



QUEEN'S BLADE
REBELLION

えいわが描く超美麗イラストストーリービジュアルブック

激動編
Queen's Blade
リベリオン
REBELLION
美闘士戦記

豪華ドラマCDつき 出演 水橋かおり 小林ゆう 戸松遥
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叛乱の騎士姫 アンネロツテ



騎士としての誇りと正義感に満ちた「叛乱軍」のリーダー。不器用で抜けているところがあるが、人をひきつけるカリスマを持ち、仲間達は彼女をほおってはおけない。女王に滅ぼされたクロイツ辺境伯に男子として育てられてきた。自在に召喚できる異界馬アンプロシウスと槍に変化する魔剣グリム ヴィナスが武器。闘いの中で感情が高ぶると魔人の血に目覚め「狂騎士アンネロツテ」に豹変する。

錬金軍師 ユイット



リトルエルフ族。偉大な錬金術師シアンの子。アンネロツテとは年下の幼馴染であり、昔の癖が抜けず「お兄ちゃん」と呼ぶ。幼くして天才的な頭脳を持ち、叛乱軍の軍師であり、軍略で敵を退ける。性格は甘えん坊で心優しいが、大義のためには冷徹な軍略をも実行することができる。クロックワーク・オートマトンであるヴァンテを操縦し、戦うこともできる。

雷雲の女王 クローデット



大陸を統べる現女王。かつては「雷雲の将」と呼ばれ、公明正大な人物だったが、その厳格さが度を越して無慈悲な君主となる。「魔導石」技術により、文明の急速な進行に成功。また伝統的な貴族制を無力化し、生まれを問わず豊かになる機会を民に与えた。しかし自らを神に選ばれし永遠の女王であると宣言し、闘技会を廃止した。また大陸支配をもくろむ邪悪な「沼地の魔女」との関係も噂される。

超振動戦乙女 ミリム



貧しい家族を養うために田舎の村から出てきた健気で平凡な村娘。戦いとはおよそ無縁な、虫も殺せぬ弱気な性格の持ち主。甘い誘いに釣られて、鋼鉄参謀ユーミルの実験素体となった。その結果、あらゆる攻撃を弾く防御力を誇る美闘士となる。その秘密は鐘の三箇所に取り付けられた超振動魔導水晶。弱点は魔力が発生する時にクリスタルが激しく振動するため落ち着いて戦うことができないこと。

錬金鋼人 ヴァンテ



ユイトが母にもらったクロックワーク・オートマトン。ユイトにとっては遊び相手兼ボディーガード兼お手伝いさん兼心から甘えられる相手。動力はねじ巻き式。ユイトが持つ“操縦器”に命令を書き込むことで、行動する。しゃべれる言葉は「ガオーン」だけで、そもそも感情があるのかどうかよくわからない。ミサイルパンチやソニックブラストといった錬金兵器を多数装備している。

幻影の戦士 マリア



神出鬼没、叛乱軍の手助けをしてくれる戦士。誰もがその正体を知っているような気がするが、なぜか誰もそのことには触れないらしい。特別強そうには見えないが、彼女と相対するものは知らぬうちに打ち負かされてしまう。ある意味、最強の存在。そんな彼女の弱点は、その身にかけられた睡眠の呪いである。1日16時間以上の眠りが必要であり、強烈な眠気が断続的に突然訪れてしまうのだ。

牙を統べる者 エリナ



現女王直属の暗殺部隊「牙の暗殺団」を統べる首領。クローデットの腹違いの妹で側近。性格は残酷で、自己中心的。愛する姉以外の他者にはまったく興味が無い。特に次姉レイナへは異常なほどの想いを寄せているが、現在行方不明の彼女を積極的に追いかけてなくなったのが、彼女の謎である。以前は敬遠していたクローデットのことだが、最近はちょっと気になっているらしい。

鋼鉄参謀 ユーミル



かつてクローデットとの闘いで自分の武器を破壊されたため、一族の掟により服従することになったドワーフの姫。しかし、計略と発明の才能を発揮し、いつしか女王の側近中の側近に登りつめる。昔に比べて驚くほど冷静な性格になっており、当時のよく涙目になっていた可愛いユーミルを知る者たちからは別人のようだと噂されている。

Chapter 1: Beautiful Fighters Hunt

In the dense forest, through the gap between the many trees concealing the heavens like a ceiling, a pale moonlight shined on the bonfire as if reproving it.

There were three girls around the bonfire — The armor-clad silver-haired girl was the only daughter of the deceased Margrave Kreutz and also a knight, the “Princess Knight” Annelotte, the Little Elf girl with genius intellect and daughter of the Great Alchemist Cyan, the “Alchemy Strategist” Yuit, and the Clockwork Automaton that protected Yuit, the “Alchemy Steel Woman” Vante.

“I want to sleep under a roof soon~”

Yuit complained while breaking and tossing dry branches into the bonfire. Annelotte answered her with a straight face.

“Tomorrow we’ll reach the Old Earldom. From there our objective, the Great Fang Mountain is very close, so be patient until then.”

“I know, I know but... Sleeping in the open also is rough for *big bro*, isn’t it?”

“Saying so won’t change the situation, so I’m not bothered with it.”

“Geez... That’s true though.”

“Also... The ‘Bandit of the Wilderness’ Risty... Should we really ask for her assistance?”

Annelotte muttered while looking at the bonfire, and this time it was Yuit who was cheering up.

“It’s going to be alright, surely.”

The way until here had been by no means uneventful.

One year ago the Queen’s Blade, the tournament with the Queen’s Throne to rule the Continent at stake had ended with the “The Queen” Aldra being defeated by the “Exiled Warrior” Leina.

Aldra’s reign of eight years was over and Leina became the new Queen... Or should have become, because instead of taking the Queen’s Throne, she disappeared without a trace.

In Leina’s place, her older sister who she defeated in the tournament, the “Lord of Thundercloud” Claudette was chosen as the Queen.

Claudette took the throne for herself, declared the abolishment of Queen’s Blade and started to oppress the people with heavy taxation and severe penalties.

The source of opposition is forcibly silenced by the strength of the elite troops under the Queen’s direct supervision.

The Margraviate of Kreutz under the govern of Annelotte’s father was also embroiled in the war and didn’t exist anymore.

Losing everything, including her family and homeland, Annelotte headed to Castle Gainos to defeat the Queen in revenge, in righteous indignation, but also in desperation.

Her raid ended in failure, but she was rescued afterwards from captivity in the deepest part of the Royal Castle by a mysterious swordswoman and, learning the limits of the strength of a single person, she began a journey to find companions.

Her story became one where she solicits the cooperation of the trusted beautiful fighters from among those who fought in the previous Queen’s Blade.

But that was not something easy. Since it was an insurrection against the Queen, they needed to trust her enough to become her companion. Excluding Elina and Ymir, the known followers of the current Queen, and Melona, Airi and Menace, the followers of the entity who had been planning to take over the Continent for a long time, the Marshland Witch, the number of people to turn to was very small.

Also, the participants of Queen’s Blade had no obligation to report their commitments after the tournament. Many beautiful fighters left the Capital and their whereabouts became unknown.

“Starting with the champion, the “Exiled Warrior” Leina, most of the participants of the tournament set off in a trip and their whereabouts are unknown.”

Yuit said, sighing.

“Also... There’s the “Musha-Miko” Tomoe that, even though we know where she is, we can’t go meet her so easily... And there are others like her.”

“Hinomoto, huh... So far away. However, if needed... Then we must surely go.”

Annelotte muttered to herself, thinking about the foreign country across the sea.

“The previous Queen, Aldra is also someone we should talk to, but... There are no clues of her whereabouts either.”

“Even though she is a former Queen?”

“I guess that once she was defeated she became just a nobody...”

“Gaon...”

To console Yuit who shrugged her shoulders sadly, Vante emitted a small growl.

"The rumors say that Aldra was separated from the demon that possessed her when she was defeated in Queen's Blade and now she is living somewhere as a normal person."

"Demon..."

That word pierced Annelotte's chest.

The demon blood dormant in her own body.

That was the fangs she bared during a crisis regardless of her will, a frightening power that tried to crush even those she needed to protect.

"Hyper Vibration Valkyrie" Mirim, the strongest beautiful fighter that the Queen's confidant, the "Iron Strategist" Ymir created.

During a battle with her, Annelotte received a serious wound and from the depths of her body, the cursed demon blood manifested.

She took out Mirim with a single blow, defeated the "Leader of the Fang" Elina and made Ymir retreat... Then she almost attacked her companion Yuit in that state. Annelotte vaguely remembered the scene like a dream.

"Was I... not the daughter of Father and Mother?"

With the power of a demon in the body of a human, they call the breed between demon and human Majin.

Annelotte suddenly murmured and Yuit shook her head with a doubting expression.

"No, there are cases where the demon blood manifests after many generations... It's rational to think that big bro's father, Margrave Kreutz also had demon blood."

"Father... A Majin?"

With that confident answer, Annelotte smiled a little.

"Even if that's true... It's better than being the daughter of some unknown people... Because Father was surely strong and gentle."

Those were her sincere feelings. Rather than think that her esteemed father was some stranger, it's better to say that the demon blood is an inheritance from many generations and that the demon blood flowing in her is not something to abhor but to be proud of.

However, there was still another question to bring up.

"Then... *My older sister is-*"

"Older sister? Big bro's *big sis*?"

"Yes, I feel that I had an older sister when I was young. Whenever I asked Father or Mother about it, they said I didn't... Because I felt I shouldn't ask anymore, I eventually forgot... Even so, sometimes I remember. It's not a misunderstanding or assumption. I have an older sister."

"Hm~m... If that's true, I think that we might meet her by chance since there aren't many Majin around."

"That's right... Thanks."

Before Yuit's kindness, she smiled spontaneously.

"C'mon, let's sleep. Tomorrow is the Great Fang Mountain... After all, we'll be meeting Risty and creating the Rebel Army to oppose the Queen."

"Hm, that's right... Vante, I'm counting on you, okay?"

"Gaoon!"

After seeing Vante nod when entrusted with the night watch, Annelotte and Yuit slept leaning against each other.

Who is Risty?



For big bro's sake, I've investigated about Risty!
She was the leader of the group of bandits that had their base in the previous territory of the Earl Vance, to the west of the Continent. She hated nobles, and stole money and goods from them to seemingly distribute them to people in trouble. This act is highly risky and isn't rational. Big bro, don't imitate her! At that time, Claudette was the Earl's general, it seems the wheel of fate was already turning. Since they were in opposite sides, they fought each other, and it seemed like they had a relationship where they recognized the other's true strength somewhat. Besides... yes, she's famous for being the person who gave the Earl heiress Leina a chance to leave on a wandering trip. I wonder if the bad girl kidnapped the caged lady? Big bro should take care as well!

Just a little while back.

A few days ago, before Annelotte and her companions arrived at the rugged and rocky mountain located to the south of the Old Earldom, the Great Fang Mountain.

According to the information that Yuit collected, that was where the "Bandit of the Wilderness" Risty had created the Rebel Army.

Or at least, that was where it existed... Until that day.

"Damn-, what are they-!"

Risty shouted, surrounded by unfamiliar enemies.

After the end of Queen's Blade and soon after Claudette's tyranny began, Risty had started to move.

You could understand much more by crossing swords with your life on the line than by using words. The Claudette that Risty knew was not a woman who would become a tyrant. She was supposed to be a righteous and respectable general, even though she was a bit of a thickhead. That was the reason for her rebel activities.

With this, Claudette could realize her mistakes. Even if that didn't happen, her misgovernment could be overthrown. This initiative might give courage to others who sensed the problems in the current system, so that they started uprisings in various places and supported each other. That was the objective.

However, that had been the dream until that day.

All of a sudden, the "enemies" appeared in the hideout.

They suddenly appeared in the late of the night.

Coming from the shadows, two girls from the outer world showed themselves wearing maid costumes and wielding large scythes. With very pale skin and lifeless eyes, the ghosts expressionlessly attacked the members of the hideout.

"You all run-! As long as you don't die, there are many chances to reorganize! Leave here to me and run away-!"

Agonizing cries in the hideout under the sudden surprise attack. A large shadow stood before Risty who was struggling by herself to allow as many companions as possible to escape.

"Don't get in the way-... Uah-!?"

Risty raised her mace to challenge the large enemy, but in the next moment she was lying on the ground, which took her some time to realize.

"W-... What's that... Ugh, uuh-..."

A single blow.

With a single blow, her weapon had been snapped, her armor had been broken and the strength to stand up had been taken from her.

Straining her remaining willpower, Risty raised her head biting her back teeth in agony and moaned.

"D-... Damn you... W-what... Are-...!"

The answer didn't come from the enemy cloaked in shadows, but from the ghost maids standing around Risty and her companions collapsed in the ground.

"This person-"

"This person-"

"Is our master-"

"Is our master-"

"The Marshland Witch."

"The Marshland Witch."

The maids' voice uttered in unison with a high-pitched voice like a bell, mocking Risty for her ignorance.

"Marshland... Witch, you say...? Ugh, uh, uuh-..."

While trying her best to endure the intense pain over her entire body, Risty glared at the enemy.

"I... Know-...! The Witch that wants to take over, bring dispute between people and hurt them...! She has been holed in that boring swamp all this time... What has she come for now-...!"

"The Marshland Witch was sleeping until now."

"Was... Sleeping, you say...?"

"That's right. She was accumulating her powers in order to bring up something even more powerful."

The Marshland Witch stared down directly at the eyes of Risty, who was looking at her from the ground.

Seized by those eyes like a bottomless swamp, a chill ran through Risty's entire body.

“However, the time to sleep is over. The Marshland Witch gained a new body and began a *Beautiful Fighters Hunt* by herself.”

“Beautiful Fighters Hunt... You mean-...?”

Answering to Risty’s moan, the maids enumerated familiar names one after another.

“‘Exiled Warrior’ Leina.”

“‘Musha-Miko’ Tomoe.”

“‘Fighting Instructor’ Alleyne.”

“All, all of them were hunted down.”

“By the hands of the Marshland Witch.”

“What...?”

For a moment, Risty became dumbfounded by the maids’ words. But quickly shifting back her willpower, she shouted back.

“Stop messing... Don’t mess with me! There’s no way that Leina would be killed by the likes of you-!”

“Yes, that’s right. The Marshland Witch hasn’t killed them. Also... ‘Bandit of the Wilderness’

Risty. You won’t be killed either.”

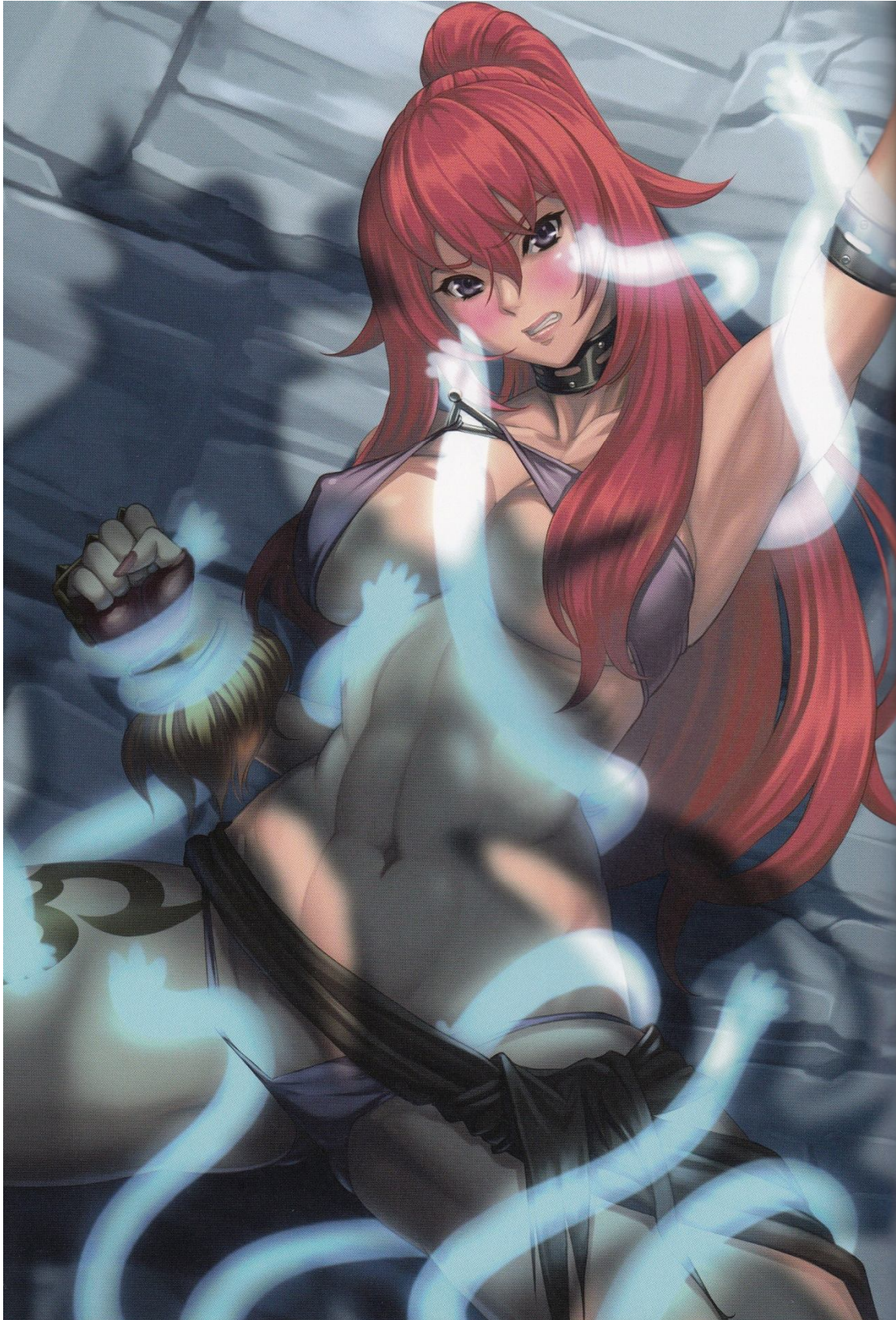
“W-what’s that...? What do you mean...?”

“The Marshland Witch shall grant you a life of suffering worse than death. That’s your destiny.”

Then the maids closed the circle around Risty. Feeling the danger, Risty’s body tried to stand up and run away. However, her body had no strength. Even though some time had passed indeed since she had been brought down by the Witch, her body was numb with the strength drained.

“U-ugh... What’s this-...?”

Before she knew it, numerous clods of wicked miasma stretched from the ground like tentacles and seized Risty’s body.



Snatching away her freedom, the tentacles sucked Risty's strength.

"M-my... Strength is-... What have you...!"

"Now come, entrust everything to the Marshland Witch. Your body and your soul."

Making her way through the maids, the Marshland Witch extended her hand towards Risty.

"S-stop-... Agh-...!"

Cold fingertips like ice touched Risty's numb body. A shiver ran through her entire body but unable to escape, Risty shouted.

"Don't... t-touch me...! Hih, ugh-...!"

The cold finger, as if examining Risty's trained muscles, rubbed her spine, shoulder and neck. "Without resistance, surrender everything to the Marshland Witch... "Bandit of the Wilderness" Risty"

The maids mocked Risty who was twisting her body to escape from the Witch's fingertip.

"Escaping is impossible... From today onwards, you're a cursed captive."

"Stop... Messing... With me..."

Clenching her teeth, Risty was barely able to say only that.

Before losing the consciousness, what Risty saw was the expressionless Marshland Witch showing an evil and lewd smirk...

A few days after the hideout attack, there was nothing when Annelotte and her companions arrived.

There wasn't a single corpse left in the hideout, but a wicked presence filled the place and their intuition could tell what had happened.

"What... Is this...?"

"I don't know... I don't know, but... Looks like something happened here."

Fearing an invisible presence, Yuit replies to Annelotte.

"However... I can say this for certain. *Onii-chan*... Looks like we won't meet Risty."

"That's right... It can't be helped, let's go. If we're fated to, the destiny shall make us meet."

Annelotte comforted Yuit with words full of hope, putting aside her own uneasiness.

Their tale of rebellion had entered in a new phase... It would take a long time before Annelotte and her companions realized that this was only its preface.

My Master



It's been a long time everyone. I'm Airi, the faithful servant of the great Marshland Witch. The great Marshland Witch is powerful, beautiful, and a wonderful Master who has the strong will to dominate the Continent. She's the most suitable person for devoting my life as a spirit to!

By the time of the previous Queen's Blade, my Master was too tired after working hard, and couldn't show her original strength. That's why both of us, Melona and me, participated in Queen's Blade, where we could eliminate the people who were likely to become a hindrance for my Master, and if I became Queen, I had planned to give my Master the Continent. However, this is embarrassing, but I... might have become too engrossed with sucking the energy out of all the beautiful fighters... *cough*, anyways, now that she's fully revived, the great, full-fledged Marshland Witch has begun acting. Nevertheless, due to my Master's condition, she can't kill anyone by her own hands. So that means, my power is needed once more!

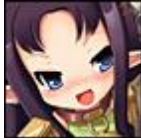
Rebellion's Room



"Long time no see, everyone. The Illustrated Story has resumed. Our battle will start once more!"



"It has been so long that I don't remember the story~"



"There was a summary in this chapter! But those who really want to know the details, they're in the 'Bitoshi Senki' sold by HobbyJAPAN. Its accompanying Drama CD is very recommended!"



"By the way, Yuit, leaving the advertising aside. Who's the Marshland Witch who's entered the stage?"



"You don't know, big bro? There were the *Mamono* Melona and Airi in the unlabeled Queen's Blade, right? The Marshland Witch is their master, the one who's plotting to take over the Continent."



"She's the Third Force aside the Queen, right?"



"That means that Claudette is an emerging force of evil while the Marshland Witch is a well-established force of evil."



"Sister Claudette is not a villain! Actually, I've never seen such a serious-minded person before."



"Wah-, you scared me!"



"Ah, it's Elina, the one who's rumored to be cheating on Leina with Claudette."



"Who's a cheater! I'm faithful to big sis Leina!"



“Claudette isn’t a villain, you say? How can a Queen that makes the people suffer and that attacked and destroyed my homeland not be a villain?”



“It’s something called different perspectives. But I don’t expect a countryside knight like you to understand!”



“Okay, okay, that’s enough. Let’s settle it during the story. After all, it’s more rational this way.”



“That’s exactly what I wanted.”



“(But by looking at the illustration above, it seems that Annelotte’s rival will be someone else...)”



“What is it, Mirim? If you want to say something, say it loud and clear!”



“Hueeee~ It’s nothiiiiing!”

Chapter 2: Inquisitor Sigui

Oh, God...

In this world, there are too many pitiful people who don't understand your love.

That's why I must teach them.

God's light doesn't shine only on chosen people... It pours into everyone, yes, even those called Demons that oppose God.

Your love... It's my mission to teach them, to convey it through me.

That's why, God...

Please, watch over me... Please, watch over my fight...

In that day, a storm blew in the Queen's Capital.

"Halt!"

Crossing their halberds to block the passage, the palace guards challenged the intruder before them.

"Beyond this point is Claudette's Ruling Castle of Gainos! No one is allowed to enter without a reason!"

Receiving the words filled with thirst for blood without moving a single eyebrow was the figure of a nun, a young woman.

With an unbalanced appearance between the beautiful abundant blond hair and the young and vivacious body almost bursting out from the priest's garb, the standing figure had an overbearing atmosphere.

The flanged mace shaped as Holy Symbol indicates she was a warrior priest. The minimal armor under the plain and unadorned priest's garb showed the confidence she had in herself.

A small sound of chains could be heard while she walked, but her graceful manners were unlike any others.

"No one? Without a reason?"

She repeated the guards' words very calmly.

"Uh...-"

An intimidating voice in contrast to the calm and refined demeanor. Pressured by it, the guards stepped back.

"I'll have you let me go through. I have business inside."

The guards became unable to oppose the nun with her words.

A little while after, the nun was in the deepest part of Castle Gainos, the Throne Room.

"I heard about an intruder, but... I didn't expect to have such a guest."

Queen Claudette's trusted advisor, the "Iron Strategist" Ymir, muttered.

"Lady "Inquisitor" Sigui...! What's the reason of this behavior coming from the spearhead of the elite corps under the direct supervision of the Pope's Diocese?"

"Because of the urgency, it's regrettable that there wasn't the leisure to send an emissary.

There's no need for an apology after such rudeness, right?"

"...Indeed."

Without changing her expression, Ymir grinded her teeth.

The Central Pope's Diocese exists to protect the State Religion and not only is treated as an independent nation, but also extraterritorial rights are granted to its High Priests.

The Pope's Diocese has the authority to judge even the Queen if she ever strays to the path of Paganism.

"Shouldn't Queen Claudette be aware of the reason for what I've come here?"

"..."

Claudette didn't answer Sigui's question.



“The right to remain silent doesn’t exist before God. If you won’t answer, then by God’s authority...”

Sigui narrowed her eyes and held her flanged mace.

“Even if it’s you, Her Majesty won’t yield. Mirim, you can be her opponent.”

“Y... Yes-!”

The "Hyper Vibration Valkyrie" Mirim came out hurriedly after having her name called. She was a mere village girl without any kind of fighting experience but gained the combat skills of a first-class swordswoman with the Hyper Vibration Sword and Hyper Vibration Armor created with the utmost essence of the alchemy by the "Iron Strategist" Ymir.

