demon Kings of the Truce Faction and the Armed Factions almost completely died out during the Laplace Campaign.

Therefore, they had already thought that the Magic Continent had no interest in fighting, nothing but the Moderate Faction and Conservation Faction Demon Kings remained.

However, even though they are called the Moderate Faction and Conservation Faction, they are still those who hold enough power to reign over the Magic Continent.

If for some reason or other they started to act violently, they would most likely spread around an overwhelming amount of destruction.

After hearing about the invasion of the Demon King Badigadi the three countries of Ranoa, Nerisu, and Basheranto started to move their internal knight groups.

Simultaneously Adventurers were gathered up.

However, there was some distance until they reached the University.

Magic City Sharia where the Ranoa Magic University is located.

The Adventurer's Guild and Magic Guild located there.

And then the three countries combined the knight group that resided there.

They gathered up their insufficient military force and encircled the Magic University.

If it comes down to it, they must slow him down until reinforcements from the three countries come.

However, the Demon King's objective was completely unknown.

His shape and appearance were reasonably famous.

Jet black skin and six arms.

Demon King of Immortality, Badigadi.

Living since before the Laplace Campaign, one of the ancient Demon Kings.

His ability is just as the name sounds, "Immortality."

Since he is a part of the Moderate Faction, there are few of those who knew of his combat power.

According to one text, it is said that he fought against that Laplace as well.

If that is true then it would mean not even that Laplace could destroy him.

Why and for what reason would that Demon King appear at the Magic University.

And why or what reason would he knock innocent ordinary students and Beast Race people unconscious.

Various countries, as well as the Magic University would only come to know of that reason a bit later.

---Rudeus Point of View---

Currently, I'm in the training field for Advanced magic used in the Magic University.

I'm in the center of a very spacious schoolyard, unarmed, confronting Badigadi.

Standing rather confidently with my arms crossed, legs spread wide, jaw pointing down, but inside I'm currently fearing for my life.

Shouldn't that be obvious?

Being glared at by a large man with pitch black skin, I don't know how anyone could remain calm.

Certainly, recently I've been thinking, "I wonder if I might actually be a bit strong?"

But, when it comes down to a Demon King, it's not just a matter of them being a bit stronger.

I feel like I've had the nail struck in just when I was getting ahead of myself.

Or rather quite plainly I already want to run away.

I continued to run everyday as training for the sake of this day.

I want to run away as far as my endurance and magic power will take me.

"..."

If I look behind me there are a large number of onlookers lined up.

Men and women and teachers as well.

They're all looking in my direction.

If I were to run away here, gone with the wind, I wonder what they would think about it.

No, I'm already at the point where I don't really care either way, but I can't help but feel like I've lost the timing to run away.

Suddenly a single person appears from the onlookers running over towards me with a quick pace.

He was a man that wore a somewhat suggestive hair accessory that suited him well.

...It seems there are wigs in this world as well.

"I've heard about the situation from Jinas. I'm sorry about this but could you please try to stall for time for a short while. Currently, we're gathering up our combat power."

He briefly left me with those words and returned.

Rather, who was that fellow just now.

I have the feeling I've seen him somewhere...

However, I understood the meaning of his words.

I don't know if Jinas is aware of the situation or what and why this is going on.

However, it seems if I stall for time they'll somehow help me out.

After all at times like these, people with authority are strong.

“Humu, still not ready yet?”

“I think it will just be a bit longer.”

Badigadi was waiting with all of his jet black arms folded.

Currently, I've asked Fitts-senpai to retrieve my, Aqua Hartia Arrogant Water Dragon King.

It seems like he's willing to follow my request and asked to wait until then.

In any case, he's slow.

It's not like there's all that much distance between the library and the dorms.

I don't remember leaving it in a strange place either.

Just as always, I've left it leaning against the side of the bed with a cloth covering the top of it.

I thought it would be quickly discovered.

“Humu, I always thought the human race were impatient and in a hurry, but it doesn't seem like you're in a hurry. As expected of one who has been acknowledged by this one's fiancée.”

“Fiancée?? Umm, Kishirika... sama was it.”

After asking that Badigadi nodded with an, “Humu.”

Great Demon Empress Kishirika Kishirisu.

It's not like I've forgotten.

The one who gave me my Demon Eye.

I never thought she was the real thing at the time, she abruptly appeared and then abruptly left so it was more like I was just dumbfounded.

However, I wonder why that fiancé is appearing now.

It can't be that like the Beast Race, he came to propose marriage.

“I only really talked to Kishirika-sama for a very short time. Although I did receive the demon eye.”

“Kishirika was giving you a high appraisal saying, amazing-amazing. It's been quite a while since I last saw her speaking with so much excitement you know. Even the tolerant I felt a small bit of jealousy.”

Badigadi said that with one of his eyebrows raised, grinning broadly.

Jealousy?

Even though I can't remember a single thing worth being jealous over.

What is it, what did I do to bother him.

Could it be, that time when I was half-joking and requested doing her once?

No, that was just an attempt. [32]

She said it was impossible because she was engaged...

Ah, shit, this guy is the fiancé she was talking about that time.

“I'm just a small fry. Nothing but a pitiful lone young mouse. I... I'm not something so amazing that Demon King-sama should feel jealous of. I'm sure Kishirika-sama was just exaggerating everything a bit as she said it.”

While hiding my internal unrest I gave an exceedingly calm answer.

And then that guy laughed.

He laughed in an extremely strange way. [33]

“Fuhahahahaha, don't be modest. I've heard about that enormous magic power dwelling within your body.”

Enormous magic power.

Even if you tell me that.

I've only recently started to realize that it was overwhelmingly more than others.

However, no matter how you put it, it shouldn't be enough to make a Demon King jealous... Right?

No, but come to think of it, that time, I kind of have the feeling she said something like that.

What was it she said again?

I could only remember it as a laughable memory.

“Umm, it seems that my magic power is only a little bit greater than others.”

“Fuhahahaha! That's right, just a bit!”

Badigadi was laughing for a short while.

However, he suddenly stopped with the loud laughter and then lowered his body to the ground with a thump.

“It would be fine for you to sit.”

I did as I was told and sat as well.

Even while sitting Badigadi was huge.

I guess you could call it, a brawny structure.

I want this kind of muscle as well.

“It seems you don't understand the meaning of being told you were amazing by that Great Demon Empress Kishirika Kishirisu.”

“...Even if you tell me that.”

“There's a guy out there with some amazing magic power. Even more amazing than Laplace. For her to say something like that, you're the first.”

Laplace. The Demon God was it.

Even if you tell me I have magic power more amazing than the Demon God, it doesn't

really come to me.

Certainly I've almost never actually run out of magic power, but it's not like my physical ability is particularly high or anything.

"The Demon God Laplace's aggregate magic power was top class throughout history. In other words, you have the top class aggregate magic power in the world that you can boast of."

"I'm sure you're just joking."

While saying that my chest was dancing a bit.

At any rate, the one saying it was a Demon King.

The other side has actual results.

I have the kind of feeling where if a Pro Player said "actually you have talent."

"This one does not know of the authenticity. Kishirika generally goes with whatever works after all. Unexpectedly, I might have misheard something as well."

While saying that Badigadi made a bitter expression.

I wonder if he has some sort of recollection.

No, but if it's that Demon Empress-sama then I can imagine something like that.

"Certainly, in the past I underwent training in order to increase my magic power, but top class is going too far I'm sure. If they underwent the same training as I did then I'm sure anyone could be number one in the world."

"Humu, normally it's something that never happens."

Normally it would never happen.

Then, I wonder if it's something that's possible if they reincarnate from another world like me.

Or else, did I receive some kind of cheat from the Human God [Hitogami] when I wasn't paying attention.

I'll try asking.

“Come to think of it, Demon King-sama, there's one thing I'd like to try asking you.”

“What is it, feel free to ask anything.”

“That is, the person who I'm about to speak of is absolutely not someone I'm the subordinate or follower or that kind of thing, therefore, I'd like for you not to suddenly attack me.”

“Didn't you say to wait, Demon Kings don't break promises.”

An Indian doesn't lie. [34]

That better be the truth.

Don't attack me. Absolutely don't attack me.

“Have you ever heard of the name Hitogami?”

“.....You, where did you hear of that name?”

“He comes out in my dreams.”

Badigadi unfolded the top pair of arms and stroked his chin.

I wonder if he knows something.

“Humu, I see... In a dream huh.”

“Do you know anything?”

After asking that Badigadi gave it some thought for a short while.

But, he nodded with a “Humu.” and shook his head.

“I see now. No clue! I have the feeling I've heard it somewhere before, but I can't remember! At the very least, it's a name I haven't heard about it in these past several hundred years!”

“I see, thank you very much.”

Speaking of several hundred years, how very vague.

“Humu, if I remember I'll inform you! Fuhahahaha!”

“Please do.”

“What a boring guy you are, you should laugh as well. Fuhahahahaaha!”

Badigadi is a person who laughs so enjoyably.

Since just now, even though nothing particularly interesting has been said, the laughs just haven't stopped.

Suddenly, I remembered the time when I met Ruijerd.

That time as well, through laughing with him we deepened our friendship.

Laughing could be considered a common language in this world.

The other side has come to talk while laughing.

It would be rude to not return the smile.

Alright, I'll laugh.

“Fu... hahahahaha!”

“That's good, that's good, Kishirika said it as well. No matter the time you should just laugh! I remember, the last time Kishirika died as well and was laughing in a loud voice, fuhahahahaahah!”

Badigadi said that and laughed.

His appearance is frightening, but it seems that this man isn't all that bad of a fellow.

“Hn?”

Around the time when I was laughing with Badigadi it seems like the onlookers from behind have suddenly gotten noisy.

After turning around to take a look it seems like someone is rustling around.

After clearing my ears to hear, I was able to catch some of the conversation.

“Let go! If I don't deliver the staff!”

“Stop it! After you deliver that staff the duel will start!”

“What are you going to do if the duel starts without the staff? Will you leave him to die!?”

“Tha... that is.”

“Leave this to myself!”

“Ah... Zanoba-kun!”

“Zanoba Shirone is it! Hey, let go, let me go... owwowowowo!”

Fitts-senpai came flying over the onlookers.

And then with an amazing speed he came running here.

Those are some unreasonably fast legs.

Probably, three times faster than me.

But, he isn't red and doesn't have horns or anything? [35]

“Ha... ha... Sorry, Rude... Rudeus-kun. The teachers got in my way.”

Fitts-senpai was breathing roughly while carrying the staff.

“Se... senpai your legs are fast aren't they.”

“Eh?? Ha... shoes, are a magic item bestowed with magic power after all...”

After hearing that I look at the boots senpai always wears.

Is that so, they were a magic item bestowed with magic power was it.

It could be that the mantle he's always wearing is a magic item as well.

This person, he never takes off the mantle even when it seems hot out after all.

“Could it be those sunglasses as well?”

“Ha... ha... these as well... yea... no... that is, a secret so...”

Fitts-senpai laughed with a bit of an Eh~

I wonder why this person's laughing face is this cute.

I'm feeling my heart pound.

“Fu... Yes, Rudeus-kun, give it your best... but don't overdo it. If you don't think you can win, even if you say sorry and run away, it's an opponent where no one will say

anything. Don't worry about some kind of strange pride, at least your life, right?"

I received the Aqua Hartia Arrogant Water Dragon King from Fitts-senpai.

It's been quite a while since I last seriously fought while holding this guy.

Let's give it our best, partner Charlene.

As a present for the other world I'll tell you.

That after we return we'll get married and have some Pineapple Salad. [36]

I removed the cloth wrapping my Aqua Hartia Arrogant Water Dragon King.

I understood that Fitts-senpai held his breath.

Some feelings of playing a bit of a prank sprouted.

"...Fitts-senpai, look at the magic stone at the end of this, what do you think of this?"

"Am... amazing, big??"

"!"

Somehow, just now a bit, I felt a bit of a shock around the back of my hips.

I wonder what that was.

No, let's stop with the jokes here.

Badigadi was standing up and rotating his shoulders.

I wonder if I've managed to stall for some time.

Wouldn't it be impossible to hold him off with conversation until the military force gathers?

Fitts-senpai reluctantly returned.

It would have been fine for you to stay here and back me up though.

Rather, how about saving me...

"Are you ready?"

"If possible I would prefer to just keep talking while laughing like this."

"Fuhahahahaha! We can do that again later!"

Does that mean he doesn't intend to take my life?

No, he's a person with a kind of vague feeling to him.

He might think I'll be fine since my aggregate magic power is large and just happen to kill me like that.

It might have been better to get a few more words in just now.

That I'd like to go with an exchange that spares my life.

Badigadi stood loosely with his hands at his hips.

It seems he doesn't intend to commence attack.

I wonder if he's waiting for some kind of signal.

For the time being I'll open my foresight eye.

“...Huh?”

I couldn't see anything with my foresight.

In the place where Badigadi was standing, nothing was standing there.

“What are you making a surprised face about...? Oh, I see. You immediately started using the Demon Eye you got from Kishirika. However, that's unfortunate. Demon eyes don't work on me.”

He carelessly said it and Badigadi snorted with a Hmphm.

Seriously.

Demon eyes don't work huh.

As expected of a Demon King.

However, if this is the case then it's bad.

The probability that I won't be able to barely avoid a fatal wound is increasing.

My physical ability isn't all that high.

The chance that I might get hit in a bad place increased.

“Demon King-sama.”

“Badi is fine. I asked you to laugh and those who honestly laugh are permitted to call me by that name.”

“Badi-sama. I'd like to make one suggestion.”

“What is it?”

“Even if I were to lose, somehow please at least leave me my life.”

After saying that, Badigadi broke out into laughter.

“Fuhahahahaha! Pleading for one's life before you even start! What an interesting guy!”

“Life is meant to be treated preciously.”

“Humu, that is true. The human race quickly dies after all! I hear there are many who think as such!”

Badigadi continued to laugh.

“However, even while you possess such a tremendous amount of magic power, it seems you don't have any confidence in your power!”

“Since two years prior a person named something like the Dragon God just had me on the verge of death after all.”

After saying that, Badigadi's laughing voice instantly stopped.

“By Dragon God, you mean Dragon God Orsted? After fighting that guy, you survived?”

“I was on the verge of death. If he hadn't left me alive on some sort of whim, I would be a ghost right now.”

Badigadi's face became serious.

This is bad.

Since Hitogami's name was alright I felt a bit relieved.

It seems Orsted's name was no good either.

“Did you manage to leave even a bit of wound on that Dragon God during the fight?”

“Eh? Yeah, though it was just to the degree of some skin peeling off on the back of the hand.”

“.....”

Badigadi completely sealed his mouth.

A scary face.

Le... let's laugh.

“Then, I'll make one suggestion from my side.”

“Wh... what is it?”

I made a serious face while asking Badigadi.

“Just a single hit.”

“...?”

“Fire off one shot of your ultimate technique at me. That's right, it's fine to use what you used to wound the Dragon God. I will receive that and if you manage to do any damage through my Fighting Spirit it's your win. If there's no damage then it will be my victory, how does that sound?”

Yeah.

It's a suggestion just as I'd wish for it to be.

Splendid.

They're considerably favorable terms.

Moreover, we can end it without me being hit.

I wonder if it's fine.

“But, I wonder if in that case, wouldn't I have too much of an advantage?”

“Advantage? Advantage you say? Humu, that is true isn't it! Then, if in the case your attack does almost nothing, I'll perform a counterattack. Just one attack that is!”

I have the feeling I dug my own grave.

But, I mean what if that single attack goes through my heart?

Let's stop already, I don't want to dig my grave any further than this.
I don't want anymore holes opened up in my chest.

"I understand. Well then, let's go with that."

"Humu."

While saying that I prepared my staff.

I packed as much magic power as I possibly could into my staff.

What I'm producing is a Rock Bullet.

However, I'll make it even harder than the one I used on Orsted.

That time I was barehanded, one handed, and created it in an instant.

This time there's the staff as well.

The power should be several times greater.

Formation.

Refine the magic power, harder, even harder.

The foundation is the same as when creating a figure.

Just, without thinking about its pliability, just make it harder.

Sharpening as much as possible in a spindle shape.

With notches almost like a drill attached.

And then apply a rotation to that.

A high speed rotation as fast as possible.

Nothing but spinning.

Even I don't know exactly how many times it's rotating per second.

All that's left is the firing speed.

Magic power should be worked into here as well.

Set it forth at the fastest speed possible.

There's never been a time where I focused this much magic power into a Rock Bullet. It takes some time to pack the magic power into it, I'm sure it could almost never be used in actual combat.

Even if I were to use it, it would just be overkill on most monsters.

However, if it's a Demon King, then they might be able to endure it.

I'd like to at least leave some damage.

I don't want to be hit.

“Then, here I come.”

“Humu! Come!”

Fire!

I heard a whistling sound.



There was no recoil.

I don't know why but no reactions exist from magic.

However, as natural as it is, an impact occurs.

The Rock Bullet made a loud bang sound as it crashed into the standing Badigadi, his upper body was shattered into very small pieces that went flying, his six arms were disassembled and scattered, even just his lower body was sent flying backwards several tens of meters and then fell over.

2

“.....Eh?”

He's not moving an inch.

I timidly, slowly walked towards where the lower half of his body went.

And then my eyes fell onto his lower body with it's internal organs flooding out.

There was no blood flowing out.

I wonder if it's because he's a Demon King.

I thought he was a guy without tears who could only laugh.

Could it be that he was a guy with neither blood nor tears.

“.....Eh?”

No, it can't be.

Eh?

It's a lie right???

He died?

I didn't understand very well what was going on.

After taking a look behind me, it was silent and still as death.

Everyone was looking over here.

The gazes hurt.