"I-I have no grudge against you, but if I don't fight, my family at home will starve... Please give up and get beaten down... Ee~i-!"

Even an amateur could tell that Mirim was full of apprehension while running towards Sigui holding high her sword and then swinging it down.

"Looks like an amateur."

Amazed, Sigui dodged easily while saying that.

However, when the greatsword was about to hit the stone pillar, the Hyper Vibration Crystals placed in the chest and waist parts of Mirim's armor sparkled and the weapon emitted a low noise.

"Hyaun-!"

Mirim let out a cry unwillingly because of the energy backflow. At the same time, her sword cut cleanly through the stone pillar like a hot knife through butter.

"This is... alchemy, right?"

Sigui muttered, looking at the clean-cut.

"Indeed, that's the *Strongest Beautiful Fighter Project*, developed using all my knowledge and technology. And its first guinea pig is this Mirim."

Sigui narrowed her eyes, looking at Ymir who answered full of pride.

"The alchemy is a heretic art that averts the eyes from His Providence... I must say that you have quite a lot of nerve to declare such thing to me, an 'Inquisitor'."

"Humph, regardless of what you say, the teachings of God can't stop the progress of the people.

Mirim, teach the lady Inquisitor the true meaning of the Earthly World's essence!"

"Uh, y-yes... I-I'm sorry... T-this is also my job-...!"

While apologizing, Mirim readied her Hyper Vibration Sword once again and attacked Sigui.

"Hyaan-!"

While enduring the torture of the Hyper Vibration Crystal, Mirim swung at Sigui. Sigui raised her flanged mace and muttered:

"Hyper Vibration Valkyrie Mirim. I declare you guilty."

She intended to hit hard the sword from Mirim's hands.

"I'll properly knock you down with an iron hammer."

"Kyaau-!"

An attack aiming for the wrist.

However, Sigui felt the shock of hitting the hard steel on her both hands.

"Ungh-!"

Trying to not let the flanged mace fall from her numbed hands, Sigui stepped back while clenching her teeth.

She took a posture expecting Mirim to come after her, but that was unnecessary.

"Ah, hyaaaaa... Hi-ia, aah-...!"

Standing in place, Mirim was groaning with kind of a sorrowful voice.

Sigui's attack hadn't inflicted any damage. There wasn't a single wound on Mirim's body.

"Any kind of attack is ineffective against the Hyper Vibration Armor developed by me! This is the warriors' figure of a new age born from the intelligence and knowledge of the Earthly World!"

Ymir proudly declared, as if triumphantly. Hearing her voice, Sigui straightened her posture and calmly replied:

"Such thing is fruit of the people's intellect that will surpass God's works? ...It's hard to say it, but looks like that you're the one that still doesn't understand God's great wisdom. "

"What... Did you say?"

Ymir gritted her teeth at the simple provocation.

"Mirim, show the lady Inquisitor! Teach her that your power and my alchemy are greater than that!"

"Y-... Yesh-!"

At Ymir's scolding, Mirim unsteadily readied her sword again.

Keeping her cool before the incoming attack, Sigui said:

"You still don't understand God's power and authority. I'll make you realize them now... With the power granted by God, the 'Holy Pose'...!"

"I wonder for how long you'll be able to say that. Go, Mirim!"

"Y-yaaaaa~!"

Sigui crouched to avoid Mirim's sword that was swung horizontally and her hip hit the floor. The sound of her flanged mace hitting the floor and rolling away could also be heard.

"Now!"

Ymir shouted with a victorious smile, thinking she had landed on her rear because of the momentum.

However, her expression changed to one of surprise in the next moment.

"W... What's that!?"

"'Holy Pose'... 'Awe'! Fear God's authority!"

Sigui discarded her weapon and while sitting down, she held her ankles and pulled her knees to her chest.

Looking at her pose, Claudette, who was silently watching the course of the events, muttered:

"O-ho... It's said that only a few chosen high priests are allowed to use the "Holy Pose" of Fear... I didn't expect you to be one of them."

"'H-Holy Pose: Fear'...? That was it, your Majesty...!?"

"That's right... By taking the Holy Poses that were recorded in the Ancient Scriptures, the body becomes the language to speak with God... That was a technique to borrow the power of fear from God by speaking directly to Him."

Such old-fashioned technique can't defeat my alchemy...

"How naive. Look, Ymir!"

"Wha...!"

Urged by the Queen, Ymir returned her attention to Mirim and Sigui.

"Y... Ymir-samaa... M-my body... I can't m-move~..."

Looking as if trying to pursue Sigui, who had fallen on the floor, Mirim's pose was frozen on the spot.

"What are you doing-!? Aren't you the Strongest Hyper Vibration Valkyrie of the Continent-!? Fight! You have to fight!"

"I-it's no good~... T-this person is s-scary... I-I can't move... Hi-, hi-, hyaa-..."

Clang-!

The Hyper Vibration Sword fell from Mirim's hands, making a raspy sound when hitting the floor.

"Hick... Hiu, hiiuuu..."

Shaking in terror with tears streaming down her face, Mirim fell on her knees.

"H-how... That can be...!"

After seeing the outcome, Ymir could only mutter that.

Sigui had neutralized Mirim without even touching her... That was the "Holy Pose", her greatest weapon.

"Do you understand...? Before God's Power, the alchemy is just like a baby walking with tottering steps, an immature and foolish technology."

Undoing the 'Holy Pose' and standing up, Sigui said, not with a triumphant tone, but with a disinterested one.

"G-gununu... Ununununu... Damn youu..."

Unwilling to admit defeat, Ymir was clenching her teeth.

"M... Miss Ymiir... I-I'm sorry..."

"Damn-, you can pull back already! Lady Sigui, I'm your next opponent!"

"Wait, Ymir."

With a calm voice, the Queen pressed Ymir who readied her battle axe to stop.

"B-but, your Majesty...!"

"Forgive the rudeness of my subordinates... Lady "Inquisitor" Sigui."

"I was originally planning to convict the Queen and her troops for using heretic arts, but... If the Queen herself is bowing her head, I'm also willing to pull back for the moment... More importantly, I have something to ask."

'I'll let you go for now', that was what Sigui meant. To begin with, the idea of alchemy being a heresy was just Sigui's theory and not the official point of view of the Central Pope's Diocese. However, that threat effectively made the Iron Strategist ready to talk about something she was unwilling to.

"Right now, there's only one thing that I want to ask... It's about... The "Majin" that your troops have met."

By hearing that word... Claudette quietly nodded and replied with her usual unchanging expression.

"That's right. "Princess Knight" Annelotte... She carries demon blood and is leading the wicked troops of evil... She is our enemy, but she'll probably become an enemy to the Pope's Diocese."

Claudette said very slowly. No one saw in her expression anything wicked.
 "I see... It's true that Annelotte seems to be a human that has inherited demon blood... A Majin."
 Sigui said with a nod after hearing the story of Annelotte's fights from Claudette.
 Annelotte, the daughter of the deceased Margrave Kreutz who was crushed for opposing the abolition of the Aristocrat's Power from the lands under Claudette's rule.
 She was pursued for rebelling against the Queen's Army and after being caught, the Majin blood dormant in her body awakened.
 With a power that goes beyond common sense and a brutal thirst for blood, the "Majin" Annelotte annihilated the Imperial Troops that were pursuing her and had had the upper hand until then.
 The power that defeated without problems the "Leader of the Fang" Elina and the 'Hyper Vibration Valkyrie' Mirim, the two greatest powers and pride of the Queen's Army, and that made the 'Iron Strategist' Ymir retreat is without a doubt not the power of a human.
 "However... Just from our conversation, I can't decide that she's a Majin or convict her."
 Sigui glanced at Ymir who wanted to say something and continued:
 "That's why... I know. I'm going to ascertain Annelotte's true identity with my own eyes."
 Sigui slowly closed her eyes and, standing like imploring to God, she sealed her lips.
 After a moment of meditation, her eyes were filled with a light of strong commitment.
 "If Annelotte ever happens to be a Majin... As an Inquisitor, I have to judge her."
 And... You must not forget, "Queen of Thundercloud" Claudette.
 In her heart, Sigui added.
 The alchemy that you and your subordinates use... I won't forget that it's a heretic technology defying God.
 I don't know if your enemy will be my enemy... But I'm sure that you're not my ally.
 Never forget it...

Inquisitor Sigui

Sigui is an inquisitor, a nun belonging to the Pope's central office. Burning to death all devil worshippers, pagans and even believers who misconduct is her mission. She's a passionate devotee to God and her strictness is second to none, even to Queen Claudette. She has been given the authority to punish anyone that can be called heretic. It's not that she has a cruel personality, actually she's usually a virtuous woman, but she's too serious and inflexible and doesn't hesitate to judge people. She's very eager to burn down the Rebel Army that she considers to be a den of heretics. She sees their leader Annelotte, who carries demon blood, as an abomination. Also, she considers the use of Alchemy as a heresy (even the Pope's central office has divided opinions on this topic). Annelotte will be no match to Sigui's exceptional combat techniques using the "Mace of Holy Fire" and "God's Chained Blade". She's also a user of the "Divine Power", the manifestation of God's miracles. For that she needs to perform the "Holy Poses" as written down on the sacred scriptures.

Height: 165cm	Protection: God's Chained Blade
B/W/H: 88/58/84	Likes: Order
Occupation: Inquisition officer	Dislikes: Alchemy
Weapons: Mace of Holy Fire, God's Chained Blade	Hobby: Reading

"Vere-dict, guilty. You have been regarded as an heretic, your punishment will be burning to death."

character created by 織田 non

Chapter 3: Coming! Twin Taimashi

The Margrave Kreutz' territory.

The Margrave Kreutz' territory had once been a famous place in the kingdom, it had started as a desolate outpost but due to the cultivations of the inhabitants, it became the grain-producing region of the greatest kingdom, called the "golden land" for its development.

The Margrave Kreutz was a man famous for his loyalty, who didn't join the conservative forces in their opposition to the count Earl and the Queen's Blade tournament that determined the next Queen, and pledged alliance to the successive Queens.

One year ago, the former Queen Aldra was defeated at Queen's Blade, and during the coronation of the new Queen Claudette, the fate of that land and its population was reversed.

The rumor that the Margrave bitterly faced Queen Claudette, who advocated for the abolition of the aristocracy, is said to have been the beginning of it all.

Even the nobles, with forces opposing the Queen and harboring similar emotions as the Margrave Kreutz, couldn't attack.

A rumor instantly expanded "Seems like the Margrave isn't pleased with the new Queen's plan to abolish aristocracy". Even more, you could say it didn't take long until it was exaggerated as much as "The Margrave is going to rebel" and "He's training even unarmed women and children in order to make his whole territory into a rebel army".

And finally, to prevent a royal suppression army from turning towards his territory and crush the inexistent, illusory rebel army, the Margrave Kreutz' territory was dragged into the vortex of the flame.

Even that Margrave Kreutz was relentlessly, crushingly smashed by the Queen's faction.

The several aristocrats who had underestimated the new Queen's seriousness didn't fight after that, and relinquished the territory to the Queen.

That was, one year ago.

That had happened no more than one year ago.

And yet, Annelotte remembered it.

And yet, she... she had to come this far.

"Big bro!"

Annelotte was interrupted by Yuit's voice calling out to her.

"Ah, uuh... so, how's the situation inside the castle?"

"Right, the reparations are almost complete, since it was a splendid castle from the start, it'll make a great stronghold for us!"

"Is that so?... That's very good."

"Ah ... I'm sorry, big bro... I'm remodeling a castle with so many of your memories..."

"It's fine. It's much better than it just rotting away."

Annelotte hurried to reply with a smile at Yuit, who was making an apologetic face.

Yes, where they were now was the Margrave Kreutz' territory, where Annelotte was born and raised.

It was because of the castle.

On a certain day, Annelotte and the others had gone to the Large Fang Mountain but didn't meet the "Bandit of the Wilderness" Risty, and it wasn't by chance, as they got to know the facts from the mouth of the person who had escaped from there.

Due to the raid of a mysterious opponent, the Rebel Army had been partially destroyed.

In order to let the others escape, Risty had gone missing.

They couldn't meet Risty herself, but they befriended her companions, fellow warriors with the will to face the Queen's Army.

And due to Yuit's suggestion, they had abandoned the ruins and were remodelling the Kreutz castle for it to become the stronghold of the Rebel Army.

"It's reassuring to have more people... but there's a big problem."

Yuit sighed.

"As I thought, is it the severe shortage of goods?"

"Yes... now, with the bandit group... no, Risty's companions that became members of the Rebel Army, who stole some of the supplies from the Queen's Army, we'll be able to endure for a little more... but if we keep up like this, a subjugation army will surely be dispatched."

"In that case... we still don't have a chance."

"I seems so although I've set some traps to defend us for now, I can't honestly say if they'll buy us enough time."

"Traps? I don't find it pleasant for you to get used to and add strange mechanisms to this castle..."

"Hmph, big bro, isn't that harsh. Don't you understand, "Necessity knows no law"?"

"I get it, I get it... though logic and feelings are different things."

Despite Annelotte saying that, Yuit was opening her mouth to explain it all once again from scratch, when:

"Gaoou! Gaoou! "

Waiting behind Yuit, the "Clockwork Automaton" Vante raised her voice in a roar twice.

"Vante?"

When Yuit heard Vante's voice, her facial expression changed completely from Annelotte's protégée to genius strategist in a moment.

"Yuit, what's wrong? What did Vante find?"

Yuit replied briefly to Annelotte's question.

"...An intruder, big bro... "Somebody" other than our comrades, is approaching the castle..."

Kreutz' castle, before the castle gate.

Two girls were standing in front of a huge iron door, shut firmly.

The duo was wearing the national costume of Shai-Fang, the place north of the continent considered a Shangri-la for its mountain glaciers, both of them joined by a metal ring on their necklaces, connected by a string.

The necklace and the string were called the "Ryu-Rin-Nen", and it was proof that the twins were the *Taimashi* [antidevil experts] that protected the unexplored region of Shai-Fang, the Shangri-la with its mountains that parted the clouds.

"Easy, Sainyang! Don't get cold feet after coming this far!"

"I don't mean I'm particularly frightened... I just mean we should proceed a bit more formally... going with sis' violent ways, it won't turn out well..."

"Don't you understand, if we don't try, we won't know if it turns out well or not! We'll age faster if we only think about how we'll fail before we do it!"

"We, we won't age faster..."

The moment Sainyang flinched, Tarnyang turned her body to the gate, opened her mouth widely and shouted.

"Is that...? That one too...? "Princess Knight" Annelotte! "Alchemy Strategist" Yuit! Both of them have come out, we can fight them if we need to!"

"Hey, sister... just stop... When we met those people last time, we couldn't grasp their strength."

"Sainyang, you coward! Have you forgotten how we were deceived by them and the terrible experience we had?"

"It sure was a terrible experience... but, but..."

As Tarnyang turned her gaze away from her, Sainyang murmured in a whispering voice that couldn't be heard by anybody.

"But, wasn't it because of sis' hostility..."

Tarnyang didn't hear Sainyang's murmur.

Because, peeping out the windows of the castle walls, Yuit turned up and asked Tarnyang a question.

"Long time no see, Tarnyang, Sainyang. Did you find the *goshintai*? [*object of worship containing the spirit of a deity] What terrible experience did you have?"

"Whaat? Gaah!"

Tarnyang raised her brow at Yuit's casual question.

"How can you say such a thing! What do you know! What do you know of the hardships we suffered!"

"Wh, wh, what are you talking about?"

As far as Yuit remembered, when they met before, two people were on a trip to look for the "goshintai" that was stolen from the "Shangri-la" Shai-Fang.

They had travelled together just for a few days.

On the way, they were able to hear some rumors about the "goshintai", and went to confirm them.

Tarnyang's and Yuit's parties had gone in different directions.

"Because of... Because of you I thought we would die! So hot, narrow, stinky, itchy... I remember it aaaall!"

"Mostly, I think you reap what you sow, as Tarnyang recklessly plunges into things."

Behind Tarnyang, that was making a fuss, Sainyang whispered in a low voice.

"A, anyway... I more or less get it, you experienced something terrible... then, what do you intend to do?"

Swish! Thrusting the finger in her direction, Tarnyang declared loudly.

"Yuit! I won't be satisfied unless I beat you up! Fight!"

"Eh... ?"

Yuit was flabbergasted at the unexpected words.

She turned to look at Tarnyang with a very apologetic face.

"Wai, wait a second, a fight, can't we talk it over?"

"Shut up shut up shut up! Until you crawl to my feet and say you're sorry, my anger won't settle down!"

"Huh... why did it come to this..."

Yuit sighed and looked up at the sky, then cast her eyes to the ground again.

At that time, her expression had become one of complete resolution.

"It can't be helped, if you say that much, I guess I can't do anything... But!"

Yuit raised her hand towards the sky, and snapped her finger.

"Gaooooon!"

Along with the roar, a shadow of a person that was holding back behind Yuit appeared, aimed at the ground, and jumped down from high above!

"Your opponent won't be me... but Vante!"

"Wait, uh, you can't hand it down! Fight yourself!"

Tarnyang was panicking at the unforeseen development, but Yuit answered with a straight face.

"Vante is a Clockwork Automaton my mother built. That is to say, Vante will fight whenever I fight! Now, Vante, let's go! Let's cool down her head!"

"Gaon!"

Raising up both arms of steel, Vante threatened Tarnyang and Sainyang.

Responding with an even more fearless smile, Tarnyang adopted a peculiar pose.

"Fufun, when this automaton gets knocked down, it'll be your turn next! Sainyang, don't lag behind, let's go!"

"Eh, uh, y, yes!"

Called by Tarnyang, Sainyang got ready while keeping her always reluctant facial expression.

"Two people as one! Watch carefully, the might of the Twins Dragon Formation!"

"Still, if you think about it, I feel we don't really need to fight, though..."

"Shut up! Like the old saying goes, 'In for a penny, in for a pound!'"

"You're using it wrong..."

"Sainyang, we don't have the time to look away now! Look out, it's coming!"

"Eh... Hyaa!"

Vante had charged at them from afar, closing the distance at a speed beyond common sense, to strike Sainyang while she wasn't prepared!

"Haah!"

Tarnyang pulled the string that connected Sainyang and her, and thanks to her drawing her sister towards herself, Vante's fist stopped just before Sainyang's eyes.

"Hey, Sainyang, this will get dangerous if you don't pick up the pace!"

"...But, I've been serious so far."

"I, I mean, get even more serious! C'mon, let's go!"

"Y, yeah..."

After Tarnyang said so, she held both of Sainyang's legs by the side, and held her up in the air.

The expression with which she glared back at Vante was brimming with the confidence of victory.

"Take this, Twins Dragon Formation!"

"D, Dragonic Spin... ..!"

"Deeeyaaaaah!"

Slam!

Along with the scream, Tarnyang swung Sainyang's body desperately and attacked Vante!

"H, how... what?"

The scene stunned Yuit a little.

But, the Dragonic Spin wasn't a technique out of desperation.

Swinging Sainyang was making full use of one of their art's strong point, increasing the two people's offensive strength several times, up to tenfold.

"Gaooooon!"

Crossing both steel arms, Vante was blocking Tarnyang's attack.
But, the two people's attack was so heavy and strong that both her legs were firmly digging into the ground, as she was pushed back more and more.

"Nuaaaaa!"

"Hyauuuu!"

Letting out a roar, Tarnyang was swingng Sainyang.

Raising her voice in a shriek like manner, Sainyang's body was striking Vante.

Vante's whole body was creaking, and it appeared to have reached its limit.

But, Yuit smiled with a daring grin, even confronted with a situation of obvious inferiority.

"Vante, now!"

Just then, she pointed at them and gave an order.

"Gaooooooooonn!"

Letting out a remarkably loud roar, Vante extended both hands, and simultaneously grabbed both Sainyang and Tarnyang, who still held her.

"Hyann?"

"Wh, what?"

"Vante, noooow!"

"Gaooooon!"

Vante threw Tarnyang and Sainyang together.

"Hyaaaaaa!"

"Uwaaaaaa!"

The duo screamed while flying through the air, as they were heading to a canal close to the gate.

Splash! Raising a great spray, both of them landed on it.

Fortunately, it seemed that the water had dried up halfway and they were only around waist level deep.

"Sa, Sainyang! Hurry up...!"

"...W, wait a second, don't push, sis...!"

After being thrown, both of them had become intertwined in a weird posture and they couldn't stand up easily.

Laughing at the situation, Yuit shouted.

"There's no way to escape! I made it myself, behold the power of the Kreutz castle's defensive system!"

Saying that, Yuit turned on a device.

"Wh.. what-what!"

"Wawawa wawaa!"

As their bodies were lifted up, Tarnyang and Sainyang embraced each other and screamed.

A trap knit with a thick rope had been built into the bottom of the canal, and had picked up the two entwined people and lifted them up.



"Like this... oww, I can't move...!"

"I told you so... calm down..."

"You're 100 years too early to beat the intellect of myself, Yuit, the "Alchemy Strategist"!"

Yuit declared proudly, looking down on the two people who complained under her gaze.

"Sure, if you fight fair and square, you're stronger than Vante. But your weak point is that you two are connected by your necklace, and your honest characters. In some respects, you're similar to a certain somebody."

"...What's taking so long, Yuit?"

Informed about the captured visitors, Annelotte came and, seeing the two soaked people hanging, asked with an amazed look.

"The castle's defense is working properly, we had to show you, big bro."

"That may be true... but that doesn't mean you can keep them hanging up forever... release them immediately."

"Uuu, Annelotte! You deceived us once, but we won't forgive you! If you release us from this trap, we'll fight you again!"

"...Again... I think we lost completely... however, if you keep struggling... it hurts..."

Annelotte tilted her head at the words of the struggling Tarnyang.

"Deceived? What in the world...?"

In the end, Annelotte and the others understood the reason behind the misunderstanding of Tarnyang's party.

Shai-Fang



How's everybody doing--!? I'm going to introduce my hometown, Shai-Fang!

At the top of the southern mountains to the northeast of the Continent, there's a lovely place. Since the mountain has snow storms a go-go all year round, no one from the outside world can enter Shai-Fang. And, since none of us from Shai-Fang are elsewhere, almost no people from the outside world knows about Shai-Fang. However, the inside of Shai-Fang is a flowery, warm place, full of food and water. This is all thanks to the "Goshintai". Sainyang's and my mission is to protect this "Goshintai". Shai-Fang has a very old history. Our ancestors, accompanied by people who were enslaved by countries like Amara 4000 years ago, reached the southern mountains at the end of a journey full of hardships. Then, they were awarded the "Goshintai" by the mountain hermit, and Shai-Fang was born!

Chapter 4: Demon Blood Again

"Big bro, stop! It has to be a trap!"

"I understand. Still..."

According to the information they got on the early morning of that day, a supply convoy had met with an ambush from the Queen's Army and had become isolated.

Although their misunderstanding had been settled and Tarnyang and Sainyang held back and became their comrades once again, if they simply stood and watched, it was evident they'd be crushed before the overwhelming enemy.

However, against Yuit's complaint that they shouldn't go to fight, Annelotte shook her head and replied.

"Still, I can't abandon our comrades.... if we do, I feel that the meaning of the fight will be lost."

"...Okay, if big bro says so... but, make me a promise."

"A promise?"

"Yes, take me with you. Then, when the soldiers move, everybody will come forth. Even with our halved military power, we'll launch ourselves and turn the tables on them."

"Thank you... Yuit."

Annelotte extended her hand and patted Yuit's head.

Yuit smiled from ear to ear, but still had a somewhat proud look.

"Then... come, Ambrosius, and let's go!"

In response to her call, the spirit horse Ambrosius materialized into the empty space, braying loudly.

"Let's go, we'll use our full strength and rescue our comrades!"

Annelotte's party arrived in time to achieve said goal.

The place where the supply unit was ambushed was a straight road, surrounded by a cliff on one side and a canyon on the other.

Because of the surprise attack from above the cliff proposed by Yuit, confusion arose among the Queen's Army which was surrounding Tarnyang's party, and they successfully used the chance to rejoin them.

Choosing a wedge formation to cross through the siege, it seemed like their strategy to escape had been a success.

However, the plan was still too optimistic, to say the least.

Their enemy, the Queen's Army, had sent out the strongest warrior amongst them, in order to crush Annelotte's party.

"Vante! Stop that girl, the "Hyper Vibration Valkyrie" Mirim!"

"Gaoonn!"

"Hyaa... D, don't come, please don't come!"

Turning towards Mirim, who easily cut down Tarnyang and Sainyang, Vante charged.

"No matter if her body is strengthened, this should be effective! Vante, Sonic Blast!"

"Ga, ga, ga, a, a, aaaaaaaa!"

The shout released out of Vante's mouth acted as a shock wave, and hit Mirim full on!

"Hyaa! S, Shuut uuup!"

Mirim grabbed both her ears and crouched down.

Seeing their chance then, Annelotte shouted.

"Now! We're retreating now! Those who can move, go and help the injured!"

The soldiers from the Rebel Army started running, aiming for the breakthrough.

But, screams and blood splashes rose from the battle, and the soldiers fell noisily.

"Hey, you know this just can't be, *giggle*, since we were told by Sister Claudette to crush the Rebel Army."

Laughing before them, gazing at the fallen soldiers, was the "Leader of the Fang" Elina.

"What...! Just Mirim was difficult enough...!"

Yuit turned pale, and seeing her chance in that moment of hesitation:

"Teyaaaah!"

"Gaoon!"

Mirim regained the freedom of her body, and cut Vante down.

"Vante! B, Big bro...!"

Annelotte caught the look on Yuit's eyes, and gnashed her teeth.

Because of her imprudence, was she to lose comrades again?
Abandoning her comrades, would she shut herself up in the castle?
If she had more... more power!
A person heard the murmurs in Annelotte's mind.
It was someone in the inner depths of Annelotte's heart, who could barely suppress a chuckle while it whispered.
"I assume, I can take your place?"
"Who... who are you?"
"I am you. "Possessed Knight Annelotte." In spite of being bloodthirsty and starving for a fight, you can't find a reason to swing your blade and kill your opponent, so I'll kill them on your behalf... I'm your other self!"
"No, no! I just... so I can... protect... my comrades..."

As a black tornado occurred in the middle of the battlefield, the "Inquisitor" Sigui observed the situation from a distance.
"That's... what a sinister-looking energy...."
Clutching the mace with the holy mark tightly in her hands, she muttered a prayer to God.
Wasting no time, she clearly understood what was happening among the confusion in the battlefield.
Before anyone noticed, the beautiful silver hair of the "Princess Knight" Annelotte had changed into a jet black color, and she was attacking her enemies with a strength that surely seemed beyond a human's.
...No, it wasn't just her enemies.
Anybody standing in her way, not caring if it was friend or foe.
That's how she was fighting.



"I never took it at face value, but it seems the "Princess Knight" Annelotte being a demon is not a lie after all..."

"Miss Sigui."

Awaiting behind Sigui, the priest fighters called out to her as they watched the situation. Sigui nodded towards them in agreement, and said.

"Let's go. To those who fail to see the light of god, it's our duty as the terrestrial representatives of God to hand down divine punishment."

""Holy Pose", "Worship!"

Sigui entered the battlefield with a loud proclamation, raising her nun garbs slowly and praying to God, and settled in an instant the confusion which was governing the battlefield up till then. Everybody there, no matter if they were friend or foe, prostrated themselves before Sigui, who stood up exposing her underwear.

That was the "Holy Power", a manifestation of the miracles of God.

"Gaoon!"

Being a mechanical woman made from alchemy, known as the "Alchemy Miracle" Vante, she wasn't affected by the effect of Sigui's Holy Pose.

But, Yuit couldn't help but to kneel before Sigui against her will, and couldn't give her a command.

Therefore, Vante had to stay upright, waiting for an order.

"Wa, wait, why can't we help kneeling? This isn't rational!"

"Fuwawa... I, I can't move...!"

Even Elina, along with the Queen's Army she commanded, and Mirim were kneeling just like the Rebel Army.

"Before the majesty of God, there are no friends or foes."

Sigui spoke to those admiring the effects she herself had brought about.

"Besides... Mirim, you're an evil warrior who uses alchemy. Just the same as those wild heretics. It wouldn't be strange for me to put you on "trial!"

"Huu! I, I'm not... But I've prayed a lot, and back in my hometown, I even went to church together with my siblings!"

"Then, I'll have to "educate" you carefully so that you don't stray from the path again."

Sigui smiled gently. But, feeling something ominous from her smile, Mirim shivered.

"I heard the Rebel Army was a wicked army, being led by a demon ringleader, with a heretic strategist who used alchemy, and who had won over savage tribesmen as comrades... clearly, all the rumors were true."

"Hey! Who's a savage tribesman from the country! "

"Taryang, this is no time to interfere..."

"Uneducated savages... still... It seems I have to be her opponent now."

Sigui turned around, and faced the knight princess, the only person who would be able to escape the restraint from the "Holy Pose".

"U...gh, gu... uh."

Gritting her teeth, eyes sparkling, Annelotte slowly rose up.

"As expected from a demon... wouldn't you say? Shaking free from God's restraints enough to move, that's not something an ordinary person can do."

Sigui slowly prepared her mace.

"S, stop! Big bro isn't evil! Because, it was the Queen's Army who attacked us!"

"In that case... Assuming a bear attacked a human village, would you leave it at large just because it came looking for food?"

Sigui ignored Yuit's scream.

"Besides... if the opponent is a demon, as an "Inquisitor", leaving them at large would be equivalent to sin."

Muttering in order to persuade herself, Sigui then turned toward Annelotte, and proclaimed loudly.

""Possessed Knight" Annelotte, veredict, guilty. As is appropriate, my humble self will burn you at the stake!"

"Oooooh!... Kill, kill, kill!"

Annelotte, with disheveled, jet black hair after she transformed due to the manifestation of her demonic blood, closed her distance with Sigui.

Chink! Sigui's mace parried away Annelotte's sword, the "Grim Venus".

"Eat this!"

Throwing off sparks, the "Grim Venus" changed its form from a sword into a spear, altered its trajectory, and tried to land a thrust on Sigui.

"As expected from a demon's weapon, I can't be careless... But, I'm the strongest!"

Sigui shouted while twisting her body, and the chain coiled around her waist extended, twined around Annelotte's spear and took it.

"Guuh!"

As her wrist was twisted, Annelotte let out a groan of pain. After the chain coiled around her hands and took the spear, it was hurled away.

Swoosh!

"Hyaa!"

The spear flew through the air and landed blade first into the ground close to Yuit, who let out a scream.

"W, what are you doing, that's dangerous!"

"If it hit you, it'd save me the time to burn you at the stake."

Sigui replied with an unconcerned look. Before her eyes, Annelotte was standing the pain well, but her prey wouldn't be snatched away.

"So, prepare yourself."

Step by step, Sigui approached Annelotte.

As long as she could get closer, with the power of her Holy Mace she could sentence Annelotte to burn at the stake.

"Gu, gu, gu...!"

Resigning to her impending death, Annelotte kneeled on the ground.

"Big bro...!"

Yuit shouted with a grim voice.

"But...! You can't die, big bro, big broo!"

Was it that her voice reached her ears, or was it the survival instinct of a demon?

"U...o, o, ooooooh!"

Howling as loudly as she could, Annelotte grasped her fist tightly and hit the ground under her feet!

Thuuump!

"A vain struggle, isn't it... eh, w, what!"

Sigui dropped her mace, and raised her voice in amazement.

Rrrumble... Resounding from behind the cliff, a sound like a rumble could be heard from the ground.

"It, it can't be... the power of a demon, is this strong...!"

The cliff collapsed, as the ground broke and fell into the canyon.

Sigui muttered while her face became pale due to the current situation.

"You realized you were going to die, so you tried to take me down as well... but that won't happen. How fitting is it that only you and your renegade comrades will die here!"

"W, what a disaster! As we are now, everybody will fall into the bottom of the valley, we must run away!"

"Hauuu, I, I can't move my body!"

"...That girl from before, she hasn't freed herself yet."

"Sainyang! I'll explain later!"

"Vante! Help the others!"

"Gaoo!"

Among the chaos, Yuit freed her body and wrote commands on her device to control Vante without delay, but it was a moment too late.

"Kyaaaaaa!"

Except for Sigui's subordinate soldiers that escaped quickly, the soldiers of both the Queen's Army and the Rebel Army still remained.

All of them fell into the canyon, along with the collapsing rubble...

"Annelotte, 0 points."

As her consciousness faded, she recalled the words of the teacher who had once taught Annelotte well.

It was certainly a rare morning for it to be snowing on the teacher's forest.

The teacher had thrown a snowball at Annelotte, and as Annelotte had tried to parry it with her sword, her face had gotten covered with snow.

Seeing that, her teacher had said so.

"My pupil. As you know, your sword is made for cutting. But, even if you wanted to cut the

snowball, it split into two and hit your face. Do you understand?"

"So, what am I supposed to do?"

Annelotte had asked defiantly, and when her teacher had said to throw a snowball at her, she had done just that.

"Eii!"

And then, she had stared in wonder.

Her teacher had swung the sword lightly, diverting the snowball's trajectory without splitting it, and it had fell by her teacher's side.

"If you cut everything that you hit, the sword won't accomplish half of its role. Cut whatever you should cut, and don't cut whatever you shouldn't cut. Any person able to do that is a swordsman worthy of 100 points."

"How can I do that?"

"Become strong."

Her teacher had answered carelessly.

"If you're weak, you can't cut what should be cut. If you're halfway strong, you'll cut what shouldn't be cut, and you'll probably be tortured by regret."

After saying that, her teacher had added with a whiff of a smile.

"It's on this year that I've understood that as well. Because of that, you mustn't stop even though hardships may appear, just do your best now."

And finally, her teacher had said.

"Don't get drunk on "power", Annelotte. Whatever your sword cuts, it absolutely must be under your own control."

Teacher... I am, useless...

My sword... I couldn't suppress the impulse of destruction...

My inner self... rather, my other self...

The demon blood... that, I won't forgive...

Chapter 5: Mirim's Decision

Gainos castle, in the middle of an audience.

Sitting on the throne, there was the Queen of Thundercloud, Claudette.

On her right, as her close aide, the "Iron Strategist" Ymir, and on her left, as a close associate to the queen, stood the "Inquisitor" Sigui.

On that day, due to Annelotte having turned into a demon before their eyes, Sigui and the Pope's agency had arranged complete support for the Queen's Army.

A momentary common front had been established.

"We have located the hiding place of the "Princess Knight" Annelotte, Sister Claudette."

Elina, the "Leader of the Fang", reported.

She was the boss of the "Assassins of the Fang", the group tasked with underground activities and intel gathering, and was also Claudette's half-sister.

"A small farm village downstream... The village of Wassilica is sheltering her. Am I to send in the army immediately?"

Sigui nodded at Elina's words.

"If it's the case that the villagers adore Annelotte and support her... We must be prepared to conclude that due to the demon's temptation, the village has already become heretic by now. As an Inquisitor, the most appropriate thing to do is to sentence the whole village to be burned to the ground."

Without even raising one brow to the terrible proposal, the "Iron Strategist" Ymir accepted it as a matter of course.

"Very well, let's make the Queen's Army advance at once to suppress Annelotte... ...As lady Inquisitor says, the village shall be burnt to ashes on behalf of sheltering Annelotte."

"You're using alchemy before the eyes of an "Inquisitor" like myself, but even if I'm rather unwilling to... I'll pretend not to know."

"I humbly appreciate it. Now, Mirim. Prepare for the sortie immediately... Mirim, Mirim?"

Ymir called out to Mirim, who was standing by her side just now. As there was no reply, she tilted her head to the side.

Mirim hadn't heard her own name being called, as her thin shoulders were shaking, and her face turned pale with fret.

"It can't be... just like that, my... my hometown, will be burnt to the ground...?"

"Big sis! Big sis Annelotte!"

Annelotte smiled gently at the girl who came to show her a handmade flower ornament.

"How skillful... I can't do that, no matter what."

"That can't be! I'll teach you, big sis Annelotte, and you'll be able to!"

As she saw the very young child puffing up with pride, Annelotte smiled and stifled a laugh. But, her facial expression became gloomy immediately again.

The poor people from the Wassilica village had helped Annelotte, after she fell into the canyon and undertook a serious injury.

It seemed like they had clearly concluded something from Annelotte's appearance, as they hadn't inquired deeply about her goals, and had lent her a house, as they said, so that her wounds would heal.

From the words the young man of the village revealed in the middle of the medical treatment, Annelotte understood the reason.

"The Savior who frees people from oppression."

In the eyes of the people from the village, especially most young men like him, she was Annelotte, the one who led the Rebel Army.

The queen's oppression was equally present in such a small village as Wassilica.

All the people, unrelated to their income, had the obligation to pay heavy taxes due to the wartime, and severe punishment was inflicted on whoever couldn't carry it out. Under the pressure of that situation, the people perceived Annelotte and the Rebel Army entirely as Saviors.

For Annelotte, that was exceedingly heart-breaking.

"What is it? Do you still hurt anywhere?"

Looking at Annelotte's facial expression, the little girl asked with visible unrest.

"No... I'm fine, don't worry."

She hurried to dismiss it, but Annelotte couldn't brighten up her mood.

Since that day, she hadn't been able to meet Yuit, Vante, Tarnyang, Sainyang or any of her other comrades.

Not knowing what had become of them felt horrible to Annelotte, she couldn't stop worrying. Besides, even going back to fighting side by side every day, only for the demonic blood to awaken again, was something that Annelotte feared.

Not caring about friends or foes, feeling even for a moment that she needed to kill everyone before her eyes, the feelings of joy that came from it.

Considering all that resulted from her inner self, it was scary.

In that case, should she turn her face away from everybody, and let the village remain peaceful?

Although it might turn out to be a mistake, Annelotte couldn't find a reason to get up, not able to muster her strength.

"Ah... big sis, someone is coming."

Annelotte's thoughts were suddenly interrupted by the young girl's muttering voice.

When she raised her face, focusing on the figure that was coming from afar, her eyes opened wide.

"It's her...!"

A young girl was rushing towards the prairie.

With a body that could reasonably be called that of a girl thin from working hard all day, the armor coiling around her barely succeeded in covering her bare skin.

In order to run faster, she was carrying on her back the large sword she usually wielded with both hands.

That is, she was unmistakably an opponent Annelotte had had to face more than once, a champion from the Queen's Army, the "Hyper Vibration Valkyrie" Mirim.

"Finally... I'm here!"

Clenching her teeth, Annelotte tried to draw her sword from her waist.

"Alia, step back!"

Annelotte called out to the little girl. But, the girl didn't nod in Annelotte's direction, she just muttered.

"Mirim... sis?"

Annelotte could hardly believe her ears.

"H, how do you know her name?"

"Because, because, this girl is my older sister."

"Is, is that so... your sister? R, Really...?"

"Alia... Hyauu!"

Wanting to call out the girl's name, Mirim fell down.

"Yes... as I thought, she's my sis, Mirim... Sis, you fall over immediately even on a flat surface..."

The young girl sighed deeply while looking at Mirim's face, that had become covered in grass from the ground.

"However, why does big sis Annelotte know about my sis, Mirim?"

They had tried to kill each other two or three times... unable to answer, Annelotte mumbled with a doubtful expression on her face.

"Ah... miss, Annelotte..."

Mirim called out Annelotte's name, while tears rolled down her muddled face.

"I, I... I don't plan to fight you, miss Annelotte... but, but..."

The contents of Mirim's talk were enough to make Annelotte turn pale.

Half a day later, on the next morning, the Queen's Army had arrived at the village.

"I thought you were nowhere in sight, did you arrive before us, Mirim?"

Paling before the "Iron Strategist" Ymir's question, Mirim still nodded.

"Y, yes... B, But, m, miss Annelotte doesn't seem to be here any longer... s, so, this village..."

During Mirim's words of explanation, Ymir gave the impression that she wasn't that much interested.

"Is that so?... So, the army shall go back. Right now, though, the village's "cleansing" will start."

"Ehh! P, Please wait, Miss Ymir! S, Since miss Annelotte isn't here, it makes no sense to attack the village...! Miss Inquisitor is as equally guilty as the villagers of being fascinated by her...!"

Mirim confronted her and spoke frantically, but Ymir only replied coldly.

"Right, this was your hometown... But, it's a shame. Our burning the village down won't be stopped."

"W, why is that!"

"Every village the "demon" Annelotte stops by, is likely to get tainted with evil... No, it should be tainted by now. There's no way to purify contaminated water, to turn it back the way it was. So... you'll destroy it."

Adding that last bit, Ymir laughed with a broad grin.

"We'll announce to the world that although the villagers helped Annelotte, they were completely annihilated when she left. If the rumor spreads, Annelotte or her Rebel Army won't have even one supporter."

"H, how cruel...! Burning down the village... And making it as if it was miss Annelotte's and the Rebel Army's plan... What is this!"

Mirim staggered, unable to stand on her legs, in the brink of desperation. The one before her eyes right now, she had found out, wasn't a person who had given her a fine job and a salary to support her poor family, but a brute who was trying to take her family and friends away from her.

"What's with that look? Besides, what do you intend to do by drawing your Hyper Vibration Sword?... It can't be, will you turn your sword against me?"

"T, t, this is... my, my village! Even if Miss Ymir says to assault it...!"

"What if I do?"

"I... I'll fight you!"

Bzzz!

To agree with Mirim's scream, the Hyper Vibration Sword made a loud sound.

"How amusing! If you rebel against your parent, you should be punished!"

Laughing inappropriately, Ymir drew huge battle axes for both hands.

"Daaaaah!"

Aiming at Ymir, Mirim charged.

"Haal!"

Parrying the point of the sword with her axe's side, Ymir slashed and hit Mirim on her back!

"Kyaah!"

If it had been an ordinary person, the blow would have broken their spinal column, but Mirim was only clumsily thrown onto the ground, in such a way that she didn't take serious damage.

"As expected from my special Hyper Vibration Armor."

"T, take it out... gh, hyaa, kyafu, hyaaann...!"

With the axe wedged into her back, the Hyper Vibration Armor kept on working at full capacity to prevent damage. Instead of damage, her whole body was assaulted by the vibration, and involuntarily, Mirim let out her voice, writhing in agony while trying to dislodge Ymir's axe.

"What a waste. There's no way you can win."

"Ya, yahaa, w, why... t, the crystal is, m, more powerful, than, usual... a, ahi, hinn...!"

The Hyper Vibration Crystal empowered and protected Mirim.

But now, it was vibrating more violently than ever, and was torturing Mirim's body.

With the strong stimulus, the strength in her hips gave out, and Mirim involuntarily went down on her knees.

"Ya, a, w, why, hya, t, the crys, gaa... a, ah, aah...!"

"Can you feel it? The crystal's vibration is greater than usual... it was me who built your weapon and armor, did you forget? Something like altering the output of your Hyper Vibration Crystal is easy for me."

Saying so while smiling with a broad grin, Ymir kicked down the kneeling Mirim, trampling on her back.

"Ta... take it out, gh... hyaaunn! Ah, hyaa, a, aa, aaah! A, hyau, miss, Y, Ymir..."

Twisting her body, Mirim turned to Ymir, a deer-like look on her face.

"Please... I, I don't care what happens to me, just let the villagers..."

But, Ymir's answer was merciless.

"That is out of discussion. In the first place, even if we overlook it, lady Inquisitor will know that the village was dyed by the demon and won't forgive them."

"But that's..."

"Don't worry. Although I can't say it out loud, it's possible to change, everyone will be born together again as faithful people."

"P, please, spare them... ku, u, uuu...!"

Mirim's voice began to be tinged with pain. The Hyper Vibration Crystal's magical power was

decreasing.

"U, aa, a aaah...!"

"Mirim, look. I've grown fond of you. Though I began by seeing you as a body to experiment on, your honesty surprised me, you're an interesting person. I ask you. Do I need to kill you?"

"P, please... spare... the others..."

"...How deplorable. Farewell, Mirim."

When Mirim heard Ymir's words, she resigned herself and shut her eyes tightly.

Clang!

An intense metallic sound.

But, even when she kept waiting, the end didn't come.

"Eh...?"

Timidly, Mirim opened her eyes, only to see Ymir's battleaxe stuck in the ground beside her.

"Y, you bastard...!"

Ymir murmured, holding down her wounded arm.

"You actually came back... "Princess Knight" Annelotte!"

"Wh-...!"

Mirim lifted her head. Before Ymir, staring intensely at her, there were the pale flame of the ghost horse Ambrosius and Annelotte, who had changed her cursed sword "Grim Venus" into the shape of a lance.

"M, miss Annelotte! You said you were leaving...!"

"Sorry, but even if I wasn't here, it was likely that the Queen's Army attack on the village wouldn't stop... so, I changed my mind and went back. I absolutely can't escape to somewhere safe at the cost of somebody's sacrifice!"

"But... that's..."

Surely, she quite agreed with Annelotte's words.

But, while Annelotte had truly come back, would she be able to save the village?

"Probably, it's impossible for me alone. But, if you lend me your help. "Hyper Vibration Valkyrie" Mirim!"

"Me... what...?"

"You understand that if the Queen's Army stays this way, it won't only be this village. Everybody in the continent will suffer! So, Mirim!"

"For the sake of, protecting... everybody...!"

Mustering her strength as a result of the flame now lit in her heart, Mirim stood up.

Acting in concert with Mirim's vitality, the Hyper Vibration Crystal installed in her chest and waist vibrated, giving off a light radiance.

"Fuah... a, nnh...!"

Withstanding the vibration that stimulated her whole body, Mirim pointed her sword at Ymir.

"Mirim, you bastard...!"

"I, I have... to protect, everybody, in the village...!"

"Evacuate your army, "Iron Strategist" Ymir! You don't stand a chance!"

Annelotte said, restoring her lance back to the shape of a sword.

"Guh, mmuh!"

Ymir clenched her teeth. Although it was mortifying, it was just as Annelotte said.

"Mirim...! If you leave the royal protection, you'll be considered a heretic for using alchemy.

Lady "Inquisitor" won't stay silent, either!"

"I, I understand that! However, how can I abandon my village!"

"Fine then, go to hell on your own, I'll let lady Sigui get rid of you. You'll get burned at the stake along with that demon girl!"

Leaving them with that parting threat, Ymir ran away, escaping from there.

"M, miss Annelotte... thank you very much...!"

Representing the villagers, Mirim bowed her head to Annelotte.

"I should be the one thanking you. However, from now on your village will be exposed to danger because of me. I'm sorry about that."

"It's not like that... Besides, not only this village is in danger. If we leave them as they are, how many villages would have been destroyed by the Queen's Army?... At least, that's how I feel."

After Mirim said that, she took Annelotte's hand and said, beseechingly.

"That's why... miss Annelotte, I... I want to join your Rebel Army, please!"

"Eh... B, but."

Due to Mirim's desperate vigor, Annelotte backed off one step involuntarily.

But, Mirim closed the distance between her and Annelotte again, and begged Annelotte, staring at her within breathing distance.

"I, I have opposed Miss Ymir... I have nowhere to go now."

Mirim appealed to her through teary eyes. Looking at her face, Annelotte felt like the strength of her shoulders was leaving her somehow.

Fuu, Annelotte replied while breathing a sigh.

"So... That's how it is? I don't mind, but I can't guarantee that you'll be alive tomorrow."

"I'm prepared for that! Besides, it's not decided that tomorrow will be worse than today, is it?"

Mirim might have been saying that frantically, but she gave no indication that she was going to change her mind.

Moreover, Annelotte also had better have one more comrade.

With a wry smile, Annelotte said to Mirim.

"I understand, from today on, you're one of our comrades, Mirim. Welcome to the Rebel Army."

"T, t, thank you very much, miss Anne... Sister!"



"S, Sister?"

Annelotte stared in wonder when she was addressed more respectfully all of a sudden.

"Yes! Can't I call you that, Sister?"

"It, it's not that... just..."

“Great! Now then, Sister! What should we do now?”
 “R, right... we must rejoin our comrades.”
 “Understood! We shall depart! *Let's go!* For real!”
 “Y, yes.”

Somehow affected by the spur of the moment, a puzzled Annelotte left the village.

Taimashi Tarnyang

They were born on the southern mountains of the secluded region of Shai-Fang, isolated from the outside world by steep and cloudy mountains. Tarnyang and Sanyang, the twins who are descendants of a lineage of "Anti-demon experts" that has been carrying the responsibility of protecting the village for generations, left for a journey to the outside world to bring back the "Goshintai".

When they were born the sisters were bond by a cord and ring called "Ryuu-Rin-Ren". The elder sister Tarnyan is a holy sword user. She's strong willed but has a cheerful personality. Since she's the type that rushes into things without thinking too deeply, she'll bring lots of trouble to the unfamiliar, outside world.

"Shai-Fang's Taimashi are invincible!"

Height: 155cm
 B/W/H: 84/55/81
 Occupation: Anti-demon expert
 Weapon: Holy sword
 Protection: None
 Likes: Chimaki (traditional chinese food)
 Dislikes: Calculation
 Hobby: Sculpture

character created by 中野友和

Chapter 6: Jungle

The southern jungle.

On the southern part of the continent, a dense jungle was in full leaf, many parts of it still unknown, where it was said that ancient relics and secret treasures hadn't yet been found by anyone, and strange creatures lived.

"Gaoon...!"

Functioning without ever feeling tiredness, the "Alchemy Android" Vante cut through the trackless path and kept going forward. After her, the figures of three people followed.

"Really noow, is there a secret weapon slumbering in a place like this, Yuit?"

The "Taimashi" Tarnyang had already asked that question many times over, yet she did it once more.

It could be said that friendship had blossomed after the end of the battle, and now she was getting quite familiar with the "Alchemy Strategist" Yuit.

"It's not rational to ask the same thing time and time again, Tarnyang. It's written in code on the scroll my mother left behind, so deciphering it is not easy..."

"So, you have a clue you don't really understand, and you still lead people into a jungle like this?"

"Uh-oh, don't start again... Besides, it's the only clue we have, so we have to choose but to rely on it."

Looking at the pair quarreling, the "Taimashi" Sainyang sighed.

Currently, they were aiming at the ancient ruins, the "Calibara Ruins", that were said to be in the depths of that jungle.

Due to the attack by the Queen's Army, Annelotte had turned into a demon and had gone missing.

But, neither Yuit nor anybody in the Rebel Army thought that Annelotte's will had been defeated in the least.

So, what they had to do was to reinforce their military power even more by the time Annelotte returned to the war front, was what Yuit and the others thought.