No one was moving, not even a quiver.

Swallowing their saliva.

A loud gulp sound came from my throat.

Di... did I kill him???

No, I mean, it's a lie right.

I mean, No, why.

Even though he was that full of confidence.

Eh?

I mean, he's the Immortal Demon King right.

Eh?

He was full of confidence and said to come at him with just one hit.

Eh, Eh?

Slowly and timidly, I turned around once more.

I was going to confirm what I was guilty of.

“Fuhahahaha! My great resurrection!”

I was close to firing off another Rock Bullet.

There, a half-sized Badigadi was standing.

He was about the same height as me, but the large size of his face hadn't changed.

Therefore I was getting an unbalanced impression.

Putting aside the matter of his size.

“Ah, you survived.”

I felt relieved.

I thought I had become a murderer for a bit there.

That's great, that the opponent wasn't a human.

"Fuhahahahaha, I thought I was going to die! But, humu, I see now, I get it well. Choosing not to fight was the correct answer! If we had fought seriously, all around here would have become a wasteland after all!"

Badigadi was laughing with a Fuhahahaha.

On his side, his six arms were crawling up and combining with Badigadi.

Badigadi's height continued to bulge larger.

But, he didn't return to his previous size.

"Oh, it flew considerably far didn't it!? It seems that it will take a bit of time in order to return to normal!"

It seemed that Badigadi was a bit excited.

"It's your victory, Rudeus! It's fine for you to call yourself Hero!"

"No, I'd rather refrain from that."

"Then at least let out a cry of victory! Fuhahahaha!"

While saying that Badigadi took my right hand.

He grabbed the hand holding my staff and raises it upward.

Almost like a Boxing Champion.

I wonder if it was the decision for a win.

It was a conclusion that I don't really understand.

"Ka??"

However, if he says that it's my win, then it's probably a win.

"I won..... nnn!"

The onlookers were all still stuck in the dead of silence.

I don't really get it but they were all dead silent.

Shortly after confirming that, Badigadi nodded to himself.

"They're really a lot that doesn't go with the flow. Well then, I'll have you let me get one hit in."

Is what he said.

"Eh!!?"

That's different from our promise!

Just as I was thinking that, his fist caught my face.

With just one hit.

Just, when it came to him, he counts three fists as one hit. [37]

In the situation where my arm was being held onto I couldn't even defend.

I was knocked unconscious with three hits.

This damn lying Demon King...

3

After that, it seems Badigadi was taken away somewhere by the middle aged man with the hair accessory from just before, a middle aged ikemen type man in armor, and an old man in a robe.

I guess they're having some kind of talk among important people.

I resurrected from my unconsciousness after Fitts-senpai used healing magic.

After that, I was brought to and warmly welcomed into a staff room by Jinas.

After receiving some tea and cakes I took a single breath.

Jinas didn't talk about it very much.

It seems, that he couldn't really understand the situation all that well either.

A Demon King suddenly came in and knocked out the conscious of some students and outsiders.

Then he challenged me to a duel and after declaring me the winner he hit me and knocked me unconscious.

It's not like you can understand the situation just by knowing that much.

Also, it seems that there were no deaths among the students that were knocked out by the Demon King.

In the first place Badigadi is part of the Moderate Faction, so that means he won't especially go out of his way to kill people.

In regards to his objective, it seems the important people are investigating it from here on.

It seems that the accessory^[38] middle aged man was this school's Principal.

What was his name again? That's right, the Wind King class magician Georg.

I did see him during the time of the entrance ceremony.

The ones taking part in the talks seem to be the leader of the three countries' knight group came to protect this town.

Also, the leader of the Magic Guild.

The four were gathered together and currently talking about various things.

“However, as expected of Rudeus-san. To finish off the Demon King with a single pre-emptive attack! And then to be recognized by the Demon King??! The Principal said that even though you were “The Quagmire” as just a lone adventurer stalling for time would be the best you can do. However, we never could have imagined it would turn out like this! After reaching this age I can't remember ever having gotten so excited over such a scene before!”

Jinas couldn't hide his excitement and was saying something like that.

It seems, they don't know about the contents of what we talked about prior to the duel.

That Badigadi intentionally took on the magic for example or that even if it had been ineffective it would have ended with that.

A short while after being looked at with eyes of respect by Jinas I was released.

For the time being, I was told to be on standby in the dorm until various things are decided.

4

After I left the staff room, Zanoba came running up to me.

“Oh~, Shisho, I was watching. As expected isn't it. No, I guess I should say it's only natural.”

Zanoba was praising me like that but I shook my head.

“He just lent me his chest and I took it.”

Certainly the attack was effective, but the opponent didn't evade or defend.

And then from there, there's that regeneration ability.

If we were to fight seriously, I can't imagine that it would just pass with my win.

“You're being modest. Isn't just landing a hit on a Demon King an amazing thing?”

Zanoba said that while laughing.

Julie looked at me with eyes of even greater fear.

I'm sure even from a distance it looked like a splatter.

I've shown her something frightening.

5

On my way back to the dorm I ran into a considerably glowing Elinalise and Cliff.

“Oh my Rudeus, what was the disturbance about?”

“Umm, what were you guys doing?”

“Exactly what you think we were doing.” [39]

Elinalise was laughing with a “hohoho”, and Cliff went bright red and got angry with a, “Don't say anything unnecessary!”

It seems that the two were opening an adult meeting while the Demon King was invading.

They sure are happy.

“Just now, Badigadi-sama challenged me to a duel and I somehow managed to win.”

“Eh!! That guy has already come here!?”

.....Already?

What the heck do you mean by already?

“Did you know? That he would come?”

“Yes, but he was being restrained by the Ogres, it seemed he wanted to stay there for a little while so I went on ahead myself. Look, those sorts, they're pretty loose with time right? Which is why I thought he wouldn't move for another 10 years or so? In reality, the time when we separated was two years ago after all...”

If you've lived for denominations in the thousands of years, I guess your sense of time would deviate.

In my previous life, even though I passed thirty years, time felt like it passed quite quickly.

The denomination is just a bit large.

“But, he was a good guy right?”

“He didn't seem like a bad person.”

Among the nobles and royalty that I've met he was a top class good person.

He laughs well after all.

He did break his promise, but if you think of the difference between one hit and one strike then that is fine as it is.

“Hey, what are you talking about?”

“Oh my oh my, Cliff you, are you jealous? It's alright, right now, the only one whom my heart can love is just you.”

“No, not that, ah, don't stick so close, Rudeus is watching isn't he?”

“I'm showing him.”

Since they had started flirting, I dispersed from that location.

From behind I heard a loud voice yelling, “There's no way a Demon King would come to a place like this right?”

I thought the same until just a short while ago.

6

Fitts-senpai was waiting at the entrance to the dorm.

After seeing my face he made an indescribable face.

After all, I wonder if he is excited as well.

His cheeks were red and he was tightly holding his hands.

A feeling sort of like he saw something amazing, but the impression isn't coming out.

“Rudeus-kun is am... amazingly strong isn't he!”

An average impression.

That sort of word floated into mind.

“I couldn't have imagined you would do it in a single hit!”

“A single hit, since we had decided on such rules for victory and defeat, I used the strongest magic I could in terms of power.”

“The strongest?... Huh, isn't that the same thing you used during the time of the examination against me right, that amazing one right?”

“Yeah, it's a Rock Bullet. Although I had 'accumulated' a considerable amount into it.”

“Even though it's just intermediate magic, if you master it it'll have that much power!?”

Fitts-senpai raised his voice in admiration with a “Oh~” and started making a Rock Bullet that has a rotation and fired it.

A whistling sound let out and it pierced into the ground far away.

He's quite good to reproduce something he's only seen once or twice.

However, it didn't have as much power as mine.

“I don't really have the intention to master it though.”

“Are you normally using nothing but earth magic?”

“I guess so, at one period it was nothing but water, but at some point it became nothing but earth.”

“After all! Since we're using the same system of magic, that should mean I can get better at it right.”

I wonder if that's the case.

No, I have the feeling I did gradually get better at making the figures.

“...I, guess so. I wonder if you call it precision getting higher”

“However, the consumed magic power will increase as well right!”

“That's right. During the times when I'm making dolls it's considerably difficult.”

Fitts-senpai seemed very happy.

Come to think of it, I haven't had very many opportunities to talk about chantless incantations with Fitts-senpai.

“Also, sorry, I'm sure you're tired. I'm sorry for holding you back. Today you should rest at ease.”

“Ah, yes.”

After saying that Fitts-senpai ran towards the school building.

I wanted to talk for a bit longer, but well it's fine.

It's immediately after that incident after all.

I'm sure he's busy with the student council as well.

I returned to my own room.

I lean my staff against the wall.

Things about the Demon King and what not, today was difficult.

My mental and physical fatigues are both building up, so I lay down on the bed.

I'm somehow tired...

7

After that sort of thing happened, a month has passed by in a flash.

The Magic Triumvirate talked with Badigadi and it seems they decided to treat him as a state guest.

In response, to apologize for the trouble he caused, Badigadi decided to lend an arm^[40] to the Magic Guild for researching immortality.

Furthermore he ended up participating as a temporary martial arts adviser for the combined knight group.

And then...

8

Next homeroom.

The two senpai came out from the dorm.

Since Badigadi put order to all of the Beast Races, it seems they became able to come to class.

“As expected of boss nya, thank you nya. I'll treat you to something next time nya.”

“But, I couldn't have possibly imagined that a Demon King would come nano. We're such devilish women nano. You did well in protecting us. In return you're free to grope the chest, of Rinia that is.”

“Thank you very much.”

Since I received the privilege of groping the chest, without reservation I'll grope them.
Rinia's that is.

“Ginya!”

She scratched my face.

Even though she said it was fine.

Even though she said she would treat me.

That's cruel nya.

It's stingy.

If it's a lady then all of them have them, isn't just a bit fine?

“Shisho is considerably open to women but, however, I've heard one uncertain story.”

“Hey, stop Zanoba, you're not allowed to say anymore than that! Look, that matter!”

“...Oh, that's right isn't it, please excuse me.”

Recently, Cliff's seat has become quite close.

It seems he hears stories about me from Elinalise sometimes.

I don't know what they're talking about, but it seems they are reasonably good rumors.

Somehow, it seems to be talk about sympathy, it may be or may not.

It seems that the reason why I ended up being rejected by Eris has become because of the illness.

Well, it's fine though.

The things about Eris are already fine, I'm over them??!

This past month, Cliff and Elinalise's public flirting gradually decreased.

Even though I say that, it seems they haven't separated yet.

Once in every two or three days Cliff comes in tired.

I'm sure he's being squeezed out.

If she's not allowed to flirt in public, I wonder if they properly talked together.

Rather, I wonder if that isn't a hindrance to their studies.

Well, I'll leave things of the two to themselves.

It's not really a problem that I have any say on.

I'm a bit jealous.

“...Grand master, I don't have enough magic power to make this hard part, please make it.”

Julie is continuing to make dolls everyday with diligence.

Recently we've been teaching her workmanship at the same time.

Although, since that side isn't our main expertise, Zanoba got a dwarf in his year to help out.

We weren't told anything but an outline of information in regards to Demon King Badigadi.

Badigadi said he came this far because he was jealous of me.

In other words, that would mean I have some level of responsibility remaining for the problem I wonder.

No, I want to think that Jinas somehow cleared up things like that.

He's the one who scouted me after all.

And then at that time, the door suddenly opened.

Excluding Silent, all of the Special Students were in attendance.

It's still too early for the teacher to come.

It can't be, Silent is showing their face in home room?

And the instant I thought that.

“Fuhahahahaha!”

The loud laughter was resounding through the classroom.

And then he came into the classroom.

Magnificently, without a care about what others think.
And then he stopped on the platform and looked over us.

“The Immortal Demon King Badigadi has arrived!”

That's a lie right.
He's wearing a uniform!? This guy.

And then he entered the Magic University as an advertisement.
Without specifically planning to learn or research anything, but it seems occasionally observing and offering some tips or concerns.
Although, if it weren't for the tips, it seems that the Demon King's wisdom wouldn't be granted...

In any case, just like this, the Demon King invasion incident of the Ranoa Kingdom ended.

CHAPTER 9

WHITE MASK 1

1

Recently, I've been feared.

By almost all of the students attending the Magic University.

I didn't realize it at first.

I just simply thought I was being avoided.

For example, if some bad looking guys came walking in my direction.

If I said to them, "In order not to trip you should walk rather than run."

However, for some reason after the other side realizes it they disappear somewhere in the hall.

Occasionally there's a guy who suddenly looks out the window and says, "The weather outside sure is good today."

Even though it's raining.

I thought "I'm lucky for them to not pick fights".

I couldn't have possibly imagined that the other side thought that as well...

The first time I gained self-awareness of it was when I was returning from Detoxification magic class.

Recently, I've been taking Intermediate Detoxification magic classes where many fourth years are learning.

For the time being, let's put that matter aside.

After the class ended and I went into the hall and spotted Goriade.

Goriade.

That's right, it's the muscle bound female who blamed me and made false charges of

stealing panties on my first day.

Since her body is huge she stands out.

It seems simultaneously the other side saw me and our eyes met.

For the time being, I tried to start up a conversation, since the other side is a senpai.

It would be rude if I don't say at least one word of greeting.

While thinking that, I approached her, thinking about apologizing again for the events on the first day of school.

And then she was surprised and her body started to tremble while avoiding eye contact.

With that large shoulder length being squeezed in, her toes were pointing inwards while cowering.

“Goriade-senpai. It's about the events on my first day of school.”

After I brought that up, she stiffened up and started to shake.

And then with a fragile voice said it.

“Th... that time, was umm, I'm sorry... very much, please forgive me??”

It was a clearly different attitude from how she was on the first day.

I was bewildered as well.

It almost looks like I'm extorting her or something.

“Ummm? No, that is, the one that should be apologizing is me. Since I wasn't aware of the dorm rules, umm, that sort of thing happened...”

While I was going on, incoherently onlookers started to gather.

2

“Hey, look. It's Rudeus.”

“The events from the first day, he was still bothered over that...”

“Goriade-san, how pitiful...”

“Even though he was the one who broke the rules, what a guy...”

“Idiot... What will you do if he hears that.”

3

From the surrounding voices I started to hear pity and criticism.

Tears started to appear in Goriade's eyes.

I felt like tears were about to appear in my own eyes as well.

Strange. What's with this?

The gazes hurt.

“Nya? What's this, what's this, a fight?”

“How vigorous even though it's noon nano.”

Just at that time, Rinia and Pursena happened to pass by.

According to a story I heard afterwards, it seems the two were in the same year as Goriade.

After seeing my appearance and Goriade with tears in her eyes.

And then it seems like they came to some kind of understanding and nodded to themselves.

Then, while making some smug faces they interrupted.

“Boss, let her off with something like that nya. I'm sure Goriade meant no harm nya. I'd like for you to let us save face here as the same Beast Race nya.”

“Look, let's hurry and go. Learn a lesson from this and never again do anything that bothers Boss nano. You have good luck nano. If the No.2 like me hadn't been passing by, you'd have been torn limb from limb nano.”

“Ah, wa, yes??!”

Goriade made a face as if she had just been saved and lowered her head to the two, and then quickly left the place while trying to make that wide back look small.

“Look, you all scatter as well nya! This isn't an exhibition nya!”

After hearing Rinia's words the onlookers all scattered like the clouds.

I took a breath in relief as well.

“Pursena what was that just now nya?”

“What do you mean by just now nano?”

“The No.2 is me nya.”

“Recently the boss's underlings have increased, the idiotic Rinia doesn't fit the job nano.”

“Pursena's grades are the same nya.”

I thought about asking about the situation, and was about to turn around and the two had started a well practiced comedy act. [41]

“Look, you two don't just get into a fight on your own, it's fine if there's two No.2.”

“Boss doesn't get it nya. It's no good if you don't properly decide the order of the organization nya.”

“That's right, it's something important nano.”

Humu. It seems that hierarchy is an important matter to the Beast Race.

But, in the first place I have no intention of standing at the top of an organization.

I don't care who is No.2.

Putting that aside.

For the time being, I thanked the two.

I decided to give them some kind of present next time.

I'm sure a fish or something would be fine.

“However, to touch upon the Boss's imperial wrath, Goriade is an idiot as well nya. Nyat did she do?”

“No, she mistook me for an underwear thief on the first day of school...”

“Ah!! It's that! So the underwear thief was boss nya!”

“...Fakku nano.”

They started sending me looks of scorn.

Let me talk to the end.

It's a false charge. False charge.

Should I give you despair and humiliation as a present again?

“Come to think of it, previously Goriade was boasting about it. That Fitts covered for a cowardly first year boy. The one cowering was that guy. How laughable nano.”

“To let an opponent who was making a fool of him off the hook, Boss sure is lenient nya... However, if you don't properly discipline them, next time I'll do it properly nya.”

Do it properly huh.

Didn't you guys stop being delinquents and turn into honor students?

“Please stop that. What are you going to do by unnecessarily increasing my enemies?”

“Ha, boss doesn't aim high enough nya. If you were to team up with us right now, you would be able to defeat Ariel and rule over the dorms.”

“That's right, since boss can win against Fitts he can be the top of the school nano.”

Somehow it seems like all the Beast Race guys are obsessed with standing at the top.

They might seriously be patients suffering from “New Leader Illness”.

“Rule over the dorm and become the top of the school, then what are you telling me to do?”

I couldn't care less about the top.

I fundamentally always go with a principle that doesn't get into fights.

In order to stand above people, in other words means to buy into the possibility of resentment.

In this world your heart can suddenly be penetrated while just walking down the road. Therefore, if you treat all of your opponents as above yourself it's about just right.