And Yuit aimed at the "Mobile Fortress Bligh".

Formerly pursued by Yuit's mother, who was once called the "Great Alchemist", it was the legacy of an ancient civilization.

Though it was a fortress, it moved on its own, and it was said to govern the battlefield.

Anyway, she had been an unreliable mother with an irresponsible nature, who would entrust her daughter to Vante and go on a journey. The only clue to the fortress Yuit had now was the suspicious scroll she was grasping tightly.

Sainyang's divination sign had read "Good luck towards the south" and they had gone together, leaving for the southern jungle without waiting for Annelotte to rejoin them.

"So, have you made progress deciphering the scroll?"

"I've made progress, but not much... even if I've deciphered the code, its contents are like a riddle, so I'm stumped..."

"A riddle, huh... Sainyang, you like puzzles, maybe you'll figure it out?"

"I, I don't think you're supposed to lump together puzzles with riddles..."

"Right, but still, we might find a clue, Yuit, let's hear that puzzle."

"F, fine..."

Opening her mother's notebook reluctantly, Yuit read out loud to Tarnyang and Sainyang.

"The gate serves the key, and the key serves as the gate."

"...."

"...."

"....Is that all?"

"R, Right."

"I see, I see... Okay, Sainyang, start solving it!"

"Eh, eeh! Is that all? Isn't, isn't there more?"

"The memo only has some scribbles besides that... "Child of the Peach Tree" and "Key <- Beast Cave?"... There's much of the memo to worry about, but it barely seems connected at all..."

"There are many names like that... unless we meet a person familiar with the situation in this

area, we won't understand it..."

Said Sainyang, struggling to find a solution somehow with so few hints, and Yuit nodded in agreement.

"That's why, we came to this jungle... inside here we could find a person from the tribe that lived here in the ancient times, the so-called "Calibara tribe", as the records state..."

"Ancient times..."

"They "lived"...?"

"Right. The records tell that the forest was taken by the "Wild Elves" as their residence and it became a war, and even though it was possibly destroyed..."

"Perhaps they might have survived, then?"

"The Calibara Tribe fell a long time before my mother was born, at the very least, but the descriptions in this scroll hint at my mother having contacted them. So, maybe... It's quite rational for such a huge thing like Bligh to be hiding in this unexplored jungle!"

Left with a ray of hope, Yuit turned her eyes towards the jungle.

It was then that:

"Kyaaaaah!"

A scream that didn't come from Yuit, Tarnyang, Sainyang or let alone Vante reached their ears.



"H, H, Help mee!"

Yuit and the others looked at the place they had heard the scream from, and it was a weird scene.

"W, what is... this...?"

Even Taryang who didn't care about minor details, could only mutter in a daze.

"Ah! Th, there are people here, please, somehow... somehow, help mee!"

Wearing only a thin cloth, the girl, who was hanging upside down, turned towards Yuit and the others and screamed.

With the native dress of that place, the cloth barely hiding the tip of her chest, a jewel coiled around her waist as an ornament, and a decoration concealed between her legs that imitated the face of an elephant, the young girl was almost exposing her voluptuous body to the open air. That girl had been caught and was now entangled in rope-like things with the thickness of a child's arm.

"E, even if you say to help you..."

"Taryang, there! There's some kind of animal!"

Sainyang pointed to the ground below the girl who was asking for help.

"What is that... a tiger?"

"A tiger... with, some kind of... tentacles, attached to it?"

It growled when Yuit and the others glared at it, and it certainly looked like a tiger.

But, a pair of tentacles grew on its back, with which it had lifted the young girl up in the air and entangled her.

"T, this is a tentacle tiger! It lifts up its prey and entangles it until it's weak enough to be eaten... Ahya, hia, d, don't touch me in strangle plaaces!"

The girl screamt as her body was felt up by the tentacle.

"S, she'll get eaten... she's in danger, help her, Vante!"

"Gaoon!"

Yuit decided to attack, and gave Vante an order.

"Wait! If you attack blindly, the beast might take the girl and run away! This one... leave it to me!"

"W, whatever is fine, just hurry up! Ahi, hyaunn!"

When she saw Taryang smoothly drawing her sword and getting prepared, the girl hanging in midair turned pale.

"Hya, hyauu... d, don't cut mee...!"

"It'll be fine, just stay still... Let's go! Sainyang!"

Sainyang touched Taryang's shoulder with her right hand.

If Sainyang made a symbol to start with her left hand, a miraculous power would begin to fill the point of the sword Taryang had readied.

"Taryang, how do you feel about this...?"

"With the holy sword technique, staying calm... and with Sainyang's spiritual power filling my sword, I should be able to make the enemy lose its will to fight... if it succeeds."

"D, do you think it'll succeed?"

"That's... For such an animal we've just seen for the first time, I can't guarantee it..."

"You have to be... a little more reliable, Taryang...!"

"Be quiet! I can't concentrate!"

Cold sweat appeared on Taryang's forehead, showing her degree of concentration. While retorting to the jeering behind her, she slowly swung her sword as if describing an arc, looking like she was cutting a pattern in the air.

"Uuuh... m, my blood is rushing to my... head, this is it..."

When the girl muttered with a beet red face due to the long time she had been upside down, a change finally showed up in the tentacle tiger's appearance.

"Gururururu...."

Although its low growling didn't change, it slowly turned back, loosened its tentacles and released the captured girl, dropping her back to the ground.

"Kyau!"

The girl fell on her buttocks and screamed.

"Gururu..."

While staring at the body it was reluctant to part from, the tentacle tiger stepped back, disappearing into the depths of the jungle.

"Fuu... we did it somehow..."

Relaxing at last, Taryang wiped the sweat from her forehead.

"That wasn't great, Taryang. It was something terribly irrational!"

"See, I can make it if I try!"

"...As always, when I get serious, we solve the problems."

As usual, Sainyang's murmur wasn't heard by anybody.

Unaware as well of Sainyang's bitter words, Tarnyang asked the released girl.

"Say, who are you? Why are you in the middle of a jungle like this, where strange animals can capture you?"

"Ah! That's right! Thank you very much, you really saved me! I almost got eaten by the tentacle tiger back there!"

The young girl laughed, and after bowing with an earnest reverence, she straightened up and introduced herself.

"Thanks, I am Luna Luna. They call me the "Solar Dancer"."

"Luna Luna...? I, I am Yuit. This is Vante, and these two odd people connected by the necklace are Tarnyang and Sainyang."

"Yuit, Vante, Tarnyang and Sainyang, right, nice to meet you!"

"W, well, nice to meet you too, but, where do you come from? Is there any village nearby where people live?"

Becoming a little confused at the conversation that came out of nowhere, when Yuit asked, Luna Luna raised both hands overhead instead of answering, and turned around in the spot.

"Ahahah! As thanks for saving me, I'll show you my dance!"

"D, don't, there's no time for dancing..."

"Eh? Which reminds me, you're people from that tribe, right? With those pointy ears, you're Wild Elves, right?"

Asked by Luna Luna, who had stopped dancing but still kept doing things at her own pace, Yuit replied.

"No... We come from the Margrave Kreutz' territory."

When she heard out loud the name of the land that was the base of Annelotte's Rebel Army, Luna Luna tilted her head.

"Mar-gra-ve Kre-utz... is it, on which side of the forest?"

"It's not in this forest, when you leave this jungle, it's northeast, a little further after crossing the desert of Amara."

Yuit explained while visualizing a map in her head.

Hearing that, Luna Luna put on a puzzled expression.

"Outside? What do you mean, outside the jungle?"

"Eeh?"

"Anyhow, it's the first time I see people other than those from the tribe of the Wild Elves! How unusual!"

"...Somehow, for this child, the jungle is like the whole world..."

Yuit nodded involuntarily to Sainyang's accurate analysis.

Somehow, they had come across a resident of the jungle. Although she didn't seem to know about the Calibara tribe, she might have heard some clue about the fortress.

"Aah! I felt hopeless after getting caught by the tentacle tiger a while ago, but I was saved by people born elsewhere who I just met for the first time, how lucky! I need to dance to convey this feeling to future generations!"

As soon as she screamed so, Luna Luna wriggled her body and began to dance again.

"W, w, w, wait! Wait, that's enough dancing!"

Confused when she was made to stop dancing, Luna Luna pouted with discontent.

"Eh, I thought I'd take the trouble of showing you the welcoming dance handed down by the Calibara."

"M, maybe next time... what, Calibara?"

"Eh? Right, I'm Luna Luna from the Calibara tribe. The guardian of the tribe, and the best dancer."

"It, it can't be..."

"Finding them this easily..."

The party was overcome with surprise.

Yuit pulled herself together somehow, and asked Luna Luna.

"We, we were searching for the Calibara, that's why we came to this jungle! Say, the name of the "Beast Cave", do you remember having heard it before?"

"Eh, "Beast Cave"...? Yes, I know it, but..."

Luna Luna answered, tilting her head to the side.

"But, the law says that it must not be told to anyone other than the tribe members..."

Although Luna Luna murmured so, frowning with a worried expression, she suddenly smiled with a bright face and continued.

"But, that's it! You guys, you saved my life!"

"W, well... thanks, Luna Luna! Quickly, I want you to lead us to the "Beast Cave!"
"Right, let's go, follow me."

Luna Luna accepted merrily, and went deeper into the jungle. The party hurried to chase after her.

Taimashi Sainyang

A person acquainted with the many mysteries of the unexplored region of Shai-Fang. She can use the mysterious power of "magic arts", different from witchcraft.

She's usually spacing out and is a weakling to the extreme that she's not very useful in battle, but when she joins with Tarnyang their combination technique "Double Dragon Formation" grants them herculean strength. Sainyang pours the power exuberant magic skills into Tarnyang's body, and when it reaches the peak a tremendously destructive power is brought forth, the "Dragonic Lightning", or Tarnyang can use her intense fighting spirit to attack with Sainyang and channel her supernatural strength into the techniques called "Dragonic Howl" and "Dragonic Spin".

She loves Tarnyang very much, and can spend hours spacing out, looking at her profile.



Height: 155cm
B/W/H: 75/58/81
Occupation: Antidemon expert
Weapons: Ritual tools
Protection: None
Likes: Elder sister's face in profile
Dislikes: Strangers
Hobby: Sleeping

"...E, even if it's me, I'll try to protect Tarnyang!"

character created by 中野友和

Chapter 7: The Fierce Tiger's Den

Annelotte's journey has continued together with Yuit, Vante and Mirim, and they went to Hinomoto to receive training from the Kensei-Miko Tomoe. Besides, she met again with the Phantom Warrior Maria who once saved her life. After receiving her training, a new strength had awakened inside her.

"Coming across you was really a blessing, Maria."

"Well, for the time being, let's have a toast for the completion of your training. Hey hey, you young lady as well!"

"Y, yes."

Near the capital city of Gainos, there was a bar at a trading city.

Annelotte and Mirim were drinking a mug of beer together with the "Phantom Warrior" Maria.

The aloof, masked warrior who had once saved Annelotte's life.

Without assembling a faction, she was a fighter of remarkable ability who continued fighting the Queen's Army by herself.

Since she instantly disappeared to somewhere else shortly after the fights ended, people called her the Phantom Warrior.

Though everybody felt like they knew her true identity, it was a taboo somehow.

Fortunately, Annelotte and Mirim were fine with not inquiring into Maria's history at all.

Annelotte respected Maria from before, and Annelotte and Mirim had searched for her once again, and had asked Maria to teach her how to fight.

Maria had said "You're my first pupil. Nice to meet you", and had agreed.

After several months of training, Annelotte was definitely able to learn something by living with her every day. Now, it was the time of her graduation.

Even though Maria's beer mug was filled to the brim with ale, Annelotte's and Mirim's were filled with white milk.

Although it was an odd drink to request at a bar, the many different customers at the bar of that town couldn't neglect their trades to direct questioning looks at them. At the establishment, none of the other customers were especially observing Annelotte's party.

That was something that, as wanted people, both Annelotte and Mirim appreciated.

Because, not only they were plotting a rebellion against the Queen, the pope's agency had recognized them as "heretics", therefore becoming traitors to God.

"Annelotte, you'd better meet Risty."

"Phantom Warrior" Maria, quite sleepy already, said that to Annelotte's party while occasionally dozing off. She said someone had put her under the "Sleep Curse", needing to sleep 16 hours or more per day, and intense drowsiness would visit her intermittently, all of a sudden.

"Risty... the "Bandit of the Wilderness"?"

Sitting next to Annelotte, Mirim asked, puzzled.

"Yes. You've trained under Tomoe and me, and you've become strong. However, you're just one person. What you're aiming for, is not to settle this with your own strength, one-to-one... is it?"

"Ah, that's right... cooperating with my comrades, adding more and more people and bringing forth the strength of everyone combined... that's what we must do."

"As I thought, like Risty. How important and difficult it was to build up an organization, and the way strength could be brought from there... she was familiar with it."

Maria said, shaking her jug as if playing with it.

"She decided to fight against Queen Claudette before you guys did. And she had gathered comrades and organized a rebel army... however."

"When I went to the Large Fang Mountain, where she was supposed to be, in order to ask for her help, it was already empty there... although we know she was attacked, as her comrades who had run away told us... but where she is now after being captured, is something we don't know after all."

Annelotte remembered how Risty's hiding place was now an empty carcass, and bit her lip.

"The Queen's Army was anticipating her, so they caught her... but what did those guys attack her for? I'm rather worried."

"Ah, the might of someone else than the Queen's Army... it seems. In the first place, if the Queen captured the rebel forces, they'd announce it publicly as a warning."

"Risty's insurrection plan is too large-scale, if she announced it, it could have the opposite effect

and mislead the public, so she's keeping it as a secret, we have to do so as well."

Maria said so, and unable to resist it anymore, she flopped down with her cheek stuck to the table.

"*Munya*... I heard a rumor that they send that kind of criminals to a secret detention center for their execution...I don't know where."

"...So, locating it is our next objective...?"

Annelotte was at a loss.

Munya, munya, Maria was sleeping like a log.

The dead atmosphere was broken from an unexpected direction.

"Did you know?... *Hiccup!*"

Both Annelotte and Maria, who was more than half asleep, looked back at the owner of the voice. Holding the jug filled with milk with both hands, Mirim was in a good mood, smiling with a flushed face.

"There is a concentration camp called the "Fierce Tiger's Den" to the north of the frontier. *Atch [half-sneeze]*... Its existence is kept a secret, made for criminals, it's unofficially used to house criminals to be executed... so I have heard."

Showing a somewhat dreamy look, Mirim still gave a steady answer.

"Is that true? Way to go, Mirim!"

Saying so, Annelotte patted Mirim's shoulder... and frowned.

"... You reek of liquor! Mi, Mirim! You, what are you drinking...?"

"Eh, this heere?"

Mirim answered while drinking and spilling the contents of her jug, exhaling breath that reeked of liquor with a "*Pooh!*"

"It is miilk."

"It absolutely isn't!"

"Milk isn't yellow, and bubbles shouldn't appear in it, either..."

"It is milk, an uncle turned to me and said: "A lady like you should drink uncle's special delicious milk" and gave it to me."

Facing Annelotte and Maria, Mirim answered, laughing with a cackle.

"Because of that, please hear me out. I was nice, but miss Elina used to threaten me, saying "If you make any more mistakes, I'm sending you to the Fierce Tiger's Den". Don't you think that's cruel? What do you think? Although she liked me despite my mistakes, she was always being picky, and teasing me... uuuuh."

"Wa, wait Mirim, get off me, you're sticking too much to me!"

"Since I still need to work hard, that's why, that's why..."

"W, wait a second, Maria! H, help me here!"

"Snoore."

"You fell asleep!"

Annelotte managed to take the seriously intoxicated Mirim to a hotel, but not without great effort. She'd never let Mirim near alcohol again, she decided.

The "Fierce Tiger's Den", according to the information relayed by Mirim (that by the way, the person herself didn't remember at all), was on the north of the continent, a facility like a stronghold built in the middle of a coniferous forest, covered with snow.

"I investigated a bit, this facility was built by the 3rd generation Queen, seemingly to imprison those who opposed her."

Lowering her voice, Maria said to Annelotte.

"During Aldra's reign this facility was never used, it was left to rot..."

"So, is it Claudette who restored it?"

"Exactly."

"Sister Annelotte, miss Maria, looks like we'll arrive soon."

Mirim, who was observing the "outside" situation, said to the two people in a whisper.

"Is that so?... We were cramped in here, it's about time we got out."

"Good, if we stay cramped anymore, my body will harden."

A cart had been dispatched with goods to the "Fierce Tiger's Den", and inside a small gap, three people were hiding in it, complicatedly entangled.

Bump, the cart shook with a bang, and stopped.

That was the sign, the three people exchanged glances, and nodded firmly to each other.

“Well, let’s go along with the plan.”

“Maria, you still have room to improve. In this place, you’ll be defeated.”

“If I seem to get into big trouble, I’ll escape suitably, worry about yourself, and do your best.”

“Both of you, a guard is coming!”

“Well, let’s get out... yaaah!”

In order to have the drop on the guard who was revising the cargo, Maria jumped out of the wagon.

“The prisoners you all captured, I’ll make you return everybody to us!”

Maria said, cutting down the guard. Moving like a flow, she knocked down two guards and the cart driver, almost simultaneously with the high-pitched alarm that sounded from the top of the watchtower.



“Come here kittens, I’ll beat you all!”

Maria was shouting, somewhat happily, while she faced the situation, and in reply, the guards from the top of the watchtower shot arrows at her.

A barrage of arrows rained from above, and Maria raised her shield to protect herself.

“Tsk, not fair!”

Cursing, she took out a dagger from the back side of her shield and threw it, and the guard holding the bow fell down the watchtower with a scream.

"Heey hey, if you lose your cool, you'll get hurt!"

In response to Maria's provocation, a guard with a spear ready hustled into sight.

"Really, isn't this too much to receive one person!"

Grasping her sword once again, Maria was quite definitely laughing.

Skipping over and cutting off the spearhead of the thrusting guard, she knew that was an indication that Annelotte's party had successfully escaped from the cart.

"Hey hey hey, you guys know you're plenty for a person like me alone!"

Shouting with a cheerful voice as if enjoying herself with a game, Maria deliberately stressed out that she was one person on her own.

At the same time, Annelotte and Mirim had successfully escaped from the cart, and were taking a roundabout path to the back of the stronghold.

From the distance, the sound and the voices of the battle reached their ears, carried by the wind.

As long as they heard them, it'd mean both Maria and them were safe.

"According to the diagram Maria prepared, around here we should go underground to get to the prison, but..."

Frustrated, Annelotte's palm touched the stone wall.

She expected a gate according to the information, but due to the recent remodeling, the door was plastered up and was unusable.

"We'll have to start over... look for another place to get in."

Replying to what Annelotte said, Mirim shook her head.

"No, Sister. If we miss here, there will be no time."

"If so, then how...?"

"Open... here!"

Fully prepared to die if necessary, Mirim drew her sword. Responding to her fighting spirit, the Hyper Vibration Crystal blinked, and the Hyper Vibration Sword roared.

"...Teyaaah!"

Mirim pointed it toward the wall and thrust, grinding with a thunderous roar while sparks scattered around the wall.

"Hyaaaauuh!"

Raising her voice involuntarily as the vibration assaulted her entire body, Mirim didn't stop her assault on the wall.

"Mi, Mirim, don't overdo yourself!"

"I, I'm, fine...! Hyaaunh! If, if it's for you, Sister!"

Mirim withstood the vibration through gritted teeth.

Cold sweat appeared on her face, but she could only watch. A person such as Annelotte would get impatient.

"Mirim... Mirim!"

"A, ahn...! S, Sister... Annelotte... Sisteer... hyaaunh!"

Pop!

Suddenly, Mirim's sword no longer faced resistance.

The sword scraped off the wall little by little, and pierced through the opposite side.

"I did it! Uh, ah, eh, huh...?"

At the same time she smiled a smile of satisfaction. The wall clattered and crumbled, as if it was about to collapse and fall on top of Mirim.

"Mirim! Watch out!"

Holding out her hand at once, Annelotte tried to grab Mirim.

"S, Sister...!"

"A, uwah...!"

But Annelotte and Mirim, along with the side of the wall, fell into the very spacious room of the semi basement.

Whoosh!

Although they must have fallen several meters, thanks to the water at the bottom, neither

Annelotte nor Mirim were greatly hurt.

Plain water? No, that was wrong.

"Ah... it's hott!"

Annelotte jumped up in a hurry. Thick, billowing steam collected on her face, and she couldn't see even 1 meter ahead of her. They hadn't fallen into water, but into boiling water.

"A, are you alright, Sister Annelotte!?"

Thanks to the Hyper Vibration Armor, Mirim was completely unhurt, and she called out to the anxious Annelotte. When Annelotte quickly covered all her senses, checking that she wasn't injured anywhere, she nodded to Mirim.

"I, I'm fine... However, w, where, on earth..."

As if replying to Annelotte's murmur, wind quickly blew from the wall Mirim had destroyed, blowing away the steam that covered them.

"W, what...!"

"Kyaa...!"

Annelotte was speechless. Mirim covered her eyes involuntarily.

Around the two people, stark naked girls stood stock still staring at them with a blank stare on their faces.

Kapoon.

Such a relaxing sound resounded from somewhere.

"A... A bath...?"

Gradually grasping where they were, Mirim murmured with a shaking voice.

The large bathroom for the guards.

Probably, they were in such a place.

"In..."

One of the stark-naked guards murmured, overcome with surprise.

"In...?"

Mirim asked back involuntarily.

"In... Intrudeeers...!"

They weren't wearing anything, nor were they carrying weapons, but they were still members of the guard. Coming to their senses because of the scream, they surrounded Annelotte's party to capture them.

"S, Sister...!"

"Don't panic, the opponents are all unarmed... we'll break through somehow!"

"Y, Yes!"

As they got together and covered each other's backs, Mirim and Annelotte drew their respective weapons.

Could Annelotte and Mirim, as well as Maria, rescue Risty after all?

They won't know that unless they fight.

Chapter 7.5: Indomitable Heroine

In the stronghold prison “Fierce Tiger’s Den”, there was now a wild chaos.

“To the plaza! All the soldiers rush to the plaza!”

“The subterranean dungeon is under attack! Defend it as soon as possible!”

“How many enemies are there!? One hundred? Two hundred?”

Maria’s strategy to break the chain of command had paid off, and now the jailers couldn’t observe and fully understand the entire situation.

Maria was hiding herself and observing the situation, and stifling a yawn under her mask, she thought of going ahead of Annelotte’s party.

“Fuwaa... well, I’ll go soon to meet Risty as well, hasn’t it been a long time...?”

“Sister Annelotte, this way!”

“Wait a second! The bolt here... if I close it...! With this, it should buy us some time.”

Annelotte and Mirim had shaken their pursuers somehow, and when they came to, a gloomy staircase spread out before their eyes, and they stared at the passage leading to the dungeon with anxiety mixed in their eyes.

“Really... is it here, where the Bandit of the Wilderness Risty, is imprisoned...”

“I don’t think Maria is one to make a mistake.”

“Well... that’s why she’s my teacher.”

When Annelotte hesitated, Mirim supported her.

For not being alone at that moment, Annelotte thanked her in her heart, and she went down the stairs.

“Let’s go, we’ll meet my fourth teacher!”

“Yes!”

Down the long, narrow stairs, beyond a corridor even longer and narrower, there was a prison where prisoners were locked up.

“What’s, with you?”

Glaring with eyes that hadn’t lost their rebellious spirit despite having become a prisoner, a man hurled his low voice at Annelotte’s party from the other side of the iron bars.

“S, Sister...”

While protecting the frightened Mirim behind her back, Annelotte asked the man.

“Is someone called Risty, being captive here? She’s the one called the “Bandit of the Wilderness”.”

“Why, do you ask?”

“We’re here to help.”

The man raised his eyebrow. The prisoners at the rear emitted a bland response.

“Who, are you?”

“I’m the only child of the Margrave Kreutz, Annelotte.”

As he heard her name, the glint in the man’s eye became even sharper.

“What I heard, was this. The Margrave Kreutz was someone who decided to go against the Queen of Thundercloud Claudette and was crushed, a man who raised a daughter pretending her to be a man.”

The man’s voice sounded with a mix of amusement.

“That person was looking for us guys, and even though we heard a rumor that she wanted to meet us... No way, did you come to a place like this for us?”

“You guys?... No way, I didn’t.”

“Aah, that’s right.”

The man, gathering with the prisoners at the rear, threw out his chest, and nodded largely.

“We guys are the group of bandits from the Large Fang Mountain led by our elder sister Risty, the “Bandit of the Wilderness” ‘ gang.”

The story the man who called himself Risty's underling told them, was one Annelotte's party couldn't readily believe.

A mysterious demon had attacked their hiding place all of a sudden. In order to let her underlings escape, Risty had fought alone. When the bandits escaped, the Queen's Army was expecting them.

There was some mysterious conspiracy hidden there. Although she felt that way, it was frustrating not to know the perpetrator's true identity, and Annelotte involuntarily ground her teeth.

"Annelotte!"

A call broke the line of her thoughts, that was falling into circles. When she turned around, the "Phantom Warrior" Maria was coming over, holding her sword.

"How did it turn out?... These people, they're Risty's friends, right?"

"Ah, but, what's the situation above like? If you're here, does it mean there's not much time?"

"Since it became a mess, I think we'll be fine for a while. They think we're aiming at the chief's head, and the guards are assembling elsewhere."

"You are..."

To interrupt the next question the man was going to ask her, Maria asked conversely.

"But, what of Risty? Isn't she here?"

"Aah, that's right."

The man replied, biting his lips.

"Our elder sister was taken and was immediately moved to somewhere else. From the talk of the jailers, seems like there's a special ward further inside."

"Further... inside."

The man grabbed the prison bars, and begged Annelotte with a frantic expression.

"We beg you! No matter what happens to us guys, help our elder sister!"

Annelotte, Mirim and Maria went down, deeper and further into the prison.

At the bottom layer, after Mirim's Hyper Vibration Sword tore to pieces the firmly sealed iron door, the three people finally managed to reach the depths of the "Fierce Tiger's Den".

"Here it is..."

They were in a strange room.

The room's entrance was wide enough to fit a hundred people, but only a thick pillar stood in the center to support the ceiling.

A gloomy, damp atmosphere with the stink of a beast, as if to reaffirm somehow that they were in the inner depths of the "Fierce Tiger's Den".

Creak... creak, a creaking sound was echoing regularly through the whole room. From the

central pillar, a log grew sideways, and as one beast pushed that log, the pillar rotated.

With a red mane of disheveled hair, and glaring shining eyes, the beast bared her gritted teeth.

Her name was...

"Risty... Are you the "Bandit of the Wilderness", Risty...?"

"It's been a long time since I've been called that... but yeah, that was my name."

Facing them, the beast slowly rotated the pillar.

Though she was slightly dirty, from her eyes it could be seen that her mental strength hadn't disappeared, and both her arms were swelled to bursting with more muscles, even if that beast had been captured, it showed that she was still a wild animal.

"Someone's here... I thought if somebody came to help me... it would be Leina. Maybe she's lost her touch. Heheh."

Risty murmured, while pushing the pillar.

"This here... Ouch..."

Mirim said, scared, and Risty answered.

"This here goes up to the upper prison... It's connected to the prison my friends are in. If I don't keep on rotating this pillar, the ceiling of the upper prison will fall down and squash all my friends, what a horrible taste."

While she talked, Risty kept on turning the pillar. If her legs missed one step, her friends would die... that was a plan only a demon could devise, and Annelotte's party started paling with dread.

"But... in that case, you can't sleep, nor have a meal?"

"Aah, that's right... Since I was brought here, I haven't slept a wink, and my mouth hasn't taken even a drop of water."

"That can't be..."

Next to the surprised Mirim, Maria sighed, and muttered.

"A curse... right?"

"Quite so, and I know which one."

"A curse?"

"Aah... on the day of the attack, a curse was put on me... the "Indomitable Curse" befell on my body. I can't eat, drink or sleep well, but I won't die from it... on the contrary, you could say I'm alive thanks to the curse."

"You were captured months ago... and you still keep your sanity."

When Maria said so, Risty grinned broadly, somewhat proudly, relaxing her mouth.

"On my arms, the lives of my friends are hanging... Plus, isn't it natural?"

Risty said so carelessly. Annelotte admired the strong spirit she saw in her, and her mental strength to protect her friends.

Even if she was captured, and cursed... unlike her, who began to act violently with the demon blood lurking inside her, she protected her friends, the people important to her... Feeling such a resolution in Risty's words that "resolution" didn't do them justice, Annelotte decided to respect this person.

"I'm Annelotte. I came here to meet you... Bandit of the Wilderness... no, "Indomitable Heroine" Risty."

After saying so, Annelotte began telling Risty the situation so far.

Because of Queen Claudette, her home and her lands had been taken, and she had been defeated when she tried to take revenge.

Saved by Maria, she went on a trip to organize a Rebel Army. To ask for Risty's help, she had gone to the Large Fang Mountain, but it had already been attacked by someone, it was an empty carcass.

Some of Risty's subordinates had joined Annelotte, they were still in good health.

"Risty, you'll escape from here. If you can rescue your captured friends from the upper floor, you'll be free as well."

After Annelotte said so, Maria continued with a nod.

"The opponent who cursed you, I have a clue on who it is. Instead of being shut in a place like this, I think your nature is more like going and beating them?"

"Hm? Now that I'm taking a closer look at you... I see."

Risty stared at Maria's face. In the eyes behind the mask, it seems like Risty felt something.

"Understood. I'll trust you."

Saying that, Risty pointed to her chest with her chin, and spoke.

"You there, you were called Annelotte, right. Put your hand here just for a moment."

"Huh...? Eh, ah, my hand? Like, on your chest?"

Annelotte stared in wonder at the sudden command.

"Thaat's right, put your hand right here on my chest, c'mon, hurry up."

"W, w, why...?"

"Just do it!"

"Uh, w, well then... E, excuse, me."

Annelotte timidly put her hand on Risty's chest. Annelotte's fingertips pressed between the sweaty skin and the dirty clothes.

"I, is... this okay?"

"Aah, that's right... just a little deeper..."

"Uh, uuh... hm?"

Like she told her, Annelotte's fingers went deeper into her breast. Her fingertips touched something solid.

"That's it, pull that out."

"Uh, uuh."

She pulled it out slowly, it was a small jewel ornament.

"This is...?"

"You can have it. Whoever has that, can proceed to the Gemstone Mountain."

"Gemstone Mountain..."

"There's a person called the "Gemstone Princess" there. That person will know you're my comrade if you show it to her."

"...I understand."

Annelotte replied, grasping tightly the jewel ornament.

"But, I'm just holding onto it. Risty, first of all you have to get out of here."

"No, you have to go now, head to the mountain, I'll meet you there."

"That's absurd. We'll go together."

"I'll help Risty. You go on!"

"Sister Annelotte, we must hurry!"

Annelotte nodded at what Maria and Mirim said, and headed for the exit. To see her off, Maria said to her back.

"We'll be fine, hurry up and go!"

"I've decided to believe in you, thanks, Maria. Let's go, Mirim!"

"Yes!"

Along with Mirim, Annelotte ran up the stairs, without looking back.

Gemstone Mountain

The continent's leading producer of gemstones. The dwarven Gemstone Princess Eilin is the ruler there. Eilin is known for her outstanding business ability and her negotiation skills, and her maxim is to profit from everything. With the gems of the Gemstone Mountain being the most suitable material for the magic stones, it's a location desired even by the Queen.



1 hour later.

Surrounded by soldiers, Maria held the collapsed Risty.

The pillar wasn't rotating anymore. From the soldiers' way of speaking, it was obvious the prisoners from the upper floor had escaped successfully. Mirim probably destroyed the jail when she left.

"Crap... I think I can't move my body."

Risty murmured with frustration.

"It can't be helped, you've been doing hard labor for many months without a break. You did a great job, Risty."

Maria's words had a somewhat gentle sound to them.

"Sorry... I keep on being saved by you."

"What are you saying. It was you who saved me first."

Step step, the soldiers narrowed the circle that surrounded them.

"Those guys... they were very interesting."

"Don't you think? That's why I lent them a hand."

"If it's those guys... I feel they can do it."

"Though I want to see this through to the end... this is relentless."

"You won through Queen's Blade, are you giving up with just this much?"

"Now, I wonder about that?"

Fuwaa, yawning greatly, Maria drew her sword smoothly.

"I'm slowly getting sleepy... I don't know how much longer I can hold on."

"That's fine, me too... but I'll strain my remaining strength to the end! Anyhow, that's why I'm the

"Indomitable Heroine!"

The collapsed Risty shook up her whole body, and stood up.

"Here we go!"

"Let's do this!"

The two people shouted simultaneously, and plunged into the soldiers.

To distract their attention from the escape of the bandits and Annelotte's party, it was a desperate battle.

Indomitable Heroine **Risty**


A strong leader and a chivalrous thief that aids the weak in the wilderness on the west of the Continent, she made a name for herself when she participated in the Queen's Blade tournament. She's known Leina for a long time, but even today, the match with her rival hasn't been settled yet.

After the tournament ended, she resumed her training, and her muscle strength increased further. She relinquished the weapon with an iron ball she was specialized in, and she realized the power of bare-handed fighting.

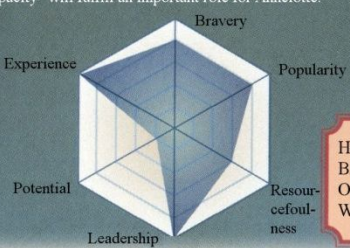
When the tyranny of Queen Claudette began, she quickly organized the rebel army. Funded by the distribution of dark magic stones, a big force was built.

But suddenly, the Marshland Witch arrived on a "Beautiful Fighters Hunt" and cast on her a "Indomitable Curse", that makes her unable to satisfy her cravings, and unable to eat or sleep well, she was captured by the Queen's Army.

Now, she's weakened after a long stay in prison, but her original fighting strength hasn't been used up, and her "organizational capacity" will fulfill an important role for Annelotte.



"Not drinking is irritating me! Time to get violent!"



Height: 179cm	Protection: None
B/W/H: 90/66/85	Likes: Meat and alcohol
Occupation: Bandits' leader	Dislikes: Monkeys
Weapons: Her own fists	Hobby: Bathing

character created by えいわ

夢の新旧クイーンズブレイド
ヒロイン尻相撲対決!



レイナ優勢は歴戦の貴録か、
はたまたお尻の大きさなのか!?

Chapter 8: Yuit's Crisis

As Yuit's party travel through the forest in search of the legendary Sacred Fortress Treasure, they had set foot inside the "Beast Cave", for the key they sought. What awaited them there was something unexpected.

The group of Yuit, Vante, Taryang and Sainyang had met a young girl called Luna Luna in the jungle, and when they asked her the location of the "Beast Cave", they had been sent to step deeper inside it.

"Really... since she brought us to the entrance, she could have guided us in too."

Yuit replied with a wry smile to the complaining Taryang.

"Now, now... aren't you thankful she guided us this far."

"Even so..."

The moment Taryang retorted, the figure of Sainyang, who had been walking nervously, disappeared along with a wild scream.

"Ahyau!"

"Sainyang?"

Then at that moment, Taryang's figure also disappeared.

Yuit rushed over, confused.

"H, h, help meee."

As expected, she abruptly found the figures of the two people.

A pit was hidden by the cave's rock surface, and Sainyang had fallen entirely into it. And Taryang had been pulled from the string that connected their necks, and fell together with her.

"H, H, Hurry up... hurry up and help me, I, I, I'm going to fall! I'm falling down, I'm falling dooown!"

Sainyang had both arms and legs stretched against the wall, frantically trying not to fall down. No wonder, set up at the bottom of the hole, many spears were pointing upwards, one of them piercing a skeleton.

"Sainyang, shut up! Despite always whispering in a low voice, you have to shout out at these times, don't you?"

Taryang was quite composed, for someone who also was stretching her arms and legs against the pit's wall. She was probably an older sister you could rely on in a pinch.

"Vante, please."

"Gaon!"

After Yuit's command, Vante extended her hand and grabbed the two people.

"T... Thanks..."

Pinching herself like a kitten, Sainyang sighed as she remained in one piece.

"Really, I told you to be careful where you walked, don't slack off!"

"Incidentally, didn't you say you were afraid to get in the cave...?"

As usual, Taryang ignored Sainyang's words of complaint, looked back to Yuit, and asked her once again.

"Are you sure, that there's a treasure deep inside?"

Yuit replied to the question with an amazed look.

"It's not that! It's an inheritance of the "Calibara tribe", a sacred treasure fortress! For the sake of fighting against the Queen's Army, we absolutely, absolutely need it!"

"I, I know that! I was just testing you a little!"

"You definitely forgot..."

"A, anyhow, let's keep going ahead! We've come so far inside, we should be reaching the goal soon!"

Saying that to gloss over it, Taryang quickly hurried.

"Hey hey, hurry up and follow me... hihyauu?"

She got caught up in a trap, and let out a strange voice.

After being caught in and overcoming many traps, the group finally reached the cave's deepest spot.

"A dead end... it can't be, did we make a mistake?"

"No way... I didn't make a wrong turn at a fork, did I...?"

“Ah, here... look.”

Sainyang crouched and pointed at her feet, in the semi-darkness of the cave.

There was a small hole, hidden in the darkness indistinguishably.

“Surely, the treasure room’s beyond this point! Let’s go!”

Saying so, Yuit squatted down and plunged half her head in at once.

“Hey hey, hurry up!”

Though Tarnyang also squatted down and urged Yuit, she immediately turned towards the cave and went back, shouting.

“The hole is too small, I can’t fit well! Only Yuit fits!”

“Eeh! It can’t be helped... Well then, I’m going alone!”

“Gaoon!”

Vante raised her voice in concern, and leaving Tarnyang, Sainyang and her there, Yuit went back into the thin hole.

By the time Yuit returned, 2 hours had gone by.

“Geez, I give up, though there was a small room inside, it didn’t lead anywhere! But! There was a box containing some kind of ancient documents, if I look at them somewhere bright...!”

“Heee, ancient documents? I’m curious, I wonder if you can tell me a little about them?”

Something was thrust in front of the dusty Yuit’s eyes, a sharp claw. Of course, neither Tarnyang, Sainyang nor Vante carried such a dangerous weapon.

“W... who...?”

She raised her look.

Standing there, there was a woman in leather armor with swinging pigtails.



“Y... You’re... “Leader of the Fang” Elina...!”

“Oh, you remember me? I’m so happy, “Alchemy Strategist” Yuit!”

“Y, Yuit.”

“Sorry... we were caught.”

“Ga... gaoon...!”

Behind Elina, many sturdy, half-naked men with strange patterns drawn throughout their bodies were lined up, and they had tied up Vante, Tarnyang and Sainyang.

“That was some perfect timing, lady.”

With a grinning smile, Elina stroke Yuit’s jaw with her claw.

“Now, I’ll have you tell me... what you know, the whereabouts of the “key”...!”

“Thaat’s why, we don’t know the whereabouts of the key either...!”

The sturdy men wound around them, and came out of the cave carrying Yuit’s party.

“Wait, stop! Get off me!”

“Oh, it’s useless, you have to ask these guys in their language... *Kikerakikera, Purimuuho!*”

Elina commanded the men in an unfamiliar language, and Tarnyang and the others were tied up harder. Seemed like she completely ruled over the natives somehow. The Leader of the Fang Elina was formidable.

“Ta, Tarnyang... t, that one! Over there!”

As Sainyang was carried on a man’s shoulders like luggage, her eyes opened up in surprise and she called out to Tarnyang.

“What? Can there be anything weirder than this... Ah, eeeh!”

“What is it? What’s going on?”

When Yuit asked, the Twin Taimashi gave a small nod, their faces turning white.

“T, that one there...”

“What?”

Beyond Tainyang’s line of sight, Elina was taking with her the figure of a very young girl.

“Just who, is that? Elina, is she your child?”

Elina looked back, with a look that mocked what Yuit had asked.

“No way. Or rather, it has nothing to do with you. But, I wonder if you’ll soon feel like talking about the key’s whereabouts? “The key serves as the gate”, I’ll make you hand it over.”

“But, I don’t know anything about a key! I’ve been telling you for quite a while!”

Facing the captured Yuit, Elina kept on asking obstinately about the whereabouts of the “key”. But, even if she asked Yuit, she had no idea about the “key”. In the first place, it was looking for the “key” why they had come to the Beast Cave.

“Really, we don’t know what you mean... right, Tarnyang?”

Turning her neck, Yuit called out to Tarnyang.

“...”

But, both Tarnyang and Sainyang’s faces showed a serious expression, like they were worried about something.

“Tarnyang, Sainyang?”

What’s wrong, Yuit tried to ask them, but before she could, Tarnyang threw a sharp voice at Elina.

“You there, why did you take our, Shai-Fang’s “*goshintai*”, with you?”

“Eh...? Goshintai? Where?”

Sainyang replied to the puzzled Yuit.

“Um... the girl Elina is leading... That one there, is our, Shai-Fang’s “*goshintai*”. “Child of the Dragon”... is her name.”

“Eh...? B, But, you said goshintai, isn’t that kind of like the statue of a goddess... eh, she’s a person?”

Yuit was staring in complete confusion, and Tarnyang and Sainyang gathered and nodded.

“Shai-Fang lost its “Child of the Dragon”... we were looking for her, why was she taken by the Queen’s Army...?”

Talking in whispers, Tarnyang and the others shared these details.

The “Child of the Dragon” from Shai-Fang. Properly said, it was “Child of the Fate Chosen by the Dragon”, their national symbol, surely she had a “Living God” in her.

The “Child of the Dragon” was born knowing everything in this world, and with all-seeing eyes, she occasionally gave predictions to the Shai-Fang’s people.

Only such a person exists in Shai-Fang, but if a new “Child of the Dragon” is born, the “Child of the Dragon” until then is said to lose all their power.

As far as the people in Shai-Fang are concerned, the “Child of the Dragon” was an existence that should also be called the actual existence of “God”.

That “Child of the Dragon” had suddenly disappeared from the Shai-Fang’s village. So, the guardians of Shai-Fang, the “Taimashi” Taryang and Sainyang had left the village, on a trip to search for the “goshintai”, that is, the “Child of the Dragon”.

“So, the child you girls were looking for, was with the Queen’s Army?”

“That’s what I want to hear!”

“Want me to tell you?”

What should have been a conversation in whispers must have gotten louder as they got more passionate, and it seemed it had reached the ears of Elina in front of them.

A somewhat demonic smile was reflected on Elina’s facial expression, but even as she felt a strong premonition that she shouldn’t hear it, Yuit nodded involuntarily.

“Yuit, you were relying on a memo written by Cyan, is that how you came here?”

“I, I don’t know what you mean...”

“It’s okay, you don’t need to hide it. I know that much. Because... the one who entered the Little Elves’ forest and left the memo in your mother’s workshop, forcing you to get your hands on it... it was me.”

“!”

Yuit’s eyes opened wide in astonishment.

Yuit’s hometown, the Little Elves forest, had been burned to nothing by the Queen’s Army.

Her mother Cyan had set up an alchemy workshop there.

For Yuit, the place where she had helped with her mother’s research, studied, and witnessed the creation of Vante, that had been her home, the place where she was born.

“Uhn... so...!”

“Yes. So, the contents of your memo, I know all about them. Ymir solved the riddle. Say, did you know? “Peach Tree”, if you transpose it with the language the Calibara Tribe used a long time ago, it’s pronounced like... “Shai-Fang”.”

“W, what... in that case!”

“Indeed, the “Child of the Peach Tree” is, in other words... this brat that won’t say a thing. And though locating Shai-Fang is difficult, with my intel gathering abilities it was no trouble.”

“Then... so, you took the “Child of the Dragon” from our village like that?”

“Eeh, even if I’d say it was severely guarded, it was easy for me to take her. I didn’t hurt anybody, I wasn’t even found out.”

Saying so proudly, Elina poked the “Child of the Dragon”’s head with the tip of her claw. Although her head swung like a pendulum doll, the “Child of the Dragon” remained expressionless and stared into space, somehow not even noticing.

“You there! I won’t let you be rude to the “Child of the Dragon”!”

“Oh, you won’t let me, what do you plan to do while you can’t even move? Scary.”

Giggling after making a fool of her, Elina continued.

“This child was taken in front of Queen Claudette, was asked about the whereabouts of the ancient civilization’s legacy, and predicted this.”

“Southern lands. The gate serves as the key, the key serves as the gate. Holding the key, a small, wise person. The steel servant, the protectors of the dragon, the gate will be opened, and then closed.”

“At first, we didn’t know what that meant! But I thought, the “small wise person” would surely be you. In spite of being a pipsqueak, you’re Annelotte’s strategist, we’ve had a hard time with you, and you’re the alchemist Cyan’s daughter.”

“T, those people... why are they cooperating with you?”

“Aah, the Calibara tribe? I just suggested to them, “If your God is resurrected, you’ll recover the glory of the olden days”, and they easily ate it up.”

“Damn...! Open your eyes! You’re being tricked by this person!”

“Ahaha, it’s useless, no matter what you tell them. They only speak the Calibara language.”

Elina stated, and bringing her face close to Yuit’s, she said with triumph.

““Alchemy Strategist” Yuit, seems like this contest of wits it’s been my victory. Now, realize this, resign yourself and hand me the key.”

“!”

Elina’s claws stroke Yuit’s cheek, running down a faint scar.

There was pain, and a single line of fresh blood went along Yuit’s white cheek.

Seeing that, Vante, who so far had remained inactive since Yuit's commands had been cut off, roared greatly.
"Gaoooooon!"

Moonlight Dancer Luna Luna

From the hinterland of the southern jungle, she's the strongest warrior of the Calibara tribe and the guardian of its historic ruins. She receives the invaders who come to steal the "Great Power" that sleeps in the ruins, sometimes with a fascinating dance and sometimes with a death dance. With four tentacles extending from her hair, when she fights her magnificent dance makes her figure look like a war divinity with 6 arms. She changes from the daring, obscene warrior personality of the "Moonlight Dancer", to the innocent, young girl personality of the "Solar Dancer". When her personality and her skin color change, so does her way of fighting. The "Moonlight Dancer" likes lascivious remarks, and dances intensely as if to seduce both men and women. The "Solar Dancer" is kind and full of charm. The dances she performs seek to lighten up and cheer her audience.



Height: 162cm
B/W/H: 87/56/83
Occupation: Dancer
Weapons: Ring blade, tentacles (change into weapons)
Protection: None
Likes: Meat dishes / Fruit
Dislikes: Spiders / Bees
Hobby: Meditating / Walking
*Depends if her personality changes

"Giggle, I'll dance on Y-O-U"

Illustrated by F.S.

Chapter 9: Moonlight Dancer

It was a grand banquet.

Here and there, bonfires were burning, and the darkness of the jungle was illuminated just like during daytime.

The rhythm of percussion instruments and men's voices sang in chorus with the swaying flame, and women carried food and alcohol, weaving their way through them.

The stone pavement under their feet, along with a combination of boulders behind the ruins, was covered in ivy.

"Say, Yuit... there's no way, we're, sacrifices... that won't happen... right?"

"Well... as I expected, it's the Calibara tribe's custom..."

"...As I thought, at that time, I wish we could have gotten Vante to help us."

"But it wasn't Elina who said to stop Vante, wasn't that you girls? Since the "Child of the Dragon" had become a hostage, you said we had to do whatever Elina told us!"

Being ordered to stop Vante, who was almost beginning to act violently, Yuit couldn't help but to seal the control device that operated Vante, stopping her movements.

"That's true, but... But, I hope we are pardoned in the festival..."

Yuit, Tarnyang and Sainyang were bound, and rolling on the ground, they exchanged such conversation.

Over there, sitting on a chair magnificently decorated, Elina was treated to food and alcohol.

Something was amusing her, as she occasionally laughed heartily.

Beside her, there was also the figure of the "Child of the Dragon", sitting expressionless. Before their eyes, food was lined up, not touched at all.

"Unless we rescue the "Child of the Dragon" somehow, if she doesn't return to Shai-Fang... our trip will never end..."

"So, since we came this far... we must absolutely take her back...!"

"But, how...?"

Bound firmly as they currently were, they wouldn't find a breakthrough.

And yet, not giving up in those circumstances, Yuit told the two of them.

"Please wait until a plan comes into my mind. They're completely unprepared, so we have to focus on the chance that may come sometime."

Moreover, Yuit added in a whisper.

"Besides... I have a hunch we may find the "key"."

"Eh?"

"It's..."

It was when Yuit's words were about to answer the twins' question. A cheer arose from the direction of the banquet, and the secret conversation was interrupted.

"What...?"

When they looked, a single dancer had appeared before Elina, and was bowing with an earnest reverence.

With brown skin, the girl had beautiful black hair that seemed to flow and was beautiful to behold, and was scantily-clad in her native dress, fascinatingly illuminated by the bonfire.

The dancer kept on wriggling her waist alluringly without a worry. Yuit involuntarily considered if her waist movement would ever stop.



“Welcome, visitors from the outside world. *Giggle*, you love my special, lovely hair, don’t you?”
“What, don’t act so familiar with me.”
“Oh, such a haughty attitude, but I don’t hate that. I’ll put you into submission with my D-A-N-C-E...”

Turning a flirtatious glance towards Elina, the girl started to dance.

Not only Elina, but also Yuit, Taryang and Sainyang, still tied on the floor, were fascinated by the dance.

“Wonderful...”

“Indecent...”

“Yeah...”

The men were raising cheers, some even playing musical instruments, but before anyone noticed they sank into silence, their hands stopped, and the banquet was wrapped up in silence. Even for the beasts of the jungle that had become fascinated, their ears got hurt by the silence and they went into hiding there.

“...Ah.”

Yuit was gazing at the dance, and let out her voice involuntarily. The dancer finished her dance and, by chance, as she didn't feel her own body weight while in motion, stood again before Elina.

“Giggle, I wonder, how was it, visitors from the outside world...? How was my dance...?”

“Eh...? W, well, it, it was quite good.”

“That's what matters the most... because, as the last dance you'll ever see, I'd be sad had it been boring.”

“...Eh?”

Thinking she had misheard the other's words, Elina frowned.

But, she hadn't misheard her.

The girl introduced herself as the “Moonlight Dancer”, and once more, said in order to warn her.

“What I've shown you just now was the “Dance of Death”, that the Calibara Tribe shows before defeating an enemy.”

“What... did you say?”