"After becoming the top of the school nya? I guess so nya?? For starters how about forcing all of the girls in the dorm to strip off their panties?"

"That sounds good nano. Since boss likes panties enough to decorate his shelves with them, I'm sure it'll make him happy."

"It won't... make me happy?"

I do like panties but.

It... It's not like I want to decorate with them just because I like them.

Getting them from a girl whose face I don't know... wouldn't make me happy?

For example, even if I got them from Goriade-san whose face I do know they wouldn't make me happy.

However, there are occasionally cute girls.

Even if they aren't to my taste...

For example, I might be a bit happy if it were from Rinia or Pursena.

These guys smell a bit of beast, but even with everything they're considerably beautiful girls.

I'm sure their blankets smell like a girl's.

No, but though you know.

Right, that's right. It's Fitts-senpai.

I'm sure Fitts-senpai hates that kind of conduct.

That's why it's no good.

Yeah.

Alright.

I won't be deceived.

Be gone, oh Mara.

That was almost a dangerous situation for you, female students who I have yet to see. If I wasn't being afflicted by this illness it could have been a dangerous situation.

"I have no interest in the panties of the masses, if you're going to do it you two can do it yourselves. Although if you're going to cause trouble for Fitts-senpai, then I will become your enemy."

"Ugu... We... well, if boss says to behave ourselves nya, then we'll obey that nya."

"...That's right, we'll do as you say nano."

And.

After that sort of event happened.

I finally became aware of it.

It seems that somehow I'm being feared.

Even after I became aware of it I didn't ask, "Why?"

I defeated the number one in real ability, Fitts.

Forced all of the problem Special Students to obey.

And then, defeated the Demon King who brought terror upon the school in a single hit.

The last one was especially effective.

That is... I'm sure they would be afraid.

It's a story I heard from Badigadi but...

It seems that in order to leave a wound on his jet black body clad in Fighting Spirit you would need to use techniques at the level of Sword God style King class or else it wouldn't work.

King class.

In other words, only after reaching Ruijerd and Ghyslaine's level will they finally be able to fight against him.

And then since he fights while entrusting it to his flesh, it seems that most opponents' attacks that Badigadi receives do almost no damage but...

Putting that aside.

If I'm to believe that story then it would mean my Rock Bullet is already over King class in power.

In the time I wasn't aware, my Rock Bullet has really grown to have quite the high firepower.

Although, it's just power.

According to Badigadi I'm not wearing Fighting Spirit.

Fighting Spirit after all seems to be something that all of the swordsmen in the world casually wear.

However, no matter how much I train, my flesh will never become as strong or fast as Ruijerd or Eris.

My muscles will grow, but just that.

In the end, the only thing I'm strong with is attack power.

Thanks to the demon eye and other stuff, I can win against opponents around here.

My aggregate magic power is on the level of Laplace (it seems).

However, my flesh is normal.

Although there's no way for the normal students to understand that.

They probably think since my attack power is King class then, my body should have an equivalent level of strength.

An existence beyond a Demon King.

If I was in the same position as the average student, I don't think I would want to get involved.

“Boss should have more confidence in himself nya. I'm sure if you have more confidence it will resolve 'that' as well nya!”

“That's right, but after you resolve it I'd like for you to only attack Rinia nano.”

Those were Rinia and Pursena's words.

Confidence, huh.

I wonder if my son's seclusion is related to my lack of self-confidence.

After hearing it, I kind of have that sort of feeling.

Defeated by Orsted, rejected by Eris and falling into despair unable to show my power.

If I were to get back my self-confidence, it might possibly stand up.

Certainly, now might be the ideal chance to regain my self-confidence.

The students are afraid of me.

After giving it a try and walking around leading Rinia and Pursena, the sea of students split.

I never stood in such a position in my previous life.

It's fresh.

I guess you could say it's a position where you're walking shoulders with the wind.

Almost like a Director-sensei doing hospital rounds. [42]

Or maybe Moses.

It's truly a good feeling.

Move, don't stand in my hallway...

And just as I was getting full of myself.

I suddenly thought.

Could it be.

That the guys who bullied me in my previous life felt this sort of feeling while getting full of themselves.

.....

...

I remembered a bit of something bad...

Let's go without getting too full of ourselves.

I won't return to being a NEET.

4

One day among such days.

I was doing the same as always, investigating things in the library.

The more I try to investigate, the number of common points between the teleport and summoning increase.

Calling out to and sending off.

The differences between these are limited to just the shape of the magic circle and the light given off.

All factors of them resemble each other.

It seems like there's a necessity to study summoning in depth.

Is what I was thinking, but there are no teachers that specialize in summoning in this school.

It seems there are some people who use them in the Magic Guild, but at best it's elementary or intermediate class.

It's only to the degree of summoning useless familiars or spirits with almost no ego.

There's no way I could hear about expert related knowledge.

It seems there are people can use up to the Advanced class of Enchantment type Summoning, but Enchantment and Summoning are considerably different, even if I ask about teleportation, I doubt they'll have an answer.

It seems like Jinas was bragging about the teachers in this school, but it was just talk.

Even though I say that, in such a world I guess it's something that can't be helped.

After giving it some thought, I've never even seen something like Summoning magic in my adventurer days.

Summoning magicians are without a doubt among the fewest in number.

Or maybe they're like Barriers and Exorcism, the techniques are monopolized by certain countries.

However, somehow I, it seems like I have the feeling I know someone who is knowledgeable about Summoning techniques.

Where did I hear about them again?

If I could encounter them I think I could remember though.

Well, the fact that I can't remember means I haven't met with them.

Well then, I've more or less finished all of the literature in regards to Summoning in the library.

Anymore than this, there's probably no option other than learning it on my own.

Therefore, I'm feeling at a bit of a deadlock.

During such a time, Fitts-senpai managed to find something out.

“Rudeus-kun. I've finally found it. There was a person who was an expert in the field of Summoning magic in this school!”

“Oh!”

“After I asked Vice Principal Jinas and Principal Georg, who do you think it was?”

Fitts-senpai seemed to come up with a prank, he came asking with a grin.

There's one in the school.

For starters, it shouldn't be a teacher.

Among the students there were some who were trying to learn Summoning, but anything above Advanced or Saint class came up with nothing.

I wonder where in the world they are...

“...In the Magic Guild side?”

If it's the Magic Guild, then I'm sure there are people who use Summoning techniques as their main.

Such a researcher might be using this school as a headquarters as they continue their research.

“Hmm, well, they are someone who is known to be A rank among the Magic Guild.”

“Oh.”

According to my investigations, A rank among the Magic Guild is Subdivision Head Class.

That would mean S rank is executive class.

Certainly, Principal Georg is S and Vice Principal Jinas is B.

“Wasn't A rank the same rank as a Subdivision Head of the Magic guild?”

“Yeah. It's surprising isn't it.”

I have the feeling I heard that even B rank would be given capital support and the know-how for making things at the Magic School.

“Then, who is it?”

“Rudeus it's a name you should have heard at least once as well.”

It's a name I've heard...

Well then, I don't think there any A rank with the Magic Guild among my acquaintances.

However, the name Fitts-senpai mentioned was a name I had heard a number of times.

“It's Special Student Silent.”

5

Special Student. Silent.

The number of achievements they've left behind for this school is immeasurable.

First, they improved the menu of the cafeteria.

They established a transportation route to get ingredients from Asura Kingdom. It became where you can even eat food made of ingredients that won't be found in the Northern regions.

Also, following their own recipe, they made something similar to Kerry^[43] Soup.

After placing carrots, potatoes, and onions in a pot you use a mix of ten types of spices to spice it.

Then you use bread to eat the thick tan soup from the pan.

In other words, it's curry.

It's quite different to the taste that my tongue remembers, but the recipe is extremely similar to curry.

The one who came up with the idea for uniforms was Silent as well.

They worked in Asura Kingdom as a designer and still owns a workshop, there the outfits were created.

By creating a uniform, they managed to clean up the mixed image of the various races.

In other words they succeeded at improving the image of the entire school.

And then, the one who suggested the idea of black boards was Silent as well.

It's a board colored with black paint and then chalk is made using lime for writing letters.

It's just something of that level, but they've become popular for making the lessons smoothly advance forward.

I'm sure there are quite a few others if we search.

It seems Silent really suggested a large number of trivial things.

In recognition for those achievements, the Magic Guild granted them A rank in the guild.

Now. About the things they've made.

All of them are things I have recollection of.

Things that I know, that the inhabitants of this world don't know.

No matter how dense I am, I somehow understand.

I can imagine what kind of existence Silent is.

But, at that time I wasn't ready to allow such words to pass my lips.

I wonder why.

I don't know.

I might have wanted to see myself as a special sort of existence.

I might have wanted to think about myself as a special existence in this world.

The only existence that holds memories of a different world.

However, after giving it some thought, there's no way it would just be me.

Speaking frankly, I'm afraid of the existence of Silent.

I thought that if possible I don't want to make contact.

Under the same conditions, I thought I don't want to meet someone else doing better than me.

On top of that if that person were to say, "What have you been playing around doing when you were born in this blessed of an environment?" something like that, I would feel like running away.

However, since I heard the name from Fitts-senpai, I decided on the spot to meet with Silent.

I might have been getting full of myself.

That's right.

Around this time I was getting full of myself.

Making a miko into a disciple and being called shisho,

Winning over the number one delinquents in the school and being called boss,

Receiving eyes of compassion from the number one genius in the school,

Winning over a Demon King from Magic Continent and being called a friend,

Being feared by all the students.

I was getting full of myself.

Of course, I swore somewhere in my heart that I wouldn't get full of myself.

However, after all with each and every thing at some point I ended up becoming arrogant.

If I'm this well made, then there's no way anyone could look down on me from above.

I might have thought as such subconsciously.

6

I heard the location from Vice Principal Jinas.

The third floor of the research building.

I see. [44]

Silent is borrowing three rooms there.

Those three rooms were remodeled into a single research room and they almost never come out from living in there.

I went to that research room to pay a visit alone.

I don't know the reason.

In reality, I probably should have gone together with Fitts-senpai.

However, I had the feeling that it wouldn't be good if I don't go alone.

I took a deep breath in front of the door.

I made my resolve.

Even if Silent was the same "Reincarnated individual" as me.

I will absolutely not flinch.

I lightly knocked.

"...Come in."

Then a short and somewhat irritated sounding voice responded.

I put my hand on the door and slowly pushed it open.

Inside the research room there was a large amount of books and paper scattered about, in each place there were magic tools which I don't know what they were used for scattered around, and then a large amount of magic crystals and magic stones were piling into a mountain.

The person sitting deep in the room.

I was lost for words the moment they turned around.

“Oh my, we meet again.”

That guy had black hair.

That guy was a girl.

And then something I couldn't forget.

I absolutely won't forget.

That blank white mask was attached.

“Gyaaaaa????!”



I screamed and made a run for it.

It's that white mask young girl.

The one that was with Orsted.

I can't remember their name.

That's right, Orsted, it's Orsted.

I had the resolve to meet with a reincarnated individual.

But, I hadn't made the resolve to meet with Orsted.

The terror from the time I was about to die vividly came back to me.

That instant, almost all of the fear I felt at that time was brought back to life the moment I saw that white mask.

The suffering from the time when my lung was crushed.

The powerlessness of having everything I tried made pointless.

The pain from the time something went through my heart.

And then the fear from the time when death was before my eyes.

Everything came back to me so I ran.

Ran and ran and ran.

I don't know where I'm running.

After looking behind me.

Of all things I'm being chased after.

The white mask is chasing after me.

I run even more.

While falling down, while scraping myself, I continue to run away with my unreliable legs almost like a drunkard.

Even though I thought I had trained my legs just for the sake of running away at times like this

My legs won't listen to what I tell them.

Even though they didn't tremble during the time I confronted the Demon King.

“?? !!”

Suddenly I saw Fitts-senpai's figure at the bottom of the stairs.

If it's him, if it's him then he'll save me.

After thinking that, my tension loosened a bit.

“Fu... to suddenly scream when you see a person's face and then run away, isn't that rude?”

I felt something tap on my shoulder.

After turning around that guy was there.

My body went into convulsions of shock and fear, in the next instant, my foot slipped and I fell down the stairs, falling unconscious in an unsightly way.

7

I woke up to the sensation of someone caressing my head.

It was a gentle hand.

I felt something flowing out from that hand, almost as if it was reducing the bad parts of my blood circulation.

There was that sort of sensation.

After moving my gaze to look at the owner of the hand, Fitts-senpai was there.

The one rubbing my head was Fitts-senpai.

Fitts-senpai's hand was warm.

And then it was slender and delicate to the point where you wouldn't think he's a man.

Without thinking I grabbed that hand.

“Ah, Rudeus-kun, you're awake? I was worried, you suddenly came tumbling down from above.”

“...I saw a terrible dream. It was a dream where I was about to be killed by a woman wearing a white mask.”

“Umm...”

Fitts-senpai made a troubled face.

What is it?

In the first place, where is this?

It's not my room in the dorm.

In the first place, it's not the dorm.

But I've seen it before...

Behind Fitts-senpai beds were lined up.

That's right, this is the medical affairs room.

While lifting up my body I circled my neck.

There's no one in the medical office.

It's just Fitts-senpai and I.

No, there's the healer that is stationed here as well.

After turning my head around even further...

“Uooh??!!”

On the opposite side of the bed.

I looked at the person sitting there.

It was a woman wearing a white mask.

Unintentionally, I fell off the bed.

And then that guy let out a sigh and glared at me.

“How rude!? Why are you that afraid? Didn't I save you last time? Ah, you must not remember since you were dead.”

Since I was dead last time.

After all. There's no mistake this guy is the one from that time.

The one standing beside Orsted.

“O... Ors... Orsted is!?”

“He's not here. He's a busy person.”

The masked woman said it without care.

He's not here.

Orsted is not here.

Really?

No, I can't help it even if it's a lie.

I see, he's not here huh.

“Don't worry. He won't target you for a bit longer.”

“A bit longer, meaning if he has time again he might come to kill me?”

“I don't think he has such plans though... But, there is that sort of possibility. It depends on you.”

It doesn't seem like it will happen anytime soon.

The instant I understood that, I felt blatantly relieved.

I sure am a selfish guy. [45]

After seeing my state Fitts-senpai was scratching the back of his ear and asked the masked woman.

“Umm, I can't understand the conversation, but is it okay for me to ask for an explanation? For starters, what kind of relation do you have with Rudeus-kun?”

“We have no relation.”

The masked woman flatly responded to Fitts-senpai like that.

I understood that Fitts-senpai was openly displeased.

“But, it's the first time I've seen Rudeus-kun in this much of a panic. Didn't you do something?”

Fitts-senpai's tone of voice when saying that was strong.

He must be trying to protect this failure of a kohai.

Thank you, thank you.

“The last time we met, he was severely beaten by the Dragon God, so he's probably remembering that.”

“Dragon God!? Of the Seven Great World Powers?”

“That's right.”

“You are the Dragon God?”

“How could that be, before I just traveled together with him.”

The masked woman declared that in a tone like she didn't care less while shouldering her hair.

I just realized it, but what she was wearing was this school's uniform.

“In any case, I didn't think we would be reunited here.”

The gaze coming from beneath the mask was strong.

“However, I guess since we triggered the flag by meeting at 'Red Dragon's Lower Jaw', we would be reunited at this school. It must be that sort of fated route.” [46]

She took out a single piece of paper from her chest pocket.

“I have three things to ask you. Answer honestly.”

That tone was one of a Yes or No.

I swallowed and nodded.

“First. Do you have any recollection of this?”

After receiving the paper she handed over.

There was,

“Shinohara Akihito

Kuroki Seiji”

Is how it was written.

In... Japanese.

I quickly realized it was a person's name.

And simultaneously.

The feelings of “after all” sprouted.

She is after all.

“Second, do you understand these words? Third, which are you?”

This question was in Japanese as well.

After coming this far it's settled.

She's the same sort of existence as I.

However, I thought about it.

This paper.

This name.

.....I have no recollection at all.

However, I was a bit perplexed, but I had the resolve.

I slowly responded.

In Japanese.

“Neither. I don't know this name.”

“I see, you understand the words right.”

“Eh? What language? Rudeus-kun?”

Fitts-senpai peeked at the paper and said in a hurried voice.

“It's nothing, we were just from the same home town.”

“Home town? There's no way that can be the case!”

Fitts-senpai denied it.

I don't know what he was denying though...

Right now rather than that.

“Then, you are the same as well?”

I asked timidly.

She nodded.

“That's right, by the time I realized it I was suddenly thrown into this world as well.”

While saying that, she removed her white mask.

In that instant, my memory completely was hooked.

A memory of my previous life.

My last moments.

The pair that were having a fight.

One of those people.

The girl.

There was a girl with the exact same face as that.

Simultaneously, doubts started to rise to the surface.

The exact same face.

Even though 15 years have passed since then, there is the girl with the same exact face from that time.

And then, just a bit, I felt something was off.

Strange.

Why even though 15 years have passed... does she still have the same face?

No, in the first place, *why* does she have the same face?

If she was reincarnated, it would only be natural for her face to be different.

My doubts.

The answer to those were soon after put into words by her.

“It's the so called 'trip'^[47]. I tripped into this worthless world.”

Trip.

This implication is a bit different from reincarnation.

I was the so called reincarnated individual.

My body is different. I was born into this world with just my memories.

Trip is different.

Trip is the so called Warp.

Age and body remain the same when they come to this world.

She is... different from me?

“My name is Nanahoshi Shizuka^[48]. A Japanese. I've been calling myself by the false name Silent Seven Star recently.”

Doubts and confusion.

The inside of my head was becoming a mess.

In regards to the me who wasn't saying anything, she asked even more.

“In any case you, where were you born? America? Or somewhere in Europe. You're

Caucasian right? But you understand Japanese. Could it be you're a half? A foreigner living in Japan for example."

It wasn't just three, that wasn't what I was doubting.

I didn't respond.

I didn't respond, but she continued the conversation.

"In any case, with this one step, I can make some progress in the situation. After all it was the correct answer to have him leave you alive. Since the point where Orsted said he didn't know you I somehow had the feeling it was like that..."

Nanahoshi just kept talking somewhat in excitement.

Without minding my confusion.

"I look forward to working with you from here on, umm, tell me your name?"

"Ru... Rudeus. Rudeus Greyrat."

"That's your false name from here right? What's your real name?"

I didn't want to speak of my real name from my previous life.

For that sake I kept silent.

And then, Nanahoshi seemed like she understood and nodded.

"Ah, I get it. You're being cautious. I understand that. Those feelings. That sort of thing happened after all. However, don't worry. I'm an ally."

"..."

"In any case, to think there were other people that came here other than me... This is the first time I've met an 'Earthling' since I came to this world. It's somehow refreshing."

Nanahoshi took hold of my hand.

Fitts-senpai's brow dropped.

And then Nanahoshi said it.

In a happy tone.

“For the sake of returning to our previous world, let's work together.”

For the sake of returning to our previous world.

Such words put my thoughts that were in a mess into order in an instant.

The words that came out were just one line.

It's “No.”

I quickly shook off my hand and said it.

“I don't want to return to my previous world.”

“Eh???”

Nanahoshi was lost for words.

“Rudeus you and Silent as well?? Talk in words I can understand??”

And then there's Fitts-senpai that doesn't understand Japanese.

In the medical office there was somehow a delicate atmosphere floating around.

CHAPTER 10

WHITE MASK 2

1

Nanahoshi Shizuka.

If it were to be written in Kanji then it's Seven Stars Quiet Fragrance.

She experienced a trip.

A trip is in other words, a teleported individual.

If I who died and then was reborn in this world as a baby am considered a reincarnated individual, then she would be, that's right something like a person wandering astray, that kind of feeling.

After piecing that together, I decided to be open about the fact that I was a reincarnated person.

I am a reincarnated person and not someone who tripped.

I just stated my cause of death as an accidental death.

However, in regards to the circumstances, I kept them hidden.

My appearance in my previous life was a terrible thing.

If she were to remember I'm sure she would look at me with eyes of prejudice.

Since the way people appear is an important thing after all.

Well, it's also a possibility that it was my fault Nanahoshi tripped.

I'd rather not have that pointed out as well.

2

I listened to Nanahoshi's story.

In nostalgic Japanese.

Since our relationship is still one of not knowing each other, Fitts-senpai was with us as well.

However, the language we were having the conversation in was Japanese.

I think that Fitts-senpai spent the time rather bored.

I'm really sorry about it.

Soon after we started talking she declared this.

"I have no interest in this world. I have no intention of using my knowledge from our previous world to bring prosperity like some worthless manga or light novel. Just for my own sake. I intend to put all of my effort for the sake of getting myself back to the previous world."

That sort of thinking was completely in contrast with my way of thinking to go on living in this world.

After hearing her say worthless, worthless over and over as expected even I would be a bit annoyed over it.

However, it's not as if I don't understand.

I'm sure she couldn't, "become familiar".

Since she has no place to belong, she has no interest. It's not as if I can't understand the feelings of wanting to cut ties with what's worthless.

Therefore, in regards to that matter, I have no intention of correcting her on her way of thinking.

However, Nanahoshi was being cautious of me.

I'm sure my uncooperative conduct at the start was a bit bad.

Most likely she's keeping secret the things that she feels.

Naturally I'm sure.

What are you going to do by completely trusting in an opponent who you don't know if they are an enemy or an ally?

Even I'm being cautious of Nanahoshi.

Even though I say that, I think I might have made a bit of a mistake.

If there I hadn't run away after seeing her face and afterwards said, "I'm planning to remain in this world, but I'll help in searching for a method to return." then I'm sure she would have slackened her guard a bit.

Well, there's no point in talking about something that's already past.

3

It seems by the time Nanahoshi realized it she was in Asura Kingdom.

In a grassland with nothing around, it seems she only understood it was Asura Kingdom sometime after.

Without anything, no one was in her surroundings, just around the time she was troubled not knowing what she should do, Orsted appeared and it seems he sheltered her.

"Why Orsted?"

"...Who knows, just, it doesn't seem like he was the one who summoned me."

It seems she studied a number of things in regards to this world in Asura Kingdom.

Starting with language, the existence of magic, currency, customs for living, etc...

In that regard, she was the same as me.

Amazing as it is, she seems to have mastered the human language in roughly a year.

Since Orsted holds the curse that makes him hated, I'm sure there was a necessary urgency for her to learn it.

If they're spurred on by necessity, anyone can learn things pretty fast.

Another year later, she passed time in Asura Kingdom.

During that time, it seems she made various techniques for cooking, clothing, and instruction while earning money.

Making use of those concessions, she created a structure that earns her an income.

The fact that she had the backing of the Seven Great World Powers, the Dragon God,

became something widely known and she made use of that credibility and her own confidence in speech to establish trade routes.

It seems she currently already has enough assets to play around for the rest of her life. That's pretty amazing.

She learned her language and even created a good foundation with money.

And all of that was nothing more than a stepping stone in order to return to our previous world.

Being dragged around by Orsted, she collected various information for the sake of returning to the previous world, and then she thought that two of her acquaintances may have tripped to this world as well, so she spent around one year traveling the world.

It seems that Orsted has many enemies so he ended up fighting here and there.

Orsted is strong, so most of his opponents are defeated in a single attack.

My fight was one of those, but since only I was somehow in a different situation, it seems she advised that I be left alive.

In regards to that, I honestly said words of thanks to her.

Putting aside the cause or process, if it hadn't been for the words Nanahoshi said I would have been dead after all.

"In any case, why is Orsted-san in a dispute with the Human God [Hitogami]? Since it was all so sudden I was surprised."

"I don't know the details either. But, he did say he held a grudge against him. Also, if he leaves alone the apostles of the Human God, then they usually become powerful, so he usually finishes them off early on."

I'd prefer if he didn't suddenly attack me over a personal grudge.

Also, I'm not an apostle of the Human God.

Recently I've been doing whatever he says, but I only ever meet him once per year or so.

It's not like our relationship is so intimate that I'd be called an apostle.

In any case, she traveled around the world and there she met a variety of people. Orsted is someone who is hated, but the Dragon God name has value to it and can be used, with just a single letter written by him, it seems renowned magicians, knight leaders, and such will want to meet you.

“You traveled throughout the world in one year...?”

I got caught on that part.

It took me two or three years to go around the world once.

“Yeah, using a certain special method.”

“What kind of method is that?”

“That's right, if I were to put it in simple terms, it would be something like a warp device.”

Door of Trip huh. [49]

“I believe they were called, 'Teleport^[50] Magic Circles' in this world. Do you know?”

“I've heard of just the name.”

When was it that I heard about it?

If I remember, it was during the time I was coming back from Magic Continent.

I heard about it from Ruijerd. How nostalgic.

“I had heard that Teleport Magic Circles already don't exist anymore?”

“It seems there are still ruins remaining, created during the time of the Human-Demon war.”

“Oh~, ruins. Where are they?”

“I've been forbidden from saying that so I can't tell you. Since they seem to be a taboo in this world, so I shouldn't really tell anyone.”

“...I see.”

“Although, since I was just following along as we went around, I don't really remember

as well."

It seems that is the case.

Even though she went all around the world, it was just walking from one teleport magic circle to the next teleport magic circle.

The fact that she doesn't remember may not be a lie.

If you were to be lead around warping all over the place without a map, there's no way to know your precise location.

If possible, I'd like to know about something as convenient as that for once.

Since I never know when or what might happen next time.

Turning back our conversation.

Nanahoshi was unable to meet the people she was searching for.

However, she met a variety of people.

Among those, a certain individual said something like this.

[Haven't you been summoned to this world by someone's hands?]

"Who was the person that said that?"

"I can't say. I was told not to tell anyone that we met."

"Why?"

"If they were to know that I was an acquaintance of his, then some troublesome guys would come visit. If you don't want to be involved in something troublesome then keep my name hidden.' is how he said it."

That person can't say his name.

However, it seems that person is a world authority on Summoning techniques.

But it seems even among what that person knows, there's nothing about techniques that can summon a person from another world.

In the first place, putting aside summoning from another world, you can't summon people in general.

Anyhow, she started to investigate into summoning magic and made the Magic

University into her base.

After contributing a large amount of the money she saved up, she bought B rank from the Magic Guild and the status enough to become a Special Student.

Furthermore, making use of her connections with Asura Kingdom she introduced school uniforms and such.

Along with a review over the Education System, and remodeling the tools used for education.

In a flash she rose up to A rank with the magic guild.

Furthermore if she would have provided all of the knowledge she has there was talk about reaching S rank status supposedly.

However, she declined that.

“I'll say it once more, but I haven't even once thought that I wanted to get along well or become a powerful person in this world.”

Therefore, she only makes things that she feels are necessary for herself, and doesn't offer them out.

She declared that.

I was a bit discontent with that.

Making the world into a more convenient place isn't a bad thing is it?

After feeling that sort of atmosphere from me.

Nanahoshi sighed and took a breath then said this.

“You know, we're a foreign body to this world. If you do anything that changes history too much, you might be eliminated from the world.”

“Eliminated from the world? What is that?”

“Haven't you read any SF? In other words, it's a power that attempts to return the world to its natural state.”

A power that attempts to return history to its original nature.

Come to think of it, I think I read a manga sort of like that in the past.

Was it the Principle of Causality? ^[51]

“...Such a thing, does it really exist?”

“I don't know, but I think it's better to proceed with caution.”

She said it like that.

Those sorts of things, I think they're more for people who time slip into the past and not really related to us who end up as people in another world though...

...Well it's fine.

Everyone is free to act as they please.

After creating an environment where no one would interfere, she started to research Summoning.

The reason why she made a false name is because guys who know of the name Nanahoshi might come around for a visit supposedly.

In any case, Silent. Seven Star.

I think it would have been fine for her to twist it a bit more...

Ah, she might have wanted to leave it so the remaining two would understand if they hear it I guess...

Rather, are there really two others?

I haven't really heard of any names other than Nanahoshi though...

4

Research into Summoning magic.

For that there was a necessity to learn the foundations of magic circles.

The Summoning magic in this world fundamentally makes use of magic circles.

If we were to describe it like this, Attack and Healing magic use kinetic energy from magic power channeling it using incantations, and then Summoning and Barriers would make use of static magic power channeling it using magic circles.

After reading the literature she seems to have understood what kind of thing a magic circle is.

Without asking a teacher, by just reading books and past records, it seems she learned the knowledge on her own.

“The way of thinking of the people in this world is coagulating. They seem to think there's nothing they can do about some things that are above themselves, but since I'm doing something that no one else has tried until now, it's something that I can't be taught about.”

Even if you say something like that, what about me who was nothing but taught by people?

Well, up until now I've never tried to do anything that no one else has done, so it's fine though.

“Besides, we don't have any magic power right? Therefore, even if we were to speak about the prerequisite of magic power it would just trouble us right.”

“...Eh?”

A weird voice came out even for me.

What.

There's no magic power?

“What's wrong? Did I say something strange?”

“I have magic power. I can use magic after all. Just the other day I was even told I have top class magic power in the world.”

After I said that she held onto her mask.

I couldn't tell her expression because of the mask, but I could perceive her movements.

“...I see, since you're reincarnated, I wonder if it's different. My aggregate magic power is... zero it seems.”

Aggregate amount of magic power zero.

That would mean she can't use any magic at all.

“Incidentally, it seems that all things in this world possess magic power. Even the corpses lying around over there. Since I came from a world without magic, I thought that would be natural though...”

Even the corpses lying around have magic power.

Is that how it is? It's the first time I've heard that.

However, if that's how it is then having absolutely no magic power should be considerably severe.

"Also, that's right, this might not apply to you as well."

After saying that she removed the mask.

It's the nostalgic face of a Japanese person.

A beautiful girl, not quite going that far, but a bit above average.

Though after giving it some thought, since I came to this world, I've really seen a lot of beautiful faces.

Unexpectedly, Nanahoshi might be first or second among her class, a face with that sort of level.

"Since I came to this world five years have already passed, but I didn't grow any older."

Eternal youth.

Five years.

Her age should be about 16 or 17 years.

"That is quite enviable isn't it?"

After I said that her face grimaced.

A sarcastic laugh and then she returned the mask.

"...Well, I'm sure it's better than growing old in an unknown land."

Come to think of it, the version of me that comes out in my dreams with Human God [Hitogami] doesn't grow old either.

Just as in my previous life.

I wonder if people from another world fundamentally don't grow old.

“I don't know what kind of principle it's working on but it's quite screwed up isn't it.”

“I normally grow older though...”

“...I see. I wonder if it's an issue with the body. Let's investigate the next time we have a chance. It might provide some kind of clue.”

After Nanahoshi said that she wrote something on the note in her hand.

I wonder if she's writing down things she realized or she wants to investigate later.

Since I often forget about things that I only give thought, I should try imitating her.

“Then, let's turn back our conversation.”

She has learned about magic circles.

It seems that a magic circle is when you turn a magic crystal into a fine powder and then after mixing it with a certain set of ingredients you turn it into a kind of paint that you use to draw.

Since the paint works as an adhesive and merges into most things, it seems it won't simply disappear.

Then when you let magic power flow through the paint it amplifies that power, then it displays the effects corresponding to the shape of the magic circle.

It seems that fundamentally the paint will evaporate after one use.

Furthermore, it seems that the type of ingredients required for the paint depend on the magic being used.

For the most part, it seems that in order to use King class or greater large scale magic you need a special kind of paint, but in order to actually prepare it you would need enough money comparable to a nations budget.

“Then, do the teleport magic circles in the ruins disappear after a single use?”

“Those aren't written in that kind of paint, so it's different.”

It seems that is the case.

Magic circles that use paint are simply the current standard.

It seems that magic circles in the golden age era took on a larger variety of shapes.

Currently those methods are still around, for example, such a method as carving a magic circle directly into a stone and then letting magic power flow through it.

According to Nanahoshi she can't use it so she hasn't investigated very deeply into it, but during the time when they make magic tools such techniques are used.

“Rather, wouldn't that be better as the foundation?”

“I can't use it, so it doesn't matter at all.”

How self-centered.

When it comes to magic circles, as long as you have the shape, paint, and magic power, most magic can be materialized.

However, there is a single problem.

Since the “shape” of magic circles is generally passed down through oral instruction, the majority of them have already been lost it seems.

Now there are no people who exist that create new magic circles.

A certain mural on some ruins in the wastelands or on a forgotten scroll deep in the treasury of a king from ancient times.

Unless you transcribe it from such places, new magic circles won't be created.

But, Nanahoshi is overturning that situation.

She's investigating the laws behind magic circles.

She said that by writing a large amount of magic circles, and repeating the experiments, she has already succeeded in developing a number of peculiar magic effects.

It's quite amazing.

By all means I'd like for her to teach me as well.

Just as I was thinking that, she said it to nail the matter down.

“However, the things that I've investigated, aren't things I would speak of readily.”

Why not, is what I was thinking though?

She continued speaking while pressing for an answer.

“Let's make a trade.”

And.

It seems that from here on out is the real issue.

“I have no magic power and I hold no techniques for the sake of fighting. I probably have eternal youth but I'm not immortal.”

“Eh?”

“I hate this world. There's no sense of reality, the food is bad. The morality is strange, it's inconvenient..... I'm sure you know but there's no such thing as shampoo in this world? Besides, I have people I've left behind in the previous world. That's why I want to return. What about you?”

After being asked I replied immediately.

“I like this world. I have a lot of acquaintances here, I don't want to return.”

“I see, don't you have any family remaining in the other world?”

“I have no regrets at all.”

I don't even want to remember things from my previous life.

I decided to live in this world.

That was 15 years ago.

In that time a lot of things have happened.

There were good things and bad things as well.

However, it was reasonably fulfilling.

Even if you told me to return at this point, I would just resist with all my power.

“I see, it was a peaceful death.”

Nanahoshi seemed to have understood it on her own terms.

I'll say it again but, I haven't told her that she was the person who I jumped in front of at that time.

I did say that the cause of death was an accident, but I've kept hidden the specific details.

“Our objectives are different. However, we mutually have things we want. Therefore, let's make a trade.”

“Is there something that I have that Nanahoshi-san wants?”

“Just now didn't you say it yourself? That you have top class magic power.”

You want magic power.

I see now.

However, it seems like she has a large number of magic crystals in her research room.

I wonder if that means they aren't enough.

“I want you to help with my experiments. And then I'll teach you things that you want to know. If it's something that I don't know then I'll investigate it. Since I have quite a few connections, I have confidence in investigating things. If there's anything else I'll help out as well.”

“In other words, let's go with a give and take relationship, you mean?”

“That's right. It's good that you're quick to understand.”

She seems to be smart, so I think it would be fine even if I didn't help.

Is what I was thinking though.

However, after all since it's a person from the same world, there must be some things she wants to try.

She did say that it was promising to meet with another earthling as well.

“I understand, then let's cooperate.”

“I see, thank you. Hearing those words is a big help. I'm just saying it ahead of time,

but afterwards don't come out saying you want to stop."

"Men don't go back on their words."

"...Hearing that in Japanese is somehow a little moving."

"If it's on this side, then no one understands the joke material."

Nanahoshi said, "Well then", and sat on the chair.

She took some rings out of her pocket and put them on.