Elina stood up from her chair in a rush, took a fighting stance and raised her claws.

“Why weren't you deceived? But... I thought!”

“To begin with, you guys came and stepped into the forest as you pleased. You precocious lady who plowed through my important bushes, and tried to peek inside the forest, you must be punished.”

Whispering so, the girl waved both arms in a dance, and the decoration twine around both her hands and feet, happening in a motion reminiscent of a mollusk.

“This is the Hand of God. The weapon that repels the enemies of the Calibara Tribe.”

Bringing the tentacle shining with black luster near her lips, the girl said with a smile.

“Nobody can defeat me... so, you who deceived us, and those people who wanted to steal Bligh... everybody, is going to die... at the hands of Luna Luna, the “Moonlight Dancer”!”

Whoosh!

Elina's face was attacked by a moving, sharp tentacle.

“Kuh...!”

If she got stabbed with the tentacles, that were equipped with blades at their tips, Elina wouldn't be safe no matter what.

By a hair's breadth, Elina jumped aside from the chair, and succeeded in dodging the tentacles' attack.

“Unfortunately, lady, even if you said “Sorry, Sister, I'm turning you down” and begged me in tears... I wouldn't give up!”

Not fearing the strange techniques of that girl, Luna Luna, Elina mocked her with a broad grin.

A tense atmosphere flowed between the two people that were confronting each other, taking their distance. All in the world remained still, it was only Luna Luna's bending waist that wriggled. Watching over them, Yuit and the others exchanged whispers in a low voice, confused.

“W, wait! Just now, that girl... did she call herself Luna Luna?”

“Y, yeah... but, when she told us about the location of the “Beast Cave”... she called herself the “Solar Dancer”, and besides, her skin color wasn't this dark, she was more fair-skinned...!”

“M, maybe, Luna Luna, is a common name for dancers...?”

“Ah, that has to be it!”

The three people got the feeling they somehow had the answer for the question.

Looking back, Luna Luna and Elina's battle had become more intense.

“Giggle, now that you're caught up, become a prisoner of the Hand of God...”

“Ku... kuuh...!”

Elina was going to jump to avoid Luna Luna's tentacle.

But, as if reading her movement beforehand, a couple of tentacles latched on to Elina's legs, coiled around her waist and pulled her back to Luna Luna.

“T... this girl...”

“Giggle, give up, you violated the Calibara taboo, to make up for it... get strangled to death by the Hand of God...!”

“Gu, guuh...! L, let me go, let me goo...!”

Entangled with a tentacle wrapping around her body, Elina struggled desperately.

By chance, her hand grabbed a portion of Luna Luna's crotch, the ornament that imitated an elephant's trunk.

“Hyauu!”

As if she was sensitive there, Luna Luna's body stiffened.

“Hi, a, ah... afuuh...”

She raised her voice while her energy drained from her body, and the tentacle that was binding Elina loosened its grip completely.

“W, what? A, anyhow, now's my chance!”

Jumping in a rush, Elina put distance between her and Luna Luna.

When she lifted her head to glare at Luna Luna again, her eyes opened wide in surprise.

“W, who, are you...!”

Yuit's party were looking at the scene from far away, and they stared in wonder the same as Elina.

“W, wait, that one... that child!”

“What, that's definitely who we met in the jungle...”

“Luna Luna... as I thought, they're the same person...!”

Her dark skin kind of discolored into fair skin.

With a glance that seemed to involve her with everyone she saw, her eyes moved round and round somewhat happily.

With almost the same figure as the “Moonlight Dancer” from until a while ago, certainly she had the appearance of a different person there.

“I hate violence. But, I'll fight for the sake of protecting everybody from Calibara. This Luna Luna, the “Solar Dancer”, will be your opponent!”

Singing a declaration, Luna Luna turned her tentacles once again towards Elina.

“Kuh!”

As she aimed at a different weak point than not long ago, Elina quickly moved to avoid her sharp straight thrust.

“Just escaping won't cut it! It's rare for me to play with people from the outside world, so let's enjoy ourselves a little more!”

Breathless from repeating the attack, Luna Luna said so with a somewhat beaming expression on her face. Not to make light of her, nor to provoke her, it sounded like Luna Luna's sincere words.

“Uuk... d, don't play... the fool!”

Elina, who was battling defensively, found her chance in an instant, jumped up with her claws, and stroke, breaking off the blade at the tip of the tentacle!

“Ah!”

The broken blade revolved round and round in midair, and suddenly got stuck into the ground in front of Yuit's eyes.

“Hyaa! W, wait! That's dangerous!”

A pale Yuit complained, and Elina gave her a glance.

“Oh, what a pity. If it hit you, I would have gotten rid of you easily.”

“Hey, gimme a break!”

“What are you looking away for? I don't have just one hand!”

Laughing happily and enjoying herself until the end, Luna Luna turned her tentacle towards Elina.

“Listen, you'll need to put in a little more effort, or aren't you beautiful fighters from the outside world that much of a deal?”

“What...! Someone... someone like you who dances such savage, embarrassing dances with such an embarrassing appearance, won't make a fool of me!”

Luna Luna stared in wonder when Elina answered her back.

“Embarrassing...? Who, me...?”

"That's right! You have a complaint?"

"A complaint... I don't."

Luna Luna said in a whisper. Her cheeks blushed deep red... No, that wasn't it. Her fair skin turned brown before their eyes.

"However, that's the first time someone has said that about my dance... so, I'll have to teach you. About the magnificence of the Calibara dance... *giggle*."

In a blink, the "Solar Dancer" had completed her transformation into the "Moonlight Dancer". Licking her lips, Luna Luna stared at Elina's body as if she was going to run her tongue all over it.

"You too, if you surrendered your body to the pleasure of the dance... you'd understand... this magnificence...!"

"Really... what's with this child...!"

Before her, it wasn't only Luna Luna's appearance that had changed in a moment, but her personality had changed completely as well, and Elina screamed in confusion.

The ability of both of them was evenly matched. They had been battling, alternating between advancing and retreating, for a long time.

"Still not enough, eeeeeih!"

The four weapons were attached to the tip of the two tentacle had been broken off, and yet Luna Luna was overflowing with fighting spirit, unleashing attacks that aimed at Elina's vitals, and adversely Elina, catapulting herself with the claw of one hand and emitting a sharp thirst for blood, leaped onto Luna Luna's bosom to try to hit her with a mortal blow.

"Teyaaaah!"

"Naive!"

But, Elina's blow was parried by Luna Luna's tentacle, and Elina was flung backwards.

"Kuh!"

Elina landed with a somersault. Lowering her body to accumulate spring force, while she prepared to charge at Luna Luna once again, her fingertips touched something on the ground.

"...Hm?"

Something was amiss. When she looked down, a thick rope had fallen on the ground.

"Hey heyy! How can you look away in the middle of a fight...!"

"W, wait a second!"

"...Eh?"

Noticing something was strange about Elina's look, Luna Luna stopped her attack.

Looking down to follow Elina's gaze, a rope had been cut off completely, and dropped beside it, she found a broken piece of the sharp claw.

"...That rope."

"...T, that's the rope those girls were bound with...! That pipsqueak, she cut it with a broken piece of my claw!"

Although she surveyed the vicinity in a hurry, it was too late, the figures of Yuit and the others were nowhere in sight.

"Wasn't there a silent child you brought, there?"

"Eh."

Asked by Luna Luna, Elina turned around.

"S, she's not here..."

The "Child of the Dragon" who should have been sitting expressionless since some time ago, had disappeared.

"T, those girls...! Not only they escaped, but the "Child of the Dragon" too...!"

"Nevermind that, you're showing something perfect, that expression of anger at being humiliated. You're quite lovely."

Luna Luna muttered with an expression completely devoid of any maliciousness, and Elina turned around and asked her.

"Wait! Leaving fighting aside, you know the location of the "Fortress Bligh", don't you? Tell me!"

"Eeeh? Why would I tell an outsider about the secret place?"

"Because those girls are heading there! They'll know the place if they ask the "Child of the Dragon", and they even carry the "key"!"

"Eh, is that right? But, didn't they say they didn't know about it?"

"They haven't noticed, but they have the key somewhere! Even the "Child of the Dragon" said they carry it, that's how things are!"

Elina didn't even hide her impatience when she said that, and kept on staring directly at Luna Luna.

"Say, let's leave the fighting aside, and cooperate!"

"Cooperate?"

"That's right, they're planning to steal the treasure that all you guys from the Calibara tribe are guarding, how are you going to protect it? Will you watch them in silence?"

"T, that is... troubling, yeah."

Luna Luna considered it for a while, then nodded her head.

She, both as the "Solar Dancer" and the "Moonlight Dancer", was tasked with protecting the historic ruins and treasures handed down to the Calibara tribe from the ancient times.

And yet, if their hidden treasure was stolen...

"If I don't fulfill my duty... it'd be troubling, yeah."

"I thought you'd say that! So, let's chase after them! You know where they're heading, don't you? Take me there!"

"Thank goodness. Here, follow me!"

Luna Luna said, leading Elina deeper into the forest.

Even in the confusion, Elina was planning to outwit Yuit's party and snatch the treasure if she had the chance, but one wouldn't notice that from her acting...

Sure enough, can Yuit and the Tarnyang and Sainyang sisters escape the pursuit from the two people, and obtain the treasure?

They won't know that unless they fight.

Chapter 9.5: Battle in the Ruins

After leaving the ruins, a devastated canyon extended.

If you raised your eyes, only a line of the quite distant sky could be seen. Cliffs towered over that deep, dark canyon.

Too thin for people to pass through anymore, the fragile scaffolding rattled if you put your feet on it carelessly, to the point that you just knew it was going to collapse.

If you looked down, the deep abyss opened a mouth that continued who knows how far, it even felt as if only darkness awaited the victims inside it. Even so, in the valley of the death where no signs of life could be detected, five figures advanced.

They were the "Alchemy Strategist" Yuit, the "Twin Taimashi" Tarnyang and Sainyang, and the "Alchemy Android" Vante, who carried on her shoulder the "Child of the Dragon".

"Hurry up! That girl is absolutely chasing after us, before she arrives, the seal of the "Sacred Treasure Fortress Bligh"... uhyauu!"

Before she finished speaking, the step under the "Alchemy Strategist" Yuit collapsed, and her small body fell into the abyss.

"Yuiit!"

"Gaooon!"

Vante stuck out her right hand towards Yuit before Tarnyang screamed.

But, she wouldn't reach!

The very moment she felt so, Vante's wrist disconnected from her arm, and aiming at Yuit, it sprung at her and caught her ankle by a hair's breadth.

That was the special move of the extraordinary android Vante, the "Alchemy Android", called the Missile Punch.

"T, thanks, Vante..."

While she was pulled up upside down, Yuit thanked her.

"Gaonn."

"Really... wasn't it you yourself, Yuit, who said to pay attention to the steps since they'd easily collapse."

"S, sorry..."

"...Let's leave that behind us. We should go ahead without quarreling."

Being told by Sainyang, Yuit and Tarnyang calmed down.

Nodding to one another, they began to walk on the path along the thin canyon once again.

"Really... you don't pay enough attention... ahya?"

Crumble!

"Vante!"

"Gaooon!"

Seeing Tarnyang hanging upside down, Sainyang sighed.

"...I don't think you can speak in such a patronizing way to people..."

"A, anyhow, we must proceed with utmost caution... or else this will happen..."

Still hanging upside down, Tarnyang said so as if to excuse herself.

At the same time, the "Leader of the Fang" Elina and the "Solar Dancer" Luna Luna were advancing through the canyon of the death, chasing after Yuit's party,

"Hey hey, hurry up! We must catch up to those girls, don't we?"

Manipulating four tentacles skillfully, Luna Luna advanced in the face of the unstable scaffold.

"I know that! But, I can't make a mistake on this road, can I?"

Going the same way, Elina advanced casually through the nimble, thin scaffold, as if she could completely feel her own body weight.

"To get inside the "Ruins of the Beast", there's no way around this "Canyon of the Death", this is the main road. If we're to catch up to those girls, you have no choice but to keep up."

"Hm, but catching up, can we do it?"

"Well, don't we have to catch up to them by any means? ...Ah, look!"

As Luna Luna's tentacles raised her body for her to observe their destination, she pointed to the path.

"What? ...The road, it collapsed?"

"Since the scaffold around here is weak, it'll collapse with just a little vibration... surely, it broke down because of those girls."

"It can't be, did they fall down?"

Elina murmured, looking into the bottom of the sheer precipice. No one would survive if they fell down from there, not even Elina.

"I hope you forgive me for all this."

As far as Elina was concerned, she wouldn't say it was over with just stopping Yuit's party. Even if she had to torture Yuit, who had seemingly solved the mystery of the "Sacred Treasure Fortress Bligh" somehow, to get information from her, she absolutely had to secure Bligh for the Queen's Army.

"Sister Claudette... if Elina obtains Bligh... I wonder if you'll praise me...?"

Upon her triumphal return having solved the mystery of Bligh, the Queen Claudette would look at Elina's face and speak words of appreciation. Picturing such an image, Elina would grin involuntarily.

They kept walking along the path of the cliff, through the fragile, thin scaffold, for a few hours. Finally, Yuit and the others left the canyon, and managed to arrive at the deepest part.

"It's here..."

A majestic appearance towered before their eyes, that took Yuit, Tarnyang and Sainyang's breath away. There was such a huge stone gate, they knew they would have believed it even if they had been told it was the entrance to a giant's house.

"Is this... the "Sacred Treasure Fortress Bligh"?"

"But, how do we open it? Can such a large door ever be opened?"

"Indeed... I'm sure there must be some trick to it."

Sainyang said to the puzzled Yuit.

"L, listen, the key... I don't think we have it anywhere on us..."

"The key...?"

Reacting to the word "key", the "Child of the Dragon" sitting quietly on Vante's shoulders, opened her mouth calmly to speak.

"Southern land. The gate serves as the key, and the key serves as the gate. Holding the key, a small, wise person. The steel servant, the protectors of the dragon, the gate will be opened, and then closed."

"We've heard that many times... if the hints were a little easier to understand..."

Sainyang was observing the stone gate with a sidelong glance while Yuit grumbled, and suddenly raised her voice.

"Look, look! Over there, up top, there seems to be something!"

"Eh?"

Yuit and Tarnyang lifted their faces, focusing their eyes on the direction Sainyang was pointing at.

Around the top of the stone gate, a small recess had been excavated.

"Is there anything there...? It kinda looks like a decoration of the stone gate."

"They're at the left and the right of the stone gate, on both sides... but, how could we go to such places..."

Tarnyang folded her arms in worry. Next to her, Sainyang, who had been looking right at the stone gate, asked Yuit.

"Say, Yuit... Vante's Missile Punch, would it reach over there?"

"Eh? Yeah, I think it'd reach."

"Well then, I want you to pick us up, to take us to the recesses over there. Both of us."

"I don't think that's a rational action... but I understand."

"Thanks, then, shall we, Tarnyang!"

"Eh... shall we, what?"

"Stand on Vante's arm."

"Eh, wait, Sa, Sainyang... Are you serious?"

"Tarnyang, don't you think this much is easy as pie? Or, is this impossible?"

"T, there's nothing impossible! This much, is a piece of cake!"

"I thought you'd say that, in that case... together on 2!"

"Ah, wa, wait, we're really going...? One!"

"Two!"

Tarnyang and Sainyang, moving without feeling their own body weight, jumped upon both of Vante's extended fists, waiting to be catapulted.

"Okay then, Yuit, Vante, please!"

"This is reckless... but it's fine. Okay then, Vante, gooo!"

"Gaoooooon!"

With a roar, Vante shot the Missile Punch with both arms at the same time. The twins stood on top of the iron fists, and flew through the air in a straight line.

"Uwaaaaaa!"

"Teyaaaaa!"

"A, amazing... both of them."

Yuit couldn't believe the scene as she watched in amazement, and next to her, the "Child of the Dragon" looked up expressionless at the stone gate.

With one breath, both girls, Tarnyang and Sainyang jumped into the recesses, and the Missile Punches, even after losing their baggage, kept their momentum and sank into the rock.

"Are you alright?"

Yuit called out to them from below, and the two people looked at her and waved their hands.

"L, like I said, this was a piece of cake...!"

"However, Yuit! Here, there's something like a mechanism!"

"Here as well!"

"This here, looks like it'll move if I pull it!"

"Same goes for this one!"

"..."

Yuit put her hand on her chin, deep in thought. After a while, she raised her face and shouted to the two people.

"Both of you! At the same time, operate the mechanism!"

"Got it!"

"Roger!"

"1, 2, 3..."

"There!"

When Tarnyang and Sainyang operated the mechanism inside the recesses at the same time, a sound like an earth tremor echoed around them.

Rummmmmble...!

"W, what is this sound...?"

Confused, Yuit took an extensive view of her surroundings. She instantly found the answer. The lower part of the stone gate had begun opening slowly.

"Yuit, how is it?"

Tarnyang and Sainyang, who had gone down to move away from the cliff, called out to her.

"Tarnyang, look! It's open!"

Tarnyang quickly noticed what Yuit was seeing, and hit Sainyang on the shoulder.

"Really... but, how are we supposed to go inside there...?"

Tarnyang was puzzled. As she said, there was no passage leading inside the open gate, there was only yet another towering stone door instead.

"What should we do this time?"

Ignoring her own complaint, Tarnyang approached the gate.

"Hm? Here, I see something like a keyhole?"

"Keyhole?"

At Tarnyang's words, Yuit, Sainyang and even Vante, who was restoring and mounting her Missile Punches, drew near.

"You're right... a keyhole."

"But, won't this need an extremely large key?"

Now that she mentioned it, the keyhole was quite large, it was like a child's arm could fit in there.

"We have nothing like a key suitable for this."

"If we did, we'd know immediately."

"Yeah, isn't it about the same size as the key that's always hanging around Yuit's neck?"

"Yep yep, a key with approximately the same size as this one, to go look for it now... oh."

Tarnyang and Sainyang exchanged glances, and said no more.

"What's wrong, you two? Anyways, we need to find the key..."

"...Y, Yuit?"

"Hm, what?"

"I mean... it can't be, but we think..."

"So, what is it?"

Tarnyang and Sainyang, both timidly, pointed at the key around Yuit's neck.

"It can't be... doesn't it make sense...?"

Asked by the two people, Yuit looked at them blankly.

"Eeh? Noo waay! This is Vante's activation key. Why would it be the key of these ruins..."

"B, but, just in case, it may..."

"If you're going to say that much... fine."

Preventing Yuit, who was going to try it out, from touching the key, a voice echoed from the canyon.

"Wait, you guuys!"

"Kuh...! Leader of the Fang Elina... and Moonlight Dancer Luna Luna!"

Looking at the pursuers who had finally arrived, Yuit called out their names.

"Seems like we're in time... well, I want to say, thanks for your hard work on guiding us here.

Now, you just have to give us the key. Didn't you find it skillfully, the key of the ruins?"

"E, even you, I didn't know what it was!"

"I told you to give it to me, lady."

Luna Luna smiled when she said that to Yuit.

"Your doll companion, Vante... in the ancient language of the Calibara, the meaning of "gate"... I wonder if you don't know it?"

"Eh..."

"You're getting it backwards, aren't you? That mobile fortress' activation key was taken by that person, the alchemist Cyan, and she hid it and deceived us by saying that it was the activation key of that doll."

"Mother... hid it...?"

"You know, if you look at it, it's a simple trick... but, it was good that I chased you before you beat us to the punch, Yuit... that activation key, no, the "Sacred Treasure Fortress Bligh"... I won't hand it over to the Rebel Army!"

Elina said so, readying her claws, and next to her, Luna Luna said one more thing to Yuit.

"I was told by Elina... Your Rebel Army, is a group of demons that keep on plundering and destroying the countries that go against you... if we hand Bligh over to you, I don't even know what will happen to this Calibara forest... you know"

"Wait, what lies have you fed her!"

"Ooh, isn't it the truth? Since your leader of your group is the "demon" Annelotte and everything."

"Ugh..."

The scary memories of Annelotte's rampage still remained in Tarnyang and Sainyang. When she referred to them, they couldn't help faltering after all.

"If you give such a demon this enormous power, we won't know what will happen... So, give up, you guys! If you do now... If you do now, you won't get off too bad... You won't get a death sentence, I'll send you to the "Fierce Tiger's Den" to avoid it."

"I have to protect these ruins, entrusted to me from my honorable ancestors... so, even though I'm afraid I'm not a cute child anymore... I can enjoy myself some more."

"Well, let's settle this quickly, and say goodbye to this irritating place!"

Before she finished speaking, Elina kicked the ground and rushed out.

"Tsk... Tarnyang, Sainyang, Vante, come here!"

"Gaoon!"

Vante stepped ahead and crossed her arms, catching Elina's claw. When the claw and the strong arm clashed with each other, sparks came off.

"Sainyang, we'll go as well, we'll start full throttle!"

"Y, yeah!"

Sainyang turned around and thrust her waist towards Tarnyang. Tying both hands behind her back, Tarnyang tried to connect her own waist to Sainyang's.

"Double Dragon Formation, Dragonic Howl!"

"Taaaaah!"

The scream concentrated inside Tarnyang's body and was transferred to Sainyang, and after running through Sainyang's body, it was released as a shock wave from her mouth!

"Giggle, I'll have you two together as my opponents, L-U-C-K-Y!"

Happily saying that, Luna Luna bent her back to avoid the shock wave.

"Kuh, Sainyang!"

"Hyaauh?"

Noticing that Luna Luna's tentacles were attacking at the same time she evaded, Tarnyang hurriedly pulled Sainyang towards herself. And it was in the nick of time, as the blade attached to the tentacle passed before Sainyang's eyes.

"Tsk... Even if she's one person, because of those tentacles it's like she can take on two or three people, no, even more..."

"Do you get it now? If we play all jumbled up we'll have more fun...giggle."

Yuit, Vante, Tarnyang, Sainyang, Elina and Luna Luna were all jumbled up now, releasing deadly blows and defending.

In those circumstances, letting one's mind wander just for an instant would prove fatal.

So, they didn't notice one thing.

"Wait, w, watch out!"

When she noticed it, Tarnyang shouted as her face started paling.

"N, no, watch out, don't come this way!"

Yuit understood the situation as well, and screamed.

"My my, don't you want all of us jumbled up, now that we're having so much fun, lady?"

Luna Luna smiled bewitchingly, as a tentacle caressed her cheek.

"..."

As expected, remaining still expressionless, the "Child of the Dragon" was standing unaware in front of Luna Luna's eyes.

"S, Stop... don't lay a hand on that child...!"

"Giggle, I wonder what I should do?"

The "Child of the Dragon" was certainly well within Luna Luna's tentacle's attack range.

If they moved carelessly, the "Child of the Dragon" might fall victim to her; thinking so, Tarnyang, Sainyang and Yuit stopped moving.

But, the "Child of the Dragon" didn't care much about that situation around her, and reaching out for Luna Luna, she tightly grasped with both hands the small ornament by her crotch.



“Hyauh!”
The Moonlight Dancer Luna Luna whined before the unexpected action.
“...”

Slowly, the “Child of the Dragon” kept on stroking Luna Luna’s elephant ornament with both hands.

“Ah... a, mn, hiu, a, ah... kku, fu, a, ah...”

As if even her nerves went through the decoration, Luna Luna let out disconnected sighs.

“Yuit, Luna Luna’s appearance...!”

“Y, yeah... she’s changing, again...!”

The brown color of her skin faded out, and Luna Luna’s appearance changed back to the one she had the first time they met her.

“...”

“Haa, haa... haah...”

When the “Child of the Dragon” let go of her grip, rather than the “Moonlight Dancer” Luna Luna, there was the “Solar Dancer” Luna Luna there.

“Luna Luna! Solar Dancer Luna Luna!”

“Yahoo, how have you been?”

“We’ve been awful! And you know that!”

“Ah, right. But, aren’t you the bad guys, who want to steal from the ruins and devastate the forest?”

“That’s wrong! We’d never think of doing anything like that!”

Yuit desperately appealed to Luna Luna.

“My hometown, the Little Elves’ Forest, was burned down by the Queen’s Army! Even if they pretend to be cooperative at first, they’ll suddenly crawl deep into the forest! The same thing will happen to this forest if we leave them as they are!”

“Eh... But, Elina...”

“You can’t believe what Elina says! She made the people in your village work for her, and she made a fool of your dance!”

“It... seems she did?”

“Heey, Luna Luna! Don’t be fooled by what those people are saying, we have to hurry up and defeat them!”

While fighting Vante, Elina turned towards Luna Luna and shouted.

“Trust me! We are allies of the Calibara tribe! If the Queen’s Army obtains the “Sacred Treasure Fortress Bligh”, they plan on burning down this forest as well!”

“Hum... which one should I trust?”

Luna Luna pondered, tilting her head to the side.

“That’s right... the thing is, it was Yuit and the others who helped me... Besides, they even praised my dance... yeah, I got it!”

“Eh, wait!”

“Sorry, Elina, but still, I’ve become their ally!”

“Wait, just, one second... that’s not what you promised!”

“But Elina, even you made a fool of my dance, these children said it was great... So as I thought, I’d better go with these people, don’t you think...?”

“F, for such a reason?”

At that excessively irrational reason, Elina felt exhausted for a moment.

That was her oversight.

“Gaoooooon!”

Weaving her way, Vante rushed and unleashed a punch.