Three even.

I wonder what she's doing.

After a single cough to clear her throat.

"Then, to start things off is there anything you want to know? I've heard that you are investigating things related to the teleport incident."

"Umm, who did you hear that from?"

She sent a fleeting gaze towards a slightly sullen Fitts-senpai who was unable to join our conversation.

I see now, during the time when I was unconscious she must have talked with him for a bit.

"Umm, what? What's going on?"

Suddenly having the gazes aimed at him, he tilted his head with a worried face.

"After this, we would like to hear about that incident. Nanahoshi-san from here on please use human language."

"I understand."

Fitts-senpai sat down next to me.

Nanahoshi faced us.

From here on wasn't in Japanese but in human language.

"I don't know anything about what created that incident. However, five years ago, it's

just about the time that I came to this world.”

Nanahoshi was saying in a way as if it was hard to talk about.

Five years ago, Asura Kingdom.

By this point, even with how dense I am, I could predict it.

I'm sure she heard as well, that I was teleported to a different location from Fitts-senpai.

“In other words?”

“Most likely that incident was a reaction that occurred at the time when I came to this world. In other words...”

There Nanahoshi cut off her words for a moment.

And then said it.

“In other words, that would mean I was the cause of it.”

After all huh.

It was an answer I had already guessed halfway through.

The fact that Summoning and the Teleport are really similar.

And then, the fact that Nanahoshi was summoned.

No matter how much of an idiot I am, if you gather together this many conditions then I'll understand.

Rather, it's almost to point that I feel relieved I'm not the cause.

But, that wasn't the case for Fitts-senpai.

“You were??!!”

He yelled in a loud voice which I've never normally heard, faced Nanahoshi and raised his hand.

“...That!!!?”

Nanahoshi raised the hand she had put the rings on.

The ring lit up.

Fitts-senpai's magic didn't work.

What is that ring?

"I... We... How much do you think we suffered because of that disaster! Father and mother??! It was your fault!"

The instant he realized the magic wasn't coming out, Fitts-senpai leaped towards Nanahoshi.

However, after the second ring lit up and that fist made a sound as if it hit something in mid-air.

That ring, it's a magic tool huh.

"Hey! Rudeus Greyrat, stop just watching and help me out here!"

Nanahoshi's impatient voice.

Fitts-senpai who was breathing heavily yet still throwing his fists out.

I grabbed onto his hand.

"Fitts-senpai, please calm down."

"How could I calm down with this? This person was the cause, she said it herself! How can you stay that calm! Even you, even you went through a lot of trouble!"

Fitts-senpai was agitated way beyond I've ever seen before.

Normally he always has a laid back attitude, but after all it seems he lost an important person in the teleport incident.

After five years have passed he may have cleared it up to some extent though if you put the perpetrator who caused it in front of his eyes, there's no way he could remain calm.

However, according to the story I heard, the one who caused that incident wasn't

Nanahoshi.

In my previous life, I think I was present in the instant she was teleported.

In other words, you could say she as well was just dragged into it.

Ah, I see now.

Since we had the talk about those parts in Japanese.

In other words, Fitts-senpai didn't hear it.

It's not strange that he's mistaken.

“Sorry about that. The explanation wasn't enough. It doesn't seem that she came because she wanted to. In other words, she's a victim.”

“Victim!? Is... is that true?”

Fitts-senpai was still breathing in stance.

However, it seems he believed my words, took a deep breath and sat on the chair.

“I'm sorry. It was a bit thoughtless of a way to put it. I'm sorry about that.”

“No, it's fine, I'm sorry as well, it was so sudden.”

I guess Nanahoshi put on the rings because she considered the possibility that I might attack her in a frenzy.

She's unexpectedly stubborn.

Rather, that seems like quite a convenient ring.

I wonder if it's for means of self-defense.

I want one myself.

“In any case, in regards to that incident, I don't really understand it myself. In that incident I was summoned, but by who, or with what objective, and then why that disaster happened. Those kinds of things, no one knows.”

“Orsted... -san, didn't say anything about it?”

“Yeah, he didn't say anything other than this was the first time.”

I see, you don't know.

Well, if these guys who call themselves Gods don't know then I'm sure it won't so simply be explained.

I do have somewhat of a feeling like the Human God [Hitogami] might have said Orsted caused it but...

Well, since it seems Orsted has that curse in operation which makes people hate him, then Hitogami as well might hate Orsted because of that curse.

Though Orsted also seems to have some personal grudge, those two don't get along with each other.

Unexpectedly, Hitogami might have some prejudice when he said it.

If I'm to completely believe in Nanahoshi's story then, I can't really imagine that Orsted caused it.

Even though she was summoned, for example, he seems to be entirely supporting the fact that she wants to return, I don't get the meaning.

“Then, why did you say you were the cause?”

“If afterwards you were to point it out you wouldn't like it right. That's why I said it ahead of time. That most likely I'm the cause. ^[52]

“I see now.”

Rather than hiding it she says it ahead of time herself.

And then, she corrects it by actually saying that's wrong.

If you were to learn about it after I guess it would be easier to calm down.

It's a bit hard to hear.

Although, we should go with it while taking into consideration the possibility that Nanahoshi or Orsted are lying.

“However, I see, you don't know at all huh.”

“I don't know. However, I have prospects with my research.”

“That you'll understand the truth behind the teleport incident if you advance your research?”

“At the very least, I'll be able to attach a theoretical explanation to it.”

She isn't going to assert that she'll know huh.

Rather, this is more believable.

“For that reason I need a large amount of magic power.”

“I see now, then my existence is like a ferrying ship.”

“A ferrying ship^[53]? Fufu, I guess, that would be right.”

Fitts-senpai was pouting over our conversation.

I wonder if he still doubts Nanahoshi.

Well, I'll make sure to slowly explain it to him later.

In any case, I never could have imagined that gentle Fitts-senpai would lose it that much.

He did say there was one acquaintance of his that he found but... I see, both his mother and father died as well...

It seems like it would be better to talk again after things calm down a bit.

“I understand. Nanahoshi-san. For today I haven't completely sorted things myself, another day, we'll come back to ask again. The specific details on what you need help with at that time.”

“I get it. We'll do it then.”

We exchanged some final short words, I lead Fitts-senpai and left that place.

5

After I told Fitts-senpai about the circumstances surrounding Nanahoshi from the start he calmed down a bit.

She was forcefully brought into this world and she's desperate to return.

After telling him that, Fitts-senpai's anger seemed to subside.

However, after the final words, he asked like this.

“And then, Rudeus-kun, how do you feel about her?”

How do I feel huh.

This is, absolutely not about her face I'm sure.

It should be talk about whether I believe or don't believe in her.

Since I came here by reincarnating, I can completely accept her story.

Still, to Fitts-senpai who was born and raised in this world, it might be a completely unbelievable story so suddenly.

However, judging from Nanahoshi's tone it just felt like she really didn't care at all for this world.

Almost as if she just quickly wanted to get things taken care of and return to her home.

She's different from me, ever since she came to this world she's continued to succeed.

There are various things being thought lightly of. She might have eternal life.

She wasn't boasting about her troubles but...

I don't really like a bit of it.

“Honestly, there are parts that I don't really like, but for now I believe in her.”

“...I see, you don't like... Yeah, then it's fine.”

Fitts-senpai made a bitter smile.

If here I had said I completely believed in Nanahoshi, I wonder if I would have received a warning of, “you should be more cautious.”

We were the ones to intrude upon her, so I don't think there's much concern about her trying to deceive us but...

Well, it was just that unrealistic story after all.

It wouldn't be surprising to be worried about me if I were to readily believe in it.

“You were worried about me right senpai, thank you very much.”

“Eh!!? N... No, it wasn't really... worry... Yeah?? You... you're very welcome.”

Fitts-senpai became flustered.

He finally seemed to relax.

In any case, just like this Nanahoshi and I started a working relationship.

There are still many things I'd like to ask, but there's no reason to be impatient.

It's fine if I just hear about them one at a time.

CHAPTER 11

DAILY LIFE AT THE MAGIC UNIVERSITY

1

Almost a year has passed since I entered the Magic University.

I've turned 16 years old.

Since there are no celebrations other than at five, ten, and fifteen years old in this world, I can't remember when my birthday was at all.

If you look at your adventurer card everyday you could figure it out but it's not something you look at everyday.

Well, age really doesn't matter at all.

2

Since I met Nanahoshi, there's been a change in the flow of my daily life.

First, my morning training.

This is about the same as always.

However, sometimes when I'm swinging my sword occasionally Badigadi will appear.

He will generally just remain quiet and watch.

It's not like he particularly goes out of his way to stick to my training, or that he was giving me any specific advice, he would just sit there with his six arms crossed nodding to himself.

I wonder what he's coming to agreement with.

He doesn't particularly say anything.

If he were to open his mouth he might let out a loud laugh in the early morning and bother the neighborhood, so I don't ask either.

I don't know what he thinks.

He is a guy who gives off a good feeling, but I don't know what he's thinking about.

For the most part he is a Demon King. I have a feeling that it would be bad if he ever got into a bad mood.

However, one day, Badigadi opened his mouth.

“Humu, it's truly an interesting training, but is there some kind of meaning to it?”

He asked me if there was any meaning to it.

I felt a bit of something weigh down on my heart.

“It shouldn't be something pointless.”

After I refuted him like that.

“You have a pointlessly large amount of magic, therefore training to wear Fighting Spirit would make such training meaningless.”

Is how he responded.

Fighting Spirit?

It's Fighting Spirit.

After thinking about it I've heard people talk about this Fighting Spirit occasionally.

However, I have no idea how you wear it, those sorts of points are kind of vague.

It's a good opportunity. I'll ask and see.

“What is Fighting Spirit?”

“Fighting Spirit is in other words magic power!”

According to Badigadi.

Fighting Spirit is a technique where you use the magic power residing in your body and explosively increase your physical ability.

In other words Body Reinforcement.

That much was just as I had imagined.

“How do you wear it?”

“Wrap each part of your body in magic power one at a time, apply it there and harden it!”

“Oh.”

I received some splendid advice.

I guess this is the so called Demon King's wisdom.

With this I should be able to become stronger.

I should be able to become an existence that's one step higher.

Since that's the case, I started to release magic power almost like Dragon ball and try it, almost as if it was Nen power I tried to gather the flow surrounding my body with my sense, and I tried a variety of things, but there was no difference in my physical ability. [54]

I just felt like I could get stronger.

“I guess you are that then! You have no talent!”

In an instant he explained the reason I couldn't do it.

Normally, the thing known as Fighting Spirit, the more you train your body you'll naturally understand how to wear it is how it goes.

I believe I've proceeded with the intention of doing a reasonable amount of training, but even now I have yet to wear Fighting Spirit.

Therefore, I have no talent.

It seems there are occasionally such guys.

No matter how much they train, guys who can't wear Fighting Spirit.

“Fuhahahaha! However, you shouldn't have a need for it! Even that Laplace never wore Fighting Spirit, but he was strong!”

Whenever Badigadi makes comparisons to me, the name Laplace often comes up.

I guess there is the common point in that we both possessed a vast amount of magic

power.

“Badi-sama have you met Laplace before?”

“Humu, he annihilated most of my body in a single attack, it took a considerable amount of time to revive! I thought I was going to die that time! Fuhahahahaha!”

I wonder if that's something to brag about.

Well, he did fight against an amazing opponent and lived, I guess that's plenty to brag about.

According to Badigadi.

Laplace was a suspicious guy with a lot of mysteries to him, but he was skillful in ways to use magic power supposedly.

“I wonder if I can be strong if I were to fight like Laplace as well.”

“You should stop with that, if you were to use magic power like that guy, your body would break apart and scatter. In the first place, for a human to have that much magic power residing in their body is already abnormal in itself!”

Powerful magic power will destroy your body.

I somehow or other understand things like that.

The operation of manipulating magic power is similar to the operation of trying to stretch your arm to its limit.

If you were to try and stretch it, bent in reverse, naturally your arm would break.

The one known as Laplace possessed a body and techniques that balanced out his enormous magic power.

I don't hold the body or the techniques.

With a human body, no matter how much I train I won't become like Laplace.

Is what seems to be the case.

“In the first place, what do you plan to do after you become stronger?”

“Even if you were to ask 'What?'“

Since I was already on the verge of death once, I think it's only natural that I want to avoid it happening again.

"I have known of any number of men that sought after strength and fame, but none of them were any good. This is about my nephew, but he's pretty stubborn you know. He's become considerably calm now, but he used to say he would strive to be the world's strongest hero until he dies. Even though there's many number of things more important than that."

"Important things? For example?"

"For example women! If you find one yourself I'm sure you'll understand! Fuhahahaha!"

And then Badi made a triumphant look and said that.

Even in manga in my previous life those who seek nothing but strength are all generally no good.

I don't really have the intention of seeking that much strength.

In this world as well, the strong guys generally have a larger image, but it's not as if strength is justice after all.

Rather than pursuing strength, pursue women.

I can understand that enjoyable way of thinking.

However, I don't know what to do in my case since I can't desire for them due to my illness.

"Demon King-sama."

"What is it?"

"Do you know the way to fix impotency^[55]?"

"..... No clue."

It seems that in my regard, the Demon King's wisdom isn't very useful.

3

After having breakfast and heading to class.

Recently, I've been learning about Detoxification magic in the morning.

Intermediate Detoxification magic.

With Detoxification magic, the large majority of conditions can be cured using just Elementary level.

However, particular illnesses, poison produced by powerful monsters, or diseases that have reached an advanced stage, you need a pinpoint incantation and a massive amount of magic power.

In order to use Detoxification magic above the Intermediate level you learn such pinpoint techniques.

Those incantations are also very long.

They're already several times longer than the incantations for attack magic at the intermediate level.

There's a story that some important person from the past shortened the long incantations into their current state, but it seems that didn't apply to detoxification magic above intermediate level.

There are a number of categories as well.

For intermediate level you have to learn over 50 incantations.

Among those there's even magic where you create poison.

Poison is medicine, is something that's commonly said.

Advanced level has over 100 incantations.

After you make it this far, you really can't continue at it with a half-assed memorization ability.

When you get to the Saint class or above the necessity for memorization gradually decreases, but in exchange the consumed magic power increases.

Also, King class and greater are being researched by many countries and is generally kept hidden.

There are countries that create poison which can't be healed with healing magic and then techniques are made to try and fix that.

I guess it means that every world has its own game of tag with viruses and vaccines.

Incidentally, the God class Detoxification magic is a single magic that cures a certain strange disease supposedly.

If I remember correctly, it was called something like Magic Stone Disease.

It seems to be a disease where all of the magic power in your body gradually turns you into Magic Stone.

Historically it's said that there was only ever one person to use it.

In regards to it's incantation words, it seems that it's kept carefully in storage in the Great Church of Milishion.

Incidentally, going from Intermediate, Advanced, Saint class the more the rank goes up the longer the incantation gets.

When it gets to King class I imagine it's at the level where you'd have to read an entire book.

No matter how high this bodies memorization ability is as expected it would take quite a bit of time to memorize something like that.

Not having any choice but to memorize scriptures, the monks and priests of every world sure have it difficult.

Well, if it's me then I would just carry a book around with the incantation techniques written down.

It could be possible that if I learn Detoxification magic, my illness could be cured.

I took this class while thinking that, but after asking the teacher at the very least up to Advanced level there's no such technique that exists to cure ED.

Obviously, I guess.

This is something spiritual after all.

4

Lunch.

Up until now I've always eaten outside, but it's starting to get a bit cold out here.

Therefore, I decided to create a building.

I used earth magic and created a roof and walls to surround my table.

In the center of the table I created a hole and started a fire there.

After opening an air hole in the room, just like that a Kamakura^[56] was completed.

Thanks to the fire the stone table warmed up a good bit.

And then after going that far, Vice Principal Jinas came along and got angry.

That if I'm going to the point of creating a building outside I should just eat inside.

It can't be helped so I ended up eating on the first floor.

I thought Zanoba would be against it, but surprisingly he didn't say anything.

“Since Julie can't sit on the third floor.”

It seems there are no chairs for those with the social status of slaves on the third floor.

Of course that's a local rule.

Zanoba doesn't treat Julie as a slave.

To the very end he treats her as a younger disciple or pupil.

Even though I say that, since her position is still lower than his, you can still see various scenes of her being ordered around. [57]

The treatment of slaves really does come in a variety of ways.

I really don't know if Zanoba's treatment is good or bad.

However, compared to someone who is blatantly treated as a slave, it shouldn't feel as bad.

When we went into the dining hall for some reason the crowds of people split.

“He... hey, it's Rudeus?”

“Isn't he amazing, he really put the squeeze on all of the Special Students all by himself.”

“I saw the time when he defeated the Demon King, a single hit, it was a single hit...”

I heard the rumors being whispered around.

I don't remember putting the squeeze on everyone, and after I hit the Demon King with a single hit I was knocked unconscious with three more.

However it isn't really a bad feeling.

I don't really want to get too full of myself though...

The split in the crowd continued down to a certain table deep inside.

“Fuhahahahaha! As expected even you aren't good with the cold.”

For some reason Badigadi was sitting there drinking alcohol, which doesn't even exist on the school menu.

Since his skin is black it had changed into a dark brown color.

I wonder if he's drunk.

That guy's muscle is mystery meat.

The surrounding students were giving off a feeling like they wanted me to hurry and sit as they watched.

I wonder if this means they want me to eat here every time I use this place.

Well, there's no problems if that's the case.

Incidentally, Cliff and Elinalise are on the second floor.

There was once a time when I saw that spectacle, truly they are an idiotic couple.

They eat while feeding each other with an “ahhhn~” and don't care about people watching while they kiss.

Since I feel empty when I see that, I try my best not to approach them.

“Master, what Demon King-sama is drinking looks very delicious.”

“Fuhahahahah! As expected of a dwarf! To understand how great this alcohol is with just a glance! That's right, this is a rare gem that a man was hiding in the hair on his head!”

Julie said something like that while pulling on Zanoba's cuff.

Speaking of hair balls on the head I wonder if it's about Principal Georg. [58]

I had heard that the dwarves like alcohol, but I wonder if that's the case for Julie as well.

However, isn't she way too young even if that's the case.

But, it seems I was the only one thinking that way.

“Humu, Demon King-sama, would it be okay to take one?”

“Of course. Drinking alcohol alone is boring after all! Fuhahahaha!”

After Zanoba asked, he took a cup for Julie and she started to drink it.

I wonder if that's alright.

As expected I wonder if she isn't too young?

If we were to say it will be fine if we just use Detoxification later then that is true but...

Well, I drank a little bit when I was seven years old in this world, I can't really talk about other people.

“Now, then I'll have one cup as well.”

“Stop that since you have classes.”

“If Shisho is saying so, Badi-sama, I'm very sorry about this.”

“Fuhahahaha! Unable to drink alcohol freely, students sure have it difficult!”

While they were having such a conversation, lunch ended.

Me? I didn't drink anything.



5

After lunch is over there are more classes.

I'm learning Advanced class healing magic.

In the fifth years' classroom.

Unexpectedly, this is the same classroom as Pursena.

If you were to ask what's so unexpected about it, it's that Pursena is alone.

Rinia is taking a different class.

It seems like Pursena mainly pursued healing magic as her field while Rinia pursued attack magic as hers.

Normally Pursena is completely lazy.

However, during classes she takes them seriously while chewing away at dried meat.

Although as a special student, moreover feared as an ex-delinquent, recently she's been alone.

It seems she was troubled being unable to make a two person group during practical skills classes.

Which is why she was quite thankful for my existence.

“If it's to boss, then I could hand over my precious thing nano.”

And then it was to the point where she handed over her half eaten dried meat.

I gratefully accepted that and started tasting it, well, licking it.

Pursena was making an amazingly disgusted face.

Even though you said you would give it to me...

Speaking of Rinia, recently, she's come to ask me a variety of things about attack magic.

The majority of it seems to be things she doesn't know about mixed magic.

It seems that the case where attack magicians get stuck is generally regarding mixed

magic.

I didn't get the impression that Sylphy was ever stuck, but I guess this could be the difference in the hard headedness between an adult and a child as well.

Today it was regarding mixed magic of fire and water.

How nostalgic.

Evaporation and condensation, I gave an explanation about the “mechanisms of rain” regarding fusion and mutual change.

But, Rinia just tilted her head.

As the water in the ocean evaporates it turns into clouds, inside of the clouds raindrops form, and eventually they fall down.

If you can understand that much, then you can apply it some extent, but I received the doubt of, “If the entire ocean turned into rain, wouldn't the ocean disappear nya.”

After teaching her, “After the rain comes down it flows back into the ocean again so the amount remains the same.”, she made a triumphant face and returned with, “That's a lie nya, after all the water in the Great Forest just soaks into the ground nya.”

From there I continued to explain, “the water that gets absorbed into the ground is either sucked up by trees or else enters the underground water flow...” and then she tilted her head again.

Even though I say that, it's not as if she doesn't understand to the extent of Ghyslaine, I'm sure she'll get it eventually.

Speaking of attack magic, I was able to learn Saint class magic of the Earth attribute.

[Sand Storm].

It's an upper class version of the Advanced magic, [Dust Storm].

Judging from the sound of it I didn't think it would be anything great, but after I actually tried using it, a tremendous amount of sand and strong winds covered the entire vicinity.

My field of vision was sealed off and even breathing became difficult.

Even after the effective time ended, the easily crumbling sand remained over the range of the magic.

If the Saint class water magic, [Cumulonimbus] creates a storm of wind, thunder, and

rain, then [Sandstorm] is magic that creates a storm of wind and sand.

It seems that among Saint class magic, many of them make use of weather effects.

The teacher who taught it to me said, "There could be damage to the crops, so don't use it in the town."

I guess saying that in preparation for the time you teach Saint class magic is a custom.

In any case, with this I can use Saint class earth magic as well.

Dossei. [59]

Just joking.

In regards to the other two attributes, if I have time I'll try to find a teacher that will teach me them.

Incidentally, that Earth Saint class teacher said, "I couldn't have imagined that you didn't already know the Saint class magic."

According to Badigadi, my chantless magic attacks are already pushing the limits of King class, it seems they assumed it was only natural I had already learned Saint class.

That Demon King-sama told me that the Rock Bullet I fired off had power equal to Emperor class magic.

It seems that he's never seen any magician who uses magic with that much pinpoint destructive power other than Laplace.

Then I asked if it would be fine to call myself an Earth Emperor class magician and I was told that calling myself that is at my own convenience.

Since it was said in a way that had some kind of hidden implication, I decided not to do it.

Nothing good has come from being talked about as amazing without reason after all.

6

Around the time of early afternoon I head towards Nanahoshi's research room.

Her research room is spacious.

Soon after entering, you get the impression of things jumbled about similar to a storage room.

After heading to the room next door to the storage room.

There is an experiment room that is covered in something like tile.

Furthermore if you head further to the next door of the classroom, it's Nanahoshi's bedroom.

It seems a certain corner in her bedroom has turned into something like a food warehouse.

I wonder if things like mice and cockroaches come out from keeping food in the same place that she sleeps.

I understand it just from glancing at the features of the room, but she has the talent to become a hikikomori.

Since I'm the one saying it, there's no mistake.

Incidentally, entry into her bedroom has been forbidden.

Fundamentally what we do is experiments relating to Summoning magic.

In the experiment room I pour my magic power into original magic circles she's drawn.

It's not that much work, but it's repeated endlessly.

It's because we're taking the approach, "they're most likely magic circles that are failures."

No matter how much money she has saved up, it's not like she has an infinite stockpile of magic crystals on hand, also, there's a limit to how many magic crystals there are on the market, if she buys them all out she might end up attracting the resentment of various groups.

Since that's the case, there were many experiments where she was hesitating to try it seems.

I just kept continuing to pour my magic power into magic circles.

Generally nothing came out. The paint would disappear and just the rough draft would

be remaining.

But, occasionally an immense amount of magic power ends up being sucked up and then some strange thing comes out.

For example a dirty black feather or a bug's leg.

When I ask if we've succeeded, she returns with obviously it's a failure.

However, since I don't know what is going on, a bit of stress builds up.

“Rather, what exactly are you trying to do with these experiments?”

“It's for the sake of trying to summon a person from our world... they're experiments for the sake of understanding the theory behind it, the very first of first of first phases.”

If she were to complete a magic circle for the sake of summoning people, can she make a magic circle in reverse that sends them back? She doesn't seem to know for sure.

Even though I say that, this is the very first of first of first steps, huh.

It seems like there's still a long ways to go.

However, even this is fine.

“Summoning a person you say, if you do the same thing, wouldn't that disaster happen again?”

“Of course, I don't have any intention of causing a disaster. However, if I can get proof of another two theories, I can make a hypothesis on the reason why that disaster occurred.”

Is what seems to be the case.

“Failures follow along with experiments, since there's such words out there, please don't think too lightly of it. There were a considerable amount of deaths in that disaster.”

“If you're going to say that then it's 'with life'. Even if you didn't say it I already know that. That's why, just like this I'm fortifying my foundations currently.”

So this was fortifying the foundations.

I don't really get it.

Since this is the case it might be good for me to learn summoning techniques as well.

“I would like to learn about summoning magic as well is that fine?”

“Summoning techniques are my life line you know. I won't readily teach it.”

“Didn't you say you would teach me anything?”

After saying that, Nanahoshi went “cheh” and clicked with her tongue.

“After this current experiment ends, I'll answer one of your questions.”

“One? I don't think that matches up very well.”

“After all of the experiments end, when I return, I'll gather together all of the experiment results, information, and connections and give them to you, therefore, endure it for a bit for now.”

It seems Nanahoshi is irritated.

Well, I guess I'm being a bit selfish asking for something when there's been no result yet.

Just as I was thinking that, she gave me a single book.

It's the book called, [Shigu's Summoning Techniques].

“If you want to know about it that much, research it yourself.”

I feel like I've seen it somewhere before, but I have no memory of reading it.^[60]

I'll gratefully take the time to read it.

The experiments for the time being are that kind of feeling.

It seems Nanahoshi is trying out thousands of different magic circle patterns in order to hit on a success and figure the laws behind them.

It's an operation that will take a while.

I stopped going to the library.

However, Fitts-senpai occasionally joins in on the experiments.

After seeing him, I came to understand that the operation I'm doing is rigorous.

After all, when he goes through only about 20 scrolls his magic power is exhausted.

“Rudeus-kun, this, just one of these consumes about the same amount of magic power as an Advanced spell.”

Were Fitts-senpai's remarks on it.

Fitts-senpai is a chantless magic user, but it seems his aggregate amount of magic power isn't all that high.

No, it seems to be considerably large if you compare it to the average person's level, but after all I really am an abnormality.

I'd really like someone to give me some kind of numerical value.

However, if Fitts-senpai who is one with proven real ability does it, it's this much.

I don't know what kind of magic circles Nanahoshi is drawing, but I guess that means that summoning magic uses up that idiotic of an amount of magic power.

Unlike attack magic, it doesn't seem to be something that can be used a number of times in battle, so it's not strange for it to be few times.

However, even the scrolls that ends up clearly being failures cause Fitts-senpai's magic power to be exhausted.

No, precisely because we're trying to summon from another world should be why it consumes that much magic power.

“Sorry, since I have the matters as a guard, I can't help anymore with this... if I don't leave magic power remaining for the time something happens...”

“It can't be helped I guess.”

Fitts-senpai seems gloomy recently.

It seems his feelings are a bit hurt.

In regards to magic, I'm sure he had a bit of pride in it.

Everyone has some pride.

“...”

Nanahoshi didn't talk down to Fitts-senpai.

It seems Fitts-senpai isn't very good with Nanahoshi as well.

“I'm... useless aren't I.”

Fitts-senpai said it in a really lonely way, but I shook my head.

“There's no way that's the case.”

“I wonder?”

“Yeah, just having Fitts-senpai here is reassuring.”

During this past year, I've depended on Fitts-senpai a considerable amount.

After this much time, there's no way I would want to say, “you're useless, so goodbye.”

If Fitts-senpai feels it's impossible no matter what, then I won't try to restrain him, but if he withdraws because he's lacking in strength, then I want to say “wait.”

“It's fine if it's just when you have time, please come again. Aren't we friends that have researched it together up until now. Let's continue to close in on the truth together.”

“...I see, thank you.”

Fitts-senpai said that and laughed bashfully.

I'm really weak to this smile.

I think Fitts-senpai is around 13 years old right now, but after a few more years pass I wonder if he'll become a handsome man that makes women cry.

No well, how do I put it.

Frankly, recently I've only been able to see Fitts-senpai as a woman though.

I wonder if my eyes are going strange.

Could it be that I've already awoken to that path?

8

Since the sun was setting, I returned to the dorms with Fitts-senpai.
We separated in front of the female dorms.

“Ah, that's right, Rudeus-kun.”

“What is it?”

“I think it would be fine for you to take the main path back?”

While saying that, Fitts-senpai pointed towards the path in front of him.

Soon after entering this school, I was stuck with the false charge of being an underwear thief by going down that path.

Ever since that day, I don't go near that path.

“You must be joking by saying that. If I try walking down there again, they'll just scream with a 'kya~' again right?”

“Nfufu, you've become considerably popular in the female dorm you know.”

“Eh? Seriously? Kind of like the Super Popular Prince of Tennis?”

“Tenni???”

Fitts-senpai made a face of confusion.

“Umm, you know, they say you're a gentleman who disciplines the bad guys, but you don't put your hands on normal students. After all, even though you're strong enough to defeat the Demon King who defeated all of the Beast Race warriors in a single hit, even after you were surrounded and threatened like that, you didn't do anything in return.”

Don't lie...

Just the other day I heard some rumors.

I was listening properly.

I shouldn't have any popularity.

Seriously none.

“Fufu, at first they were all afraid, but Rinia and Pursena went around saying it. Boss is a tolerant gentleman therefore he won't go around putting his hands on weaklings nya, like that.”

While Fitts-senpai was saying that, he put his hands around his ears imitating Rinia.

How do I put it.

Ah.

Cute.

I feel like something around the top of my hips is going to descend.

“And then, it seems like everyone finally realized Rudeus-kun's charm. Even though your outfit is a bit poor looking, after taking a close look your face isn't bad, your silhouette is amazing, and that even though you're strong you're not selfish is good.”

Oh~?

Those two, somehow, they really say some good things huh.

According to the story, it seems they're keeping quiet about my impotency as well.

I guess I should treat Pursena to some expensive meat.

I wonder what Rinia would like. I'm sure it would be position, fame, or money.

“There are still people who are afraid though, Goriade-san for example.”

“Ah, I'm sure there's no helping it with her. She was leading the group that time after all. The other day it seems we got a bit too caught up with something as well.”

“I see. Rinia and Pursena as well, every time they see Goriade-san they go to pick a fight with her about that day.”

They go to pick a fight.

In response to those words, I remembered the image of a trembling Gorilla from the other day.

It's the scene of bullying.

“Fitts-senpai won't stop them?”

“I won't stop them. After all, that was Goriade-san's fault, she was just selfishly finding faults to make Rudeus-kun into the bad person. It's good medicine.”

Fitts-senpai as well is considerably heartless.

However, bullying isn't good.

“Since I'm sure she didn't have any ill intent, please don't drive her too far into the corner... Will you please convey that to Rinia and Pursena as well?”

My tone of voice stiffened up a bit.

Fitts-senpai went into a panic and put up the palm of his hand facing me.

“Ah, that's wrong. It's not like I'm specifically driving her into a corner. How do I put it, kind of peacefully, it has a kind of feeling where Goriade-san as well is like, 'Really, please let me go on that already.'”

I wonder if Goriade-san really had that kind of friendly, touchy character.

There's a paper thin difference between bullying and touchiness, so it's better to be careful around there as it's dangerous.

“I see, it's fine as long as it remains within the scope of joking around but... in any case since I'm not really bothered over it, Fitts-senpai as well please make sure it doesn't go too far.”

“Rudeus-kun sure is kind. Yeah. I'll convey that along to Goriade-san as well.”

It's fine for you to not convey that to Goriade-san.

I'll be troubled with the disposal if she ends up sending panties or something as a sign of gratitude after all.

“Eh~?”

While Fitts-senpai was bashfully laughing as he went down the path.

I remained in that place.

After he walked about three steps, Fitts-senpai turned around.

“Umm, since that's the case, it's alright you know?”

“No, since I've already got my long-awaited good image attached, I'll avoid walking through as if I belong there.”

I said that while making my game face.

“I... I see? That's just like Rudeus-kun.”

Fitts-senpai stuttered while trying to hold his lips together.

I wonder if he's laughing.

After all I wonder if it's better if I don't use my game face.

Many months and years ago I was told that my laughing face is creepy.

Hypermetric^[61].

“Yeah. See you next time, Rudeus-kun.”

“Yes, we'll meet again.”

And then, I separated with Fitts-senpai.

9

After dinner I teach Julie magic in Zanoba's room.

Julie is diligent and clever. She absorbs things almost like a sponge.

She's skillful with her hands as well. Anything she can't do with magic, she manages with her hands.

Putting it like this might not be a good way of saying it, but she was a good purchase.

Certainly, someone like her is a lucky find among slaves I'm sure.

Even though I say that, it's still the first year.

She's still completely lacking in the amount of magic power and her precision is nowhere close as well.

Even if I say she's skilled with her hands as well, the clumsiness of being a beginner with carving tools still remains.

I'm sure there's a necessity to look at it over the long term.

While I was instructing her, I worked on making my own doll.

Recently, I've started making a "1/8 Fitts-senpai".

Even though I say that, since Fitts-senpai is always wearing baggy clothes, I don't know how his body line looks.

Since the elves have almost no body fat, I think he should be pretty thin but...

The problem is whether to make it attached or removable.

Though it's fine as long as I don't make it so the clothes can be taken off.

However, I'm wavering.

In my brain I don't want it to be attached, but if the person himself were to see it he might get angry.

If I were to complete, it I would want to show it to him as well. I'm lost on what to do...

"If you want, I can forcefully strip him of his clothes?"

"Please stop that."

In regards to my hesitation over it, Zanoba came out saying something like that, but it's rejected.

Incidentally, speaking of what Zanoba is doing, under my direction, he's continuing work on creation of the Red Dragon figure.

Since each of the parts of the Red Dragon are large, it's oriented towards Zanoba.

Although, since Zanoba is clumsy with his fingers as usual, the progress is slow.

It's fine to do it slowly.

10

Before I go to sleep, I read [Shigu's Summoning Techniques].

It's a story about how a witch named Shigu summoned one magic beast after another. And then, in the end she used a large quantity of offerings and a tremendous amount of magic power to summon a magic beast stronger than herself, and was eaten alive.

Her disciples lamented in grief and swore in their hearts to never summon a magic beast beyond their own ability.

It seems to be intended as a moral instruction, similar to a fairy-tale.

It was good for getting the image that if an amateur with an excessive amount of magic power like me tries to use too much to summon a magic beast, there's the possibility that I might summon a dangerous one that can't be controlled.

If I were to learn it, then it has that sort of merit. The demerit would be that I need to precisely keep it held down I'm sure.

However, there wasn't any specific detail on the method or magic circles for summoning written down in the book.