“Kuuuh!”

Elina leaped, without getting into a panic. But Vante, no, Yuit wasn’t aiming at Elina herself.

“Vante, do iit!”

“Gaoooh!”

Vante’s fist beat the ground thoroughly!

Clatter clatter!

“Eh, ah, wait, a sec, eh...!”

The ground collapsed, and began to collapse at Elina’s feet.

“Uh... hya, a, a, aaaaaah...!”

Her footing was lost faster than she could escape, and Elina’s figure disappeared along with the rubble in the blink of an eye, falling into the canyon which bottom couldn’t be seen.

“Haah... haah... haah...”

Once the intense battle finished, before even catching her breath, Yuit headed to the stone gate. "Mother Cyan... the Bligh you discovered, I've finally found it now... are you watching from somewhere, mother...?"

Muttering quietly, she inserted the key, and twisted it.

Rummmmmble...!

Along with a short earth tremor, the stone gate really opened this time, and inside it, there was the central part of the "Sacred Treasure Fortress Bligh", guiding the party in.

This way, the Rebel Army took possession of the strongest fort, succeeding in obtaining a base. But at the same time, the Queen's Army, together with its allied forces, the pope's agency, was arranging a large battalion of troops to exterminate the Rebel Army.

The battle had yet to end.

Elina's Afterwords



Uoooooh, I'M SO PISSED OFF! The pipsqueak strategist, the iron puppet, the conjoined twins, and even the pervert dancer, I'll rip them to shreds the next time I see them! Hey you, listen! After I did my best, this can't be happening to me! First, when I attacked the village of the Little Elves, I gathered information on Bligh. I read the scroll Cyan left behind carefully, but I didn't get its meaning, and I discovered the location of the legendary land, Shai-Fang (maybe the first time anyone ever has).

Then, I kidnapped the mystical brat without anybody noticing. Furthermore, I lured Yuit into the jungle, anticipating her. I even solved Bligh's mystery ahead of Yuit, so! I need no help even if I fell this far down the bottom of the valley! In the first place, I'm one of the few talented people in the Queen's Army! I almost don't have to work!

Big sis Leina, hurry and come pick me up!

*However, Elina was grave when she returned to Gainos. Please listen to the supplementary Drama CD for details!

Chapter 10: Beginning of the Showdown

Overcoming her cursed blood, taking over Risty's soldiers and assets from the Gemstone Mountain, Annelotte is trying to accomplish great tasks. Believing in the teachings of God, the Inquisitor Sigui is making severe judgements. Now, the two beautiful fighters will collide!

It was a memory from the distant past.

Sigui had grown up in a poor farm village, and when she was still a young child, she had left her home to begin working as a live-in maid in a monastery located in a far away land.

In a poor farm village, that was a scene that could be seen from time to time. Although they were prestigious for producing a large number of priests to serve God, of course, they couldn't completely deny that there was a side to it that was to reduce the number of mouths to feed. But, Sigui was not like other maids. With her diligent enthusiasm, her deep faith stood out from the crowd, and when she caught the attention of the priest, it didn't take much time for her to receive education and change from a mere servant to a superior nun.

A senior nun is the elite of the religious world, who show people the way to the faith. The "education" of her training school was close to what is called "brainwash".

Her new life was tough but not as hard as the one she used to have, so the devout Sigui wasn't afflicted by it. On the contrary, she was delighted, as her good luck had brought her closer to God.

Some time ago, when Sigui asked a question about the contents of a theology lecture she received, "God has appeared in public in various shapes, giving a trial", the priest's facial expression became severe.

"Mister Priest, the mayor of my village was praying in the middle of the night to the image of a goddess I've never seen, as Mister Priest previously said, has God changed his figure to give a trial to the people, or might it be the figure of a different God?"

But, due to either selfishness or caprice, or out of pity, the priest didn't inquire into Sigui's question on that occasion. So Sigui, unable to obtain the answer to her question, continued her training, harboring a slight feeling of indigestion in her chest.

Wanting to understand the real motive why the priest had kept his mouth shut, several years passed, until the day Sigui was recognized as an Inquisitor by the pope's agency.

The trial executive who became her boss, with a still expression of one that gave the oracle of God, said to Sigui.

"Inquisitor Sigui, your first trial will be to capture the heretics that are said to live hidden in a certain village, and bestow the judgment suitable for their sins."

Sigui condemned the mayor of the village that had been her hometown, with the sentence of burning to death as a heretic.

The mayor had been worshipping a demon from the underworld, a succubus. No matter what, her faith didn't allow that.

The villagers had loved the mayor for a long time, and he had been kind to the young Sigui.

Against Sigui, who executed the punishment cool-headedly, her parents screamed that her daughter had become a monster.

If she had refused her duty that time, what would have happened? If she could go back in time, would she have spoken frankly to the bishop about the question that crossed her mind?

She had thought about it many times, and the answer was clear.

To serve God as an Inquisitor, she couldn't do that.

Even if it was a blood relative, she couldn't overlook it if they did something to disrespect God. Because, carved on Sigui's body, was her responsibility as an Inquisitor.

Since that day, she came to spend more time devoting herself to practice and discipline than ever before. Even if she had to judge as heretics her true family that called her a monster, she wouldn't lose her way, and she thought that she couldn't stop.

Like that, she, who belonged to the fundamentalist school of the scriptures with the severest doctrine, received the initiation of Cardinal Dantan, and was led to master the "Holy Poses".

"That's wrong! Go farther, the angle is essential. With such a pose, God's message won't get through, Sigui!"

"Y, yes! Cardinal, how about this?"

"Yes, that way!"

Though the training was painful and very severe, Sigui didn't hesitate anymore.

If she hesitated, beginning with her family, she'd become a traitor to everyone she had condemned until now.

That was how Sigui felt.

"Therefore... therefore, I cannot yield to a heretic like you... "Princess Knight" Annelotte!"

It was a bizarre view.

On a hill, every human who had set foot on the battlefield, soldiers from the Rebel Army, the Queen's Army, or the pope's agency, were equally kneeling on the ground, without moving, as if they had been frozen.

No, only one person in the middle, the "Inquisitor" Sigui, raising her nun garbs solemnly with both hands, stood quietly covering her eyes.



“Even if it is for defeating Annelotte... this is overkill...”

The “Leader of the Fang” Elina from the Queen’s Army muttered while kneeling.

“She doesn’t care about friends or foes... No, she might not even consider us her allies... Our Sister, as expected, is so dangerous...!”

Against the Queen’s Army and its allied forces, the pope’s agency, that supposedly outnumbered them, the Rebel Army was showing a high proficiency in the battle so as not to be outdone.

If they failed to crush the Rebel Army here, the latter would gain momentum once again, and they wouldn’t be able to deal with them anymore. That had to be prevented at all costs.

Therefore, Sigui released the “Holy Pose: Worship” in every direction at its maximum power. Those who saw this pose instructed by God, would kneel down immediately, and it’d become impossible for them to move even one finger until Sigui, God’s representative, allowed them to. “I, I can’t move... Sister Annelotte... If you... If you... If you see her panties, your body... acts of its own accord...!”

“M, Mirim...! Don’t... Don’t... Don’t...!”

“Rather than giving up, it’s accepting it. “Princess Knight” Annelotte. My “Holy Pose”. The power of God... Your body has already accepted it, is that not why you’re kneeling down like this?”

“Ku, uuh...”

Friends, and foes, everybody would be prevented from moving, and the Rebel Army’s ringleader would easily be defeated.

That was Sigui’s intention, however, it was shattered by one person.

“What... is that...”

Among all the soldiers who couldn’t move, their mind deeply captured by God’s power, one person slowly stood up.

“Ku... a, aah...!”

She was moaning painfully, and yet the “Princess Knight” Annelotte was standing up. Her beautiful silver hair was becoming jet black as if it was discoloring.

That was a phenomenon they had seen before.

“D, demonification...”

“Sister... Sister Annelotte!”

Mirim shouted with a pale face.

As she once faced her as an enemy, she remembered Annelotte’s demonic power, the demonic power that would cut down everybody without regards to friends or foes.

“Kuaa... uu, u, uuuh...!”

Baring her teeth like a beast, Annelotte groaned. When she opened her eyes, they were dyed deep crimson as if bloodshot, and even though her armor’s helmet was down, there was really no trace at all of the graceful dignity she once had.

God... let me drive away this wicked demon...!

In order to shake away the fear that had surfaced in her heart for an instant, Sigui grasped tightly the mace shaped like a holy symbol.

The “Demon” Annelotte... turned towards her.

“I... I, won’t...”

Annelotte murmured with a desperate expression.

“I, won’t... u, kufuh, b, be defeated... by you all... nor by the Queen, n, nor by the blood... that, runs... through my body, this demon blood...!”

“Sister... Annelotte...!”

While still kneeling, Mirim mustered the strength to raise her face, and called the name of her beloved “sister”.

It wasn’t only Mirim.

“Miss Annelotte!”

“Princess!”

Everybody in the Rebel Army was shouting the name of the recovered Annelotte.

Looking around her with smiling eyes, Annelotte spoke to the people who supported her.

“I’m OK... this, power of mine... this cursed blood, I’ll prove that I can control it...!”

In Annelotte’s mind, she recalled the faces of each person who had helped her out through her journey so far.

“Tomoe... Maria... you taught me. To accept a fate with adversity... and the way to change it into a good opportunity...”

The many times she had gone on a rampage due to her demon blood, she had almost destroyed everything, and yet they didn’t fear Annelotte, and placed their trust in her.

Therefore... Annelotte also had to live up to their trust.

The freedom they fervently expected to grasp to live they own lives, had to be shared with everybody.

“Mirim.”

“Yes!”

“Yuit.. and Taryang and Sainyang, they’re probably doing well.”

“Y... Yes! If it’s those people, they’ll be fine! Absolutely, they must have succeeded!”

“Is that so...? Then, we can’t fail here, and hold Yuit and the others back.”

Saying so, Annelotte continued further.

“When this is all over... Let’s go to Hinomoto again. Tomoe said so. The cherry trees in Hinomoto are said to be very beautiful flowers.”

“Yes! I’ll row the boat myself!”

“Haha, Yuit would probably get worked up and make a boat that runs on alchemy on its own.”

“Really? That’s really convenient, it’ll be easy!”

“However, since Yuit would be making it... we might need to be careful for a while.”

“Ahaha, you could say that! Maybe it has an awesome speed, but it can’t stop!”

“Giggle, what if we let Yuit do the test operation by herself?”

Leaving the form of a demon, Annelotte was back to being her old self.

Involuntarily, tears rolled down the eyes of the happy Mirim.

“Sister...!”

Sigui was hearing the exchange of the two girls, involuntarily grinding her teeth.

“What’s that nonsense...! With such heretic reasons, there’s no hope for you! Annelotte, for you, and for all the people that were fascinated by you, verdict: guilty. Every one of you is to be rightly burned to death!”

Shouting just a little, Sigui had noticed one thing.

She hated Annelotte.

Annelotte hadn’t given up until that day, and had protected them even by rebelling against God.

Her strength was somewhat dazzling.

She wouldn’t allow herself to think something like that.

So, she hated Annelotte.

“That’s probably fine, “Inquisitor” Sigui.”

Annelotte spoke Sigui’s name slowly.

“Just like you, I’m faithful to my duty, and I won’t run away from the fate that I imposed on myself! My comrades who trust in me, the people whom I call my teachers that instructed me, besides, the innocent people who help me and smile at me like this... if I lose to you here, if I give up, it’ll be like I’m betraying them!”

Two people who weren’t able to understand each other’s reasons.

If both were forced to face each other, they’d make full use of what each had learned and clash, and it could only be settled with a showdown.

Will the “Princess Knight” Annelotte win?

Will the “Inquisitor” Sigui win?

They... won’t know that unless they fight.

Chapter 10.5: End of the Battle

The battlefield was shrouded in silence.

Two beautiful fighters were facing each other.

Princess Knight Annelotte.

Inquisitor Sigui.

And, the soldiers who watched their actions breathlessly.

It looked like as if it was the Queen's Blade arena.

Since the Inquisitor Sigui had already freed them from the power of the "Holy Pose: Worship" that she had emitted, the soldiers had regained the freedom to move their body.

But still, staring at the girls in the battlefield had taken their breath away, and they weren't able to move.

"Sister... Annelotte..."

A voice mixed with a hint of anxiety escaped from the lips of the Hyper Vibration Valkyrie Mirim. The whisper acted as a signal, as the two beautiful fighters moved at the same time.

"Haaaah!"

"Yaaaah!"

When Annelotte's sword "Grim Venus" was parried by Sigui's "Holy Flame Mace", its form changed into a spear and tried to unleash a thrust on her again.

"That... I've seen it before!"

Sigui shouted with a smiling grin, and tried to stop and twine around the spear with the "God's Chained Blade" around her waist.

"I'll... show you another one!"

The next to shout was Annelotte. Against Sigui's "God's Chained Blade", the "Grim Venus" restored its form into a longsword once again, and dealt a slash to the former.

"Kuh...!"

A fragment of the chain was cut off and danced around in midair, glittering as it reflected the sunlight.

Rustle rustle, the chain fell into a circle on the ground noisily, and Annelotte calmly told Sigui.

"I think that settles the match – Inquisitor Sigui, there's no meaning to continue any further."

"It's – too early to say that, Princess Knight Annelotte."

Sigui acted just a moment before Annelotte could understand Sigui's words.

"Teaah!"

Sigui swung one hand, and more of the chain hidden in the inner part of her sleeve extended towards Annelotte.

"Wha..."

She didn't have the time to evade it.

"S... Sister Annelotte!"

Having her weapon and the upper part of her body constrained, Annelotte's movements were completely sealed, and Sigui smiled calmly.

"I caught you off guard – Annelotte, you heretic."

"Kuh...!"

In front of Annelotte who couldn't move at all, Sigui slowly raised the mace held in her hand.

"Previously, I told you – your sentence, is the capital punishment by burning to death. Some time has passed since those words, hasn't it?... Now, let's fulfill my promise."

Sigui readied the mace shaped like a holy symbol.

"So that not even your bones remain, I'll burn you thoroughly – with this sacred flame of purification!"

The "Holy Flame Mace", the high-grade holy utensil only the Inquisitors were allowed to carry, emitted a flame that hit Annelotte!

"Kuaaaaaaah!"

"Siiiiiiister!"

Annelotte was wrapped up in the hellfire, and among the grove of trees away from the hill, it rather looked like a bonfire.

"Demonism is heresy, alchemy is heresy, it's convenient that we're not judged... so much for integrity, certainly that's a flame that alchemy can't produce."

Despite the distance, grasping exactly the events that were happening from the hill, one person muttered so, the Iron Strategist, Ymir.

Behind her, the elite force of the Queen's Army was standing at attention.

No, it wasn't just an elite force. Behind Ymir, with big frames that exceeded by far an ordinary person's, giants in armor and helmet were sitting in a row.

"Our magic troop – Maybe in the Rebel Army remains a soldier to try the strength of the giants of the Marshland... Anyway, I suppose I should hurry."

Leading them, while giving the whole team the order to march forward, Ymir stood alone and muttered so that no one would hear her.

"However... lady Inquisitor Sigui... you've gotten a little impatient... what happened...?"

"S, Sister... Anne... lotte."

The Hyper Vibration Valkyrie Mirim murmured aghast before the hellfire pillar.

"When your "sister" burns to nothing, it'll be your turn next, Mirim. That armor made by alchemy, that tool of the devil... I can't forgive you for that."

"M, my Sister... my Sister, won't... be defeated like this!"

Although the Hyper Vibration Valkyrie Mirim shouted firmly as she got into a ready position, the point of her sword was shaking pitifully.

"Accept it, my "Holy Flame Mace" is an article consecrated by the Pope himself. The wicked people will burn to ashes by the flame, and those who aren't won't."

"Th, then... if my Sister is safe...!"

"Such a thing is impossible, as I've said. However, that's right... if such a thing happened, she'd have been accepted by God, and I'd say I forgive her."

"In that case... then, look... look at that!"

Mirim pointed to the hellfire behind Sigui, her eyes wet with tears. With an overawed expression, she instinctively turned around – and, Sigui saw it.

"What... is that!"

Slowly.

Slowly.

Stepping firmly, one step at a time, from inside the hellfire, a female knight with silver hair and in silver armor was coming out.

"It, it can't be... that's, impossible...!"

If one was blessed by God and the Holy Flame didn't burn them, it could only mean one thing.

That is, they were pure children of clergymen, holy beings who had no evil.

However, in that situation.

The fact that the Princess Knight Annelotte was coming out of the hellfire unharmed.

"Did God... forgive, that woman...?"

Her strength fading, Sigui fell to her knees. She had no choice but to accept it.

But, she didn't want to accept it.

Sigui was assaulted by a feeling of despair, as if God had abandoned her.

"Why... why is that, an impurity descended from a demon... in the name of God... that's heresy... I... I..."

Sigui kept muttering grumbling words that didn't make any sense, and when it finally dawned on her, she looked up at Annelotte, and said without strength.

"...This is my loss. Princess Knight Annelotte... kill me."

"Kill you... why?"

"God... he's chosen you, a demon, over me, who has been serving him so far. I cast everything aside in order to serve God, family, my village's mayor, most of the people I've ever met, I've judged mercilessly, and I've lost the favor of God... I have nothing left."

Sigui looked up at Annelotte, her eyes wet with tears.

"Therefore... surely now, it is my turn... so I'm asking you, your judgment..."

"What are you talking about, I don't understand..."

Annelotte said with a worried face.

"Although you're my enemy – no, for that reason, as we've crossed swords, we understand each other better than if we had said many words... my teacher taught me that, and I don't think it's a lie."

Annelotte's hand wasn't grasping her sword any longer. While touching the hilt of her sword kept in the sheath, Annelotte calmly said.

"Inquisitor Sigui. You're very strong. If I consider the great efforts, faith and piety it took you to obtain such strength – I can only respect you, I won't ever despise you or scorn you."

"But... I was denied by God. The judgment I gave you was mistaken. Maybe, I may have been repeating the same mistake over and over again... My sin, the punishment for so long, I can't possibly atone for it... except with my death..."

In contrast with Sigui, who was revealing that while clenching her teeth, Annelotte... laughed.

"Hahaha...!"

"S, Sister?"

Looking sideways at the confused Mirim, Annelotte said to Sigui.

"You are a serious, considerably stubborn person. I was called that by Yuit too, but I don't know if I can hold a candle to you."

"Eh...?"

"What has happened cannot be taken back even if you regret it. So, you don't have to deal with the punishment from your sin, just make sure you don't repeat the same mistake again. If you regret that you hurt somebody, the next thing to do is to protect them so that they don't get hurt... I think that is the "hope" we humans possess."

"Hope..."

Not punishing one's sins, and finding a way not to repeat one's mistakes...?

That was a way of thinking Sigui just became aware of for the first time.

"So, Sigui, I think you'll be fine from now on if you find a way to protect people so that they won't get hurt. It surely doesn't conflict with your faith in God."

Saying so, Annelotte held out her hand to Sigui.

"If you say that's difficult on your own, I'll lend you a hand. What is painful on your own, can be overcome if you're together with someone... This, is something important that I learnt from people I respect."

"Together... with someone..."

For someone like Sigui who had been forced to be alone, those words came as a shock.

"I... I..."

Despite her confusion, Sigui tried to hold out her hand towards Annelotte's. But, before their hands could touch, Mirim shouted.

"Sister! The enemy, the Queen's Army! We've been surroundeed!"

The battlefield was shrouded in confusion.

The Rebel Army had certainly been ambushed, and as the commander, Inquisitor Sigui, had been defeated by the Rebel Army's side, the Pope's Army of priest soldiers hesitated about the aim of the attack.

To crush both parties, the elite soldiers of the Queen's Army, huge magic soldiers were rushing on.

Seeing the magic soldiers smashing up both the Rebel Army and the priest fighters with their battleaxes like children, Mirim turned pale.

"Sister! T, these people, they're somewhat weird! T, they don't care about friends or foes...!"

While parrying a battleaxe with the "Grim Venus", Annelotte replied to Mirim's scream, gnashing her teeth in frustration.

"Kuh, these guys, they're wild monsters with superhuman strength... besides, there are too many of them!"

"Haa-haaha! I remodeled the Marshland giants, they're an army of magic soldiers! No matter how much Annelotte draws from her demon blood, you're no match for them!"

Ymir's loud laugh, however, quickly grew dim.

Goo! [flame sound]

A huge hellfire, that wrapped the body of a few magic soldiers at once.

"Hmm...?"

Of course, the flame was the power of the Inquisitor Sigui.

"Marshland giants strengthened with alchemy... If I'm not mistaken, an existence that renounces religion. In other words, veredict: guilty... I'll humbly burn you to death!"

"Sigui, I'm sorry!"

Annelotte shouted. Sigui smiled and spoke with a calm voice, it was visible that she had completely regained her former confidence.

"My hellfire hasn't lost its heat yet. That is to say, God didn't deny my faith itself... for letting me realize that, I thank you... Elder Sister."

"Ah...?"

Annelotte stopped moving.

"Elder Sister?"

So far, many people had called Annelotte "Sister" and "big bro", but this was unexpected.

"Yes, you shaped my new life, if I don't call you "Elder Sister", what should I call you?"

"N, no, you don't need to call me anything special..."

"Elder Sister, we'll continue the conversation later, let's defeat our enemies!"

"Ah, aah, yeah."

While feeling like she had been skillfully tricked, Annelotte readied her sacred sword "Grim Venus" once again.

"Gaooooooh!"

Screaming like beasts, the giant magic soldiers trampled down the Rebel Army.

"Ahyaunn! T, this many... hiiu, t, they don't give up! Hiaann!"

Every time she received a blow, the Hyper Vibration Crystal vibrated, and Mirim involuntarily let out her voice.

"This number... is too big! Besides, these monsters aren't affected by the "Holy Pose"!"

Lying down on the ground, keeping her legs in the stance of the "Holy Pose: Fear", Sigui gave a cry of fright.

And Annelotte, now able to control the demonic power, was struggling as well.

"Kuh, I, I... can't defend against them either...!"

Grinding her teeth, Annelotte spoke in despair.

"Haa-haaha! Rebel Army, even if the pope's agency has sided with you, feel the power of the Queen Claudette's troops, and bow down nicely before us!"

With a loud laughter, the Iron Strategist Ymir was issuing instructions to the magic soldiers to run down the Rebel Army.

But suddenly, her face got clouded, as her eyes turned towards the distant deserted land.

"What's... that sound?"

A faint rumbling from the ground reached Ymir's ears.

Looking slightly beyond the deserted land, there was a cloud of dust.

Rumm...ble.

Rumm...ble.

Along with the heavy earth tremor – a thing like a hill slowly appeared from beyond the cloud of dust.



No, it wasn't a natural object.

From the form "it" had, it was obvious that it was a man-made object, and unmistakably, it was moving, drawing nearer.

"T, that thing... what, what is it..."

Before they noticed, everybody in the battlefield had stopped moving, as they were staring at "it".

"A fortress? A fortress, that moves...? Such a thing, it can't be... heresy, it's heresy...!"

"S, sister, that thing... would you say it's our ally, or our enemy?"

"I, I don't know... j, just what is, that thing..."

Neither the enemies nor the allies in the battlefield could hide their confusion. From there, a huge "voice" roared like thunder.

"Big broo, we've been waiting!"

"T... that voice... is it Yuit!?"

"With this "Sacred Treasure Fortress Bligh" here, the Queen's Army is in a pinch! Goo!"

"Gaoon!"

At the same time the "Alchemy Android" Vante replied to Yuit's command, Bligh started moving once again.

"Kuh... That's the Sacred Treasure Fortress Bligh...! We don't stand a chance if we get run over, though it's mortifying... we'll retreat from here!"

Shedding cold sweat before the pressure from the huge fortress, Ymir gave an order to her whole army.

"The Rebel Army, obtained something like that... I must think of a way to deal with them in the future..."

The Rebel Army was excited with its victory.

At its center, the Alchemy Strategist Yuit had run down from Bligh, and came smiling to Annelotte, jumping into her bosom.



"Big bro! I'm glad I made it in time, big bro!"

"You had me worried, Yuit... you probably ran into a great deal of troubles over there."

Vante was in the rear, waiting with Yuit's gear, and noticing she had more small wounds, Annelotte stroke her cute "little sister" 's hair.

"Fwa... I, I'm fine, everybody has helped me... we even have new comrades now."

"Now that we're here, we'll stay with you until the end! In for a penny, in for a round!"

"I think you want to say, in for a penny, in for a pound..."

Tarnyang with a guts pose, and Sainyang whispering behind her playing the straight man, that was the Taimashi duo.

"I, I'll also be more useful to Sister from now on!"

Burning with rivalry for some reason, the "Hyper Vibration Valkyrie" Mirim raised her voice.

"Are you Yuit's "big bro"? I expected a boy, guess I was wrong."

Luna Luna, the dancer that wore a fascinating outfit, peeked at Annelotte from behind Yuit.

"And you are?"

"The one who protects the hidden treasure of the Calibara tribe, the Solar Dancer Luna Luna! I was allowed to come for the sake of watching over the fate of this treasure, the fortress Bligh."

"Is that so? That's reassuring... but, you know, that exotic outfit... looking at it for a while is embarrassing."

"Embarrassing...?"

"Ah, big bro, that's...!"