I wonder what she was telling me to research with this.

Just like this, my every day life continues.

I still haven't found the method to cure my illness.

While I haven't found it, I do feel like I've reached the next step towards it.

Or else, maybe I should desperately try to explore for a solution in a greater variety of directions without being too optimistic.

Just as I was thinking something like that on a certain day.

I started to head towards solving all of my troubles at once.

SIDE STORY

ENTER THE MAD DOG

1

The Holy Land of Swords. It had no other name. A harsh land that was covered in snow all year round.

In his final years, the first generation Sword God built a school here to teach his disciples the sword. To swordsmen it was a place they would go, and then eventually leave. As long as you were a swordsman, no matter who you were, it was somewhere you should visit at least once. This was the Holy Land of Swords.

Gathered at this Holy Land of Swords were young swordsmen in the making, all with promising futures. Though they were teens, they had talent in the sword that you could see at a glance. They were young geniuses.

At the Holy Land of Swords, there were three swordsmen who had outstanding talent.

The first was the eldest daughter of the Sword God. Nina Farion. Though she was now 18 years old, by the time she had reached 16 she had already been regarded as a Sword Saint with talent. People would say that she'd be a Sword King around the time she turned 20, and by 25, she would undoubtedly be a Sword Emperor. The people around her felt that she was the most promising one.

Next was Nina's cousin. Jino Britts. He was the second son of the Britts family; a branch family to the Sword God Style's main house, the Farion family. He was now 14. As someone who received the title Sword Saint at 12 years of age, he was the youngest Sword Saint. He was such a genius that though he was now a step behind Nina, people didn't know if this would stay the same in the future.

Finally, Eris Greyrat. She was now 17 years old. She was a mad dog who frightened everyone who saw her, and those who bit her would be mercilessly beaten down. She

who had come along two years ago as Sword King Ghyslaine's disciple would never compromise when it came to her actions. Each day she would tackle her training with a do-or-die attitude, and she'd abuse her body until it surpassed that abuse.

Her debut at the Holy Land of Sword was striking. It was vivid enough that even now, several years later, it was still a topic of conversation.

-- Approximately 2 years ago --

The location was the Holy Land of Swords. Brought here by Ghyslaine, Eris showed herself before the Sword God. The ones encircling them were the best pupils of the Sword God Style, not one of them below Sword Saint. Among them were Nina and Jino. Though Eris was before the Sword God, she neither got down on one knee, nor lowered her head.

“I have no use for a small fry like you!”

Of all things, she declared this to the one who was presently the strongest swordsman, Sword God Gull Farion. The Sword Saints around her became riled up.

“Wha-! YOU, to Shishou-!”

“Kneel down! Do you know nothing of the Sword God Style's manners!?”

“What have you been teaching her, Ghyslaine-dono!?”

“Sit.”

With just one word, the Sword God silenced the Sword Saints.

That this young and arrogant dog would be cut down by the Sword God's hands; everyone there thought that. No one who had said such arrogant words to the Sword God had left here alive. They were reckless enough words that even the arrogant Ghyslaine's tails and ears were standing straight up.

However, the Sword God merely grinned. While smiling, he asked,

“You have good eyes, huh. Just who is it that you want to cut down?”

Who was it that she wanted to cut down? Having been asked that, Eris replied frankly.

“The Dragon God! The Dragon God Orsted!”

Everyone here had heard the name 'Dragon God'. However, they didn't know the name 'Orsted'. The people there that knew the name were limited to Eris and one other.

“Haahhahaaa! I see, if you compare me to Orsted then I'm certainly a small fry! I see, I see, so it's him that you want to cut down! So there was someone besides me who wanted to cut him down!”

The Sword God energetically slapped his knee while cheerfully laughing. Everyone there gulped at the strange scene. That Sword God was laughing. Arrogant words were thrown at him, he was called a small fry, but he was laughing. It was something impossible.

However, only the Sword God knew. To plan on killing Dragon God Orsted. It meant, in other words, to aim to become the strongest.

“But you know,”

The laughter suddenly stopped. A complete silence returned to the area.

“It's easy just to say it. Can you do it?”

“I will.”

Eris declared it as if it was natural. There was neither fighting spirit, nor hesitation. She had eyes with not a single hesitation. The Sword God raised the edges of his mouth.

“Alright. Let's see your sword. Jino, be her opponent.”

“Eh!? Y-, yes!”

Called by his uncle, Jino Brits stood up. Of about the same age as him, a girl. Making his uncle laugh with empty words; a disagreeable girl. He wanted to give her a scare.

"He's our youngest one. Though he's younger than you and still naive, he's pretty good, you know."

Eris and Jino received the wooden swords tossed over by the other Sword Saints.

"Then in the center"

"Uraaaaaaaa!"

The moment she received the wooden sword, Eris struck Jino. Jino couldn't even respond. With a single strike to the wrist, he dropped the sword, and before he could even surrender, no, without even realizing what had happened, he was cut down by the sword. A perfect killing intent. Jino saw a delusion of being cut down with a real sword, and fainted.

"Wha-!?"

Everyone there was dumbfounded. As if they'd accept something so ridiculous. At the very least they should've faced each other in the middle, right? To start with, Jino wasn't even facing Eris at the time. She was a coward. So thought the Sword Saints. Since the boy that she saw as her younger brother was taken down by a sneak attack, of course Nina was the same.

The ones who didn't think so were four people; the two Sword Emperors, the Sword King, and finally the Sword God.

"See? Naive, right?"

"He really was, huh."

Eris's short hair swayed and she was already taking note of the movements of everyone there. So that it would be fine even if anyone attacked, at any time. Without any useless movements, she looked over her surroundings in contempt.

The Sword God didn't criticize Eris. He merely judged that the beaten and unconscious Jino was naive. It was his fault for letting down his guard when the two of them were holding swords; he was stupid for not considering the possibility of being suddenly attacked. This was what the Sword God had implied.

"Alright, next is Nina. You're up. This time start after you face each other in the center. Though surprise attacks are good too, this time show me your sword after I give you the signal."

At those words, one of the Sword Saints turned to Nina and tossed her a wooden sword. The instant she caught it, Nina did a double take at the Sword Saint. It was a little heavy. It was a wooden sword with metal inside.

"..."

The one who had thrown it nodded. Seeing that, Nina trembled once and then returned the nod. She would kill this insolent girl. Even Nina was a Sword Saint. It wasn't as though she hadn't killed someone with her sword before. Though it was a little cowardly... Eris was the one who was rude just now. Considering Jino's humiliation, she deserved to be paid back with certain death.

The two lined up in the center and took their stances.

"Begin!"

At the Sword Saint's signal, Nina swung her sword. It was one of the forms in the Sword God Style that she had practiced countless times, and with this she would knock down the red-haired girl. That single swing of hers was filled with fighting spirit.

The swords collided. In that instant, with a dry sound, Eris' sword was smashed to pieces.

Nina was convinced of her victory. Now she would just swing into Eris's temple without mercy. So she thought.

That moment, Nina's face was hit. Next her chin was hit. While she was stumbling, she was sent flying with a kick, and then mounted. Before she realized, her two arms were checked by Eris's legs.

When she looked up, she saw a bloodthirsty devil with its fist raised.

"S-, stop! St-, stop it!"

When these words were spoken, Nina had already been hit several times. Blood ran from her nose, her teeth were broken, and she had fainted. A pool of steaming liquid

that was streaming from her crotch now spread across the ground.

Eris slowly stood up, and then she picked up the iron-cored wooden sword that Nina had been using. She then snorted. She kicked Nina over to where Jino was laying unconscious.

“Does this place have nothing but naive people?”

“Y-... You bastard!”

The swordsmen flew into a rage. Shouts of 'coward' and other abuse could be heard. However, those who were Sword King and above, on the contrary, overlooked those swordsmen indifferently. They understood who was in the right.

“My bad, my bad. I misread you a little, huh. I'll be your opponent.”

However, when the Sword God stood up, the two Sword Emperors' expressions showed a little surprise.

“There's no need for Shishou to do it personally.”

“Ghyslaine, she's your... 'disciple', wasn't it? In that case, I'll go.” [63]

Ignoring her words, he grasped his own sword. He was serious.

Seeing this, Eris strongly kicked off the ground. She leapt backwards to where she had left her sword. Then she immediately removed the scabbard from the partner that she have gone on many journeys with.

“Don't panic, I'll properly give you a handicap after all... Oh, that's a good sword you have. It's one of Yulian's, right?”

“I don't know. It's something I got from the Migurd clan, you see.”

“Ah, I see... This guy here is also one of Yulian's works.”

While saying this, the Sword God slowly drew his sword. It was a sword with a sparkling golden blade. It was one of the Sword God's seven swords. It was one of the 48 swords that the Demon Realm's craftsman, Yulian Jalisco created, from the bones of King Ryuuou^[64]. The demon sword “Windpipe(Nodobue)”.^[65]

The Sword God held the demon sword loosely in his hand. The Sword Saints all held their breaths. It was rare to see the Sword God get serious outside of training the Sword Emperors.

And then the Sword God light-heartedly muttered,

“Alright. I'm coming.”

In an instant, Eris was blown away. Her body flew outside, smashing down the gate in the process, and smacked into a pile of snow.

Before anyone had noticed, the Sword God was already standing still in the terminal position of a strike; no one had seen the motion at all. [66]

“Amazing!”

“Amazing!”

“You were truly amazing!”

The surrounding swordsmen unanimously praised the swing of his sword. It wasn't the power of the demon sword; the touki^[67] emitted from the Sword God had blown Eris away. That insolent person had died. Everyone thought as much. However, Eris hadn't died.

“Uu... Guu...!”

Raising a groan, she struggled weakly in the snow. Though she received an attack from the Sword God, she was alive? Nay, the Sword God had gone easy on her. However, there was no need for the Sword God to get serious on a stray dog like her. Afterwards it'd be fine just to excommunicate her from the Sword God Style, and throw her out into the snow. However, the Sword God spoke words completely contrary to the expectations of the Sword Saints.

“Ghyslaine, treat Eris. From today onwards, she's a Sword Saint. Starting from tomorrow, the great me will teach her the sword.”

The grinning swordsmen froze in place. 'teach her the sword' meant, in other words, that she would become the Sword God's direct pupil. It was something that hadn't

happened since Ghyslaine; she was the best pupil, amongst the best pupils.

“Ridiculous! The title Sword Saint is something that isn't given to anyone but those who have learned the “Longsword of Light”! To teach a brat who's the same as a barbarian^[68] is...!”

The Sword God raised his sword towards the man who had spoken and cut off his words.

“Didn't she just defeat two of the people who had learned the “Longsword of Light”?”

“H-, however...”

“A “Sword God” isn't something that you can become simply by memorizing a skill or something, you know? Even though someone special like me didn't get special treatment, why is there a need to treat Sword Saints that way?”

“...I've spoken inexcusably.”

The swordsmen didn't say anything more. They had noticed that their feelings were those of jealousy. The Sword Saints understood that jealousy was something that would dull their swords.

But they misunderstood. The Sword God advocated swordsmanship based on desire. According to this, the majority of those with dirty emotions like jealousy would have their swords sharpened instead.

However, the Sword God didn't intend on spoon-feeding such important things. He believed that if they were the type who couldn't realize this themselves, then it was pointless even if you told them.

Like that, whilst creating a striking impression, Eris became a Sword Saint.

2

Nina hated Eris. She had been knocked out in front of a large group of people, and made to wet herself after all. Humiliation. Right, she was humiliated.

The sudden appearance of that barbarian... When her sword was broken, she started hitting her opponent instead; she clearly had the attitude of a bad child. She was unsuitable for the title 'Saint'; at least within the Sword God Style. That was what everyone had been saying.

For nearly two years, the words directed at her had no effect. She was completely left out by Jino and the people around his age.

However, everyday Eris would do nothing but continue her training with either the Sword God or Ghyslaine. When she slept she'd be in Ghyslaine's room. There was no contact between them, and she had no need to converse with Nina and the rest.

Speaking of conversations, at most they'd exchange a few quarrelsome words during the day of the month that all pupils practiced together. In regards to that practice, Eris and Nina's abilities rivaled each other. Nina thought that she had won more often. Dropping your sword or breaking your sword counted as defeat, and as long as such rules were in place, she wouldn't fall behind, Nina thought. Though that was part of her "naivety", this wasn't something that she would come to realize until a later time.

A rivalry. That was how it was seen from outside, but to Eris it was as clear as writing that Nina and her lot had no fangs.

On a certain day... Nina was chatting with some girls around her age. As befitting of young girls, they were talking about things like who was cool among the other students, or how had their first time with the person they were dating been. They talked about those kind of topics.

Because Nina had been training earnestly in the sword since she was born, she wasn't good with topics like this. She thought that they would continue to be irrelevant. If you asked her about men that she was close to, the only one who came to mind was her 4 years younger cousin, Jino, but they were raised together like siblings so she couldn't think of him like that. As a result, she lived only for the sword. For if she didn't, she would be left behind by Eris. She was thinking that she would hate to lose to Eris.

The one who happened to pass by there was Eris. There was steam rising from her whole body. Even when Nina had been chatting with these girls, Eris had been training. When Nina considered this, she lost her cool a little.

As a result, she said,

"Hmph, still training even at this hour, huh! You'll probably never get a man your whole

life, huh! It's fine if you want to stay a virgin forever and live for nothing but the sword!"

Even though she herself was inexperienced, she said something like that. However, because it was something that she was worried about herself, and something that hurt her as well, she assumed that Eris would also be hurt by it.

"Hu...!"

However, Eris snorted with laughter. In the face of that triumphant expression, Nina winced.

"Wh-, what?"

"Sorry, but I'm not a virgin."

That she was a little proud about it, and that she was blushing a little as well.

That was what everyone was thinking.

"Eh...!? That's a lie, right? Eh? Who? With who?"

Nina couldn't hide the unrest in her heart at all. While unsightly and flustered, she started questioning Eris.

"Someone I grew up together with."

Though Eris was usually taciturn, when it came to that man, she continued to talk about one thing after another. About how they had grown up together since they were young, about how they traveled from the Demon Continent to their hometown, about how when they met the Dragon God that man managed to land a hit, and then, about how she had her first time with that man. About how it was for his sake that she wanted to become stronger.

It was a love story that detailed the events from when she fell in love with him as a girl, until that love was fulfilled.

Nina was in complete shock. She had lost, she thought. She had completely lost.

Their swordsmanship was on par. However, she lost in age. Furthermore, the other

girl had a man.

The only thing left that Nina could do was deny that man's existence.

"Y-, you're lying! This is something Oto-san said! That the Dragon God wears something called "Dragon Holy Touki" so half-assed techniques can't wound him! You're just making stuff up! That person actually doesn't exist, right!? Admit that it's a lie. It's still not too late to say so, you know?"

"It's not a lie. Rudeus isn't half-assed!... But, right now I'm not suitable for Rudeus. I have to get stronger."

Eris said that at the end, and firmly clenched her fists. Her eyes carried flames of determination, and ignoring Nina and the rest, she returned to the "Space of Martial Training"^[69] training place that she had come from.

Dumbfounded, Nina watched her walk away. The one person she thought would absolutely never beat her in this had already surprised her. Nina was dizzy from the reality of this.

3

Though she hadn't had one yet, that barbarian had a lover. As if Nina could bear with such a thing. She decided that it was definitely a lie. That Rudeus person or whatever was imaginary, she thought.

On one of her free days, she headed towards an information broker and gathered information on Rudeus.

'Well, it won't be easy; he's fictional after all' she thought.

Contrary to her wishes, she immediately managed to find some.

Rudeus Greyrat. Born in Buina village of the Fedoa region of the Kingdom of Asura. At 3, he became the pupil of the (Water Saint Ranked at the time) Water King Ranked magician, Roxy Migurdia. At 5 he became a Water Saint Ranked magician. At 7 he became the home tutor of the Stronghold City Roa's mayor's daughter, Eris Boreas Greyrat. After that, his location became unknown due to the Teleportation Incident. However, lately he was in the northern parts of the Central Continent and made a

name as the adventurer "Rudeus of the Quagmire". He was now a Special Student at the Magic University and staying at Sharia, the capital city of the Kingdom of Ranoa. He was admired by certain types of adventurers, and there was also a rumor about him single-handedly slaying a stray dragon.

He was real. He wasn't just some prince from Eris's delusions.

While yielding to this, Nina thought to herself that he wasn't a big deal. Though everything up until age 7 was amazing, in the end he was just an adventurer. He hadn't even become Water King Ranked, he had a lame name like Quagmire, and he was talented as a child, that's all. There was no mistaking it. So thought Nina.

Then she thought of something bad.

'If I defeated this Rudeus, made him into a slave and brought him here, what kind of face would Eris make, I wonder?' she thought.

No time like the present. Nina prepared for a journey that very same day, and demonstrating the impatience inherited from her father, she jumped on a horse. Like that, she began her trip to the Kingdom of Ranoa. Though it was still winter, Ranoa was very close by. With one of the fine horses raised in the Holy Land of Swords, you wouldn't even need 2 months to get there. She was impatient.

After easily finishing her journey in a month, she arrived at the Magic University. There she was shocked.

Nina had honestly made light of magicians.

'Without any decent training, they were a bunch that did nothing but mumble some vague chants or something, thinking they could get stronger that way.' she thought.

However, walking down the road were muscular men. For some reason there were a lot of Beast People, and people dressed like warriors. Though there were also those in robes, and those in cute uniforms, the overwhelming majority had robust bodies. Nina was ashamed of her ignorance of the world; her view of magicians had been narrow until she was as old as 18.