Yuit and the others panicked, and in front of the puzzled Annelotte's eyes, who didn't understand what was happening, the color of Luna Luna's skin and hair quickly changed.

"Giggle, don't be shy. BROTHER."

"W, what's this...?"

Luna Luna brought her face close enough to touch her, and whispered at the flinching Annelotte.

"Don't worry about me... worry about yourself."

"A, a, about me?"

"Yes, if you defeat the Queen, what are you going to do, I wonder? Will you become the new Queen, will you rule the Continent in her stead, I wonder, using the great power of this Bligh?"

Yuit raised her voice at Luna Luna's words.

"Don't mix big bro together with someone like Claudette! If big bro handles this great power, she'll guide us to peace in the Continent!"

Tarnyang and Sainyang raised an objection.

"But, there's no guarantee for that."

"...Before becoming Queen, Claudette was a great general, Yuit said so herself."

"T, that's... yeah, but, but...!"

Yuit couldn't answer back, and caressing her head to calm her down, Annelotte said to everybody.

"I don't plan on doing anything like ruling this continent."

That was something Annelotte had been thinking since long ago.

"If I, no, if the Rebel Army is able to defeat the Queen... then, I think we should try to revive the Queen's Blade."

"Queen's Blade...?"

"Uh-huh, and we'd do like before, whoever won through Queen's Blade, the fighter who reached the top would become Queen, and rule the Continent for a fixed period. And then, why don't we try ourselves?"

Like that, the Rebel Army obtained the base called the Sacred Treasure Fortress Bligh, obtaining a power equal to the Queen's Army's.

The Rebel Army, the Queen's Army, which one will win, and how will the Continent be ruled?

They, won't know that unless they fight.



南崎のクイズブライド・バリエーション -Naked & Truth-

シギイさん
『マメが
高過ぎて
面白い』
の見本。
基本リッ
ですが、
イニリ
ように
よって
はまだ
幅が
出そう。

まあ!!
不埒な
イメージ
紛れ
込み
ます
かね

ども皆様こんにちは、もしくは初めまして、『クイズブライド-Hide&Seek-』
というコミカライズをやらせて頂いていた南崎いと申します。
今回そのご縁から(?)付属ドラマCDの脚本を書かせて頂きました。
(しかもエリナとユミルというご指定!!)リッオキエとの掛け合い、
セリフと効果音のみで表現せねばならないシナリオ。

初めてのことに戸惑いながらも楽しんで言葉作りさせて貰いました!!
声優さんの収録にもお邪魔したのですが、
皆様の素晴らしいお仕事に只々感嘆
途端にキャラの核に生命力が吹き込まれ、
脳内でガツンガツンと動き出す感覚が
しました。QBキャラは、皆どこか生っぽい。
そのえば、少せ7ミなセリフを
収録した後、ワタシが
「なんだか気持ちいいと
いふか...申し訳ない
気がしますね」と
苦笑していたら、
原作者の
ハズさん(DS)
が「慣れ
ました!!」

ぴぎやああん!!
リッオキエの正体や真相が
気になつた方も
多いハズ
その辺りも
明らかかな??

...アスノー。
個人的には、
エリナとユミルの
漫才的な会話が
声付きで聴けて
嬉しいです!!(実は
密かに夢でした)
ちなみに、シギイの
セリフ回しのイメージは
「女教師」だそうです。
ほほうと納得。
(だから2Pはメカネなのか...!!)

2Pシギイさん
キリッ
と
あ
り
ま
す

さてさてそんなワケで、無印の頃より周囲の状況に振り回されている**火版コト**。漫画版主人公としても描き続けてきたキャラなので、勿論愛着もあるのですが... あがいているコを観描きするのが好きな自分としては、あの不安定さはツボだったりします。ヒールだけど詰めが甘くて、やっぱり妹気質なココロとか。意外とお姉ちゃんキャラな**タニヤン**とは相性イイんじゃないかと思ったり。彼女は天然かつ飄々と、**エリカ**の毒舌をかわせる気がする...!! (なかは肝玉オカン的な器と度量があたう) 横で見てる**サレン**は気が気ないでしょうが... 色々な意味で。

や...ヤ...なま
タニヤン...
泣いてるし

多分、人の話を呪言さえも聞き流して「ん?」というタイプ

人のコト
馬鹿之言う方が馬鹿ネ♡

無印の頃よりも、髪型のせいか幼くなさそうなの? 安定剤の**レナ**が居なくて退行してる? 胸は成長しているのに...!! ユ

みんな
おほいもげろ!!
ババカ
ババカ!!

ア...ア...
ヒ

↑
大人しいけど貴重な%コミ体育。

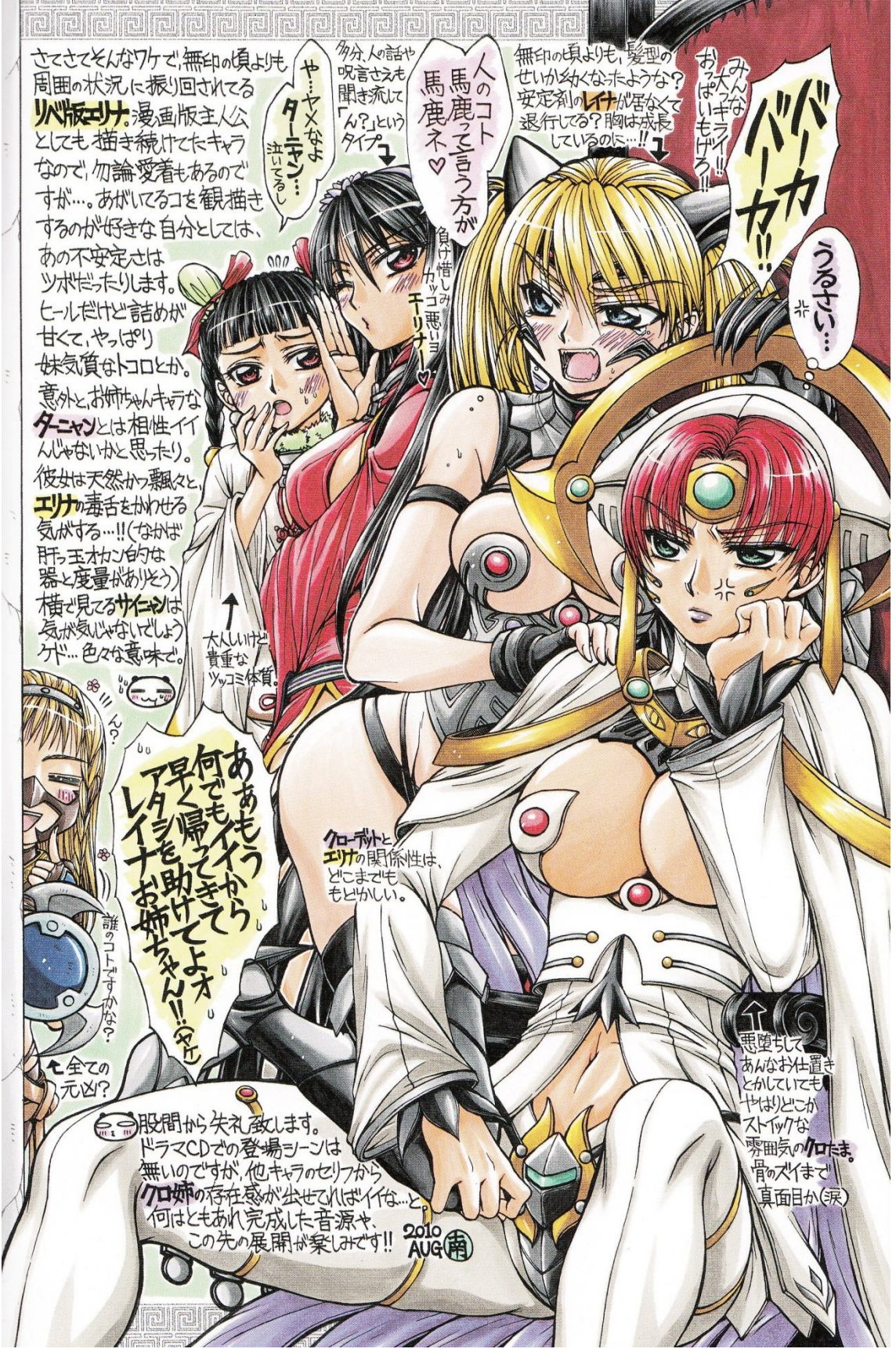
あ...あ...
何でも早く帰ってきから...
ア...ア...
レナを助けてよ...
お姉ちゃん!!

↑
クロコトとエリカの関係性は、どこまでももどかしい。

↑
悪堕ちしてあんなお仕置きとかしていてもやっぱりどこかストイックな零田気の**クロたま**。骨のズイまで真面目か(涙)

股間から失礼致します。ドラマCDでの登場シーンは無いのですが、他キャラのセリフから**クロ姉**の存在感が出せてればイいな...と、何はともあれ完成した音源や、この先の展開が楽しみです!!

2010 AUG(南)



Chapter 11: Ruler of the Desert

The scorching from the Amara desert.

With nothing in the middle of the desert as far as the eye could see, a rocky mountain was swaying in the heat haze, as if it was moving.

...No, it was actually moving, slowly. Emitting a low growl, blowing up gold dust like a puff of smoke, the huge fortress that could pass for a rocky mountain was advancing, cutting through the desert.

The Sacred Treasure Fortress Bligh.

The legacy from an ancient civilization, it was actually the base of the Rebel Army, and was currently moving, carving its way through the desert as if to turn it into a dry arroyo.

“Elder Sister, it’s about time, Taryang and Sainyang should return soon.”

“U, uuh... yeah.”

The Inquisitor Sigui drew closer, and the leader of the Rebel Army, Annelotte, answered worriedly. Reconciled in the battle, they were supposed to act together but after some time had passed, they were more familiar but hadn’t still gotten used to each other.

“Even so, if you think about the desert of Amara... if we move regularly like this, the Queen’s Army won’t be able to know our location.”

“Yeah, the traces of our movement are immediately covered by the sand.”

“That’s because, this Bligh can move by itself, like I told you. Yuit really went and discovered something amazing.”

“Eeh, such terrible heresy... burning it just once won’t be enough.”

“Eh.”

“Ah, no, I didn’t say anything.”

Although Annelotte felt like she had heard some inappropriate remark, the Hyper Vibration Valkyrie Mirim came running, calling out to her, and Annelotte turned towards her.

“Sister Annelotte, Taryang and Sainyang are back with supplies!”

“Ooh, it took longer than expected, are the two of them okay?”

The Taimashi Taryang and Sainyang, in order to procure goods from the caravan around the small villages in the desert, had led members of the Rebel Army and left to an oasis. Although providing supplies was outside of their area of expertise, they had succeeded at supplying goods at Gainos once, and they completely expected they could fulfill the role.

“The supplies went well, and we even obtained properly the alchemy materials Yuit wanted.”

Despite the Rebel Army having obtained that huge military power of the so-called Sacred Treasure Fortress Bligh, that was the reason why they were hiding in the desert of Amara. Bligh had been out of order for too many years, and though it could move freely, the fortress couldn’t display even ten percent of its functions.

Even if the Alchemy Strategist Yuit descended from the Great Alchemist Cyan, she didn’t have enough raw materials to restore it.

Moreover, this vast desert of Amara was a suitable place to practice Bligh’s move operation.

Because of such circumstances, the Rebel Army was hiding temporarily in the desert, and was dedicated to getting its system ready.

“Is that so? In that case, even repairing the fortress should proceed smoothly.”

Annelotte said so, smiling sweetly to Mirim. But Mirim made a glum face, and continued like this.

“However, it seems... we may have a little problem somewhat.”

“A problem?”

“Yes, could you come here for a minute?”

I wonder what it’ll be, thought Annelotte as she and Sigui went with Mirim.

“Ah, big bro!”

Led by Mirim, Annelotte went to the room that was the heart of the fortress, and the Alchemy Strategist Yuit ran up to her.

“Though I heard from Mirim that there is some problem...”

“Y, yeah...”

“Didn’t the supplies go well?”

“There is no problem with that. But... just look a bit over there.”

Saying so, Yuit pointed ahead of them with a sigh...

“W, what... is that?”

There, where on the previous day had been nothing at all, a luxurious throne had been built. On the throne that imitated a snake, a woman wearing a crown was sitting calmly, and fiddling with the staff she held in her hands, she partly closed her eyes as she was revered by a sturdy servant with a huge fan.



"Annelotte! "

Taryang and Sainyang spotted Annelotte's face, and approached her with an apologetic look.

"I'm sorry... that weird thing caught us..."

"...We'd better not get involved with something that suspicious, I told you."

"Taryang, Sainyang, what do you mean?"

"That's..."

"In the village of the oasis, we were accosted. I wonder if you've heard any rumors about the Rebel Army, they said."

"That's why, Taryang spoke fluently about our gathering place."

"I'm ashamed..."

Taryang bowed her head in a really apologetic way.

"No, we need to have more comrades now, and to call out and spread our voice, so with what you said, Taryang, you did nothing wrong. Nevertheless, that one there..."

Annelotte glanced at the woman sitting on the throne with a worried expression.

"Big bro, do you know who that is?"

Yuit mumbled in whispers, and Annelotte nodded and replied.

"Uh-huh, even someone ignorant of the ways of the world like me knows who that is. She's... one of the participants of the latest Queen's Blade, lady Menace... probably."

Menace and the Amara Kingdom



I've investigated again for big bro~!

Menace was originally a person from 4000 years or more in the past, the princess of a prosperous country called Amara. How can a person from such ancient times be alive now? Because she was revived by the Marshland Witch. Though reviving the dead is a terrible thing, this person goes even beyond that. I don't think it was a rational choice... By the way, even if now it is considered that 4000 years ago they didn't have strong magical items, the Amara Kingdom looks like it did have many of such hidden treasures. Maybe the Marshland Witch chose Menace because she wanted such a treasure.

“Therefore~, during Queen’s Blade, a merchant came and offered me support~”

Menace had left the throne, saying that she wanted to see the interior of her future royal palace, and to accompany her as she walked towards the fortress, Mirim walked the passage towards the fortress with her.

(Hauuu... they’re all so cruel... forcing me to accompany this person, I should have gone somewhere else...)

Not noticing the sighing Mirim’s state, Menace kept on talking while smiling calmly.

“This merchant had been making and selling dolls of us beautiful fighters who participated in Queen’s Blade~”

“Uh-huh, they were well done. After hardening the materials into a mass and baking them, and shaving the body like a sculpture, the craftsman colored them. I think he was able to reproduce

them quite well. Especially popular were the dolls that reproduced the damage in the middle of a fight.”

The talking scepter in Menace’s hands, Setra, interjected.

“Eeh, they were very lovely and beautiful, but since he had made business with dolls in my likeness just as he pleased, Setra threatened him...”

“You mean, persuaded him.”

“Yes, persuaded him... so, he presented me with all the money he had earned~”

“On parting, the merchant was caressed by Milady’s cursing fingertips, I don’t know how he’s doing by now.”

Setra laughed with a *hihihi*.

“Well, like that, Milady and I have come back to our nostalgic Kingdom of Amara.”

“Though the desert doesn’t have any traces at all of the period when I lived, I don’t think I know of a better place than this~”

“Is... that so.”

That land hadn’t been a desert in the past, but a very prosperous kingdom, Mirim knew that much.

But, the person before her eyes was a living witness who was acquainted with that era.

... This person had died once, and then had been revived, so one could wonder if she could be called “living witness” or not...

“When we received that money, with the power of a hidden treasure we found at the ruins of the Kingdom of Amara, we founded the village of the oasis as the new Kingdom of Amara... as a small Kingdom of Amara, so we’ve been accumulating power to rebuild the genuine Kingdom of Amara.”

“Then one day, we heard a rumor about the Rebel Army.”

“A... rumor?”

“Yeah, about them obtaining a moving fortress, that increased their military strength. Such a thing didn’t exist in the ancient Kingdom of Amara. Milady and I are quite intrigued by it.”

“Yes, I thought it would be a perfect fit for the royal palace of my new Kingdom of Amara, I think I’ll accept it if you present it to me as the royal palace of this “Queen of Amara” Menace, since you came all the way here to greet us~”

“E, even if you say to “present it to you”...”

No matter how many times Mirim tried to persuade her, Menace had an absent-minded, ecstatic expression and wouldn’t hear anything at all.

“Haa, anyway, for such a fantastic fortress to become my new royal palace, I’m so happy~”

“T, that would also trouble us... we, the Rebel Army, absolutely need the Sacred Treasure Fortress Bligh.”

After she nervously said that, the wise scepter in Menace’s hands, Setra, stifled a laugh and uttered.

“Apart from Milady and I, and the Rebel Army, Claudette’s kingdom is also interested in it. It’s alright, isn’t it, if you give us this fortress, and you’ll just have to wait for the day when the revived Kingdom of Amara conquers the whole world.”

They were saying that they could beat Claudette, without needing the Rebel Army at all.

“B, by the way.”

To change the subject, Mirim asked Menace.

“Miss Menace’s kingdom... the Kingdom of Amara, it doesn’t exist anymore, does it? I heard that it was lost a long time ago, and had become a desert...”

“That’s right~, though the kingdom was very prosperous, the passage of time is relentless~”

With a mood as if she wasn’t very worried, Menace still looked slightly doubtful when she replied.

“If I haven’t been revived, I think I’d have accepted this fate, but since I was revived, I want to restore my kingdom~”

“You were... revived.”

“Yes~”

Smiling sweetly, Menace nodded quickly.

“Though I died once, recently, after a long period of time, the person called “the Marshland Witch” was able to revive me~”

“The Marshland... Witch.”

That was a name even Mirim had heard.

A cursed being that planned to govern the continent.

An evil being, that after waking up from her longtime sleep, was said to be bringing calamity everywhere.

"Although I didn't hear from the Witch for a while after Queen's Blade ended, one day a messenger from the Marshland Witch came all the way to this small Kingdom of Amara, because I had to start working on a new operation, I was told~"

"That fellow, what a thing to say to Milady, who is the Queen of the great Kingdom of Amara." Though Setra, in Menace's hands, raised his voice in indignation, his mistress kept going her own pace.

"But, I was satisfied if the Kingdom of Amara could be revived, and because I had just created this small Kingdom of Amara as the first step, I thought I could try to refuse..."

But from what she said, she was told she couldn't refuse.

"Because I got revived by the Marshland Witch, I was told I had to listen to what she said, and though it troubled me~..."

"Though I still think that was a mistake... Milady lent Amara's treasure to the Marshland Witch." "Amara's... treasure?"

"Yes~, in this era such things as the treasures from the Kingdom of Amara had already been lost, but it was left in the ruins of the ancient Amara~."

Matching Menace's explanation, Setra arrogantly puffed up with pride.

"I, the great "Wise Scepter" Setra, am also one of them."

"Huh... that's great..."

The Hyper Vibration Armor and the Hyper Vibration Sword Mirim was carrying, had been made gathering the best of the current era's cutting edge alchemy.

However, the sentient, talking scepter in Menace's hands, Setra, was way more advanced than Mirim's weapon and armor, that was something even Mirim, not interested in alchemy or magic, could clearly understand.

"Then... uh, that treasure you said you handed over to the Marshland Witch, what was it?"

"The "Controlling Treasure"."

It was Setra who replied, instead of Menace.

"As the name suggests, it's a treasure that can control any person. It can only be used on people, but since its power would be wasted, we restricted its use... we lent it to her under the condition that she wouldn't use it on Milady."

"Huh..."

"Since we handed it over, none of the messengers of the Marshland Witch have come at all, it's so nice this has become quiet~"

"Is, is that so?... Is this, okay..."

And it was then, when Mirim had begun speaking.

Rumble! And, making an earth tremor, the fortress shook.

"Hyauh!?"

Mirim involuntarily fell on her backside.

"Oh my, what's wrong~?"

"It's not... an earthquake, did the fortress stop...?"

Bligh had been moving slowly, they'd find out later that it was the emergency stop.

"Such a screeching halt like this, how unusual... There may be something. I need to check on it."

"Ah, then, I'm coming along too~"

Inside the huge structure that was the Sacred Treasure Fortress Bligh, the watchtower was the highest place.

By the time Mirim rushed in there, the Alchemy Strategist Yuit was already there with the Alchemy Android Vante.

Mirim asked Yuit, who was riding on Vante's shoulders, staring at the horizon with a grim expression.

"Miss Yuit, we stopped suddenly, what's wrong?"

"...Look over there."

"Over there...?"

Mirim narrowed her eyes and looked at the horizon Yuit was staring at.

Her eyes opened wide in astonishment.

"Eh, ah, over there... what's...?"

It was a bizarre sight.

The heat haze that was shaking in the desert's horizon, had been replaced by a sinister miasma, they could clearly see it from the distance.

"To the east of the desert, there was originally "Marshland Miasma". Where human beings of flesh and blood cannot set foot, the cursed Marshland. However... the stories had it that it was much more far away, the Marshland couldn't be seen from here... at least, it wasn't supposed to."

Biting her lips, Yuit said.

"Until recently, it was supposed to be a desert around here. And yet, it's quickly becoming a marshland... Since we would be getting deeply into it, I used the emergency stop."

"B, but... then, that's...?"

"In other words, the marshlands, the territory of the "Marshland Witch", has extended rapidly... and I think, we could be overthrown."

While she said that, Yuit's expression wasn't convinced somewhat.

"However, why is it so sudden, I wonder how she's using such powerful magic... if there was something that changed."

And, sighing and adding in a low voice.

"Yes, for example... like she obtained a powerful magic item, or..."

"Ah."

"Eh, what? Mirim, anything ring a bell?"

"T, that's, let me see..."

Mirim became confused. Next to her, the one in Menace's hands looking like it didn't concern him, Setra, grumbled with a rotten mood.

"Look over there, Milady. As I thought, handing that over may have been a mistake."

"What is "that"?"

"Auuuu, that's..."

He whispered into her ear to answer her question, "Controlling Treasure".

"Such a thing... when she obtained that treasure, the Marshland Witch's power grew... It doesn't seem like you thought it through."

"I was troubled~, it's regrettable that the Kingdom of Amara's territory was infringed~"

Saying so leisurely, Menace suddenly chuckled and burst into laughter.

"Regrettable", "was infringed", I said~... isn't it funny~?"

"..."

"..."

Looking at each other, Mirim and Yuit gave a deep, deep sigh.

"Anyways, I was troubled~"

Menace had come back to the throne, and told Mirim so with a look that didn't seem to be very troubled.

"I asked everyone, and I'm afraid they say I can't transform this Sacred Treasure Fortress into my royal palace, the Marshland Witch will try to reduce the territory of my Kingdom of Amara... what should I do."

"W, well..."

Because she didn't have an aggressive personality in the first place, Menace had somehow become Mirim's responsibility, and she answered worriedly.

"But, about this Sacred Treasure Fortress of ours, it really is something important... that's why we can't give it to you, miss Menace..."

"Then, give us something else instead."

When she heard what Setra said, Mirim was puzzled.

"Something instead...?"

"You can't just not present anything to the Great Queen of the Amara Kingdom, commoner."

"Auuuu... ah, that's right."

"What is it~? What did you think of~?"

"The Rebel Army... if we can subdue the "Marshland Witch", the witch's castle and her territory... what if we give them to you then?"

"The witch's... castle, you say~?"

When she heard that, Menace's face lit up.

"That's a very wonderful idea~, in that case, I'll wait until then in the small Kingdom of Amara~"
Speaking so, Menace sat back on the throne and raised her scepter overhead, and the servants who were waiting around grabbed the throne and raised it.

"Wah! W, why is that?"

"Since I got you, Mirim, to promise me that, I'll return temporarily to the small Kingdom of Amara~"

"Eh, r, really?"

"Eeh, but on the other hand... it'll be no good if you forget the promise you made~"

Poke, and Menace's index finger poked Mirim's forehead, pressing just in case.

Although a little overawed, Mirim nodded a couple of times.

"Y, yes..."

Looking at her and smiling with satisfaction, Menace spoke to her servants.

"Alright, everybody, let's return to our kingdom~"

Following Menace's orders, the servants walked carrying the throne.

She waved back at her... then Mirim was finally released from the tension, and breathed out deeply.

"I, I'm so glad... I have to go back..."

Of course, that was an outrageous promise she had made of her own accord, but that's why she was badly scolded later by Annelotte and Yuit.

Although, Mirim's verbal promise wouldn't be completely pointless... but that's another story.

-Upheaval arc end-

Queen of Amara **Menace**

She was the Ancient Princess of the Amara Kingdom, revived by the power of the Marshland Witch, and one of the participants in the Queen's Blade Tournament.

With the help of her eloquent and good partner, the scepter Setra, after the tournament she succeeded in reviving her home, the Amara Kingdom, in a small desert. She became the queen of the small kingdom.

Going her own pace as usual, she doesn't appear to have changed much since becoming the queen, but she now seems to think about the ideal way she ought to manage her "country" and her "people". Currently, she loves the citizens of the new Kingdom of Amara (population: 98 people) from the bottom of her heart.

Height: 157cm
B/W/H: 90/58/85
Occupation: Queen
Weapon: Living Scepter Setra
Protection: Crown
Likes: Oil massages
Dislikes: People who don't listen to her
Hobby: Practising unarmed martial arts

"Bow down before the authority of the Amara Kingdom, and please make an offering!"

character created by F.S

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激動編

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