At any rate, Nina called out to a nearby young man. He was well-built and was a Beast Race who definitely appeared to be a warrior. She tried asking him about Rudeus's

whereabouts. When she did, he replied that he was heading to Rudeus as well. Thinking 'this is perfect', Nina followed him.

They arrived at a uniformed youth. He was said to be Rudeus.

He was just as Nina had imagined. Though he had trained his body, she couldn't feel any ambition from him. Though his face wasn't bad, he had an unconfident expression, and he had no appeal as a man. He was perfect for Eris.

'Right, time to beat him down...' but the instant she thought this, the young Beast Man raised his voice.

"I assume that you are the lone horseman who defeated a stray dragon, A-Ranked adventurer Rudeus of the "Quagmire"! I challenge you to a customary courtship duel!"

Nina was shocked. The man had suddenly challenged Rudeus to a duel.

"No, I have piano lessons so..."

Though it was unmanly, Rudeus immediately rejected him. However, with this or that reason, the man ended up in front of Rudeus and because there was no use talking, he attacked.

Nina thought that in the next instant, Rudeus would be cut to pieces. Though he wasn't as skilled as she was, Nina could still see that the young Beast Man was quite strong. And Rudeus was a magician. The common sense of a swordsman dictated that as long as you closed the distance, a magician was weak. At this distance there was nothing a magician could do.

However, the result was the opposite. In the blink of an eye, Rudeus had defeated the young man. It might have been within three seconds. It was truly an instant.

Then without paying another glance at the dumbfounded Nina, he quickly went away.

4

And then, after Nina somehow managed to compose herself again, once again she asked about for Rudeus's whereabouts. She then found out that he was at the library. When she headed towards it, she found a huge line of Beast People lined up in front of

the building. Thinking that it had nothing to do with her, she made to enter the library when,

“Are you here to duel Rudeus?”

She was asked this by a young Beast Man.

“Y-, yeah. That's right.”

She replied as such without thinking.

“Then get to the back of the line! Don't cut in!”

He became angry. According to what she had heard, the people in this line were all here to duel Rudeus. There were 30 people. While trembling in trepidation at the reality of this, she quietly waited in line. When she did, the Beast Man who was in front said “It's a pity, huh?”. She had no idea what was going on. She just waited like that, and it became afternoon.

Then 'he' appeared.

A demon with pitch black skin, like a lump of muscle. With a very self-important attitude, he overlooked the surroundings.

“Hohh, is this a line for an attraction or something!?”

“It's the queue for dueling Rudeus Greyrat!”

“What! There are this many of you!? Huhahahaha! Rudeus is a pretty popular guy, isn't he!? I don't mind waiting, but isn't there any way I can get further ahead!?”

The people around became angry at the man who boldly declared this. They had lined up and waited for their turn. Nina was indignant as well. Even she who had come here after a long journey was waiting for her turn.

'Stop acting so conceited and get in line!' she thought.

Then, a certain idiot said it. He said what he shouldn't have said.

“If you wanna get ahead no matter what, then how about you do so after beating down

everyone in front of you!?"

"Huhahahaha! That's fine! I'm good with it! Well then, all of you come at once! In deference to the guts you have for challenging me, I'll let you attack first!"

At that excessive haughtiness, everyone there became mad with rage.

"What did you say!?"

"Don't get too carried away!"

Then thinking to let this guy know his place, they attacked. Before she knew what was going on, Nina was participating in the attack as well.

Then, she lost.

Though Nina was attacking as well, the demon stayed composed. Their swords couldn't pierce that black skin. After letting loose her blood-lust she finally wounded him with her Longsword of Light, but he healed in an instant.

"I am the Demon King Badigadi! Huhahahaha! If you can defeat me I'll grant you a hero's title!"

Nina ought to have been putting up a good fight. However, her attack power was too low, and after her tactics failed to strike home multiple times, she was caught, defeated, and her beloved sword was bent.

Then came the terror, and the chaos.

'Why am I doing something like fighting a Demon King here?'

'To begin with, why is a Demon King of the Demon Continent at a place like this?'

That was what everyone there was wondering.

A little while after Nina was beaten, everyone else was as well. Miraculously, though there were injured people, no one had died. He had held back. When she realized this, tears fell onto Nina's fists. However, though it was mortifying, she had already lost her sword and there was nothing left that she could do.

"...The heck is this?"

Around the time everyone had been defeated, Rudeus appeared from inside the

library. After saying this and that, he moved locations.

While frowning due to the pain in her body, Nina followed them.

They arrived at a large field. Rudeus and the Demon King continued to glare at each other. Seemingly having some sort of conversation, sometimes the Demon King's loud laughter could be heard. However, Nina couldn't tell what they were talking about. The duel began when a terrifyingly fast youth brought a staff to Rudeus.

The duel between Rudeus and the Demon King.

Nina watched the duel from beginning to end. Rudeus received the staff, and unsealed it. After some brief words, he pointed his staff at the Demon King, and in that moment,

The Demon King's torso was shot off.

An opponent that she was helpless against was defeated in one blow. In the face of that reality, Nina was purely dumbfounded. She couldn't remember what happened afterwards very well.

Nina returned to the Holy Land of Swords. Now that she knew the level of strength that Eris wanted to reach, Nina was shocked. While shocked, the gaze that she turned on the endeavoring Eris had somewhat softened.

Then, since that time, Nina turned over a new leaf. She renewed the effort she had put in up until now, and to deal with cases where her sword broke again, she now carried two swords. She stopped looking down on attacks from Eris's fists, and distanced herself from the trivial acquaintances from her age group.

After that, she became a true rival to Eris but... That's another story.

Incidentally, upon hearing about the news of the Demon King's attack, the Sword God had grabbed his sword with great enthusiasm written on his face, but hearing Nina's story, he looked disappointed and returned his sword to its sheath.

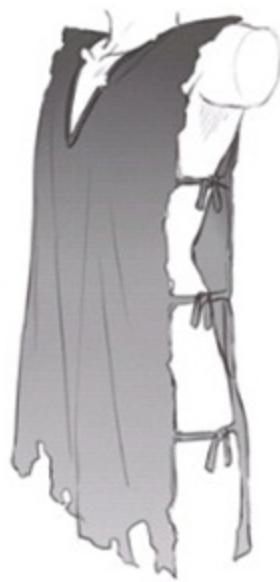
ジュリエット



キャラクターデザイン
ジュリエット&フィッツ



奴隸服



サイド 1



サンク"ラス 無し

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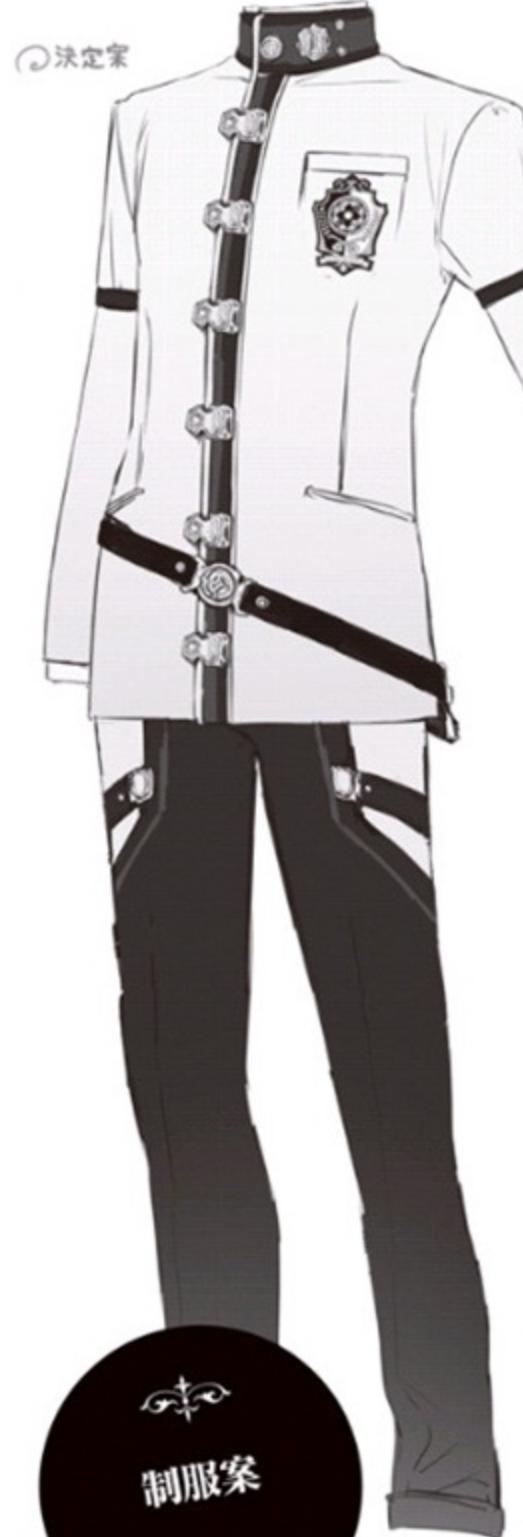
フルセナ



リニア



男子制服



女子制服



制服案

エンブレム



①



②



③



①



②



③



TRANSLATOR'S NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. This time written as “god's child” and not as “shrine maiden” like usual.
2. Sarubobos are red human-shaped dolls, with no facial features, made in a variety of sizes.
3. A sound that is used for “I see”, “hmmm”, or “really now?”
4. \$10.
5. His name is just 'bulldog' with less emphasize on the 'g' sound (or you could say less emphasize on the 'do' sound depending on how you want to describe it).
6. Uses 'mesu', which means female, but specifically used for animals.
7. Lit. “make them know how we feel.”
8. Fumi-e. Incidentally, the concealed Christians particular to Japanese history are called Kirishitan, specifically Kakure Kirishitan (hidden Kirishitan).
9. Rinia has 'nya' scattered within her sentence, and actually doesn't end sentences in 'nya' that often. It's generally a replacement for 'na' sounds which Japanese has a lot of.
10. Pursena ends things in 'nano' or 'no', which has uses that change depending on context, but can generally be described as something that places emphasis. Her swearing (fakku nano) is also the same.
11. He says a phrase that means to 'hate absolutely everything about a person'. Then the next line says something like 'there's an expression like that'. Since we don't have an equivalent in English, left it out.
12. Kanji reads 'ran'(disorder/disturb) 'ma'(magic), but the name of this spell is read aloud as Disturb Magic (in English).
13. Throw Character is a type in fighting games. Zangief (Street Fighter) or Jeffry McWild (Virtua Fighter) for example.
14. Kamidana. Made small enough to place in house.
15. Note sure if anyone else plays porn games, but generally each heroine has their own route/story.
16. Literally “upper slip spreads”. It's an expression that Japanese say that people

make naturally when they have perverted feelings. Apparently it's not just a saying?

17. It doesn't specify just how he's better than these teachers. Just that he's better, so it might be that he uses the magic better, or he can use more magic, or anything else.
18. Also translated as bestowal-type in some chapters.
19. If you don't already know about this, you must have a watch:
<http://knowyourmeme.com/memes/people/billy-herrington-gachimuchi>
20. The raws actually use a certain term for 'spirit'. This particular 'spirit' word when combined with 'essence/liquid/extract' gives the proper term for semen. However, just 'spirit' by itself isn't explicitly saying semen; here it's implied to be semen. I decided to reverse this, since in English we don't think 'spirit' implies 'semen', whereas we do for 'essence'. But yes, strictly speaking it says 'spirit'. If you want to know how prolific this spirit word is, just to let you know it's used in stuff like fairy (youSEI, 妖精) and psyche/spirit/mental (SEIshin, 精神).
21. Would usually translate as 'oh my', but that's too extreme in this context. It's just 'oh', so I thought I'd leave it in. I should mention it but she speaks ending her sentences in 'wa'/'desu wa' etc.
22. This is supposed to be more polite/grateful, but can't make it work in English.
23. Sorry. This was supposed to be more polite/fancy, but I don't know how fancy people ask others out.
24. Actually says "Aeiii? Why? Why a ninja?" It's a meme about Ninja Slayer, and wouldn't be funny even if I explained it. <https://twitter.com/NJSLYR>
25. Read menstruation absence.
26. He starts using archaic forms of I here. Samurai-like?
27. Normal is Engrish, and I'm not 100% sure on the term used for homosexual stuff: "homo homo shii?"
28. Rudeus is using a weird mix of Japanese tones in his dialogue here maybe some reference to it?
29. Gyaku kansetsu, might have some relation to the unknown reference,
<http://dic.nicovideo.jp/oekaki/574703.png> ?
30. Koku = aviation? sanbo = staff officer, but it feels more like a reference to something. Air Force/Pilot Officer or something along those lines that

desperately wants to become a Leader.

31. The word used for corpse here is shishi, the word for beast is also shishi, heaps of beasts, heaps of corpses.
32. Read attempt (at crime).
33. Might have been, he laughed “amused by my words”.
34. A “Lone Ranger” reference, more specifically, how it was handled in the Japanese translation: The Indian sidekick Tonto says “White man lies. Indian does not lie.” The latter part is apparently a well known buzzphrase in Japan.
35. A Char Custom reference. “Char Custom refers to Char's tendency to highly customized standard Mobile Suits to his exact specifications and generally making the said units far more potent than normal. This usually involves the character coloring his suits red, which led some people to go as far as to label anything red 'Char-custom', and to make vague references to the '3 times more potent' line in the original Gundam series (e.g. A red pencil might write 3 times faster, or is 3 times more likely to break).”
36. Macross series reference. The pineapple salad is a symbol of death flags for characters.
37. Probably referring to side = hand.
38. He shortened hair accessory Engrish to heakuse.
39. Shite is to do, and the way this line is worded is like a play on words in regards to that.
40. Literally, he lent them one of his arms.
41. A traditional style of stand-up comedy in Japanese culture. Manzai usually involves two performers (manzaishi)—a straight man (tsukkomi) and a funny man (boke)—trading jokes at great speed.
42. <http://www.mangaupdates.com/series.html?id=15478> ? Then again I guess it could just be referring to how actual doctors in Japan act.
43. Keri = Kerry/Kelley/Clear Soup? Curry? In earlier chapters he called it curry soup so its most likely the same meaning here.
44. Saio/Saiou? Feels like a word I've heard “okay or splendid”? But only thing I can come up with is great/best feels off in this case.
45. Genkin refers to money or self interest, this seems like an expression I'm not sure how to word. Feeling relieved for your life is self interest?
46. Flag, route are in English, she also uses inga or Karma/Fate/Cause&Effect.

47. Trip is in Engrish, think Time Slip across worlds.
48. Nana = Seven, Hoshi = Star, Shizuka = Silent/Silence.
49. I have a feeling this was intended to be a play on words, tabi no tobira, tabi = journey/travel/trip, Trip is used to refer to the transfer across worlds previously. So, it would be a Door of Transfer/Travel. Someone suggested Travel Door from Dragon Quest.
50. Teni = transfer, transition, metastasis, movement, I prefer teleport.
51. Alternative law of cause and effect, I think causality works better for this meaning.
52. She was saying if Fitts realized it and came to that conclusion on his own after hearing the story it would be more suspicious or cause more conflict.
53. Watari ni fune, ship ferrying across might be a better way of wording this expression? Basically expression means getting what you need just when you need it.
54. That double reference, HxH + DBZ, actually not 100% on the HxH since Nen is a pretty general term.
55. Read as ED.
56. Something like a small hut/cabin.
<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/location/spot/festival/kamakurasnow.html>
57. Ago de tsukatte, using the jaw/chin, I'm not sure what was meant here, but I assume something like ordering her around as a younger disciple rather than a slave.
58. 毛玉 Kedama from Touhou
59. Do = earth, I'm not sure what kind of pun he was going for here, either "earth is good" or "thanks to earth" honestly, this one is lost on me, just know it's a bad pun.
60. This isn't a important reference or anything but that is the book he was going to buy when he was still teaching Eris. It was priced at 10 Asura gold coins(\$10,000). When he came back to buy the book it had already been sold.
61. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dysmetria>
62. Strictly speaking it's 'Burn(emotionally)[a command; telling her to burn], Mad Dog' but Enter the Dragon was released in Japan as 'Burn, DRAGON' so I felt like going with it. Honestly, she really does 'enter'.
63. The reason 'she is' is present, and 'wasn't' is past is because they're two

distinct thoughts. It's presented this way in the original text, so I used different tense to represent this. i.e. Ghislaine, she's your... (disciple, right?) (The word you used was) 'disciple', wasn't it? In that case, I'll (be the one to fight her).

64. Says king dragon king, so I didn't know what to do and left 'dragon king' as ryuuou.
65. Read aloud as 'noh doh boo eh'.
66. An attack in martial arts usually starts with the chamber/set-up (positions the body for the movement), then goes into the follow-through (the movement itself), then ends in the terminal position (usually the position where the body has fully extended for the strike). Basically no one saw his first two steps; by the time anyone had noticed, he was already in the final step (the static terminal position).
67. Literally 'fighting spirit', but in a lot of series it's not 'fighting spirit' the way we think, but more like a 'fighting variant' of 'ki' or a type of 'ki' that comes from one's will to fight. In this series it seems to be mana or something...
68. This term 'yamazaru' literally means 'mountain monkey'. It's basically used to refer to either people from the boonies, or just, uncultured people who lack etiquette (i.e. monkeys). Since these sword dudes apparently live on a snow island in the middle of fucking nowhere, I'll go with the latter and translate it as barbarian.
69. Uses a rather strange term - renki (training spirit). It's obviously a made-up compound word, but upon research seems to have martial connotations. The only notable thing I could find on it was a martial arts training method called Renki Juushin Hou (the training spirit gentle truth method) which was apparently a martial training method allegedly based on the training methods of Chen Variant Taijiquan. Point is, it's just a training room, but the name is meant to be imposing and meant to bring to mind special martial arts for experts.



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